THE EPISTLES

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TRANSLATED,

WITH

AN EXPOSITION, AND NOTES,

By the Rev. THOMAS BELSHAM,

MINISTER OF ESSEX-STREET CHAPEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

"*Affer animum rectum et simplicem, veritatis supra cætera amantem, præjudiciis vacuum. Ne protinus tanquam nova, tanquam inaudita et absurda damnaveris, quæ tibi nova, tibi inaudita, et absurda occurrent. Ea quæ dicimus, non cum aliorum judiciis, non cum vulgi inveteratis opinionibus compone, ut inde rem æstimes, sed cum autoris divini verbis, scopo, ipsoque rationis filo. Hinc tibi veritas petenda est: hinc de nobis ferenda sententia. Equidem nos sicubi lapsi, aut D. Autoris mentem non satis assecuti sumus, amice admoniti, ultro manus dabimus, gratesque insuper accumulabimus.*" SLICHTINGIUS Præf. ad Heb.

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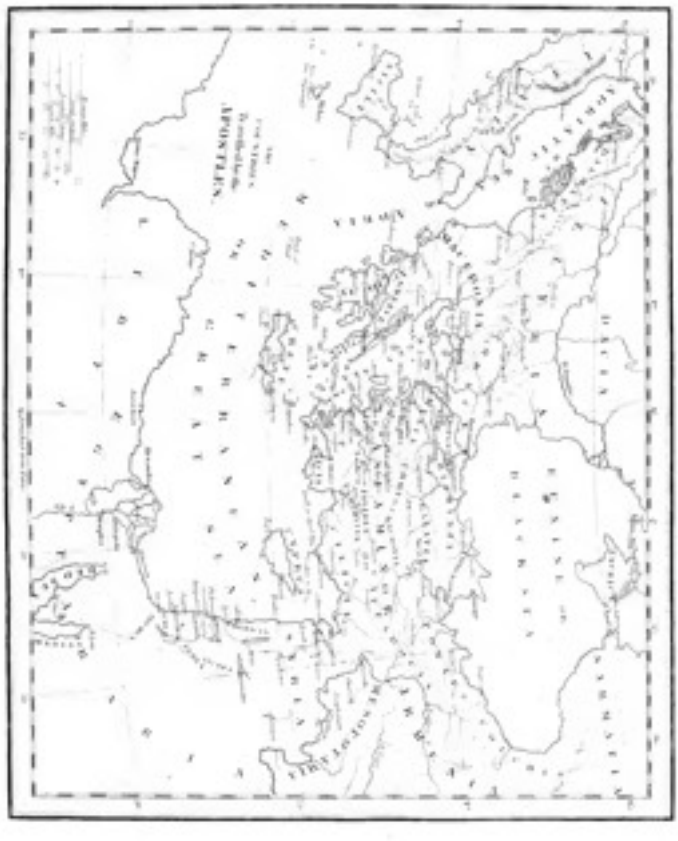

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ADVERTISEMENT.

WHILE the Author of the following Work officiated as Divinity Tutor in the Academical Institutions at Daventry and Hackney, it was his custom to deliver Lectures on the Epistles of Paul. These Lectures were chiefly critical; and the design of them was to instruct his pupils in Mr. Locke's manner of studying and expounding the Epistles. They were delivered, according to his usual custom, from brief hints and imperfect notes.

When the Institution at Hackney was suspended, and the Author had the honour of being chosen to succeed his venerable friend Dr. Priestley in the pastoral office there, he was anxious to supply to the best

of his ability the loss of his illustrious predecessor; and, among other methods of instruction, by adopting Dr. Priestley's plan of expounding the Scriptures. This accordingly constituted a regular portion of the morning-service every Lord's day. An Exposition of this kind would of course be of a more popular cast than what he had been accustomed to deliver to his pupils. It included all that appeared necessary for illustrating the sense and analysing the argument of the sacred writer; it traced out the train of thought and reasoning; critical remarks were sparingly introduced, and only where they appeared to be indispensably necessary; and such practical reflections were interwoven as naturally arose from the subject, without a formal introduction of them at the close of every section; it being the wish of the Author rather to give the whole Exposition a practical turn, than to interrupt the train of ideas and the course of the argument by reflections which, however useful in their place, are not always relevant to the subject.

It was the expressed desire of many of the Author's friends who heard, and of some who read the Exposition[1], that he would give the Work to the public. Nor was he himself averse from the proposal, considering how very few Expositions of the Scrip-

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[1] *Who read the Exposition.*] Among these was the late Rev. Timothy Kenrick of Exeter; with whom the Author had the honour to be intimately connected for many years in office, in affinity, and, which is of still greater importance, in similarity of sentiment, upon almost every important topic in theology, metaphysics, and morals; and with whom, as long as his life was spared, he held a most confidential and unreserved correspondence upon all those topics which are interesting to man as a reasonable being, formed for immortality. At Mr. Kenrick's request the Expositions were sent to him after being delivered in public: and both the plan and the execution so far met with his approbation, that he not only expressed his wish for the publication, but he commenced an Exposition of the Gospels nearly upon the same plan: which, since his lamented decease (being cut off by a sudden stroke in the midst of health, life, and usefulness), has been published to the world. Excellent as that Exposition is in itself, and most acceptable as it has been to all the friends of piety and rational Christianity, how much more valuable and acceptable would it have been had he lived to complete his plan, and to enrich his Exposition with notes! The Author is happy to announce, that a second edition is in contemplation, which will be greatly enhanced in value by additional corrections and notes by his son the Rev. John Kenrick, M.A. of York; of whose distinguished talents and attainments in theological, as well as in many other branches of literature, there are few scholars who now need to be informed.

tures by Unitarian Divines had lately appeared; and, more especially, since the Epistles of Paul, as they are usually interpreted, are regarded as the strong holds of Orthodoxy, or rather, of that enormous combination of errors which assumes the name. In furtherance of this design, the Author, repeating the course of his Exposition in public, availed himself of the opportunity of revising and correcting it, of transcribing it for the press, and of adding notes which were judged necessary for justifying either the translation or the paraphrase. He also often inserted the sentiments of learned and pious expositors even where they differed from his own; that the reader might have an opportunity of selecting the interpretation which he might best approve. In this way the Author had completed and transcribed the translation, commentary, and notes of the Epistles to the Thessalonians, of those from Rome, and of that to the Hebrews, when, in the year 1805, he received an invitation from the Trustees of Essex-street chapel to succeed Dr. Disney in the

office of minister, which invitation he was induced to accept, and to become connected with a Society which he has now had the honour and happiness of serving, upwards of seventeen years.

This change of situation, however, suspended the progress of the Work, and had nearly induced the Author to lay it aside altogether. For the mode of conducting public worship by a Liturgy not easily admitting, at least as he then thought, the introduction of an Exposition of the Scriptures, that custom was discontinued. The Author now thinks differently, and regrets that he did not pursue his original practice. Still, however, he had thoughts of resuming it at a future period: but the Improved Version of the New Testament[1], under the

[1] *The Improved Version of the New Testament.*] The Author of the present Work regards it as an honour to have been one of a Committee appointed by the Unitarian Society for publishing the Improved Version of the New Testament. He was indeed the party chiefly concerned in carrying it through the press. He is also responsible for the whole of the Introduction, and for many, perhaps the major part, of the Notes: but whatever credit may be due to the alterations in the Primate's text, to this he can lay but a very limited claim. It having been deter-

auspices of the Unitarian Society, having been published A.D. 1808, and the Author having given up much of his time to that publication, and declining fast into the vale of years, not to mention that many of his leisure hours were occupied with various publications in defence of the common cause, he laid by his papers and relin-

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mined to adopt Archbishop Newcome's text as the basis of the Improved Version, it was his own wish, in no case to have departed from that text, excepting in those instances in which the learned Prelate's predilection for system might be supposed to have given a bias to his Version. Others, however, members of the same Committee, thought differently; and many contributed, some in a greater and others in a less degree, their corrections of the Primate's Version; which corrections were admitted and published. It was, however, agreed, that every variation from the Primate's text should be noted in the margin, and that his own words should be inserted there; that so his character might be protected from every shadow of responsibility for any alteration that was introduced. This rule was invariably observed, except in very few instances, owing to inadvertency, which candour, not indeed always exercised, would readily excuse. This being the state of the case, it is surely no great breach of decorum in the Editors to have given the Work the title of the *Improved Version*, at which some have taken such great offence. No biblical scholar can deny the great superiority of Archbishop Newcome's Version, with all the helps and discoveries of the last two centuries, over that of King James's translators, which was made in the beginning of the seventeenth century, and, for the time in which it appeared, is no doubt excellent, but which makes no pretensions to be either inspired or immaculate.

quished all intention of sending them out into the world.

Nevertheless, being occasionally urged by his partial friends to perform the promise which he had made at a time of life when he had greater confidence in his own powers and qualifications than he now possesses, being also more at leisure from theological controversy, and enjoying a better state of health, and a greater capacity for mental exertion than he was entitled to expect at his advanced period of life, he at length surmounted his reluctance, and undertook to revise his papers for publication: and having been kindly assisted by a young and amiable friend now deceased [1], in transcribing the remainder, and every objection of a prudential nature being overruled by the great and unexpected liberality of his friends, who volunteered a munificent subscription to a quarto edition, the whole of which they took off his hands,

[1] *A friend now deceased.*] The much lamented and reverend Thomas Biggin Broadbent, son of the reverend William Broadbent of Warrington.

he engaged to send the Work immediately to the press, and it was hoped that it might have appeared, at the latest, by Christmas, A.D. 1821.

But the Work, upon review, requiring much correction and improvement, and many additional Notes, it was soon discovered that it could not be carried through the press with that celerity which was first expected. The Author being very desirous to render his Work as worthy of the acceptance of his friends and the public as might be in his power, regarded the delay of a few months as nothing in comparison with the benefit which it might derive from his latest corrections and improvements: and, in fact, this delay has afforded him an opportunity of adding at least one-fourth to the Notes, besides numerous corrections of the translation, and many alterations and recompositions of passages in the commentary. He may indeed truly say, that could he have foreseen all the additions and alterations which it has been necessary to introduce, and the time and labour which

it has occupied to bring the Work to its present state, he should have been so intimidated by the prospect, that no consideration would have induced him to undertake to prepare it for the press. But he now thanks God that he has been spared to finish his arduous but pleasing task; and that this Work was not permitted to go forth into the world in that very imperfect state in which it existed when he first consented to the publication.

The Author has allowed himself in this long personal detail, in order to account, if not to apologize, for the form under which the Work now appears. Having been originally drawn up as a practical paraphrase, to be used in public worship, the commentary is often extended to a much greater length, and comprehends a greater variety of observations and reflections than would be needful, or even allowable, if he had proposed to limit himself to a close and dry expression of the meaning of the text, in the manner of Locke, or Taylor, or Sykes. In fact, Dr. Priestley, of whose in-

teresting method of interpreting the Scriptures from the pulpit he had for some years been an attentive and highly gratified hearer, was, at the beginning at least, more his model than any other expositor.

When, however, the Author determined upon publication, it occurred to him that a body of Notes would be highly requisite for the vindication both of the translation and the exposition; and particularly to show that many interpretations, which to some readers will give offence, and which have the appearance of novelty and singularity, have been advanced, and ably supported, by critics and expositors of high reputation for learning and judgement, and therefore, that they are at least entitled to a candid hearing.

To conclude, in the words of the learned, pious, and venerable Bishop Pearce, "It may seem no recommendation of the following Work, for the Author to inform his readers that it was drawn up above *thirty* (the Bishop says *fifty*) years ago, unless at the same time he could inform them, that

it has received some alterations, which he hopes are improvements, as in the advance of his age his judgement increased, and as he met in his reading things worthy of being observed for the purpose. And such as the Work now is he offers it to the public, as what he hopes will make the true meaning of the apostle, in many places of his Epistles, better understood than they have been generally hitherto [1]."

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[1] See the Preface to a New Translation of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, with a Paraphrase and Notes, by Dr. Zachary Pearce, Bishop of Rochester, written eight months before his decease. The venerable prelate had kept this Work by him upwards of *fifty* years. He died June 29, 1774, in the eighty-fourth year of his age.

Essex-House, May 31, 1822.

PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION.

THE design of the following sheets is to exhibit a clear and distinct view of what appears to the Author to be the true sense and scope of that invaluable portion of the sacred writings, the EPISTLES OF PAUL.

Of these celebrated compositions, it has long ago been remarked by very high authority, that "they contain many things hard to be understood." And so greatly and so generally have they been misconceived, and misinterpreted, and so numerous and glaring have been the errors professedly derived from them, that not a few have thrown them aside in despair: and some have rashly presumed to hazard an insinuation, that it might have been as well if the Epistles of Paul had never formed a part of the Sacred Canon. But as no believer in the Christian religion can possibly

deny the conversion and mission of the apostle Paul, so it cannot reasonably be doubted that he was eminently qualified for the important office to which he was appointed; and therefore, that his writings, if genuine, must contain a very important meaning. And the Author of the following Exposition is greatly mistaken indeed, if it should not appear, that these masterly compositions, when studied with diligence and impartiality, and in the way that other ancient writings are, may like them, generally speaking, be well understood; and if, when so understood, they should not be found to comprehend a mass of instruction of the most interesting and useful kind, which will amply reward the labours of the biblical student.

SECTION I.

Of a Correct Text.—Fidelity in Translation. —Bias of System.

THE first object of the Author of the present Work has been to attain, as nearly as possible, a *correct text*: and to this end he

has generally adopted the text of the second edition of Griesbach, in whose accuracy and impartiality all biblical critics, of any consideration, are agreed; and he has, for the most part, carefully noted any material deviation from the received text; which deviations are indeed, comparatively speaking, not very numerous.

In *translating*, the Author has endeavoured to exhibit the true meaning of the apostle, in plain, simple, and intelligible language: and, with this view, he has made no scruple of availing himself, not only of the words of the Public Version, which are often the best that can be chosen, but of all other versions to which he has had access, whether those of Pearce or Chandler, of Doddridge or Worsley, of Newcome or Wakefield, or any other which have fallen in his way; not even excepting the Liberal Translation of Dr. Harwood, which, though generally affected and in bad taste, sometimes hits upon a happy phrase. So that the Translation here offered to the public might perhaps with greater propriety be called an Eclectic, or Select Version, than a *new* one. And, in very many instances, after having introduced into the text the

word which was judged preferable, the translations of other critics have been given in the Notes, leaving the reader to his own judgement in the selection.

Where a word in the original is ambiguous, it is right, if possible, to translate it by a word which has the *same* ambiguity, and not to make that definite which the original leaves indefinite: but where an expression occurs which, being ambiguous in the original, does not admit of ambiguity in the translation, but must be rendered by a word of definite signification, the Author does not hesitate to avow that in such cases, where the context does not supply the meaning, he is governed in his choice by the *analogy of faith*, or, in other words, by what he apprehends to be the genuine doctrine of the sacred writer; presuming that it is quite impossible that the apostle should contradict himself[1]. This principle has been ex-

[1] "I have looked into it with care," says the candid and learned Bishop Watson in a Letter to the Duke of Grafton, who had made him a present of a copy of the Improved Version, "and have met within it what I expected, and what indeed must ever accompany all translations, many places in which the sense of the author still remains ambiguous. Murphy's translation of Tacitus differs from Gordon's, though both these writers were free from the

claimed against by unthinking persons, as a corrupt warping of the text from attachment to system. But to act otherwise is impossible; and those who have boasted most of their impartiality have failed in the attempt. Least of all can the Public Version pretend to perfect freedom from this bias. Nor are King James's translators, nor any other, to be censured on this account. No doubt, all believe their own system to be the true doctrine of the apostles: and when they come to a passage which must be translated in a sense favourable or unfavourable to their own system, they will, and ought to translate it in the favourable sense, which must necessarily appear to them to be the true sense. Who can blame a Trinitarian for translating Titus ii. 13, "the glorious appearance of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ?" Who can condemn an Arian for rendering Heb. i. 4, "being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they?" And who ought to take offence at a Unitarian

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bias of preconceived opinions, which must almost necessarily occupy the minds of translators of the New Testament." Bishop Watson's *Life*, p. 492.

because he prefers "the church of *the Lord* (Acts xx. 28), which he has purchased with his own blood," a reading supported by all the best manuscripts, to "the church of *God*," &c. which is only supported by the modern copies of the Vulgate, and by the Æthiopic, which is avowedly corrupted from the Vulgate[1]? Being, therefore, decidedly convinced, that the SIMPLE HUMANITY of Jesus Christ is the clear indis-

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[1] See Improved Version *in loc.*; also Griesbach, ed. 2. *in loc.*; and Bishop Marsh's Michaelis, vol. ii. p. 96.

As a further illustration of the observation we may refer to 1 Cor. xi. 10: "For this cause ought a woman to have power (a veil) on her head, (δια τους αγγελους) because of the *angels*." The word, though ambiguous in the original, must be rendered definitely in the translation: viz. either *angels*, in allusion to the supposed presence of celestial beings in places of worship; or, *messengers*, in reference to the custom of sending a deputation from the assemblies of the men to those of the women.

A much more important case occurs Heb. i. 4, which in the Public Version is rendered, "being made so much better than the angels:" a translation which expresses the superiority of Christ to celestial spirits, as the text is commonly understood.—Mr. Wakefield's version, instead of *angels*, renders the words *those messengers:* i. e. the prophets of the old dispensation, alluded to in the context, ver. 1. The original is *ambiguous;* it expresses both senses. The translation is necessarily *definite*, there being no English word which has the same ambiguity. Every one, therefore, is induced to translate according to what he believes to be the true sense of the writer: that is, according to his own system of belief. And neither party is to blame.

putable doctrine of the New Testament, the Author makes no hesitation in avowing that he translates passages which admit equally of two senses, in that which is most favourable to this plain and important doctrine: exactly as Dr. Doddridge and the authors of the Public Version translate with a bias favourable to the deity of Christ; or as Dr. Chandler and Dr. Harwood translate with a prepossession in favour of Arianism. To pretend the contrary would be folly and affectation: and the Author hopes that he shall meet with the same candour and indulgence in this respect as his Arian and Trinitarian predecessors. In fact, to be destitute of a bias of this kind is both undesirable and unavoidable: for what must we think of the translation of an author by one who professes that he does not understand his general scope and design? and if he does understand it, how is it possible for him to avoid paying regard to it, in giving the sense of an ambiguous passage? Translators are then only to be censured when, through the bias of system, they are induced to give a turn to the translation which the original does not warrant.

It has been already observed, that where

the original is ambiguous the translation ought, if possible, to be alike ambiguous; and that it is only under the circumstance of a necessarily definite translation of an ambiguous original, that the bias of a correct translator will appear. In Exposition the case is altered. The expositor professes to give what he sincerely believes to be the true meaning of his author, and to explain passages which the author himself has left ambiguous. This has been attempted in the following Exposition, in which the Author has, to the best of his judgement, in every instance, given what he conscientiously believes to be the true sense of the apostle, without pretending to infallibility, and leaving it to his reader to determine how far his interpretation is just.

SECTION II.

Inspiration of the Epistles.

FROM the history of Luke, and from the testimony of his own epistles, it appears evident that the apostle Paul was a man of

great zeal and unblemished integrity; who, having been educated in all the superstitions, and in all the rigour of the Pharisaic discipline, and having been originally a cruel persecutor of those who believed in Jesus, had been converted to the faith by a miraculous appearance of Christ to him on the road to Damascus, whither he was going with authority from the chief priests to raise a persecution against the believers in that populous city. Having been chosen and appointed by Christ to be his apostle, and to preach his gospel to the Gentiles, immediately after his conversion he went into Arabia, where he resided two years, during which period he was favoured with personal intercourse, more or less, with Christ himself, and was by him fully instructed in the whole doctrine and scheme of the gospel, and in the nature and duties of the apostolic office, and particularly of his mission to the Gentiles: he was also endowed with a large portion of the gifts of the holy spirit, and with that privilege in particular which was peculiar to the apostles, the power of communicating spiritual gifts to the new converts: so that, as he himself declares, he was not behind the very chief of the

apostles. See Gal. i. ii. 2 Cor. xi. xii. In addition to this, it appears that the apostle was favoured with occasional interviews with Christ, and revelations from him during the course of his ministry, and that in his various missionary journeys he shaped his course not only under the general superintendence, but occasionally under the immediate direction of Christ himself. See Acts xiii. 2, xvi. 6—9, xviii. 9, 1 Thess. iii. 11. From all these circumstances, it may be justly concluded, that the apostle carried in his mind at all times, in all places, and to the end of life, a complete and infallible knowledge of the doctrine of Christ, so that whatever he taught, or wrote, upon that subject is to be received as true, and as of divine authority; nor is it of the least consequence to ascertain whether that which he delivers be in any other sense inspired. For the doctrine which had been revealed to the apostle by Christ in Arabia, and which he could never forget, is as truly divine, as if it were communicated at the instant by the immediate inspiration of God. The same observation will apply to prophecy, which the apostle either spoke, or wrote. The prediction is equally of divine autho-

rity, whether it were originally revealed to the apostle by Christ in Arabia, or supernaturally suggested to his mind at the instant of his dictating an epistle to the Thessalonians, or to Timothy. Whether it were the one, or the other, it is not always easy to distinguish, nor in the least degree material. Whatever the apostle teaches as Christian doctrine, whatever he announces as dictated by the spirit of prophecy, must be received as such by all who admit the claim of Paul as an apostle of Jesus Christ. Whether *revealed* or *inspired*, the authority is the same [1].

[1] The vulgar and loose idea of inspiration which regards every sentence of the Old and New Testament as an inspired aphorism, must be abandoned by every one who allows himself to reason justly upon this subject: inspiration, that is, the supernatural communication of truth to the mind, being a miracle, is not to be admitted in any case but upon the clearest evidence. The apostles by their miracles exhibited the most satisfactory proofs that they were divinely instructed and authorized to teach the doctrine of Christ; whatever, therefore, they advance as such, must be received as a revelation from heaven. When the apostle Paul announces to the Athenians that "God will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained," or, when he teaches the Corinthians that "this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality," he speaks with authority; he is to be received as a messenger of God: he teaches what he could only learn from inspiration or revelation. Inspiration teaches with a tone of authority: "Thus saith the Lord," &c. Reasoning is an appeal to

Further than this the claim to inspiration does not extend. There is no reason to be-

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the understanding: "Judge ye what I say." Whoever appeals to reason waves, *quoad hoc*, his claim to inspiration. Still the doctrine may be from heaven, while the argument is inconclusive. That believing Gentiles were admitted to equal privileges with believing Jews, was a revealed truth. That all the arguments used by the apostle Paul in the Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians to establish this principle were inspired, or even that they were all conclusive, cannot reasonably be maintained.

Upon the whole, an approved prophet, or an apostle, is to be received as inspired, or divinely instructed, First, when he asserts it; Secondly, when he utters a prophecy; Thirdly, when he speaks authoritatively upon the subjects of his mission, viz. the mission of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the final judgement, &c.

If it be inquired, How is it to be known when a prophet or an apostle is speaking upon the subject of his mission? the answer is, From his own declaration, or the nature of the subject, the scope of the context, or the circumstances of the case. These considerations will generally lead to a right conclusion. But if error be involuntarily adopted after using the best means of information, it may be safely concluded that such error will not be imputed as a crime.

These or similar views of inspiration were favoured by Erasmus and Grotius; they were published by Le Clerc in his celebrated Five Letters upon the subject; and the most important of them have been supported by many eminent divines both in and out of the Established Church.

Erasmus says, "*Non est necesse ut quicquid fuit in apostolis, protinus ad miraculum vocemus. Passus est errare suos Christus, etiam post acceptum paracletum, sed non usque ad fidei periculum.*" Erasmi *Epist.* lib. ii. tom. 3. ed. Basil. Grotius has the following passage in his *Vot. pro pace Eccles.* tom. iii. p. 672, ed. Lond. 1679, fol.: "*A spiritu sancto dictari historias nihil fuit opus, satis fuit scriptorem memoriâ valere.*" Le Clerc divides the sacred writings into three classes, prophecies, histories,

lieve that the apostle was inspired to write a certain number of epistles and no more,

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and doctrines: in the first he admits inspiration, in the two last he absolutely denies it. Vid. *Sentimens de quelques Theologiens Hollandois*, Lett. 11, 12. See Marsh's Notes upon Michaelis, ch. iii. sect. i. note 10, vol. i. p. 379.

"It is possible," says Michaelis, "to doubt and even to deny the inspiration of the New Testament, and yet be fully persuaded of the truth of the Christian religion; and many really entertain these sentiments, either publicly or in private, to whom we should render great injustice if we ranked them in the class of unbelievers." Marsh's Michaelis, vol. i. p. 72. "Had the Deity inspired not a single book of the New Testament, but left the apostles and evangelists without any other aid than that of natural abilities to commit what they knew to writing, admitting their works to be authentic, and possessed of a sufficient degree of credibility, the Christian religion would still remain the true one." Michaelis, ibid. p. 72. Upon which Bishop Marsh remarks, "Here our author makes a distinction, which is at present very generally received, between the divine origin of the Christian doctrine, and the divine origin of the writings in which that doctrine is recorded." Ibid. p. 379.

"The wisdom contained in the Epistles of Paul," says the late learned Dr. Powell of Cambridge, Master of St. John's College, "was given him from above, and very probably the style and composition were his own."

"He is changed at once from a declared enemy to a teacher of our religion. But how did he learn the doctrines which he undertook to teach? Let him answer for himself. I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Gal. i. 16. The doctrines of Christianity and his appointment to be a preacher of it were immediately revealed to him; or, as the same thing may be otherwise expressed, his knowledge of them was inspired. For there seems to be no intelligible distinction between original revelation and inspiration: whether we say that the new doctrines were revealed

or, that he was prompted by immediate divine suggestion to write every, or any one,

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or inspired, the meaning is exactly the same. They whose understandings were furnished by the holy spirit with more than human knowledge were inspired: they who committed such knowledge to writing made inspired books."

"The natural faculties of the human mind enable it to retain the knowledge it has once acquired, especially if that knowledge be clear and important. None could be more important, or more justly claim attention, than the suggestions of the holy spirit. But as long as the memory retained the divine communications, so long did the inspiration continue; and this we may presume was usually as long as the apostle lived.—But this wisdom consisted not in enticing words of human device. Of whatever kind the language be, it probably had no other source than the natural abilities of the writers. The form and character of St. Paul's Epistles we shall find to have been derived from the circumstances of his early life." "It has been said that the holy spirit suggested not only the religious wisdom, but every sentence and word which the sacred writers delivered: this can never be proved. And could it be proved that the holy scriptures were thus dictated, it does not appear that any important conclusions would be deducible from it. That which is important is also clear: whatever be thought of the colouring, the substance of these writings was from heaven." Dr. Powell's Sermons, No. xv.

"The difficulty," says Dr. Paley, "which attends the subject is contained in this question: If we once admit the fallibility of the apostolic judgement, where are we to stop, or in what can we rely upon it? To which question, as arguing with unbelievers, and as arguing for the substantial truth of the Christian history, and for that alone, it is competent to the advocate of Christianity to reply, Give me the apostles' testimony, and I do not stand in need of their judgement."

"But I do not think this the only answer of which the objection is capable. The two following cautions will

of the epistles which are now extant: he puts in no claim to inspiration in his reasonings, in his illustrations, in his narratives of fact, in his typical and figurative arguments from the Old Testament, in his application of scripture language, in his in-

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exclude all uncertainty which can be attended with danger:

"First, to separate what was the object of the apostolic mission, and declared by them to be so, from what was extraneous to it, or only incidentally connected with it." The learned writer illustrates this by the case of demoniacal possessions; in which "the malady was real, and the cure was real, whether the popular explication of the cause was well founded or not."

"Secondly, that in reading the apostolic writings we distinguish between their doctrines and their arguments. Their doctrines came to them by revelation properly so called; yet in propounding these doctrines they were wont to illustrate, support, and enforce them by such analogies, arguments, and considerations, as their own thoughts suggested. The doctrine itself must be received; but is it necessary, in order to defend Christianity, to defend the propriety of every comparison, or the validity of every argument, which the apostle has brought into the discussion?"

"When divine writers," says Bishop Burnet (Expos. Art. 6), "argue upon any point, we are always bound to believe the conclusions that their reasonings end in, as parts of divine revelation; but we are not bound to be able to make out, or even to assent to, all the premises made use of by them in their whole extent, unless it appear plainly, that they affirm the premises as expressly as they do the conclusions proved by them." Paley's *Evid. of Christ.* vol. ii. p. 301—305. Dr. Priestley also has some excellent observations on Inspiration in the *Theol. Repos.* vol. iv.

terpretations of the sacred writings, in his appropriation of Jewish prophecy. In all these cases the apostle speaks and writes as any other person of similar abilities and information would in similar circumstances, with similar habits and prepossessions: and his writings are to be examined, discussed, and discriminated, like those of any other author; with the same freedom and the same candour.

This way of considering and treating the apostolic writings emancipates the mind from the bondage in which it is held by the popular but unfounded supposition, that every epistle was written by a divine suggestion, and that every sentence in every epistle, and every word in every sentence, was dictated by the holy spirit. Under these circumstances, in which the author is nothing but the passive instrument of the holy spirit, the expositor finds himself under the hard but imperious necessity of justifying every fact, every doctrine, every argument, every proposition, and every expression. Whereas, upon a rational and judicious theory of inspiration, ample provision is made for the support of the apostle's authority in every case in which it

can be necessary, while at the same time sufficient scope remains for liberal and candid criticism. Upon this principle, an Expositor will not feel himself bound to warp and strain a text from its plain and obvious meaning, because that meaning is erroneous, and to adopt some unusual and far-fetched interpretation in order to reconcile it to truth, because at all events the proposition must be justified; but he will endeavour to find out the true meaning of the author according to the established and approved rules of interpretation, leaving the whole responsibility, whether for the sense, the truth, or the reasoning of the passage, upon the author himself, without any pain for the result; being justly confident that, whatever error may be discovered, it will not be of such a nature as to diminish any reasonable confidence in his authority as an apostle of Christ, and an authorized missionary of the Christian religion.

In this way, both the reader and the expositor of the writings of Paul will acquire an interest, both in the author and his Works, far beyond what it would be possible to feel if the writer were considered merely as the organ of the holy spirit.—

When the language of the apostle is understood as the natural and unaffected expression of his own thoughts, views, and feelings, in the very extraordinary circumstances in which he was placed, and in the arduous and hazardous ministry with which he was charged, it gives a life, a spirit, a raciness, to his compositions, which they would not otherwise possess; it inspires an interest in them which it would be impossible to excite in any other way, and renders these Epistles the most impressive, as well as the most important, of any that were ever written or dictated by man.

SECTION III.

Obscurity of the Epistles of Paul.—Mr. Locke's Method of investigating their true Meaning.—Dr. Taylor's Key.

In his Exposition of the Epistles, and in the investigation of the true meaning of the apostle, the Author of the following Commentary has followed the judicious advice and the excellent example of Mr. Locke,

whose solidity and correctness of judgement, and whose comprehension of mind, are no less conspicuous, in his 'Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of Paul,' than in his celebrated 'Essay on the Human Understanding,' and his admirable publications in defence of Civil and Religious Liberty[1]. Discarding all attention to the modern divisions of the Epistles into chapters and verses, which are of themselves sufficient to envelop the most perspicuous writer in confusion and obscurity[2], and persuaded that

[1] *Religious Liberty.*] See Mr. Locke's *Essay for the understanding St. Paul's Epistles by consulting St. Paul himself.* "That great man," says the late Bishop Watson, speaking of Locke, "has done more for the enlargement of the human faculties, and for the establishment of pure Christianity, than any author I am acquainted with." *Life of the Bishop of Llandaff*, p. 407.

[2] *Confusion and obscurity.*] Among the "causes which keep us from an easy and assured discovery of St. Paul's sense," Mr. Locke mentions "the dividing the epistles into chapters and verses, whereby they are so chopped and minced, and as they are now printed stand so broken and divided, that not only the common people take the verses usually as distinct aphorisms, but even men of more advanced knowledge, in reading them, lose very much of the strength and of the force of the coherence, and the light that depends upon it. These divisions also have given occasion to the reading of these epistles by parcels and in scraps . . . and I doubt not that every one will confess it to be a very unlikely way to come to the understanding of any other letters to read them piecemeal, a bit to-day, another scrap to-morrow, and so on by broken intervals." Locke's *Works*, vol. iii. p. 277, 278.

no person in the apostle's situation would write or dictate epistles of considerable length to churches, or to individuals, without meaning to convey important instruction in language that would be intelligible and impressive, his first concern, agreeably to Locke's advice, was, by careful and repeated perusal of the apostle's Letter, to discover his main object and design, and then to trace the method by which he effected his purpose.

With this view, it was necessary that the Author should make himself familiar with the apostle's style; so as to be able to pursue his thoughts through their various divisions and ramifications; to mark the nature of his transitions, often very pertinent when apparently most abrupt; to notice his long parentheses, his frequent personifications, his various digressions, and his method of returning to the subject in hand, sometimes after a long interval; and the application of his observations to the case of which he is treating, which shows that he had never lost sight of the question, and that he was not the loose and rambling writer which many imagine [1].

[1] *Which many imagine.*] "After I found by long expe-

The apostle Paul was a Jew, a Pharisee, who had been educated in the most rigo-

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rience," says Mr. Locke, ibid. p. 281, "that the reading of the text and comments in the ordinary way proved not so successful as I wished to the end proposed, I began to suspect that reading a chapter as usual, and thereupon sometimes consulting expositors upon some hard places of it which at that time most affected me, was not a right method to get into the true sense of these epistles. I saw plainly, after I began once to reflect on it, that if any one now should write me a letter as long as St. Paul's to the Romans, concerning such a matter as that is, in a style as foreign, and expressions as dubious, as his seem to be, if I should divide it into fifteen or sixteen chapters, and read of them one to-day, another to-morrow, it was ten to one I should never come to a full and clear comprehension of it. The way to understand the mind of him that writ it, every one would agree, was to read the whole letter through, from one end to the other all at once, to see what was the main subject and tendency of it: or, if it had several views and purposes in it, not dependent one of another, nor in a subordination to one chief aim and end, to discover what those different matters were, and where the author concluded one and began another; and, if there were any necessity of dividing the epistle into parts, to mark the boundaries of them."

"In prosecution of this thought, I concluded it necessary for the understanding of any one of St. Paul's epistles, to read it all through at one sitting, and to observe as well as I could, the drift and design of his writing it. If the first reading gave me some light, the second gave me more; and so I persisted on, reading constantly the whole epistle over at once, till I came to have a good general view of the apostle's main purpose in writing the epistle, the chief branches of his discourse wherein he prosecuted it, the arguments he used, and the disposition of the whole."

Such was the excellent method pursued by this truly great man, who at the same time discarded all attachment

rous observation of the ceremonial law. This gave a cast to his ideas, and a tinge to his language, which always adhered to him. These circumstances led him to invent, as it were, a phraseology of his own, and to use classical words in a sense which they never bear in classical writers. He not unfrequently changes the meaning of his words in the same discourse without giving notice: he sometimes assumes different persons, writes under different characters, states and replies to objections, without giving his reader any hint of the transition. This abruptness in the apostle's style often creates great obscurity, and makes it very difficult to ascertain his meaning. Other difficulties also occur, which are necessary consequences of the epistolary style; such as allusions to cus-

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to popular system, and sought for nothing in the writings of Paul but what Paul himself intended, making him for the most part his own interpreter. By these means he not only himself exhibited to the public an exposition of these difficult compositions, far more rational and intelligible than any which preceded, but he also supplied succeeding expositors with a clue for the more judicious interpretation of these invaluable writings, of which they have not failed to make use. And if the Epistles of Paul are better understood in the present age than in any which preceded it, this honourable pre-eminence is almost wholly owing to that distinguished philosopher and Christian, John Locke.

toms and manners not now existing, nor well understood; also, to facts and occurrences, both with regard to societies and individuals, which, though perfectly familiar to the writer and his correspondents, are utterly unknown to modern readers, and can only be imperfectly guessed, perhaps from hints incidentally dropped in the epistle itself. Hence arises great and frequent obscurity[1] in the Epistles of Paul,

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[1] *Great and frequent obscurity*] "Besides the disturbance in perusing St. Paul's epistles," says Mr. Locke, "from the plenty and vivacity of his thoughts, the frequent changing of the personage he speaks in renders the sense very uncertain, and is apt to mislead one who has no clue to guide him. Sometimes by the pronoun *I* he means himself, sometimes any Christian; sometimes a Jew, and sometimes any man, &c. His use of the *first person plural* is with a far greater latitude, sometimes designing himself alone, sometimes those with himself whom he makes partners to the epistles; sometimes with himself comprehending the other apostles or preachers of the gospel, or Christians: nay, sometimes in that way he speaks of the converted Jews, other times of the converted Gentiles, and sometimes of others, in a more or less extended sense; every one of which varies the meaning of the place, and makes it to be differently understood." Locke's *Works*, vol. iii. p. 277.

"The form and character of St. Paul's Epistles," says Dr. Powell, "we shall find to have been derived from the circumstances of his early life. Tarsus, where he was born, was in that age a celebrated seat of learning. The Tarsic eloquence was employed in sudden and unpremeditated harangues; and St. Paul, long accustomed to compositions of this sort, transferred the style and manner from

which can never be perfectly explained; but which the Author of the following Exposition, to the best of his power, and with the aid of his learned and pious predecessors in the field of investigation, has endeavoured, in his humble measure, to elucidate.

It is after mature consideration that the Author has adopted that theory of interpretation of the Epistles of Paul which was first suggested by Mr. Locke [1], and afterwards amplified, confirmed, and illustrated, by the late learned and laborious Dr. John Taylor of Norwich, in his celebrated 'Key to the Apostolic Writings,' prefixed to his Paraphrase on the Epistle to the Romans.

The general principle of which theory is, that, the children of Israel, who had been

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speaking to writing. Little solicitous about method, he is often drawn from his design by the accidental use of an expression or a word; and neither when he quits his purpose nor when he returns to it again, does he employ the usual forms of transition. Sometimes he assumes another person, and introduces a kind of dialogue in which it is not always easy to distinguish who is speaking. Lastly, he abounds with broken sentences, bold figures, and hard far-fetched metaphors." Powell's *Sermons*, p. 250.

[1] *Suggested by Mr. Locke.*] See Locke's long and admirable note upon Rom. v. 6—8; where he distinctly but briefly lays down the principles of interpretation afterwards adopted by Dr. Taylor, and so judiciously applied by him in his Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans.

formerly the chosen people of God, having been cast off by him because of their great wickedness, and particularly for their rejection of the Messiah, believers in Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, are now admitted into the same relation to the Deity which the Israelites once held; and those terms which were formerly applied to the state and privileges of the Israelites are now used to express the state and privileges of Christian believers. For example,

The Israelites having been selected by God from all other nations to be his peculiar people, are for that reason said to be *chosen* or *elected;* being placed in a new state of moral existence, they are said to be *created;* being separated from the rest of mankind for the service and worship of the true God, they are *consecrated* or *holy;* having formerly been heathen idolaters, they were then *aliens* and *enemies;* being become worshipers of the true God, they are *reconciled* and *friends;* having been promised an inheritance in Canaan, they are made *sons* and *children* of God; having been recovered from the bondage of Egypt, they are *redeemed, delivered, purchased;* having been put into possession of Canaan, and favoured

with a divine institute, they are the *servants* and *subjects* of God, in *covenant* with him, and bound by their allegiance to him. On the other hand, God is represented as sustaining the correspondent relations of a *Creator*, a *Redeemer*, a *Saviour*, a *Father*, a *Sovereign*, a *Judge*, a *reconciled* God, and a God in *covenant*. He requires homage, worship, love, confidence, unlimited obedience to his laws and statutes, and, above all things, that they should abstain from idolatry. And upon these conditions he promises to be their protector and friend, to defend them from their enemies, and to continue them in possession of the land of Canaan, and of all the privileges and blessings they enjoy. But on the contrary, if they violate the covenant, if they disobey his law, if they reject his authority, if they swerve into idolatry, he also threatens to disown them as his people, to cast them out of covenant, to visit them with judgements, to expel them from the land of Canaan, and to deliver them over to their enemies.

Now this language applied not so much to the moral conduct and to the personal character of the Israelites, as to their external state, as a community separated by a

peculiar ritual from the rest of the world, consecrated to the service of God, and the main design of which was to support in the world a standing memorial and testimony against idolatry.

But the apostle teaches, that the Jews having rejected Jesus as the Messiah, are therefore themselves as a community rejected by God; they are no longer a holy and peculiar people; they are cast out of covenant, and in a national view they stand upon the same footing as the Gentile world.

He further teaches, that Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified and who rose again, is the true Messiah promised by the prophets, the mediator of a new and better covenant; that Jews and Gentiles are alike invited to enter into its engagements and to accept its blessings; and that all who believe in Jesus as the Messiah, and who enter themselves as members of that community of which he is the head, are introduced into the same state of grace and privilege in which Israel formerly stood, and are entitled to the same honourable distinctions. Believers in Christ are acknowledged as the spiritual Israel; the true people of God, his servants, his children. They are chosen,

holy, redeemed, called, and saved: having once been enemies, they are now reconciled: they are new created, new born. God is their creator, their redeemer, their governor, their father: they are 'translated out of darkness into light,' and 'from the kingdom of Satan,' a state of idolatry, into that 'of God's dear son,' the Christian community: they are become 'fellow-citizens with the saints,' heirs of the promises and 'of the household of God [1].'

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[1] *Of the household of God.*] "Certain maxims of interpretation," says Dr. Paley, "have obtained authority without reason, and are received without inquiry. One of these is the expecting to find in the present circumstances of Christianity a meaning for, or something answering to, every appellation and expression that occurs in scripture. Or, in other words, applying to the personal condition of Christians at this day those titles, phrases, propositions, and arguments, which belong to the situation of Christianity at its first institution."

The learned author gives several instances of this misapplication of scripture language: amongst others, that *baptism* and *conversion*, though almost synonymous in the apostolic age, are by no means essentially connected in the present. He adds:

"The community of Christians were at first a handful of men connected among themselves by the strictest union, and divided from the rest of the world by a real difference of principle and persuasion, and by many outward peculiarities of worship and behaviour. This society, considered collectively, were set apart from the rest of mankind for a more gracious dispensation, as well as actually distinguished by a superior purity of life and conversation. In this view, and in opposition to the unbelieving world,

All these high and honourable titles are applied to them in consequence of their having become members of the Christian community; and do not generally express moral character so much as an external state, a state of privilege and profession, which if they duly improve, they shall obtain the promised blessings, they shall at the appointed season be raised from the grave to a new and endless life: and "when Christ, who is their life, shall appear, they

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they were denominated in scripture by terms of great seeming dignity and import: they were *elect, called, saints,* in *Christ,* a *chosen generation,* a *royal priesthood,* a *peculiar people.* That is, these terms were employed to distinguish the professors of Christianity from the rest of mankind, as the names of Greek and Barbarian, Jew and Gentile, distinguish the people of Greece and Israel from other nations. The application of such phrases to the whole body of Christians is now become obscure; and we resort to a sense and an application of them easier, it may be, to our comprehension, but extremely foreign to the design of their authors, to distinguish individuals among the professors of Christianity from one another: agreeably to which idea the most flattering of these names, the *elect, called, saints,* have by bold and unlearned men been appropriated to themselves and their own party, with a presumption and conceit injurious to the reputation of our religion amongst them that are without, and extremely disgusting to the sober part of its professors."

The learned and pious author further notices the strong expressions used in scripture to express the change from heathenism to Christianity, viz. regeneration, new birth, alive from the dead, a new creation; and goes on to remark, "No such change can be experienced by any one

also shall appear with him in glory." He who reads the Epistles of Paul with attention will plainly see that this is the general meaning of his language. Without this clue it will be almost impossible to understand his admirable writings, but with it there are few passages which do not admit a simple and easy interpretation: or, to say the least, the judicious application of this principle elucidates many passages which would otherwise be involved in inextricable difficulty.

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educated in a Christian country, yet we retain the same language. And what has been the consequence? Some conclude that the expressions only indicate the enthusiasm of their authors. Others understand the phrases as signifying nothing more than a gradual amendment of life and conversation; which degrades too much the proper force of the language. A third sort have imagined certain perceptible impulses of the Holy Ghost, by which in an instant they are regenerated and born of the spirit. If it be said, If such expressions of scripture do not mean this, what do they mean? we answer, They mean NOTHING: nothing, that is, to us: nothing to be found or sought for in the present circumstances of Christianity." Paley's *Caution recommended in the Use and Application of Scriptural Language*, in a Sermon before Bishop Law. *Sermons and Tracts*, p. 63.

SECTION IV.

Authenticity of Paul's Epistles.—The irresistible Evidence which they bear to the Truth of the Christian Religion.

Of the thirteen epistles which bear the name of the apostle Paul, it may truly be said, that there are no writings of equal antiquity, the genuineness of which is so clearly ascertained. The name of the apostle is prefixed to each; and they contain nothing that is unworthy of his character, inconsistent with what is known of his history, or incongruous with his mission. The claim to apostolic authority is indeed amply supported by internal evidence. The subjects upon which these epistles treat, the spirit which they breathe, the tone of authority which they assume, the controversies which they discuss, the ardent zeal for truth which they exhibit, the faith, the fortitude, the patience, the piety, the charity, which they display, the entire devotedness to the cause in which the writer is embarked, the joy in its success, the indigna-

tion against malignant opposers, the grief at the misconduct of professors, and the glorious anticipation of a final triumph, are all in perfect unison with the apostle's character. The incidental allusions to persons, manners, and customs, which existed in the age and country in which the apostle wrote, and the undesigned coincidences[1] and accidental discrepancies with the history of the Acts, and with other portions of the New Testament, are strong confirmations of the genuineness of the epistles.

The genuineness and authenticity of the thirteen Epistles have been admitted without controversy from the earliest age. The learning and inquisitive spirit of Eusebius of Cesarea, who appears to have examined the question thoroughly, could not discover that they had ever been disputed[2]: and citations from these epistles[3] have been made

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[1] *Undesigned coincidences.*] See upon this subject Dr. Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ.*—This celebrated work exhibits perhaps the best model of reasoning from indirect evidence in this or in any language. Many excellent hints to the same purpose are contained in Hartley's *Observations on Man,* vol. ii. part ii. chap. 2.

[2] Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* lib. iii. c. 24, lib. vi. c. 25.

[3] *Citations from these epistles.*] For the external evidence of the genuineness of the Epistles of Paul, as well as of the other books of the New Testament, the reader

by ecclesiastical writers from the age of Clement, contemporary and companion of the apostle, to the present day, in every successive generation, more numerous and full than those from any profane author, however celebrated or popular. And these citations are made by men who held very different systems of faith, and who all appeal to the authority of the apostle, and would consequently keep a very vigilant eye upon each other, that no one might corrupt the apostle's text in favour of his own system, even if he should be so disposed. Also, the Epistles of Paul were very early translated into a great variety of languages, and many of these ancient versions are still

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may consult the incomparable Work of Dr. Lardner on the *Credibility of the Gospel History*. This learned and candid writer has completely exhausted the subject, and has brought together a mass of evidence in favour of the Sacred Writings, which will in vain be sought after to establish the genuineness of any profane author. "There are," says Dr. Lardner in his article upon Tertullian, sect. 23, "perhaps more and larger quotations of the small volume of the New Testament in this one Christian author, than of all the works of Cicero, though of such uncommon excellence for thought and style, in writers of all characters for several ages. And there is a like number of quotations of the New Testament, in St. Irenæus and St. Clement of Alexandria, both writers of the second century." Lardner's *Works*, vol. ii. p. 287, Kippis's edition.

extant and agree with our present copies. Many manuscripts of great antiquity are still in existence, some of which are believed to have been written as early as the third or fourth century, and have been found in very different parts of the world. These, within the last century, have been very carefully collated together [1], and, with a very small number of exceptions, they have been found to agree. It is therefore next to impossible that evidence so various and accumulated should be fallacious. No such evidence can be produced in favour of the Epistles of Cicero or Pliny, of the

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[1] *Carefully collated.*] Dr. John Mill of the University of Oxford had the honour to lead the way in this most laborious and useful task of collating manuscripts and versions. His great work was published at Oxford, A.D. 1707. He was succeeded by Kuster in Holland and Bengel in Germany, and eminently so by Wetstein in his most learned and valuable edition of the Greek Testament published at Amsterdam A.D. 1751, 1752, in two folio volumes. Their successors in the same field of laborious inquiry were Alter at Vienna, Matthai at Moscow, Birch at Copenhagen; and last of all, that industrious and very accurate critic, Professor Griesbach of the university of Jena in Saxony, whose revision of the text of the New Testament, founded upon a collation of manuscripts, of ancient versions, and of ecclesiastical writers, is now universally received by biblical scholars as approximating the nearest to the purity of the sacred originals, of any which has yet been published. See Introduction to the *Improved Version of the New Testament*, sect. vi.

Commentaries of Julius Cæsar, or the Annals of Tacitus: and yet the most learned and the best informed men receive these Works as genuine: and he would be laughed to scorn who should express a doubt upon the subject. Much more then may we receive as unquestionably genuine the Epistles of Paul, the evidence of which is so much brighter and more decisive than that of any classical writer. And it is a fair and undeniable conclusion, that a person is fully justified in sitting down to read the Epistles of Paul with as complete a conviction that they were written by him, as if he had been present while the apostle was dictating, or had even been himself the apostle's amanuensis.

This is a principle which it is extremely desirable to bear continually in mind while we are reading the epistles. For it seems next to impossible that a person should admit the existence of such a man as Paul of Tarsus, and that he was verily and indeed the author of the epistles which bear his name, and at the same time, after a serious and attentive perusal of the epistles, that he should remain an unbeliever in the Christian revelation.

And this, no doubt, is the true design and the most important use of these inestimable writings, though not often or sufficiently adverted to. Far indeed were they from being intended to incumber the plain and simple doctrine of Christ, with an additional mass of curious speculations concerning election and predestination, original sin, vicarious suffering, irresistible grace, imputed righteousness, and final perseverance, to none of which do the epistles, when rightly understood, give the least countenance. These invaluable records are calculated to convey to the latest generation the most substantial evidence of the truth and divine original of the Christian religion: and this they do, by exhibiting a very fair and most interesting representation of the character, the views, the feelings, and the exertions of one of the principal leaders and teachers of the new religion, of the very extraordinary circumstances in which he was placed, and of the integrity, the zeal, the courage, the fortitude, the patience, the prudence, and the perseverance, which he manifested in the discharge of his mission, in the labours which he undertook, in the dangers which

he encountered, and in the sufferings which he endured. They also display the dispositions, characters, and views, the feelings, the prejudices, the imperfect information, the partial reformation, the errors, the faults and irregularities, the frequent wavering and instability, of the first professors of the Christian faith: also, the dangers to which they were exposed, and the joyful and faithful adherence of many to the apostle, and his doctrine, in the midst of sufferings and persecutions. These Epistles manifest in particular, the violent prejudices of the Hebrew believers against the apostle on account of his liberality to Gentile Christians, and how constantly they followed his steps wherever he had founded a Gentile church, insisting upon the absolute necessity of subjection to the yoke of the ceremonial law, and denouncing the apostle as an unauthorized preacher of the gospel, and one whose doctrine and authority were disowned by the original and genuine apostles of Christ. These charges imposed upon the apostle the indispensable obligation of defending his character and authority by such direct appeals to the miraculous powers which he possessed and ex-

erted, and the supernatural gifts which he had even communicated to many converts, as must have silenced all objection if his appeal were just; and must have involved himself, his writings, and his doctrine, in eternal disgrace, if it were not so. In fact, the appeal was such as no man in his senses could have made, had he not known that it was true and unanswerable. So that, if the Epistles are genuine and the apostle was in his right mind, the reader may be as certain of the truth of the miracles and of the divine authority of the Christian religion as founded upon them, as if he had actually been an eye-witness to the extraordinary events related in the gospel, or had seen our Lord himself raised from the dead.

To those readers who consider the subject in this light, the Epistles of Paul will appear an inestimable treasure; and instead of being, as they have hitherto often been, neglected by many as obscure and of little value, and abused by others as the inexhaustible source of animosity and bitter controversy, they will become a delightful occasion of concord and harmony through the whole Christian world, being received by all parties as containing the most ir-

resistible evidence of their common faith. And if what is now offered to the public for the purpose of elucidating this important portion of the Sacred Writings, is made effectual in any degree to the accomplishing this desirable end, the Author will be happy in the reflection that he has not lived or laboured in vain.

CHRONOLOGICAL ARRANGEMENT

OF

THE LIFE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL.

[*Chiefly taken from Lardner's Works*, vol. vi. ch. xi.]

A.D.

5. THE apostle PAUL, descended probably on both sides from Jewish parents, of the tribe of Benjamin, and by birth a Roman citizen, was born at Tarsus, an opulent city of Cilicia, perhaps a few years after the birth of Christ[1], Acts xxi. 39, xxii. 3; Phil. iii. 5.

30. Christ suffered at the Passover in March, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius. The holy spirit was

[1] *A few years after the birth of Christ.*] Paul is called a young man Acts vii. 58; and in the Epistle to Philemon, ver. 9, he calls himself Paul *the aged*, A.D. 62, unless for the word πρεσβυτης *aged* we read πρεσβευτης *ambassador*, which is perhaps the more probable reading, though it is only supported by conjecture. See Lardner, vol. vi. ch. xi. sect. 4.

A.D.

30. poured out upon the apostles at the Pentecost in May. See Priestley's *Observations on the Harmony of the Evangelists*, sect. 2.

35. September, or October. Pilate removed[1]: no successor appointed till

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[1] *Pilate removed.*] In order to retain a distinct idea of the order of events in the public life of the apostle, it will be of use to bear in mind certain dates which are pretty well ascertained, and which form, as it were, landmarks for the arrangement of principal facts.

1. The first is the recall of Pilate, by Vitellius the lieutenant of Tiberius, at the solicitation of the Jews, a year and half before the death of Tiberius, September or October A.D. 35. Lardner, vol. i. p. 374. After which no governor with power of life and death was sent into Judea, till Petronius was appointed by Caligula, *i. e.* for three or four years. Hence it is concluded, that Stephen was martyred in the latter end of A.D. 35, as it does not appear that the Romans took offence at so irregular an act. John xviii. 31.

2. The second event is the attempt of Petronius to introduce the image of Caligula into the sanctuary A.D. 40; which by the universal consternation it excited is supposed to have put a stop to the persecution, and to have produced that rest to the churches which is mentioned Acts ix. 31. But this did not take place till after Paul had escaped from Jerusalem to Tarsus, Acts ix. 30, more than three years after his conversion, Gal. i. 18: which must therefore have happened A.D. 36 or 37. Lardner, vol. vi. p. 242.

3. The death of Herod Agrippa happened A.D. 44, Acts xii., and the famine predicted by Agabus, Acts xi. 27—30, soon followed it. Lardner, vol. i. p. 240, vol. vi. p. 268. This fixes the time when Paul and Barnabas visited Jerusalem with the collection from Antioch, Acts xi. 30.

4. Fourteen years after his conversion, Paul and Bar-

A.D.
35. Petronius. Paul at Jerusalem. Stephen martyred[2] in December. The gospel preached in Samaria. Philip baptizes the Ethiopian eunuch, Acts vii. viii.

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nabas visited Jerusalem to settle the question concerning circumcision, Gal. ii. 1; which therefore must have happened A.D. 49 or 50. It is mentioned by Luke Acts xv. and by Paul Gal. ii. 1—10. This settles the date of the Jerusalem decree, which the apostles took back with them to Antioch the latter end of the year. Lardner, vol. vi. p. 274.

5. The decree of Claudius to banish the Jews from Rome was issued A.D. 51. Lardner, ibid. p. 280. When the apostle came to Corinth, he there found Aquila and Priscilla, who had been banished by that decree: probably, therefore, he reached Corinth at the latter end of that year, where he staid a year and six months, that is, till March or April A.D. 53. Acts xviii. Lardner, ibid. p. 279.

After this period the chronology is tolerably clear. The apostle remained at Ephesus about three years. Acts xx. 31. He left that city in the spring of A.D. 56, passed two years in Macedonia, &c., and the winter of A.D. 57 at Corinth, which he left in the spring of A.D. 58, and kept the Passover at Philippi: he hastened to Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost; where in a few days he was seized in the temple, and confined a prisoner at Cesarea for two years. He was sent to Rome A.D. 60, where he arrived in the spring of A.D. 61, and was released A.D. 63. Lardner, vol. vi. ch. xi. sect. 11, 12.

In this manner we obtain tolerably correct dates of many of the principal events. But there are some at which we can only guess; and difficulties attend every hypothesis. These are principally the date of the apostle's visit to Crete, of the First Epistle to Timothy, and of the journey to Illyricum.

[2] *Stephen martyred.*] The death of Stephen was an irregular act, yet no notice was taken of it by the Romans:

A.D.

36. November. Paul converted on the way to Damascus, Acts ix. 1—22; and invested with the apostolic office[1].

37. Paul visits Arabia, Gal. i. 17.

38. Paul in Arabia: is instructed by Christ in the doctrine of the gospel, *ibid.*

39. Returns to Damascus; preaches in the synagogues: is persecuted; let down in a basket from the wall, and escapes to Jerusalem[2], Acts ix. 23—25, 2 Cor. xi. 31, 32; spends a fortnight with Peter, Gal. i. 18: falls into the trance mentioned Acts xxii. 17; goes down to Cesarea Philippi, and from thence to Tarsus, Acts ix. 25—30, Gal. i. 22.

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hence it is concluded that this event took place in the interval between the removal of Pilate A.D. 35, and the appointment of Petronius A.D. 39 or 40; during which interval there was no procurator with power of life and death. Lardner places the martyrdom of Stephen in December A.D. 35. Lardner, vol. vi. p. 240, 241.

[1] *Invested with the apostolic office.*] A trivial controversy has been moved concerning the time when Paul became an apostle, which Lardner properly dates from the time of his conversion, when Christ appeared to him and gave him his commission. Acts xxvi. 15—20. Lardner, vol. vi. ch. xi. sect. 5.

[2] *Escapes to Jerusalem.*] The apostle Paul was converted A.D. 36, and died A.D. 56, making the whole course of his ministry and apostleship 20 years; of which two were passed in Arabia, two as a prisoner in Judea,

A.D.

40. Petronius attempts to set up the statue of Caligula in the most holy place. The alarm excited diverts the Jews from persecuting the Christians, and gives rest to the church, Acts ix. 31. Peter visits Lydda, and heals Eneas, ver. 24, —Joppa, and raises Dorcas, ver. 40, —Cesarea, and converts Cornelius, Acts x., and returns to Jerusalem; where he vindicates his conduct towards the Gentiles, Acts xi. Paul remains at Tarsus, or in the neighbourhood, probably preaching the gospel in Syria and Cilicia, Gal. i. 21.

41. Paul at Tarsus. Barnabas is sent down by the apostles to Antioch, in conse-

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and two in confinement at Rome: so that the whole course of his active ministry was no more than 23 years. After his conversion, he made five visits to Jerusalem, all of them very short. The first was three years after his conversion, when he escaped from Damascus, Acts ix. 26; and staid only fifteen days, Gal. i. 18. The second was in company with Barnabas, to bring a contribution from Antioch, Acts xi. 30, A.D. 44. The third visit was A.D. 50, when he and Barnabas were deputed to consult the apostles upon the question of circumcision, and returned to Antioch with the Jerusalem decree, Acts xv. The fourth was a mere salutation in his rapid journey in the summer of A.D. 53, Acts xviii. 22. And the fifth and last was at the feast of Pentecost A.D. 58, when he was almost immediately seized by the mob, and after two years' imprisonment was sent a prisoner to Rome, Acts xxi. 27.

A.D.

41. quence of the great success of the gospel among the Gentiles there, to confirm the new disciples, Acts xi. 22.

42. Barnabas visits Tarsus, and brings Paul to Antioch, ver. 25. Lardner, *ibid.* ch. xi. sect. 8.

43. Paul and Barnabas pass a year at Antioch, where the disciples are named Christians [1], ver. 26, 27. Paul is favoured with the vision, or rapture, mentioned 2 Cor. xii.

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[1] *Christians.*] A designation probably imposed by the enemies of Christianity, who annexed no other idea to Christ but that of a despicable Jew who had suffered an ignominious death for treason and blasphemy; and among the Greeks and Romans it would sound pretty much as עבדי תלוי (*abde tolvi*) did to the Hebrews, who branded the disciples of Christ, as the *followers of the man that was hanged.* The word *Christian* occurs but three times in the New Testament, and always in a bad sense. The first is in the text before us, Acts xi. 26. It occurs secondly Acts xxvi. 28, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a *Christian;*" where it is observable that the apostle does not repeat Agrippa's words, and express a wish that he and all who heard him were altogether *Christians,* but altogether *such as himself.* And finally 1 Pet. iv. 16, where the word *Christian* is evidently mentioned as used by the enemies of the gospel synonymously with *malefactor.*—If the name *Christian* had been given by divine appointment, as many suppose, it would have been constantly used by the apostles and primitive believers; and must have occurred hundreds of times in the New Testament. It is very true that the title was soon adopted, and became the boast of the early believers, but not in the age of the apostles. The apostle Paul never uses the word *Christian* in all his epi-

A.D.

44. Agabus foretells a famine: Paul and Barnabas are sent with a collection for the relief of the poor believers in Judea, Acts xi. 27—30. Herod persecutes the church, puts James to death, and imprisons Peter, who is released by an angel, Acts xii. 1—19. Herod dies at the end of the year. Paul and Barnabas, accompanied by Mark, return to Antioch, ver. 20—25. Dr. Lardner supposes that it was at this time that the apostle was favoured with the trance mentioned Acts xxii. 17.

45. Paul and Barnabas by divine direction set out upon a mission, accompanied by Mark. Lardner, *ibid.* sect. 9, Acts xiii. 1—3. They visit Seleucia and Cyprus, where Paul strikes Elymas the sorcerer with blindness for his malicious opposition to the gospel, converts the proconsul Sergius Paulus, and takes the Roman name of Paul in exchange for his Jewish name, Saul;

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stles, instead of which he uses the epithets *holy, brethren, believers,* and the like: for which reason those words also have been generally adopted in the paraphrase, as it seemed improper to represent the apostle as using a word which he appears purposely to have avoided. See Lardner, *ibid.* p. 265.

A.D.

45. and, having passed through the island from Salamis to Paphos, ver. 4—12,

46. The apostles sail to Perga in Pamphylia, where they are deserted by Mark, ver. 13. They proceed to Antioch in Pisidia, where they preach the gospel with great success, ver. 13—51; but being persecuted and driven out by the malignity of the Jews, they escape to Iconium, ver. 52, 53, where they make a considerable stay, and gain many proselytes, ch. xiv. 1—6; but the Jews inflaming the multitude against them, they flee to Lystra.

47. At Lystra Paul heals the cripple, ver. 7—10, and with difficulty prevents the people from offering sacrifices to him and Barnabas as incarnate deities, ver. 11—18; but the same populace being afterwards instigated by emissaries from Antioch and Iconium, stone Paul and drag him out of the city; but recovering, he escapes to Derbe, ver. 19, 20; from which place, after having made a considerable number of converts, they return to Lystra, Iconium, Antioch in Pisidia, Pamphylia, Perga, and passing through Attalia they sail

A.D.
47. for Antioch in Syria, from whence they set out, and having made a report of their mission, they remain in that city a considerable time, ver. 21—28.
48. Paul continues at Antioch.
49. Paul at Antioch. Zealots from Jerusalem disturb the peace of the church by insisting upon the necessity of circumcision.
50. Paul and Barnabas are deputed to go to Jerusalem [1] to settle with the apo-

[1] *Deputed to Jerusalem.*] Luke and Paul both give an account of this transaction: the former Acts xv., the latter Galatians ii. 1—10, but with a very different spirit. Luke simply reports, that in consequence of the disputes concerning circumcision, the brethren at Antioch determine that Paul and Barnabas, and some others, should go up to Jerusalem to consult with the apostles and elders upon this question; but he says nothing of the high spirit which Paul exemplified upon this occasion, and which we learn only from his own account in the Epistle to the Galatians. Conscious of the high authority under which he acted, he would upon no account compromise his character as the apostle of the Gentiles, nor suffer his decisions to be called in question. And if he went up to Jerusalem to consult with the other apostles, it was not as the delegate of the church of Antioch, but by express divine revelation. Gal. ii. 1. And when there, he did not seek either for information or advice from his apostolic brethren, but only communicated to them the doctrine which he taught, in which they acquiesced, and to which they added nothing, but with the greatest readiness acknowledged his authority to be on a par with their own. And as to the bigots who would impose circumcision on the Gentiles, he treated them with the utmost contempt; and in defiance of their

A.D.

50. stles the question of circumcision, Acts xv. 1—29. Paul strenuously supports the liberties of the Gentile church, and the validity of his mission is fully acknowledged by the other apostles, Gal. ii. 1—10. On their return they pass through Phenice and Samaria, announcing the decision of the apostles, and arrive at Antioch with the Jerusalem decree, accompanied by Judas and Silas, Acts xv. 30—35; Lardner, vol. vi. p. 273. Peter visits Antioch, and is publicly reproved by Paul for his duplicity, Gal. ii. 11—21. Silas remains at Antioch. Paul invites Barnabas to revisit the churches which they had planted. Barnabas proposes to associate Mark with them, which Paul refuses; in consequence of which disagreement they separate from each other, and Barnabas in company with Mark, and Paul with Silas, pursue different routes. Acts xv. 35—40; Lardner, *ibid.* ch. xi. sect. 10.

51. Paul and Silas visit Syria and Cilicia[1],

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anathemas he brought up Titus with him to Jerusalem, who was an uncircumcised Gentile convert, and whom he would not suffer to be subjected to the yoke of the law.

[1] *Paul visits Syria and Cilicia.*] Witsius and L. Ca-

A.D.
51. ver. 41. They pass through Derbe and Lystra, where Paul finding Timothy,

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pellus think that the apostle went from Cilicia to Crete, it being very improbable that the gospel should not have been introduced into Crete till A.D. 63 or 64, the time assigned by Pearson, Benson, and others, when all the countries round had received it long before. Lardner, *ibid.* p. 276. Lardner is of opinion that the visit to Crete happened some time in the interval between the apostle's leaving Troas in the spring of A.D. 56, and returning thither again in the spring of A.D. 58, in his way to Jerusalem. In this interval also he places his journey to Illyricum, Rom. xv. 19, and his purposed residence at Nicopolis, either in Epirus or Thrace, Titus iii. 12. "But I cannot," says he, "digest the order of his journeys, since St. Luke has not related them." p. 287.

Dr. Ashworth, the late learned and respectable tutor of Mr. Coward's Academy at Daventry, in his manuscript life of the apostle conjectures that Paul took some opportunity of visiting and preaching the gospel in Crete during the three years which are assigned for his residence at Ephesus and in its vicinity; during which time it is allowed by critics that he did not confine himself wholly to that city and its environs. The mission to Crete is supposed to have occurred in the latter end of A.D. 55. And the apostle returning in the beginning of A.D. 56, writes the Epistle to Titus, directing him, when relieved by his successor, to come to him at Nicopolis, where he then proposed to pass the winter. But soon after he had sent this epistle, the apostle received the deputation from Corinth, which induced him materially to vary his plan; and, instead of spending the winter at Nicopolis, he proposes to pass it at Corinth. And, having sent his reply to the Corinthians by the messengers who brought their letter to him, the apostle dispatches Artemas to Crete to set Titus at liberty, directing him to go immediately to Corinth, and that after having waited long enough to observe the general state of things at Corinth, and the impression made upon the Corinthians by his letter, he should leave Corinth

A.D.
51. assumes him as an associate, having been well recommended by the elders, Acts xvi. 1—3. They pass on to Phrygia and Galatia, and being restrained by the spirit from preaching in the proconsular Asia, they proceed to Mysia, and being forbidden to visit Bithynia,

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in time to meet the apostle, if possible, at Troas, where he intended to be, soon after Pentecost, in his way from Ephesus to Macedonia. But the apostle being probably obliged to leave Ephesus sooner than he intended, in consequence of the tumult of Demetrius and the artists, did not find Titus at Troas; and, being impatient to receive tidings from Corinth, he hastened into Macedonia, where, to his great joy, he found the evangelist, 2 Cor. ii. 12, 13, vii. 5—7. But though the tidings brought by Titus were upon the whole encouraging, yet the apostle, willing to allow the irregular members more time to reflect and to reform, determined upon deferring his proposed visit till the following year; and, instead of going to Corinth at the latter end of A.D. 56, he made a circuit into Illyricum, from which he is supposed to have returned in the spring of A.D. 57 to Macedonia, where he probably found Timothy, who joined with him in writing the Second Epistle to the Corinthians; which was carried by Titus and Luke, and in which he apologizes for having so long deferred his visit. 2 Cor. i. 15—24, ix. 2, compared with 1 Cor. xvi. 1—4. The apostle followed this letter in person at the latter end of the year; and, having passed three months at Corinth and written an epistle to the Romans, he leaves Corinth in the spring of A.D. 58, and reaches Philippi at the Passover in his way to Jerusalem.

This scheme is acknowledged to be only a hypothesis; but such is every other way of accounting for this part of the apostle's missionary travels, and it is only proposed as affording a probable solution of the difficulties which exist.

A.D.
51. they go on to Troas, ver. 4—8. At Troas a vision invites the mission into Macedonia. Luke joins the party, and begins to write in the first person, ver. 9, 10. They sail first to Samothrace, and then to Neapolis; they visit Philippi, where Lydia is converted, the pythoness dispossessed, the apostles accused, beaten, and imprisoned, released by miracle, the jailer converted, the magistrates humbled, and the apostles set at liberty, ver. 11—40. Passing through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they arrive at Thessalonica, where they make some stay, and preach the gospel with great success. Here Paul works for his subsistence, and receives supplies from Philippi. Philip. iv. 16. They are driven from Thessalonica in consequence of a tumult excited by the unbelieving Jews, Acts xvii. 1—10. Paul escapes to Berea, where he makes many converts, and the Bereans are commended for trying his doctrine by the scriptures, ver. 11, 12: but, the Jews from Thessalonica exciting the populace against him, the apostle is conducted privately to Athens, leaving

A.D.

51. Silas and Timothy behind, ver. 13—15. Timothy soon follows, and is sent by the apostle to visit and comfort the Thessalonians, 1 Thess. iii. 1. At Athens the apostle, moved by the gross idolatry of the place, remonstrates against it, Acts xvii. 16—18; and being brought before the court of Areopagus, he defends himself in the eloquent speech recorded Acts xvii. 21—31; and, though ridiculed by the philosophers, he makes some respectable converts, ver. 32—34. Paul proceeds to Corinth; meets Aquila and Priscilla, banished from Rome by Claudius's decree; lodges in their house, and supports himself by working in their occupation, ch. xviii. 1—3, being assisted occasionally by supplies from other churches, 2 Cor. xi. 8. At Corinth the apostle is joined by Silas and Timothy, Acts xviii. 5.

52. Paul continues at Corinth a year and a half; and from this city he writes the two epistles to the Thessalonians, and the epistles to the Galatians, Acts xviii. 11.

53. The first three months at Corinth.

A.D.
53. Gallio the proconsul refuses to listen to the complaints against Paul, ver. 12—17. Paul goes to Cenchrea; visits Ephesus for a short time; sails to Cesarea; makes a short visit at Jerusalem; spends some time at Antioch; passes through Galatia and Phrygia, in order confirming the churches; and, having made a circuit through the upper regions of Asia Minor, he arrives at Ephesus[1] after Apollos was gone to Corinth. Acts xviii. 18—xix. 1.

54. Paul at Ephesus, where he performs extraordinary miracles; and where the sons of Sceva are beaten by the demoniac, ver. 2—20. Claudius dies Oct. A.D. 54[2]. The apostle proposes, after visiting Macedonia and Achaia, to go

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[1] *Arrives at Ephesus.*] Dr. Lardner says, "possibly in October or November;" and adds, "I hope I have allowed time enough for all the journeys hitherto mentioned; and that I have not brought Paul to Ephesus too soon." Lardner, *ibid.* p. 280. The learned writer certainly keeps the apostle pretty much upon the alert during the summer of A.D. 53; and Dr. Ashworth inclines to allow him another year, beginning his mission from Antioch a year earlier. It is impossible to be perfectly accurate, and Dr. Lardner's calculations are, upon the whole, as probable as any.

[2] *Claudius dies.*] See Lardner, *ibid.* p. 282.

A.D.

54. to Jerusalem, and thence to Rome. Acts xix. 21.

55. Paul probably visits Crete, and thence, perhaps, sends his First Epistle to Timothy. He leaves Titus to settle the church, Titus i. 5. Soon after his return he writes the Epistle to Titus, intending at that time to pass the winter at Nicopolis, where he directs Titus to meet him. Titus iii. 12.

56. The apostle proposes to remain at Ephesus till Pentecost, 1 Cor. xvi. 8; receives an epistle from Corinth, and writes the First Epistle to the Corinthians in reply.—He changes his plan; sends Artemas to relieve Titus, and directs Titus to go to Corinth to see the state of things there, and to meet him at Troas, 2 Cor. ii. 12, 13. He sends Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia, Acts xix. 22. A tumult was excited at Ephesus by Demetrius and the artists, ver. 23; after which the apostle set out for Macedonia, xx. 1; and, leaving Ephesus probably something sooner than he intended, he comes earlier than he was expected, to Troas, 2 Cor. ii. 12. Not finding

A.D.
56. Titus there, and being impatient to receive tidings from Corinth, he crosses the sea into Macedonia, where he finds the evangelist, who gave him a favourable account of what was passing at Corinth.—From Macedonia, it is commonly believed, though probably erroneously, that the apostle dated his First Epistle to Timothy [1].

[1] *The First Epistle to Timothy.*] It seems quite incredible that Paul, if he wrote this letter to Timothy from Macedonia, immediately after he had left Ephesus, 1 Tim. i. 3, should have made no allusion whatever to the danger to which he had been exposed by the tumult at Ephesus, to which he so feelingly refers in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, which was written a year afterwards. This and other considerations have led Pearson, Paley, Macknight, and others, to fix the date of this epistle after the apostle's first imprisonment about A.D. 64. But, besides that this hypothesis contradicts the apostle's assertion that he should never visit Ephesus again, Acts xx. 25, it could hardly have been necessary at that time to have cautioned Timothy that no man should despise his youth, 1 Tim. iv. 12. On every hypothesis difficulties seem almost insurmountable. It seems to me possible that the epistle might have been written from Crete A.D. 55, when the apostle was there with Titus. He might have left Timothy to superintend the church at Ephesus during his absence, intending to return soon. The obvious objection against this is ch. i. 3, where he says expressly that he left Timothy at Ephesus when he went into Macedonia. This difficulty would be obviated if we could admit the reading of a manuscript of Hilary, "I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus (*cùm ires in Macedoniam*), when thou wert going into Macedonia." See Griesbach *in loc.* ed. 2. But it must be acknowledged that this reading is not supported by any other authority.

A.D.
56. When he wrote to the Corinthians it was his intention to have passed the winter at Corinth, 1 Cor. xvi. 6. But the intelligence he received from Titus, not being quite satisfactory, induced him to alter his plan, and to defer his visit to Corinth till the year following. In the mean time, after passing a few months in Macedonia, he went, perhaps in September or October, to preach the gospel in Illyricum. It is believed that Titus accompanied him, 2 Tim. iv. 10, 2 Cor. viii. 17, and Luke v. 22; and perhaps Timothy, whose name he joins with his own in the inscription of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. The apostle and his associates returned to Macedonia in the spring of A.D. 57, Rom. xv. 19.

57. Returns to Macedonia; writes the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, joining the name of Timothy with his own. This he sends by Titus, 2 Cor. viii. 6, 22, accompanied by two other brethren, one of whom was probably Luke[1]. See ver. 18, 19, and P.S. to

[1] *Probably Luke.*] Luke first joined the apostle at

A.D.
57. the epistle. At the latter end of the year he visits Corinth, and stays three months, Acts xx. 3. From Corinth the apostle writes the Epistle to the Romans.

58. Paul reaches Philippi before the Passover, and there spends the days of unleavened bread, ver. 6; and is again joined by Luke, who perhaps accom-

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Troas, and accompanied him into Macedonia, Acts xvi. 10, 11. He seems to have parted from him at Philippi, Acts xvii. 1, but to have joined him again at Philippi when he quitted Macedonia on his way to Jerusalem A.D. 58, and from that time to have been his constant associate, Acts xx. 1—6, Lardner. vol. vi. p. 105. It is remarkable that Luke, through his whole history, never mentions Titus, though they must often have travelled together in company with the apostle; and in this instance were associated in the same mission. There must have been some reason for this pointed neglect. Perhaps the following may be assigned as not improbable: The apostle in his Second Epistle to Timothy, written probably soon after the commencement of his first imprisonment, ch. vi. 10, 11, complains of being abandoned by many of his friends. "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed to Thessalonica, Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me." Demas, it appears, soon repented, and joined the apostle again; who makes honourable mention of him in the epistles to the Colossians and Philemon. But of Titus we hear no more. It does not appear that he ever returned to the apostle: his name is never mentioned again. And Luke, who was then writing his history, which closes with Paul's imprisonment, might so far resent the conduct of Titus as not to introduce his name.

A.D.
58. panied the apostle from Corinth. At Troas he raises Eutychus to life, ver. 7—12. From Troas he passes by Assos, Mitylene, Chios, Trogyllium, and Miletus, on his way to Jerusalem. At Miletus he sends for the elders of Ephesus, and delivers to them the beautiful and affecting charge recorded ver. 17—38. Hence he passes by Rhodes, Patara, Tyre, Ptolemais, and Cesarea, where Agabus foretells his imprisonment and bonds, Acts xxi. 1—14; and reaches Jerusalem by the feast of Pentecost, ver. 15, 16. Here, having by the advice of James joined in purification with four Nazarites, seven days after his arrival, an outcry of profaning the temple was raised against him by some Asiatic Jews; and being seized and beaten by the mob, he was rescued by the Roman military commander Claudius Lysias, by whom he was permitted to address the people in his own defence, xxi. 18—xxii. 21. This harangue being interrupted by a tumult, the commander ordered him to be examined by scourging; but desisted upon being informed

A.D.
58. that the apostle was a free citizen of Rome, ver. 22—30. The next day being examined before the council, and having severely reproved the high-priest for ordering him to be struck without any provocation, the apostle, being reminded of the dignity of the magistrate, apologizes for his freedom; after which he divides the council, by declaring himself a Pharisee, and, being in danger of his life, he was rescued by the Roman commander, Acts xxiii. 1—10, and afterwards encouraged by Christ in a vision, ver. 11. Forty Jews having bound themselves by an oath to assassinate the apostle, and the conspiracy being discovered by a youth who was related to him, the Roman commander again protects him, and sends him by night under a military escort to Cesarea, to plead his cause before Felix, the Roman governor, ver. 12—35; who, when his accusers were come, after having heard Tertullus's charge and the apostle's manly defence, defers the judgement, and remands the apostle into custody, expecting that he would offer him a

A.D.
58. bribe to be set at liberty. In the mean time he frequently sends for the apostle, and hears his doctrine with emotion: nevertheless he keeps him in confinement for two years; and when recalled from his government, in order to gratify the Jews whose resentment he feared, Felix leaves Paul in bonds. During this period we are not told that the apostle either wrote an epistle or delivered a discourse; though we may be sure that he would gladly avail himself of every opportunity that offered to teach the gospel, Acts xxiv.

59. Paul a prisoner at Cesarea.

60. Paul still in prison. Festus succeeds Felix; visits Jerusalem, where the Jewish rulers allege charges against Paul; he orders the accusers down to Cesarea, where he hears but does not decide the cause, Acts xxv. 1—4. To please the Jews, however, Festus proposes to the apostle to take his trial at Jerusalem, which the apostle, apprehensive for his life, declines; and availing himself of his privilege as a Roman citizen, he appeals to Cesar; which appeal is allowed by Festus and his

A.D.
60. council, ver. 5—12. Shortly afterward, Agrippa and Berenice being upon a visit to Festus to compliment him upon his accession to the government, Festus states the case of the apostle, and his own difficulty in describing the nature of the charge, ver. 13—22. Agrippa earnestly desiring to hear Paul, Festus consents; and the apostle being brought into court, and leave being granted, ver. 23—27, he makes the eloquent defence recorded ch. xxvi. 1—30; after which the king and the governor express their regret that, on account of his appeal, they could not immediately release him, ver. 31, 32. At the latter end of the year, perhaps in October, he sets sail for Rome, ch. xxvii. 1—13; and the weather proving tempestuous, and the mariners being disappointed in their purpose of sheltering themselves in Crete, the ship was wrecked on the coast of Malta, probably in the month of November, ver. 14—44.

61. At Malta Paul miraculously escapes from the bite of a viper, ch. xxviii. 1—6: he heals the father of Publius,

A D.

61. and others, ver. 7—10; and at the end of three months he sails for Italy, lands at Puteoli, passes a week with his friends, and proceeds to Rome [1], ver. 11—14; where, probably after an early hearing of his cause, he was permitted to reside at his own house in military custody, and to preach and teach without restraint, ver. 15—30. Soon after his first hearing he writes the Second Epistle to Timothy [2].

62. Paul a prisoner at Rome, ver. 31, 32; writes the Epistles to the Ephesians or Laodiceans, the Philippians, the Colossians, and Philemon.

63. Paul released [3], probably in the spring. Dictates the Epistle to the Hebrews, if that be his; is supposed to have visited Colossæ, Philippi, Ephesus, and Jerusalem; and after this to have returned to Rome. Some have thought

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[1] *Proceeds to Rome.*] Probably in the month of February in the seventh year of the reign of Nero. See Pearson and Witsius *apud* Lardner, ibid. p. 294.

[2] *Second Epistle to Timothy.*] This fact appears to be decisively established by Lardner, vol. vi. ch. xii. sect. 10.

[3] *Paul released.*] For the conjectures and traditions concerning the apostle after his release from what is called his first imprisonment, see Lardner, vol. vi. ch. xi. sect. 13.

A.D.

63. that he visited Spain, and even Britain, but of this there is no proof or probability.

64. Rome was set on fire by Nero, who, to exonerate himself, charged the crime upon the Christians, for which they were cruelly persecuted.

65. In this persecution the apostles Paul and Peter both suffered martyrdom; it is said on the same day; Peter by crucifixion; Paul, as a Roman, by decapitation. He was buried in the Via Ostiensis, being probably about sixty years of age. That the apostle did not survive this persecution is highly probable; as, otherwise, he could not have failed to have written an Epistle of condolence, of consolation, and encouragement, upon this memorable occasion.

END OF THE LIFE OF PAUL.

APPENDIX TO THE LIFE OF PAUL.

"A TABLE OF ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES, IN THE ORDER OF TIME; WITH THE PLACES WHERE, AND THE TIMES WHEN, THEY WERE WRITTEN."

[Prefixed to Dr. Lardner's Supplement, in his Works, vol. vi., Dr. Kippis's edition.]

EPISTLES.	PLACES.	A.D.
1 Thessalonians .	Corinth	52
2 Thessalonians .	Corinth	52
Galatians . .	Corinth . . . near the end of	52
	or Ephesus . the beginning of	53
1 Corinthians . .	Ephesus . . the beginning of	56
1 Timothy[1] . . .	Macedonia	56
Titus[2], in or near	Macedonia . before the end of	56
2 Corinthians . .	Macedonia . about October .	57
Romans . . .	Corinth . . about February	58
Ephesians[3] . .	Rome . . . about April . .	61
2 Timothy . . .	Rome . . . about May . .	61
Philippians . .	Rome . . . before the end of	62
Colossians . .	Rome . . . before the end of	62
Philemon . . .	Rome . . . before the end of	62
Hebrews . . .	Rome or Italy in the spring of	63

[1] 1 *Timothy.*] For reasons which are elsewhere assigned, it seems quite impossible that the First Epistle to Timothy

should have been written in the journey which Luke mentions, when the apostle went from Ephesus to Macedonia in the spring of A.D. 56. And the hypothesis which assigns a date to this epistle in a journey which happened on the apostle's return to Rome A.D. 64, after his first imprisonment, is liable to great, though not equal, difficulties. The supposition that the apostle visited Crete from Ephesus, that he then left Timothy in charge of the church at Ephesus, and that he wrote a letter of advice to him from Crete, is the hypothesis which appears to me to be attended with the fewest difficulties; though neither this nor any other hypothesis is supported by much external evidence. Upon this supposition, the First Epistle to Timothy would be dated about the latter end of A.D. 55.

[2] *Titus, in or near Macedonia.*] If the late Dr. Ashworth's hypothesis be admitted, that "the apostle went from Ephesus to preach the gospel in Crete, where he left Titus," the Epistle to Titus must have been written from Ephesus in the beginning of A.D. 56, before the apostle had received the letter from the Corinthians. This induced him to change his plan, and to send a message to Titus; that instead of meeting him at Nicopolis, he should go forthwith to Corinth, and, after having learned the state of things there, that he should return immediately to meet the apostle at Troas, or at least in the nearest city of Macedonia.

[3] *Ephesians, Rome* A.D. 61.] Dr. Lardner has taken great pains to show that the Epistle to the Ephesians was not only actually addressed to the Ephesians, but that it was the first of all the epistles which were dated from Rome; and that, together probably with the Second Epistle to Timothy, it was sent to Ephesus by Tychicus, who returned again to Rome in time to carry the Epistles to the Colossians and Philemon. Lardner, ibid. vol. vi. p. 327. But Dr. Paley in his *Horæ Paulinæ* has demonstrated with such irresistible evidence that the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians must have been written nearly at the same time; and it is so clear, and indeed undisputed, that the Epistle to the Colossians was written near the close of the first imprisonment, that Dr. Lardner's argument cannot be sustained. It is also equally evident,

and demonstrated by Paley, that the letter could not be addressed to the inhabitants of Ephesus; but was either a general circular epistle, or the Epistle to the Laodiceans to which the apostle alludes Col. iv. 16. At all events, this epistle must have been written and sent at the same time with that to the Colossians and the Epistle to Philemon, and by the same messengers, before the end of A.D. 62. The Epistle to the Philippians was probably written somewhat later; Epaphroditus, the bearer of it, Phil. ii. 25, being with the apostle at Rome when he sent the Epistle to the Colossians, Col. iv. 12.

The following, therefore, appears to be the most probable order of the Epistles, from 1 Timothy:—

EPISTLES.	PLACES.		A.D.
1 Timothy . . .	Crete	the latter end of . .	55
Titus	Ephesus . .	beginning of	56
1 Corinthians .	Ephesus . . .	spring of	56
2 Corinthians . .	Macedonia .	about October . . .	57
Romans . . .	Corinth . .	about February . .	58
2 Timothy . . .	Rome	about May	61
Ephesians . .	Rome	before the end of .	62
Colossians. . .	Rome	before the end of .	62
Philemon . . .	Rome		62
Philippians . .	Rome	near the end of . . .	62
Hebrews . . . (writer unknown)	Italy . . .	in the spring of . .	63

ERRATUM.

Vol. ii. page 2, line 13 from top, for *musical* read *mechanical*.

THE EPISTLE

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

THE ROMANS.

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

THE APOSTLE PAUL is supposed to have left Ephesus about Pentecost, A.D. 56, and to have spent the following winter in Macedonia. It was his design to have visited Corinth in the spring; but it appears probable that he deferred his journey a year longer than he intended, see 1 Cor. xvi. 1—8 compared with 2 Cor. i. 15—24, ix. 1—4, and that he availed himself of this opportunity to preach the gospel in Illyricum and the neighbouring regions. Rom. xv. 19—23.

From Macedonia the apostle came to Corinth, probably in the latter end of the year 57; and, having passed three months in that city, he returned to Macedonia in February A.D. 58, on his

way to Jerusalem: but he did not leave Philippi till after the passover.

During his residence at Corinth the apostle wrote his epistle to the Romans. This appears from the recommendation which he gives, ch. xvi. 1, of Phebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea, a sea-port in the neighbourhood of Corinth: this person was probably intrusted with the epistle. He also mentions Gaius as his host, Rom. xvi. 23; who was an eminent disciple at Corinth, and one of the very few whom the apostle himself had baptized, 1 Cor. i. 14. That the epistle was written by Paul at the time assigned as its date, is manifest from the circumstance of his being engaged to carry to Jerusalem a contribution which at his recommendation had been made for the poor believers there, by their more opulent brethren in Macedonia and Achaia, Rom. xv. 25—31. Comp. 1 Cor. xvi. 3, 4. Upon which occasion it appears, that several persons, whose names are mentioned as sending their salutations to their brethren at Rome, were his companions from Greece. Rom. xvi. 21; Acts xx. 4.

It is uncertain when, or by whom, the gospel was first preached at Rome. It seems evident that no apostle had yet been there; it being probable, from Rom. i. 11, that no spiritual gift had hitherto been conferred on the Roman believers, as the apostle expresses his wish to visit them for this very purpose. It is certain, however, that the number of believers at Rome at the time when the epistle was

written was very considerable, and their character extensively and deservedly celebrated through the churches, Rom. i. 8. Nor is it at all surprising or improbable, that a numerous body of believers should then exist at Rome. The imperial city was the metropolis of the world, and the resort of immense numbers from all quarters. Many Jews resided there as sojourners or inhabitants; and among these, no doubt, were many believers in Christ, whose persecution by their countrymen probably occasioned those tumults for which the Jews were banished by the decree of Claudius, A.D. 50. This decree expired with him three years afterwards, when the Jews were permitted to return. Aquila and Priscilla, natives of Pontus, who had left Italy on account of Claudius's decree, were found by the apostle at Corinth, Acts xviii. They accompanied him to Ephesus; and at the time when the apostle wrote they had returned and were resident at Rome, Rom. xvi. 3. It cannot admit of a doubt, that many heathen converts also resorted thither; and among them were probably some persons of distinction, and philosophers. These might have access to persons of rank at Rome, some of whom might be captivated with the simplicity of the Christian faith, and the benignity and perfection of christian morals, and might upon these grounds be induced to profess their faith in the doctrine of Christ. When the apostle was a prisoner at Rome, there were saints even in Cesar's household. Aristobulus and Narcissus, Rom. xvi. 10, 11, are sup-

posed to be persons of consequence, who, if not believers themselves, connived at the profession of Christianity by their domestics and dependents. Epaphras, or Epaphroditus, so often mentioned with applause by the apostle Paul in his epistles, is believed by some to have been the celebrated freedman of Nero [1]. And even Burrhus, the preceptor of Nero and governor of the city, is by many thought to have been partial to the Christians, if he was not himself a believer. These facts are mentioned to show that it is not at all incredible, that a numerous and flourishing society of believers should have existed at Rome, though no apostle had been there to raise it; and that the mention of such a society is no presumption, as some have thought, against the authenticity of the epistle to the Romans.

This is one of those epistles, the genuineness of which, as Eusebius attests, was never called in question in the primitive ages of Christianity; and such are the internal characters of its authenticity, that it can hardly be disputed by any who are acquainted with the apostle's train of thought, or with his style of writing [2].

The principal design of this excellent epistle is to

[1] See Philip. i. 13, iv. 22; also Dr. Jones's Series of Important Facts, chap. iv. This learned writer supposes Seneca likewise to have been a Christian.

[2] The argument in favour of the genuineness of the Epistle to the Romans, from undesigned coincidences with facts related in Luke's History, is beautifully and irresistibly stated in Dr. Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*: but it does not admit of abridgement.

exhibit and magnify the great mercy of God in the dispensation of the gospel to Jew and Gentile; to illustrate the excellence of that dispensation, to justify the measures of the divine government, and to induce the believers at Rome to adorn their Christian profession by the practice of universal virtue.

The epistle is distributed, as most of the apostle's writings are, into two great divisions, DOCTRINAL and PRACTICAL. The DOCTRINAL, or argumentative portion, extends through the first eleven chapters; the remainder of the epistle is chiefly occupied in PRACTICAL exhortation and advice.

The apostle, after a suitable introduction expressive of his apostolic authority, his good-will, and his earnest desire to visit them in person, chap. i. 1—17, enters upon the ARGUMENTATIVE portion of his epistle, which, without any formal distribution, he arranges under four heads—the Unmerited Goodness of God in communicating the gospel dispensation both to Jew and Gentile, chap. i. 18—v.; the efficacy of the motives of the gospel for the Sanctification of believers, chap. vi.—viii. 17; also for their Consolation and encouragement, chap. viii. 18 to the end; and, finally, the apostle states and justifies the conduct of Divine Providence in the present Rejection of the Jewish nation from a covenant state, and in the Invitation of the Gentiles, chap. ix.—xi.

In pursuing this train of argument, under the

First head, the apostle shows that neither Jews nor Gentiles possess any claim to the blessings of the gospel upon the ground of merit. And here 1. he considers the case of the heathen, chap. i. 18 to the end;—2. the case of the Jews, chap. ii. 1—iii. 20;—and 3. the case of both united, chap. iii. 21 to the end.—The apostle then states at large, that Abraham was justified by faith without merit, and that his justification was a pattern for all who believe in Christ, and who are admitted into the Christian covenant without any claim of right on their part, chap. iv.—The apostle further illustrates the privilege and happiness of those who are admitted thus freely, and from pure undeserved mercy, into the gospel covenant, chap. v. 1—11,—and finally, he argues his proposition, from the curse entailed upon the posterity of Adam by the lapse of their first parent, and states the vast extent of the blessings of the gospel beyond the miseries of the Fall, chap. v. 12 to the end.

The apostle, having thus established the mercy of God in the free gift of the gospel to those who had no antecedent claim to its blessings, proceeds

Secondly, to prove that the motives of the gospel are effectual to promote the renunciation of sin and the love and practice of universal virtue; 1. with regard to Gentile believers, who by the profession of the gospel are raised to a new life, chap. vi. 1—11, and entered into a new service, chap. vi. 12 to the end.—And 2. with regard to the Jewish believer: he is first released from a dead and united

to a living principle, chap. vii. 1—4; and secondly, as the law, by its severity, goaded those who were under its yoke to desperation and to vice, so the gospel, by the promise of forgiveness, encourages hope and animates to virtue. This the apostle illustrates by a beautiful allegory, in which he represents the awakened Jew, not yet released from the law, as suffering under the domineering tyranny of guilty passions, which were subdued and slain by the grace and mercy of the gospel, which set him free from the tyranny of the law, and inspired him with life and energy to obey the commandments of God, chap. vii. 5—viii. 17.

In his Third argument the apostle shows, that the principles and discoveries of the gospel are amply sufficient for the Consolation and encouragement of believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, under all their trials and persecutions, chap. viii. 18 to the end.

The Fourth argument treats of the present rejection and ultimate restoration of the Jews, and of the invitation of the Gentiles into the privileges of the covenant. And First, he introduces the subject with great reluctance, chap. ix. 1—5;—he obviates objections, ver. 6—24;—he shows that these important events were foretold by the prophets, ver. 28 to the end;—he laments that his countrymen should reject the gospel, the easy requisitions of which he clearly defines, chap. x. 1—13;—and he vindicates the mission and the success of the apostles of Christ, notwithstanding the foreseen rejection of the Jews, ver. 14 to the end. Secondly,

concerning the restoration of his countrymen, he first shows that the present rejection of the Jews is not *total*, chap. xi. 1—10—and, further, that it is not *final*—and that in the mean time it accomplishes the wise and beneficent purposes of the divine government, as their ultimate restitution also will, ver. 11 to the end.

The apostle, having thus closed the ARGUMENTATIVE portion of this epistle, now proceeds to the PRACTICAL part.

And First, he exhorts believers, in consideration of the freedom of their admission to the privileges of the gospel, to adorn their profession by the practice of christian virtue, and by a faithful performance of the duties of their respective stations in the Church, chap. xii.

Secondly, upon Christian principles he enjoins the practice of all civil and social duties, chap. xiii.

Thirdly, the apostle recommends mutual candour to those who hold different opinions concerning things in their own nature indifferent, and particularly concerning the holiness of times, and the distinctions of food, chap. xiv. 1—xv. 13.

Fourthly, the apostle apologizes for the freedom of his address; he pleads his privilege as the apostle of the Gentiles; he modestly reports his great success; he expresses his intention to visit Rome in his way to Spain, after having finished his commission at Jerusalem; he is confident that his visit will be a mutual blessing; he requests their prayers

for his safety and success, and concludes with his benediction, chap. xv. 14 to the end.

Fifthly, by way of postscript, the apostle recommends to their protection the person who was intrusted with the conveyance of the epistle; he sends various salutations to friends at Rome; he cautions them against the artifices of those who would disturb the peace of the church; he transmits the salutations of believers at Corinth to their brethren at Rome; he annexes a suitable doxology; and concludes with repeating his apostolical benediction.

The Postscript containing the date, which in many cases is of no authority, in this epistle happens to be true. The letter was written at Corinth, and intrusted to the care of Phebe, a Christian of respectability at Cenchrea.

THE

EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

THE APOSTLE'S INTRODUCTION.

CHAP. I. 1—17.

1. THE apostle introduces the epistle with an appropriate salutation, in which he hints at the argument for Christianity from the accomplishment of prophecy, ver. 1, 2; and from the resurrection of Christ, ver. 3, 4; and in the course of which he also asserts his own apostolic mission to the Gentiles, ver. 5—7. Ch. I.

PAUL a servant[1] *of Jesus Christ, invited* to be Ver. 1.
an apostle, separated to the gospel of God, (which 2.
he had promised before by his prophets in the holy
scriptures,) concerning his son (who by natural 3.
descent was of the lineage of David, but with re- 4.
spect to his inspiration, was miraculously distin-
guished as the *son of God by* his *resurrection from*
the dead,) even Jesus Christ our Lord; through 5.
whom we have received the favour of an apostle-

[1] *Paul a servant*] "Δουλος is a servant who is the absolute property of his master, and bound to him for life."—Dr. Taylor.

ship, for preaching *obedience to the faith among all the Gentiles, for the sake of* spreading *his name:*
Ver. 6. *among which are ye also invited by Jesus Christ:*
7. *To all in Rome, who are beloved of God, invited,* and *holy, favour be to you and peace from God our Father and* from *the Lord Jesus Christ.*

This sentence is a memorable example of that involved and intricate style which so much distinguishes the apostle's writings, and which, being very difficult to counterfeit, constitutes one considerable internal proof of the genuineness of Paul's epistles. It arises from the warmth and fulness of his heart, which often prevented him from paying attention to accuracy of method and perspicuity of expression. The main design of the apostle is to represent the gospel dispensation as the free unmerited gift of God, both to Jews and Gentiles; and authoritatively to establish the full equality of the Gentile believer with the believing Jew. With a view to this, in the very first sentence, and in the introductory salutation of the epistle, he asserts the divine authority of the gospel revelation as founded upon the prophecies of the Jewish scriptures; the claim of Jesus to be the true Messiah established by his resurrection from the dead; and his own apostolic mission for the conversion of the heathen world. And he addresses the whole body of Christians at Rome, consisting of converts both from Jews and Gentiles, as all equally entitled to those high and honourable appellations which under the

old covenant were appropriated to the Jews alone, as the peculiar people of God. Ch. I.

Paul a servant, a slave, or bondman, *of Jesus Christ*; to whom his whole life was devoted, and from whose authority he had neither inclination nor power to emancipate himself. Ver. 1.

Invited to be an apostle[1]. Not nominated by Christ during his personal ministry, nor, like Matthias, admitted by lot; but invited to the apostolic office by Jesus after his resurrection, who for this purpose appeared to him in the way to Damascus, and invested him with power and authority in no respect inferior to any of his colleagues.

Separated to the gospel of God. By divine direction, solemnly set apart with Barnabas for the ministry of the gospel to the Gentiles, and recommended by the brethren to the blessing of God. Acts xiii. 2[2].

It is observable that the apostle here calls the Christian revelation, the gospel of God. It originated in the mercy of God: from whom Christ received his commission. And the doctrine of the gospel is the best gift of God to man: it is glad tidings to an ignorant, an idolatrous, and a sinful world. It brings life and immortality to light.

This gospel had been *promised before by the* 2.

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[1] *Invited*] "and therefore a true apostle; as an invited guest is a true and proper guest."—Taylor. See Acts ix. 1—22, xxvi. 16—18.

[2] *Separated*, &c.] Or, by a divine designation from his birth. Gal. i. 15.

Ch. I. *prophets in the holy scriptures* [1]. This observation is with great propriety introduced by the apostle, in order to excite the attention of those of his countrymen at Rome who might see or hear this epistle. It was no new doctrine which the apostle taught, nothing inconsistent with that religion which they had received from their ancestors; on the contrary, it had been repeatedly attested by the prophets under the Mosaic dispensation, who had foretold that the Messiah should appear and suffer, and that he should be the first who would be raised from the dead to an immortal life. The apostle calls the books of the old Testament the holy Scriptures, or the holy Writings, not because he regarded them as being all divinely inspired, but because they were preeminently distinguished from all other books which then existed, as containing upon the whole a faithful narrative of divine communications to the Jewish nation.

Ver. 3. *The gospel of God concerning his son* [2]; that

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[1] *Promised by the prophets, &c.*] "An observation well calculated to conciliate the attention of his Jewish readers. It would put the Jew upon inquiring."—Taylor.

[2] *Concerning his son.*] Christ is called the Son of God for two reasons: first, because this title is equivalent to that of Messiah, and was so understood by the Jews. See John i. 50. "Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." Compare Mark i. 1, Luke iv. 41, xxii. 67, 70. Secondly, because he was raised from the dead and put into possession of an immortal life. See Acts xiii. 33, Heb. v. 5. In this view Christ is called the *first-born*, having been the first human being who was raised to immortality from the grave. Col. i. 15, 18, Heb. i. 6, Rev. i. 5. All believers, as heirs of the same inheritance, are also sons of God. John i. 12, Rom. viii. 14—17,

is, concerning the Messiah: for that is the appellation by which the Messiah was to be distinguished from other prophets. They were only servants, but he was a son. Heb. i. 1. Ch. I.

Who by natural descent was of the lineage of David, but with respect to his inspiration, was miraculously distinguished as the Son of God[3] Ver. 4.

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1 John iii. 2. Hence they are co-heirs with Christ, and he is the first-born among many brethren. Rom. viii. 29. These are the only senses in which the title Son of God is applied to Christ in the *genuine* apostolical writings.

[3] *Who by natural descent,* &c.] Literally, "according to the flesh,"—"according to the spirit of holiness," &c. The antithesis between κατα σαρκα, according to the flesh, and κατα πνευμα ἁγιωσυνης, according to the spirit of holiness, is obvious to every attentive reader. Some have supposed, that by the former the apostle means what is called the human nature of Christ, and by the latter his divine nature. But Dr. Doddridge justly rejects this interpretation, because, even upon orthodox principles, it is not agreeable to the style of the scriptures to call the divine nature of Christ the holy spirit. Mr. Locke by the "spirit of holiness" understands "that spiritual part of Christ which, by divine extraction, he had immediately from God," and in this interpretation Dr. Taylor concurs. But this by no means suits the connexion, nor the scope of the apostle's argument; for how can the resurrection of Christ prove, that the soul which animated his body was of a nature different from other human souls? The expression, spirit of holiness, or holy spirit, must therefore be taken in its common acceptation, of divine inspiration. The apostle's meaning then will be clear and obvious. By natural descent Christ is of the lineage of David, but by his inspiration he is the Son of God. *q. d.* As a *man* he is descended from David, agreeably to the predictions of the Jewish scriptures; but as a *prophet* he is distinguished (ορισθεντος, accurately marked out and defined. See Schleusner) from all others, as being entitled to the appellation of Son of God, or the promised Messiah. But what is the circumstance which so decisively demonstrates his right to this high distinction? It is the wonderful exertion of divine power in raising him from the dead. This extraordinary fact

Ch. I. *by his resurrection from the dead.* This illustrious person, the head of the new dispensation, as a man was descended from the family of David, as it was foretold that he should; but as a prophet to whom the holy spirit was imparted without measure, he is entitled to the high distinction of Son of God. He is the very Messiah whom we have been taught by the prophets to expect. And if any inquire how this fact is to be ascertained, the answer is, By his resurrection from the dead. It is this wonderful act of divine power, exerted upon this eminent person, which clearly distinguishes him from all the prophets who were his predecessors, and elevates him to that matchless pre-eminence which entitles him to the rank and character of the Son of God; being the only one of the human race who has been raised from the grave, and put into possession of a glorious and everlasting inheritance.

This appears to me to be the true meaning of the distinction which the apostle makes between

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abundantly proves the great superiority of Jesus to all preceding prophets, and establishes his claim to the character of the Messiah. Acts xiii. 33, "God hath fulfilled his promise in that he hath raised up Jesus again, as it is also written in the second Psalm, 'Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.'" And after his resurrection the former prophets are, by a bold and sublime figure, summoned to do homage to him, and to acknowledge him as their superior. See Heb. i. 6, Improved Version; also Wakefield *in loc.* See likewise Mr. Lindsey's Second Address to the Youth at the Universities, p. 276, where the learned writer justly observes, that the words *by natural descent* will be found a more just translation of the apostle's words than the literal rendering of them, *according to the flesh.*

Christ being the son of David according to the flesh, and the Son of God according to the spirit: an expression from which some would, without sufficient reason, infer, that the body of Christ was descended from David, but that the spirit which animated his body was of a rank superior to mankind; an interpretation which by no means suits either the connexion or the argument. Ch. I. Ver. 4.

Even Jesus Christ our Lord. This distinguished messenger of God is no other than Jesus of Nazareth: he is the true Messiah, and him we acknowledge as our honoured master.

Through whom we have received the favour of an apostleship[1]. The apostle, like his master, was a messenger from God. It was indeed the privilege of Jesus to receive his commission immediately from God himself; but the apostle derived his authority through the medium of Jesus Christ, who appeared to him in the way to Damascus, and invested him with that honourable office, which he justly represents as a great favour, considering with what violence and malignity he had persecuted the church. 5.

For preaching *obedience to the faith among all the Gentiles, for the sake of* spreading *his name*[2].

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[1] *Through whom——the favour of an apostleship.*] See Gal. i. 1. In the original, "favour and the apostleship," a common hendiadys. See Grotius and Wakefield.—Hence χαρις, grace or favour, is put for the apostolic office. Rom. xv. 15, 16; 1 Cor. iii. 10; Gal. ii. 9; Eph. iii. 2, 7, 8. See Grotius and Taylor.

[2] *For* preaching *obedience*, &c.] This is archbishop Newcome's version of the text. He observes that "St. Paul na-

Ch. I. Ver. 5. The apostle's elliptical and abrupt manner of expressing himself makes the construction of his sentences obscure; but it is plain that he means to represent, that the great object of his apostolic mission was to preach the gospel to the heathen, and to invite them all, without any exception, to believe in Christ, and to accept and secure the blessings of the gospel by a faithful compliance with its requisitions. Thus he was employed to spread the name, that is, to extend the authority of Christ through all nations.

6. *Among which are ye also invited by Jesus Christ*[1]. The church at Rome probably consisted chiefly of converts from heathenism. They had formerly been as ignorant, as idolatrous, and as immoral as any

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turally calls the gospel the faith, as it was his chief purpose in this epistle to prove that faith was the sole condition of being admitted into the gospel covenant." *For the sake of his name.* See Acts ix. 16. To advance his cause, to promote his glory. Luke xxi. 12, Mark xiii. 9.—Newcome. Taylor.

[1] *Among which are ye,* &c.] Hence it appears, that the great body of Christians at Rome were converts from heathenism, who were probably instructed in the principles of Christianity by visitors from the Greek or the Asiatic churches. The converts at Rome, therefore, might be both numerous and of great renown (see ver. 8), though the Jews residing at Rome might know very little about them, and might hold them in great contempt. Acts xxviii. 21, 22. This consideration obviates Mr. Evanson's principal objection to the genuineness of this epistle. Evanson's Dissonance of the Evangelists, p. 307, second edition. It seems quite frivolous to ask, as this ingenious writer does, p. 309, Who preached the gospel at Rome before the apostle? Among the innumerable multitudes which were continually flowing to Rome from all parts of the world, some must have been Christians. These would undoubtedly be zealous in making proselytes, and in some instances probably successful. *Quo cuncta undique confluunt, celebranturque.*—Tacitus.

of their neighbours; but they had been invited by Christ, through the medium of his faithful messengers, to participate in the privileges of the gospel: they had accepted the invitation, and were entitled to all the privileges of the Christian community. Ch. I. Ver. 6.

To all in Rome, who are beloved of God, invited, and *holy*[2], *favour be to you and peace*[3] *from God our Father and* from *the Lord Jesus Christ*[4]. 7.

Beloved of God, in the apostle's language, expresses persons who are favoured with peculiar external privileges. In this sense Jacob is said to be beloved, and Esau to be hated, even before they were born, God having intended to impart privileges to the one which he would deny to the other,

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[2] *Beloved—invited—holy.*] "These are but different expressions for professors of Christianity."—Locke. "That the word saints comprehends the whole body of Christians, appears from Acts xxvi. 10; Rom. xii. 13; 1 Cor. vi. 1; Eph. iii. 8, and many other places. All Christians are thus called, because they are dedicated to God, 1 Cor. vii. 14, and because they profess a religion which tends to make them holy, 1 Cor. vi. 11. But those who were thus denominated might fall from personal holiness."—Newcome. See also Dr. Taylor's judicious and excellent Key to the Epistles, chap. vi.

[3] *Favour and peace.*] "χαρις και ειρηνη, *favor et prospera omnia.*"—Grotius. "all favour and felicity."—Taylor. But the word χαρις (grace) is often used to express the Christian religion, which is the best gift of God to the world. John i. 17; Acts xiii. 43; Rom. vi. 14, 15; 2 Cor. i. 12, vi. 1. See Schleusner. The words, therefore, are probably a hendiadys, by which the apostle expresses his earnest desire that the Christians at Rome might all, without distinction, participate in all the blessings of the gospel covenant.

[4] *From God—and* from *Jesus Christ.*] From God as the primary cause, and from Jesus Christ as the great instrument and honoured messenger of the gracious purposes of God to man. Or "from God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." See Erasmus *in loc.*

Ch. I. Ver. 7. Rom. ix. 13. The *invited*, or *called*, are those to whom the blessings of Christianity have been proposed, and who have professed their acceptance of these gracious offers; and the *holy*, or *saints*, are those who, by a public profession of their faith in the Christian religion, sanctify, that is, separate themselves from the idolatrous and unbelieving world, as a community consecrated to the one living and true God.

To *all* the members of this holy community who were then resident at Rome, without distinction of Jew or Gentile, the apostle in his introductory salutation wishes grace or favour, that is, the continual possession of the gospel, which is so called because it is the gratuitous gift of God; and peace, which includes all the blessings which accompany, or which flow from, the sincere profession of Christianity. These inestimable blessings are derived from God, who acknowledges the endearing relation of a Father to all who believe in the Christian religion, for whom, if they are obedient, he has prepared an everlasting inheritance; and they are transmitted to us by Jesus Christ, whom we honour as our master, and who is the faithful messenger of these joyful tidings.

The apostle's words might be rendered, "who is the Father of us and of the Lord Jesus Christ." Christ is in a peculiar sense the Son of God, being the first-born from the dead; and all who believe in him are also sons of God, because they are co-heirs with Christ of the same glorious patrimony,

into possession of which they shall in due time be introduced. Ch. I. Ver. 7.

2. The apostle thanks God for their honourable profession of the Christian faith, and for their high reputation in the churches, and expresses his earnest desire to visit them, ver. 8—10.

In the first place, I thank my God through Jesus Christ on account of you all, that your faith is celebrated through the whole world. 8.
For God, whom I serve with my spirit[1] *in the gospel of his Son, is my witness how incessantly I make mention of you.* 9.
Always in my prayers entreating that by some means[2] *I might now at length, by the will of God, have a prosperous journey to visit you.* 10.

Your faith is celebrated through the whole world. 8.
This circumstance proves that there were many Christians at Rome at the time when this epistle was written; that these were not all of them persons of mean rank and indigent circumstances, and that their character and conduct were creditable to their Christian profession.

The apostle "thanks his God" for the prosperous state of the Christian doctrine at Rome: he rejoices in the prosperity of the Roman church,

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[1] *Whom I serve with my spirit*,] "to whom my mind payeth its religious service."—Wakefield. "with my whole spirit."—Newcome.

[2] *That by some means*] Gr. "if by any means." "that I may by some means at length, through the will of God," &c.—Wakefield.

Ch. I even though he had not himself been honoured as the instrument of planting it.

Ver. 8. *I thank my God through Jesus Christ on account of you all.* The doctrine of Christ had taught him to extend his charity to all mankind, and to rejoice in the goodness of God to the believing Gentile, manifested in the dispensation of the gospel, equally with the believing Jew.

9. *God whom I serve with my spirit,* that is, sincerely, entirely, and affectionately, *in the gospel of his Son.* The life of the apostle was one continued act of religious worship. He had been appointed by God to the ministry of the gospel, and this was the great object to which his whole heart and soul was elevated, which occupied all his thoughts, his cares and labours.

God is my witness how incessantly I make mention of you. Ever since I heard of your faith and zeal, and spiritual prosperity, God knows I can hardly think or speak upon any other subject.

10. *Always in my prayers entreating that by some means I might now at length, by the will of God, obtain a prosperous journey to visit you.* I am eager to see you ; I have been importunate in my prayers to be permitted to visit you ; and I flatter myself that the time is not far distant, when my prayer shall be answered and my best wishes accomplished.

Such was the state of the apostle's mind ; ardently desirous to be permitted to preach the gospel in the great metropolis of the world, but resigned

to the disposal of Divine Providence, and waiting for the direction of heaven; and, for the present, his prayer was denied, and the visit he so much desired to make was for wise reasons deferred. Ch. I. Ver. 10.

3. The especial reason why the apostle desired to visit Rome was, that he might confer upon the believers there some spiritual gift for the confirmation of their faith, ver. 11, 12.

For I earnestly desire to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift for your establishment; that is, that while I am *among you, we may be comforted together by our mutual faith, the faith of both you and me*[1]. 11. 12.

Spiritual gifts, such as the gift of prophecy, the gift of tongues, and many others, which are detailed by the apostle, 1 Cor. xii. 8, were imparted by imposition of the hands of the apostles to the primitive converts, and were the principal means of converting unbelievers, and of confirming the faith of those who were initiated in the Christian doctrine.

The believers at Rome were in general destitute of these spiritual gifts, a proof that no apostle had hitherto visited the imperial city. The Christian

[1] *Of both you and me.*] See Newcome, who observes, that "the apostle wishes to impart the gifts of the spirit, not to display his own power, but to establish his converts in the gospel. He is cautious of assuming." The primate argues from Rom. viii. 9, 16, xii. 6, that "some of the Roman converts had received the holy spirit;" rather, perhaps, some who had received the spirit were then resident at Rome; such, for instance, as Aquila and Priscilla.

Ch. I. Ver. 12.

religion, therefore, must have been introduced by some teachers of an inferior order; perhaps by some pious believers who were not teachers by profession, and who, visiting the city upon commercial or other necessary engagements, had availed themselves of the opportunity to sow the precious seed of the gospel in a soil so well prepared, that it had soon produced a copious harvest. God is not limited in his choice of instruments, and the meanest talents are in his hands equally efficacious with the most splendid; nor should any proper opportunity of promoting the knowledge of truth and virtue be omitted even by those who are not teachers by profession; for who can say what incalculable benefit may be derived from a hint dropped in due season?

Paul was desirous of communicating some spiritual gift to the believers at Rome for the confirmation of their faith. This was the privilege of an apostle; but, lest he might appear to assume too much, he in part retracts his words, and represents the object of his proposed visit to be as much for his own benefit as for theirs: *that we may be mutually comforted by each others mutual faith.* How pleasing is this unaffected modesty in one so highly gifted and of such exalted rank!

4. As it was the main object of his apostleship to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, he was particularly desirous to fulfill his ministry at Rome, and it had often been in his contemplation to visit the imperial city, ver. 13—15.

Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, Ch I. Ver. 13.
that I have often purposed to come to you, though I have been hindered hitherto, that I might gather some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles. I am debtor both to Greeks and Barba- 14.
rians, both to the wise and to the unwise; so that 15.
I am ready, according to my ability[1], *to preach the gospel to you also who are at Rome.*

The apostle was not his own master with respect to the course of his missionary journeys, and was no doubt often obliged to abandon the scheme which would have been most agreeable, for the sake of prosecuting that which would be most useful. He is, however, solicitous that it should be fully understood that his delay to visit Rome did not arise from any reluctance on his part to perform his duty there. He had received a commission which it was the first wish of his heart to fulfill; he was intrusted with the gospel, which it was his imperative duty and his earnest desire to communicate to all who were willing to receive it. It contained tidings of equal and infinite importance to all in every country and in every station; to the polite and to the rude, to the learned and to the unlearned. The gospel was freely offered to the poor, but it was not limited to them. It was with equal freedom and with equal earnestness addressed to the opulent, the wise, the powerful, and the honourable; and many of this description were professors of the Chris-

[1] *Ready according to my ability.*] Gr. "that which is in me is ready." "as much as lieth in me I am ready."—Newcome.

Ch. I. Ver. 15. tian faith in its earliest age. The apostle was willing and even eager to publish and defend the doctrine of his honoured master in the city of Rome itself, the august metropolis of the empire, and the residence of the imperial court.

5. This leads the apostle to express his triumph in the gospel revelation, and briefly to state the doctrine which he proposed in the progress of the epistle to assert and vindicate at large, ver. 16, 17.

16. *For I am not ashamed of this gospel*[1]; *because it is the power of God to salvation to every one who believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

17. *For therein*[2] *the justification*[3] *of God by faith, is revealed to faith; as it is written, The just by faith shall live*[4].

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[1] *This gospel.*] The received text adds, *of Christ;* but the word Χριστου (of Christ) is wanting in the earliest copies, and is omitted in the text of Griesbach.

[2] *For therein.*] I have given Dr. Doddridge's translation of this clause, which affords a clear sense to an obscure passage. Gr. "from faith to faith;" *i.e.* "wholly by faith."—Locke: not so correct as Doddridge.

[3] *Justification.*] "Δικαιοσυνη, the original word, is often used by St. Paul for God's treating men as just or righteous, whether by admitting them into the outward privileges of the Christian church here, or into his heavenly kingdom hereafter."—Newcome. I choose to retain the theological word, justification, though it is somewhat old-fashioned; as, like the words faith, grace, and other theological words and phrases, it is used by the apostle to express combinations of ideas peculiar to himself, and which are not comprehended under any other single word in the English language.

[4] *The just by faith.*] See Hallet's Observations on Scripture, vol. i. p. 15; and Rosenmuller *in loc.* The apostle here lays down, in brief, the main design of his epistle, viz. that all who believe in Christ are admitted into covenant with God, by which

I am not ashamed of this gospel. The doctrine of Christ at its first promulgation was an object of contempt, because it did not, like the philosophy of the schools, affect subtilties which the vulgar could not comprehend; nor was it set off by a studied and ambitious eloquence. But it was held in scorn chiefly because its founder was a crucified Jew. In this despised doctrine the apostle had long been taught to place his confidence and glory; for, in his present correct estimation, it was *the power of God to salvation to every one who believed.*—The doctrine of the gospel, however humble in its origin, was confirmed by the miraculous exhibition of divine power; it saved those who received it from the bondage of the Mosaic Institute, and from the tyranny of heathen idolatry, and brought them into a state of light and liberty. This inestimable treasure was to be first offered to the Jews; who, notwithstanding their many privileges, and their high opinion of themselves, stood in great need of it. It was also to be offered to the idolatrous Gentile; who in this new order of things is to be admitted to equal privileges with the descendant of Abraham. Ch. I. Ver. 16.

For in it, the justification of God by faith, is revealed to faith. The apostle through this whole epistle calls that state of privilege into which men are brought by the gospel, JUSTIFICATION. In the language of a Jew, a heathen, as such, is called a 17.

they become entitled to eternal life, if their faith be practical and persevering.

Ch. I. Ver. 17. sinner, whatever his moral character may be: he is out of covenant with God. A Jew, being in a state of covenant, is holy. Under the new covenant, the heathen believer, as well as the Jew, is admitted into this holy state: from being a sinner he becomes a saint, selected and separated from the idolatrous and unbelieving world.

This justification, or state of privilege, is *by faith;* for by the profession of faith in Christ, a man is transferred from the community of sinners and heathen into the community of saints, and becomes entitled to the privileges of the Christian covenant. This doctrine, so important to our peace and comfort, is now *revealed* by the gospel: it was before unknown even to the Jews themselves: it was a mystery, hid from ages and generations, though it may be correctly expressed in the language of the prophet Habakkuk, ch. ii. 4, "He who is justified by faith, shall live;" that is, He who is by faith admitted into the community of believers, is already acquitted from the sentence of the law; and, if he improves his privileges, shall be entitled to eternal life.

This is one instance amongst many of the loose manner in which the writers of the Old Testament are quoted by those of the New. The passage in the original has no reference to the apostle's doctrine of justification; but the text is cited by him in a way of allusion, as the words of the prophet will aptly express the doctrine which the apostle now proceeds to establish.

The apostle having thus conciliated the attention of his readers by an affectionate and judicious introduction, proceeds now to the main business of the epistle. Ch. I. Ver. 17.

THIS Epistle is divided, in the apostle's usual manner, into two distinct portions—the ARGUMENTATIVE or DOCTRINAL, and the PRACTICAL.

The ARGUMENTATIVE or DOCTRINAL portion of the epistle, which extends through the first eleven chapters, is arranged under four heads:

The apostle proves, I. That the gospel is the free unmerited gift of God to Jews and Gentiles, ch. i. 18,—v. II. That it is efficacious for the sanctification, and, III. for the comfort, of all who believe, ch. vi.—viii. IV. That the Jews, as a nation, are for the present rejected from their covenant state; but that this rejection is neither total nor final, ch. ix.—xi.

PART THE FIRST.

THE GOSPEL DISPENSATION IS THE FREE UNMERITED GIFT OF GOD TO ALL MANKIND.

To prove this proposition the apostle argues, That none can claim the blessings of the gospel on the ground of right, ch. i. 18,—iii. Also, That

Ch. I. Abraham's privileges were a free gift, and not the reward of merit, ch. iv. He then digresses into an eulogium upon the excellence of gospel privileges, ch. v. 1—11. And he concludes this Part by arguing from the analogy of the Fall, ch. v. 12 *to the end.*

SECTION I.

The privileges of the gospel are a free gift, because neither Gentiles nor Jews could make pretensions to them upon the ground of having improved their antecedent privileges. Ch. i. 18,—iii.

CASE I.

The case of the Gentiles.

The Gentiles are not admitted to additional privileges on the ground of right. Ch. i. 18 *to the end.*

1. The wrath of God is denounced against all who wilfully transgress his moral law, ver. 18.

Ver. 18. *For the anger of God from heaven is revealed against all ungodly and unrighteous men*[1] *who restrain*[2] *the truth by unrighteousness.*

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[1] Gr. "ungodliness or unrighteousness of men."

[2] *Restrain.*] "Κατεχω, *detineo, moror, et ex adjuncto, impedio, prohibeo, cohibeo.* Luke iv. 42; Philem. v. 13; 2 Thess. ii. 6."—Schleusner. "When that heaven-born captive would exert its energy upon their minds, and urge them to obey its dictates."—Doddridge. They not only did not allow truth its proper influence upon their own minds; but they unrighteously concealed the truth they knew, and deprived others of the benefit of its light and influence.

The anger of God is that just punishment which he will inflict upon impenitent offenders. God is never angry; and the severest visitations of his justice are in every instance the result of infinite benevolence, under the guidance of perfect wisdom. But the apostle's language is accommodated to the imperfect conceptions of human beings. Ch. I. Ver. 18.

The gospel is a dispensation of mercy; yet it reveals, in the clearest and most explicit manner, the righteous judgements of God upon impenitent sinners. This awful doctrine is revealed from heaven by messengers divinely commissioned for this purpose.—Or, the expression may imply, that the anger of God will descend from heaven in that day, when God will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained.

The offence particularly specified by the apostle, is that of detaining the truth in unrighteousness; of unjustly confining the celestial captive, and refusing to communicate those moral truths in which they were instructed, and which would be beneficial to mankind; or disgracing the principles they professed by a vicious conduct. These charges applied equally both to the heathen philosophers and to the Jewish teachers; and the apostle now proceeds to substantiate his charge against the former.

2. The evidence of the divine existence and attributes is so clear from the works of nature, that to be ignorant of them was inexcusable; ver. 19, 20.

Because what is to be known of God is manifest 19.

Ch. I. Ver. 20. *among them; for God hath made* it *manifest to them that they might be inexcusable. For his invisible attributes*, even *his eternal power and Godhead*[1], *being considered attentively, have been discerned by his works from the creation of the world.*

All the notions which the most enlightened of mankind can form of the Supreme Being must be comparatively poor and inadequate. Yet, imperfect as they must be, they are of great practical importance; and God has been pleased to make the evidence of his existence and attributes so conspicuous, that all persons, and especially those who profess to know more than the rest of mankind, must be inexcusable if they do not attain all necessary information upon this subject. For, from the very beginning of time, the eternity, the power, and the greatness of God are discoverable to every reflecting mind; and the beautiful structure and harmonious arrangement of the visible creation naturally lead to the acknowledgement of an invisible and eternal cause.

How far the light of nature only, independently of divine revelation, would enable the honest and serious inquirer to form just conceptions of the attributes and character of the Supreme Being, is a problem of very difficult solution. It is plain that the heathen were in general grossly ignorant of God; and that this ignorance was the principal source of

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[1] *Godhead.*] Mr. Lindsey translates "Providence," the word *Godhead* being liable to be misunderstood.—Lindsey's Second Address, p. 278.

those scandalous immoralities which were the disgrace of the idolatrous world. And, though many of the philosophers were better informed, so far from communicating the knowledge which they possessed, and endeavouring to enlighten and to reform the world, they wickedly concealed their knowledge; and, both by precept and example, they encouraged their countrymen in superstition and in vice. This is the conduct to which the apostle alludes, and which he most pointedly condemns. Ch. I. Ver. 20.

3. The inconsistency and folly of the heathen philosophers, in countenancing and falling in with the popular superstitions, were most inexcusable and criminal, ver. 21—23.

Because that knowing God, they have not glorified him as God; neither were thankful, but became vain in their reasonings, and their inconsiderate heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became foolish; and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and of quadrupeds, and of reptiles. 21. 22. 23.

The philosophers had some just conceptions of God; but they did not worship him, they did not love him, they did not obey him. They foolishly reasoned themselves into the persuasion, that it would be better to encourage and to join in the popular idolatry. Thus, professing to be the wise men of the world, the lovers and teachers of wisdom, they acted the part of the most consum-

Ch. I. Ver. 23. mate folly, and in their practice were gross idolaters.

These philosophers concealed the truth which they knew, and joined in the rites which they despised, because they thus escaped persecution; and they valued themselves upon their superior wisdom. But this selfish sinister wisdom the apostle justly pronounces to be egregious folly.

4. In consequence of this temporizing and dishonest conduct, they were permitted to abandon themselves to the most dishonourable vices, ver. 24, 25.

24. *Therefore God gave them up to impure affections, to dishonour their own persons by them-*
25. *selves; because they changed the true into a false God*[1], *and offered religious worship and service to the creature, in preference to the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.*

"God gave them up to impure affections," not by impelling them to vice, but by not interfering to alter the natural tendency of the course which they had chosen for themselves. They chose the worship of idols, with all its foolish and vicious consequences, and they were left to reap the fruits of their own folly: and what better could be expected, when they acted in contradiction to their better judgement and deserted the worship of the

[1] *The true*, &c.] Gr. "the truth of God into a lie." See Wakefield and Newcome.

great Creator, who alone is worthy of the highest adoration and homage of all creatures, throughout all ages? Amen. Ch. I. Ver. 25.

5. For this criminal conduct God suffered the heathen, without excepting those who were in the highest reputation for wisdom, to degrade themselves by the most abominable crimes, ver. 26,27.

Therefore God also gave them up to dishonourable passions. For their females changed their *natural use into that which is against nature.* 26.
And likewise the males, leaving the natural use of the female, have been inflamed with desire towards each other; males with males doing that which is contrary to decency, and receiving in themselves the just reward of their error[2]. 27.

The crimes to which the apostle here alludes were the disgrace of the heathen world. They were practised and justified, not only by the vulgar, but by the learned, the wise, the polished, and the great. They were not only permitted, but authorized, and even required by their idolatrous ritual; and that the apostle has not overcharged the melancholy, miserable picture, is known to all who have the slightest acquaintance with the celebrated remains of Greece and Rome.

6. The apostle exhibits a sad detail of the vices of the heathen world, ver. 28—32.

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[2] *Error,*] *i. e.* idolatry. See Taylor, who refers in his note to

Ch. I. Ver. 28. *And as they did not search after God so as to acknowledge him, God gave them up to an undiscerning mind* [1], *to do those things which were not*
29. *expedient* [2]; *being filled with all injustice, lewdness, wickedness, exorbitant affection* [3], *malice; full of envy, murder, contention, fraud, malig-*
30. *nity* [4]; *whisperers, slanderers, haters of God, violent* [5], *proud, boastful, inventors of evil, disobe-*
31. *dient to parents, without consideration* [6], *violators of contracts, without natural affection, implacable,*
32. *unmerciful: who, acknowledging the divine rule of right, were not aware* [7] *that they who practise*

Cicero *De Nat. Deor.*, and to his Tusculan Questions, for proof of the justice of the apostle's charge. See also Bos *Exercit. in loc.*

[1] *Undiscerning mind.*] So Wakefield. "Reprobate; a mind not to be approved of. It is properly used of adulterated coin."—Newcome.

[2] *Not expedient.*] "A meiosis for things most inexpedient and enormous."—Doddridge.

[3] *Exorbitant affection.*] Πλεονεξια. This is the sense in which the apostle commonly uses the word when discoursing concerning heathen idolatry; and it has been overlooked by the generality of translaters. Compare Eph. iv. 19, v. 3; Col. iii. 5; 1 Thess. iv. 6; 1 Cor. v. 10, 11. See Hammond's note on Rom. i. 29, and Locke's excellent Notes on Eph. iv. 19, v. 3. "*De omni immoderata et nimia cupiditate, etiam de libidine venerea quandoque vocem hanc usurpari docuit.* Elsnerus *Obs. Sac.* v. 2, p. 218."—Schleusner.

[4] *Malignity.*] "Κακοηθεια: it consists in putting the worst construction upon every thing."—Newcome, from Aristotle.

[5] *Violent.*] "Injurious."—Wakefield. Υβρις, personal injury.

[6] *Without consideration, &c.*] Ασυνετους: Bowyer suspects, that either this or the next word ασυνθετους, violators of contracts, should be dropped. The latter word Wakefield renders *morose*, "with whom there can be no harmony or friendly connexion."

[7] *Were not aware.*] With Mr. Locke I adopt the reading of the

these things are worthy of death, and not only commit these crimes themselves, but even take pleasure in those who practise them. Ch. I. Ver. 32.

The wise men of the heathen world did not search after God so as to acknowledge him. All their theological inquiries terminated in vain speculations, which had no influence on their practice. They entered no protest against the popular superstitions which they held in contempt, but associated with the multitude in their idolatrous rites; therefore God gave them up to an undiscerning mind. Errors in practice led to errors in judgement, so that they could not discern right from wrong. And while they were pleading for what they judged to be decent and expedient, they came to conclusions the most remote from truth; and, instead of recommending universal benevolence, such as became the children of the great universal Parent, they taught the lawfulness of violating every relative and social duty; and exemplified their doctrine by their practice. So that hardly a vice can be named which did not find its advocates. They acknowledged, indeed, a rule of right, and admitted that rule to be of divine authority: not, however, understanding that death was the just punish-

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Clermont and some other copies, that they were not aware of the capital punishment denounced by the law; which reading seems to be required by the apostle's reasoning, the object of which is to prove that the Jews were the most guilty, because they not only were aware that these actions were criminal, but also knew that the law of God had expressly prohibited them, under pain of death.

Ch. I. Ver. 32. ment of sin. But at any rate they did not reckon those unsocial passions which produce quarrels and strife, and mischief, confusion and misery in the world, in the catalogue of vices. Many of these bad passions, such as hatred and revenge, were estimated by them as splendid virtues, which they openly practised themselves, and which they approved and celebrated in others.

From this correct, but melancholy representation of the wretched state of the heathen world, the apostle leaves his reader to draw the conclusion, what claim the heathen could allege, on the ground of merit and of right, to the blessings of the Christian dispensation.

CASE II.

The Case of the Jews.

Ch. II. The Jew has no better claim to the privileges of the gospel than the idolatrous Gentile, ch. ii. 1,—iii. 20.

1. The apostle, without expressly mentioning the Jews, argues from general principles the justice of punishing a man who, setting himself up as the judge of others, himself commits the crimes which he condemns in them, ver. 1—8.

The apostle had suffered very injurious treatment from his countrymen; but he always retained a sincere affection for them, and in his writings he generally treats them and their prejudices with the greatest tenderness that was consistent with fidelity.

This is particularly observable through the whole of this celebrated epistle. Ch. II.

The Jews held the Gentiles in the utmost contempt, and were loud in their censures of the idolatry and vice of the heathen world. They would therefore be well pleased with the picture which the apostle had just drawn of the deplorable state of morals among those who professed to be the most enlightened and civilized of the heathen.

But it was the apostle's design to prove that the Jews themselves were in a state equally corrupt with the heathen, and still more inexcusable; and to the Jew nothing could be more offensive than this charge. The apostle introduces it therefore with great caution, and in such a form, that the Jew is led to acknowledge the justice of his conclusion before he is aware that it is applicable to himself; for the apostle, before he ventures to introduce the Jew by name, first establishes the general principle, that a man who officiously condemns others for crimes of which he is himself guilty, does by parity of reason condemn himself, and acknowledges that he is himself deserving of that punishment which he is so forward to denounce upon others. Having fully established this point, he turns short upon the Jew, and plainly tells him that he is the person to whom this argument applies.

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man[1], *who-* Ver. 1.

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[1] *O man.*] Dr. Taylor remarks that "the apostle addresses the Jews in a covert general way, and uses general

Ch. II. Ver. 1. *soever thou art that judgest*[1]; *for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself, for thou who judgest doest the same things.*

Whether Pagan philosopher or a teacher of any other sect or nation, if thou condemnest in another the crimes of which thou art thyself guilty, thou art convicted out of thine own mouth, and no plea can avail thee in arrest of judgement.

2. *Now we know that the judgement of God is according to truth*[2] *against those who commit such things.*

It is a principle not to be denied by any one, that God will visit sin with condign punishment, whatever be the character or profession of the guilty person. God is righteous, and his decisions are perfectly impartial.

3. *And dost thou, O man, who judgest those who do these things, and who doest them thyself, expect that thou shalt escape the judgement of God?*

Canst thou, O teacher, of whatever character, sect, or country, who assumest the office of a judge, conscious and self-convicted as thou art, calculate upon escaping that righteous condemnation of God which thou art so ready to denounce upon others whose crimes are similar to thine own?

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terms, that the Jew may not too plainly see that he is speaking to him."

[1] *That judgest.*] "Ὁ κρίνων, the Judger, is here very emphatical. It denotes more than simple judging. It implies assuming the character, place, and authority of a judge."—Taylor.

[2] *Is according to truth.*] "will be without distinction."—Wakefield.

Or dost thou despise the riches of his kindness[3], *and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the kindness of God should lead thee to repentance?* Ch. II. Ver. 4.

Dost thou treat divine patience and forbearance with contempt, instead of availing thyself of the opportunity which his rich mercy affords to repent of thy manifold offences? What astonishing folly and presumption in one of such high professions! who settest thyself up as a teacher and a judge.

But by this hardness and impenitence of thy heart, thou treasurest[4] *up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath and of the revelation of the righteous judgement of God, who will recompense to* 5. 6.

every man according to his works.

Alas! these pretensions and this profession will be of little avail; for, however thou mayest flatter thyself, be assured that thy crimes will not escape either detection or punishment. Hypocrisy will only add to this offence, and aggravate thy condemnation in that day when God will manifest his displeasure against sin, and all men shall be treated, not according to their pretensions or professions, but in exact correspondence with their real character.

To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, honour and immortality, eter- 7.

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[3] *Kindness—should lead.*] See Newcome, and Professor Symons's Expediency of revising the Translation, c. 82.

[4] *Thou treasurest.*] I follow the punctuation of Griesbach and Taylor.

Ch. II. Ver. 8. *nal life. But to those who are contentious, and disobedient to the truth* [1], *but obedient to unrighteousness, indignation and wrath.*

The reward which God will bestow upon those who patiently persevere in a course of virtue, will be that everlasting honour and happiness in a future life, the hope of which has been the most powerful spring of action, and the most abundant source of consolation in their struggles through life. But, on the other hand, the most insupportable effects of the divine displeasure shall fall upon those who have acted contrary to their better knowledge; who though instructed in the rule of duty have lived in the practice of vice, whatever arrogant pretensions they may have made to be the favourites of heaven, or how loud and severe soever their censures may have been of others, who, though not possessing the same privileges, have not exceeded them in the commission of crime.

2. The apostle having argued the impartial justice of God upon general principles, now proceeds to apply his doctrine explicitly to the Jew as well as to the heathen; and particularly he expressly announces that the final distribution of rewards and punishments shall be allotted in exact correspondence with men's moral character, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, ver. 9—11.

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[1] *Disobedient to the truth.*] "who obstinately and pertinaciously dispute against the truth, and do not humbly and sincerely yield themselves to be governed by it."—Taylor.

Tribulation and anguish shall fall *upon every soul of man who practiseth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek. But glory, honour and peace* shall be *to every one who practiseth good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.* Ch. II. Ver. 9. 10.

As though the apostle had said, To be plain with you, my brethren, I must frankly tell you, that the Jew who glories in his privileges is equally amenable to the divine tribunal with the despised Gentile. The man who perseveres in sin shall suffer adequate and insupportable punishment, whether Jew or Gentile, and indeed the Jew will be the greater sufferer, because he sins against superior light; and every one who perseveres in the practice of virtue, shall be put into possession of the promised reward, whether Jew or Gentile. If indeed the Jew by improving his privilege has attained a higher degree of moral excellence than others, but not otherwise, his reward will be proportionably great.

For there is no respect of persons with God; who will deal with his rational offspring in due correspondence with their real characters, without regard to their external privileges and profession, and will no more spare the offending Jew than he will punish the virtuous heathen. 11.

3. In the day of general retribution, every one shall be judged according to the tenor of the dispensation under which he hath lived, ver. 12 and 16.

Ch. II. Ver. 12. *For as many as have sinned not being under a law*[1] *shall without a law perish; and as many as have sinned under a law shall by law be judged.*

A righteous God will make a just discrimination in the punishment of guilt; nor will he visit the sins of those who possessed imperfect degrees of moral information with the same severity with which he will punish those who offend against the clear light of divine revelation. Some sin against the obscure intimations of unassisted reason only, being destitute of the superior information communicated by a written law: their offences shall be punished in the way that reason may dictate. Others offend against a written and positive law which prohibits the crime and declares the penalty: by that law shall they be tried, and to its condemning sentence shall they be doomed.

16. *In that day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.*

There is a day coming, when the secrets of the heart shall be brought to light, and every man's character shall be made manifest. In that day God will allot the final condition of all mankind in exact correspondence to the truth of their character; and the gospel, which it is my honourable commission to publish to the world, announces that the me-

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[1] *Under a law.*] "They who shall be found to have transgressed the mere light of nature shall not come under the same rule with such as have enjoyed an extraordinary revelation."—Dr. Taylor, who considers ver. 13, 14, 15, as a comment upon the 12th.

dium through which this grand event is to take place is the Lord Jesus Christ, who may perhaps in some unknown and inconceivable manner preside in person as judge upon this solemn occasion [2]; and whose laws, as revealed in the gospel, will certainly constitute the rule of proceeding at this grand and final assize. Ch. II. Ver. 16.

4. In a parenthesis [3] the apostle justifies the assertion which he had made, that men shall be judged

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[2] As in the language of prophecy, the prophet is sometimes said to do that which he only foretells, see Jer. i. 10, Rev. xi. 6, it is possible that when it is said that Christ will judge the world, the meaning may be no more, than that the world will be judged and the final state of mankind decided agreeably to the solemn declarations of his gospel; and this supposition would afford an easy explanation of those texts which represent not only the apostles, but Christians in general, as assessors with Christ in the final judgement: for they also bear their solemn and united testimony to the same important truth. This interpretatior would also obviate the objections which some learned men have offered to the doctrine of the proper humanity of Jesus Christ, from the consideration of the extreme improbability that a mere human being should be appointed to the office of universal judge. It cannot however be doubted, that God is able to qualify any being for the office to which he may call him out, and he certainly will do it; and Dr. Priestley justly remarks, that they who make this objection do not sufficiently consider the wonderfully rapid progress in knowledge and in power which our Lord is necessarily making in the long interval antecedent to the day of judgement. Upon the whole, as the accomplishment of the prophecy can alone explain its awful import, our time will be better employed in preparing for the great event, than by indulging in random speculations upon a subject which we cannot comprehend. See Belsham's Calm Inquiry, Part I. Sect. x. 4. Dr. Priestley's Letters to Dr. Price, p. 140.

[3] *Parenthesis.*] This parenthesis, for the sake of perspicuity, I have placed after ver. 16.

Ch. II. according to the tenor of the dispensation under which they have lived, ver. 13—15.

Ver. 13. *For* it is *not the hearers of a law*[1] who are *just in the sight of God, but the doers of a law will be justified.*

Some may perhaps flatter themselves, that because they are indulged with the light of divine revelation they are the favourites of Heaven and are sure of acceptance. This is a most dangerous error; for privileges are only valuable as far as they are improved, and render the possessors of them wiser and better.

14. *For when the heathen, who have not a law, perform by nature the duties of the law, these, not*
15. *having a law, are a law to themselves: who show the work of the law written in their hearts, by the concurring testimony of conscience, and by mutual reasonings accusing and defending.*

The apostle having affirmed, ver. 12, that as many as sin under the Mosaic law shall be judged by that law, establishes his proposition upon the principle that it is not the mere possession, but the just improvement of external privileges which entitles a man to the favour of God. Not the mere hearers of the law, whatever veneration they may profess for it, or whatever value they may set upon their privilege, but those who practise the precepts

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[1] *A law.*] The definite article is omitted in the Alexandrine and other ancient copies, and the connexion seems to require it.

which they hear, and they alone, shall be accounted righteous in the sight of God. Ch. II. Ver. 15.

And having before asserted that the heathen, though ignorant of divine revelation and destitute of positive law, should nevertheless be punished for their crimes, he here justifies this assertion, by alleging the existence of a natural law in their own minds which approved virtue and condemned crime.

And first he argues from the actual existence of virtue in the heathen world. *For when the heathen, not having a law, perform by nature the duties of the law, these, not having a law, are a law to themselves, showing the work of the law written in their hearts.* In other words, the virtues of the heathen, who are ignorant of the revealed law, and who are prompted to them by the light of nature only, show that they possess a natural sense of right and wrong.

Their conscience also, bearing its concurring testimony, approving the right and condemning the wrong, is an additional proof that the work of the law is written in their hearts; or that the providence of God has so arranged their condition and circumstances, that without the aid of revelation they still possess the means of acquiring some knowledge of his moral law.

Also, their *mutual reasonings accusing or defending*. The great questions of morality were constant subjects of debate in the schools of the philosophers: what some asserted to be right, others condemned as wrong; and their discussions

Ch. II. Ver. 15. upon these interesting topics are an additional proof that the light of nature supplied them with means, however imperfect, of acquiring the knowledge of moral distinctions [1].

It may be observed here that the apostle allows that the heathen, who are altogether ignorant of divine revelation, may nevertheless, from the light of nature and reason, acquire a knowledge of the moral law of God and live in the practice of its duties, so as to be approved and rewarded by his just and good Creator. How different were the apostle's views from the system of many modern Christians, who delight in debasing and degrading human nature, and representing the creatures of God as born into the world in a state of unalloyed depravity, and under a sentence of condemnation to eternal misery!

5. The apostle now directly charges the Jews as guilty of the very crimes which they imputed to the heathen, and with circumstances of superior aggravation; and in support of his allegation he appeals to the testimony of the Jewish scriptures, ver. 17—24.

17. *Behold*[2], *thou bearest the name of a Jew, and reposest thyself on the law, and gloriest in*

[1] The interpretation here given of this parenthesis, and the illustration of the apostle's argument, are very ably supported by Dr. Taylor in his learned and judicious note upon the text.

[2] *Behold.*] The reading of many ancient and approved manuscripts is εἰ δε, "but if." See Griesbach and Newcome, who both adopt it.

God[3], *and knowest* his *will, and distinguishest* Ch. II.
things that differ[4], *having been instructed out of* Ver. 19.
the law; and art confident that thou art thyself a
guide of the blind, a light to them that are *in dark-*
ness, an instructor of the simple, a teacher of babes, 20.
having the form of true knowledge[5] *in the law.*
Thou then who teachest another, teachest thou not 21.
thyself? Thou who proclaimest that a man should
not steal, dost thou steal? Thou who forbiddest 22.
to commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery?
Thou who abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacri-
lege? Thou who gloriest in a law, dost thou by 23.
the transgression of that law dishonour God? For 24.
through you the name of God is blasphemed among
the Gentiles, as it is written.

The apostle having sufficiently prepared the mind of his Jewish readers by arguing upon general principles, equally applicable to Jews and Gentiles, now

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[3] This passage proves that the Jews prided themselves in their relation to God as in a peculiar sense their God, and shows how unlikely it was that the apostle should pass over this important circumstance in his enumeration of their privileges, Rom. ix. 4, 5. This consideration gives weight to the conjecture of Slichtingius, Whitby, and Taylor, as to the true reading of the fifth verse. See the Note on Rom. ix. 5.

[4] *Distinguishest things that differ.*] This is the interpretation of Beza and of the margin of the public version. Erasmus and others prefer the common translation, "approvest the things which are excellent." "discernest the things that are excellent." Newcome. "capable of distinguishing exactly between things lawful and forbidden." Taylor.

[5] *The form of true knowledge.*] Gr. "the form of knowledge and truth." "Μορφωσις, a plan, delineation, a sketch, or outline of any thing. 2 Tim. iii. 5. Bos *Exercit.* p. 100." Doddridge. "who art furnished with the whole plan and system of divine knowledge, and of the truth contained in the law." Taylor.

Ch. II. Ver. 24. brings his conclusion home to the Jew exclusively, and directly charges him with being equally, and even more guilty than the untaught and despised heathen.

17. *Behold, thou bearest the name of a Jew.* Thou thinkest it an honour, as in truth it is, to be a descendant of Abraham and the other patriarchs to whom the promises were made.

And reposest thyself on the law[1]. Thou thinkest thy state secure, because thou art a member of that community to which a revelation was vouchsafed.

And thou gloriest in God[2], as in a peculiar sense the God of your fathers and of your nation. Having declared himself in a special and appropriate sense the maker, the protector, the benefactor, the lawgiver, and the sovereign of the Jewish nation.

18. *And thou knowest his will, and distinguishest things that differ, being instructed out of the law.* Thou hast not been left like the heathen to those doubtful conclusions to which the light of nature leads, but thou hast been taught by a revelation from heaven both what to do and what to avoid; and that not only as to moral, but likewise to ceremonial precepts. Thou hast been instructed by the law to distinguish between clean and unclean, holy and unholy, so as to be able to keep yourselves

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[1] *On the law.*] "Thou restest on the law altogether, looking no further." Newcome.

[2] *Gloriest in God,*] *i. e.* "you rejoice in him as the object of your hope and dependance; you praise or speak well of him; you account it your honour that he is your God, and that you worship him." Taylor.

ceremonially pure, and separate from all other nations on the earth. Ch. II.

And art confident that thou art thyself a guide of the blind[3], *a light to them who are in darkness,* Ver. 19.
an instructor of the simple, a teacher of babes, 20.
having the form of true knowledge in the law.
Conceiving thyself to have attained a complete knowledge of God and duty from the law, which thou justly reverest as the standard of moral excellence and the perfect rule of duty, thou regardest thyself as eminently qualified to instruct the poor, ignorant, forlorn Gentile, whom thou hast been accustomed to regard as morally blind, involved in total darkness, and to treat with a supercilious and scornful air; as in comparison with thyself, a driveller and a child.

In such terms as these it was customary for the Jews to express their contempt of the idolatrous heathen. It is easy, therefore, to judge how offensive the apostle's doctrine must have been, both when he charged them, as in the present instance, with crimes equal to, or even greater than those of the Gentiles whom they so much despised; and when he taught, as upon other occasions, that the believing Gentile was admitted to equal privileges with the believing Jew; while the great mass of

[3] *Guide of the blind.*] "*Te esse a quo omnes gentes doceri possent.*"—"*Judæis hic ascribuntur, ex ipsorum judicio, tituli magnificentissimi, Gentibus, vilissima nomina.*" Grotius. "Blind, in darkness, foolish, babes, were appellations which the Jews gave to the Gentiles, signifying how much inferior to themselves they thought them in knowledge." Locke.

Ch. II. Ver. 20. the Jewish nation, on account of their unbelief, were excluded from covenant with God, and were reduced to a state equally deplorable with that of the idolatrous Gentile whom he despised and hated. This was the source of the chief part of the persecution which the apostle suffered from his countrymen in the course of his ministry.

21. *Thou then who teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?* Thou who imaginest thyself capable of teaching the ignorant and forlorn Gentile the doctrines and requisitions of the law, canst thou not instruct thyself in the great end and design of the law?

22. *Thou who proclaimest that a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou who forbiddest to commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery?* Are you yourselves detected in violating the plainest precepts of the law; and while you are teaching your heathen neighbours the great duties of honesty and chastity, and loudly declaiming against the contrary vices, are you convicted by your own consciences of the very crimes which you so ostentatiously condemn in others?

Thou who abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? While you abjure idolatry as dishonouring God and his worship, do you equally dishonour him by denying him that worship which his law requires, and robbing his altar of its dues under the pretence of tradition?

23. *Thou who gloriest in a law, dost thou by the transgression of that law dishonour God?* And

upon the whole is it not an undeniable truth, that while you make a boast of superior privilege, and hold the unenlightened Gentile in utter disdain, you are at the same time conscious, that by your own multiplied and aggravated offences you are disgracing a divine Institution, and bringing into contempt both the authority of the Law and the name and honour of God who gave it? Ch. II. Ver. 23.

For through you the name of God is blasphemed among the heathen, as it is written. To speak plainly and without any further circumlocution, I do allege and directly charge it upon you, the great mass of the Jewish nation, that by your notorious immoralities and crimes you have induced the Gentiles, who have no other means of judging of your Institute than from your conduct, to think meanly and to speak evil both of your Law and of your God, whom they necessarily regard as tolerating, if not authorizing, your flagitious conduct; and how indeed can they think or speak otherwise, if your character resembles the description which is given of it in your own sacred books? 24.

The apostle here proposed to introduce a number of passages selected from the Jewish scriptures which describe the wickedness of the Jewish people; but an objection occurring suddenly to his mind, he drops his argument for the present, and resumes it again at the tenth verse of the following chapter, the intermediate portion being occupied in discussing the collateral question.

That the apostle does not overcharge the moral

Ch. II. Ver. 24. character of the Jews in this place, any more than he had done that of the heathen in the preceding chapter, is evident from the testimony of their own contemporary historian, Josephus, who declares that the wickedness of his countrymen was so great, that if they had not been destroyed by the Romans, he verily believes that God would have exterminated them by fire from heaven, like Sodom and Gomorrha, as a terrible example to the world.

6. The apostle interrupts the course of his argument in order to prove that as outward profession would be of no use to the vicious Jew, so the want of it would be no disadvantage to the virtuous heathen, ver. 25—29.

25. *For indeed circumcision is of use if thou perform*
the law; but if thou be a transgressor of the law,
26. *thy circumcision is become uncircumcision. If then*
the uncircumcision keep the righteous precepts of
the law, shall not his uncircumcision be regarded
as circumcision?

It cannot indeed be denied that a Jew has a great advantage over a heathen while he observes the precepts of the law; but if he transgress the law, his privilege is of no value, he reduces himself to the state of a heathen. Can it then be denied that if a heathen, who is destitute of Jewish privileges and professions, should under these disadvantages live in the practice of virtue, he will, by parity of reason, be in as safe and happy a state as if he had been born and educated a Jew?

And shall not the natural uncircumcision, if it keep the law, condemn thee, who notwithstanding thy legal circumcision[1] *art a transgressor of the law?* Ch. II. Ver. 27.

Shall not the virtuous, though by the accident of birth unprivileged and uncovenanted heathen, by the rectitude of his conduct, notwithstanding great moral disadvantages, justify thy condemnation, O wicked Jew, who, notwithstanding thy birthright and peculiar privileges, art become an habitual and impenitent transgressor?

For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, 28.
neither is that *circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he* is *a Jew who is one inwardly,* 29.
and circumcision is that *of the heart, in the spirit,*

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[1] Notwithstanding thine external circumcision, τον δια γραμματος και περιτομης, literally "thee, who by the letter and circumcision," as the public version renders it; *i. e.* who being literally circumcised, or circumcised according to the letter of the law. A hendiadys which Mr. Wakefield renders, "who hast a written rule of circumcision," and thinks it parallel to ὑμεις δια της γλωσσης, 1 Cor. xiv. 9, which he translates, "ye who speak with a different language." Archbishop Newcome translates the words, "who under the letter of circumcision." Dr. Taylor explains them, "who in presumptuous dependance upon an outward profession." It is obvious that the apostle in this context uses the abstract for the concrete: circumcision and uncircumcision for circumcised and uncircumcised, *i. e.* Jew and Gentile. It is not perhaps easy to ascertain whether the apostle means to express the Jew who lives under the law of circumcision, or who has been circumcised according to law. The general sense of the passage cannot be mistaken. It is a peculiar construction of the preposition δια in these two passages, which Mr. Wakefield, in his note upon 1 Cor. xiv. 9, says, "seems to have escaped all his predecessors, whether critics, translators, or interpreters."

Ch. II. Ver. 29. *not in the letter*[1], *whose praise is not from men but from God.*

That man has very little reason to boast, who has no other pretensions to the divine favour than the circumstance of his being a descendant of Abraham, and early initiated into the community of the chosen people; for this is of no use without a virtuous life: but he is the true Israelite, in the only valuable sense of the word, who lives in the practice of those virtues and of that purity of heart and life which it was the main design of the law to inculcate, and of its rites to symbolize; and such an one, however he may be despised by those who value themselves on their outward privileges and profession, will be as highly approved by God, who searches the heart, as if his pedigree were without a blot, and his conformity to the ritual law were unimpeachable and without defect.

How earnestly and how forcibly does the apostle here plead the cause of the virtuous heathen; and how decidedly does he declare his superiority to the privileged but supercilious and unrighteous Jew! So little countenance does the Christian religion afford to that narrow-spirited doctrine, that the heathen, however virtuous, are excluded from salvation on account of their not believing in the gospel, of which they had never heard.

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[1] *The letter,*] *i.e.* not externally according to the letter of the law, but internally by purity and self-denial, of which circumcision is the symbol. See ver. 27.

7. The apostle shows, that though the Jew might forfeit his privileges by his crimes, the advantages he possessed were nevertheless real, and of high importance, ch. iii. 1—9. Ch. III.

It was natural for the Jew, after he had been taught that the virtuous Gentile would be raised to a level with the privileged Jew, and that the vicious Jew would be degraded to a state worse than that of the ignorant heathen, to inquire what was the value of Jewish privileges, and what the superiority of a holy to an uncovenanted and unholy state. The apostle had indeed, ch. ii. 25, introduced his remarks upon the precedence which he claims for the virtuous Gentile over the wicked Jew, with observing cursorily, that the profession of Judaism was indeed advantageous to the virtuous Jew; but the complete discussion of this point he had reserved. He now resumes the subject, and discusses it in the dialogue form, introducing a Jew urging objections, to which he makes replies[2].

[1.] The Jew demands to know in what his pre-eminence consists, ver. 1.

What advantage then hath the Jew? or what is *the benefit of circumcision?* Ver. 1.

You say that circumcision is an advantage, if we keep the law; and yet you tell us, that the virtuous heathen is upon a par with us. What, then, is the

[2] See Dr. Taylor's admirable Commentary upon this paragraph.

Ch. III. Ver. 1. use of the Jewish peculiarity, or the advantage of the Jew above the heathen?

[2.] To this question the apostle returns a pertinent answer, ver. 2.

2. *Much every way*[1]*: chiefly, because the oracles of God were intrusted to them*[2].

The advantages possessed by the Jewish nation are numerous. I shall reserve the detail to another opportunity (see chap. ix.): at present I shall only mention the chief; namely, that to this chosen people were committed the sacred records of divine appearances, the law and the prophets, the rule of duty and its awful sanctions, the promises and the threatenings, and particularly those great promises relating to the Messiah, and the invaluable blessings which through him would be communicated to all the nations of the earth. These are surely

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[1] "There is always," says Dr. Priestley in his excellent note upon this text, "a real advantage in superior knowledge; because it puts it into men's power to become greater and happier than they could have been without that knowledge. It is a true maxim of Lord Bacon, that knowledge is power; and if this be the case with respect to natural knowledge, it is much more so with respect to religious knowledge. A true knowledge of God, of his perfections and moral government, of the conditions on which we live here, of the proper duties of life, and of our expectations after death, is such knowledge as tends most of all to ennoble men's minds, to enlarge their views, and thereby make them superior beings to those who have never been taught to look any further than the present world, who have no knowledge of the true end of their being, and of the government under which they live."

[2] "were confirmed to them by proof." Wakefield, who refers to Gen. xlii. 20.

very important privileges, and powerful incentives to duty, whether they are improved or not. Ch. III. Ver. 2.

[3.] The Jew proposes a second objection, ver. 3.

But what if some have proved unfaithful, shall their unfaithfulness annul the faithfulness of God[3]*?* 3.

Shall God cast us off as a nation, because some of us have transgressed his covenant and been disobedient to his laws? Will the guilt of some entail the rejection of all; and release the Almighty from the obligation of his own promise?

[4.] The apostle again returns a satisfactory reply, ver. 4.

Far from it[4]*. Yea, let God be acknowledged faithful, though every man should be false. As it* 4.

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[3] "The term faith," says Dr. Priestley, "has two significations, viz. mere belief or assent to truth, and also fidelity, faithfulness, or being true to a promise or engagement. This apostle, as well as other ancient writers, seems to have been too fond of what we now call a play upon words, using the same term in different senses; which, though it may sometimes amuse and entertain, yet too often misleads, the reader. In the former part of this verse, the word faith is used in the first of the above-mentioned senses, viz. for mere belief; and in the latter part in the second of them, viz. fidelity." Dr. P. also observes, that in ver. 5 there is a similar play upon the words righteousness and unrighteousness.—Dr. Taylor, however, does not allow this ambiguity in the present case, but assigns corresponding meanings to the original words in both clauses of the sentence, viz. faithfulness and unfaithfulness; *i. e.* adherence and treachery to stipulated engagements.

[4] *Far from it.*] Μη γενοιτο, Let it not be: in the public version, God forbid. Dr. Taylor translates it, By no means; and so Wakefield.

Ch. III. Ver. 4. *is written*[1], *That thou mightest be justified in thy declarations, and mightest prevail when thou art called to account.*

q. d. I never said, I never insinuated, that all would be condemned for the transgressions of a few. No: if God rejects all, it is because all have transgressed; and under these circumstances the punishment of all would be no impeachment of the faithfulness of God. But the words of the Psalmist, Psalm li. 4, upon another occasion, would be strictly applicable in the present case; and the divine perfections would be abundantly justified in the severest measures of his government.

[5.] The Jew proceeds to urge another objection of so bold a nature, that the apostle thinks it necessary to thrust in a caution, that he is not writing in his own person, but in the character of a cavilling Jew, ver. 5—7.

5. *But if our unrighteousness recommend the righteousness of God, what shall we say?* Would not *God* be *unrighteous for inflicting punishment*[2]*?*

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[1] *As it is written*] in Ps. li. 4. The apostle quotes from the LXX., and applies the passage as a general maxim, that the dispensations of God, when brought to the test, will always be found to correspond with his declarations; so that if the Divine Being is brought to the bar, he will be sure of an acquittal, and will come off victorious after a fair, however rigid, trial. See Doddridge *in loc.* Elsner's *Observ.* v. 2. p. 18, 19. Bos *in loc.* Dr. Taylor thinks, that though the apostle quotes from the LXX., he argues from the Hebrew; which is not probable.

[2] *For inflicting punishment.*] See Wakefield

Would not God be unjust, and would it not be a violation of his promise, to punish us for our transgressions, and cast us out of his covenant,—when our wickedness would afford him an opportunity of displaying his own faithfulness to greater advantage? Ch. III. Ver. 5.

The apostle, aware of the immoral tendency of this objection, interrupts the course of it to warn his reader that he is writing under an assumed character, ver. 6.

I speak as a man[3]. *By no means; for how shall God judge the world?* 6.

Recollect that I am not writing in my own person, but under a fictitious character. I am urging the objection of a cavilling Jew, who argues that his nation ought not to be rejected; because, the worse they are, the more would the goodness of God be magnified in keeping his promise—than which nothing can be more unreasonable and immoral. It would destroy at once all the sanctions of virtue; for, if the more wicked men are, the better is their title to divine mercy, there is an end of all moral government and righteous retribution.

Having thus cautioned his reader, the apostle pursues the adversary's objection, ver. 7.

For if the faithfulness of God has abounded more to his glory by my unfaithfulness, why am I still condemned as a sinner? 7.

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[3] *I speak as a man.*] "I speak freely, as with a man." Wakefield. "Here I represent the reasoning of an unbelieving Jew." Taylor, more properly.

Ch. III. Ver. 7. Why am I not rather approved and rewarded for my unbelief, which affords so glorious an opportunity to the Divine Being, of manifesting his infinite and unchangeable faithfulness?

[6.] To this impious objection the apostle makes an indignant reply, ver. 8.

8. *And*, why dost thou not add [1], *as we are maliciously reported, and as some affirm that we teach, Let us do evil that good may come? whose condemnation is just.*

Why do not you speak out? Why do not you act up to the principle which you advance, and which our enemies most falsely and injuriously impute to the teachers of the Christian doctrine? If the mercy of God and his faithfulness to his promises are magnified in proportion to the magnitude and multiplicity of your offences, why do not you say at once, Let us yield to every temptation, let us hesitate at no enormity; for our crimes only afford the Divine Being a more favourable opportunity of displaying his mercy? Absurd, abominable doctrine! Justly, indeed, are they who admit and who act upon these odious principles, liable to that righteous condemnation, to that insupportable doom, which they thus insult and defy.

The apostle here shows the folly of the principle upon which his opponent argues, by reducing it to

[1] *Why dost thou not add.*] "why dost thou not then say." Wakefield. "why do you not draw this into a general rule and maxim." Taylor.

an absurdity; and by showing the impious and immoral consequences to which it necessarily and directly leads. Ch. III. Ver. 8.

The apostle complains that his enemies charged him with teaching licentious doctrine; probably founding their charge upon a misapprehension, not uncommon in modern times, of his doctrine of justification by faith without works: by which he meant nothing more than that by faith in Jesus as the Messiah, they were admitted into the Christian community, without submitting to the Jewish ritual; but which his opponents understood, or pretended to understand, as preaching up pardon and salvation through faith in Christ, unconnected with the practice of virtue. This he justly represents as a base calumny upon himself and his associates; and solemnly denounces the judgements of God upon those who hold, and who act upon, such nefarious principles.

Thus we see that it is no new thing for those who profess or who teach the pure unadulterated doctrine of the gospel to be charged with sapping the foundations of morality; nor ought such to be discouraged by these calumnies from the firm and faithful discharge of their duty. So persecuted they the prophets and apostles who were before them. Let them put to silence and to shame the insinuations of malice and the clamours of calumny, by the purity of their doctrine and the sanctity of their lives.

Ch. III. Ver. 9. [7.] The Jew now proceeds to put his final question, ver. 9.

How then[1] *? are we better* than they?

You allow that our moral advantages are superior to those of the heathen, and we cannot but admit that we have not improved them to the utmost; but surely you will agree, that in a general view the privileged Jews excel the ignorant and idolatrous heathen both in knowledge and in virtue, and therefore have a better claim to the privileges of the gospel?

[8.] To this question the apostle gives a decided negative, which brings him back to the point from which he had digressed, ver. —9.

—9. *No, not at all: For we have before proved, that Jews and Gentiles are all in a state of sin.*

I can by no means allow that your moral state is in any respect superior to that of the idolatrous heathen, so as to give you any claim to further privileges. For though your advantages have been many and great, I have already plainly shown, that you have altogether forfeited your privileges by your

[1] *How then?*] Τι ουν in a dialogue, and when τι has no following substantive to agree with it, is a form of introducing another question or objection by the inquirer. See Dr. Taylor's learned note on ver. 3. He further observes, in his note on ver. 9, "That the apostle in his arguments considers Jews and Gentiles as a body in their collective capacity, and that he is arguing for a justification agreeable to such a capacity: *q. d.* Well; but have not we Jews a better claim than the Gentiles to the blessings and privileges of the kingdom of God?"

crimes; and I am now about to prove, by an induction of particulars, that your own scriptures confirm the just but melancholy representation. Ch. III. Ver. 9.

This brings the apostle back to the point from which he had digressed at the 24th verse of the preceding chapter; and, taking up his words again, he pursues the course of his argument, by alleging the testimony of their own scriptures.

8. The apostle, returning from his digression, confirms his description of the Jewish nation by the testimony of the Jewish scriptures, ver. 10—20.

As it is written, "There is none righteous; no, not one." 10.

At the 24th verse of the preceding chapter, the apostle had directly charged the Jews with having excited the indignation of the heathen by their scandalous immoralities. He adds, "as it is written;" meaning to confirm his charge by testimonies from the Old Testament. But, an objection occurring to his mind, he drops his main argument, till after he has discussed it; and this discussion being finished, he now resumes his argument, by taking up the words which he had used when the interruption took place. Similar parentheses are not unfrequent in the apostle's writings, and add greatly to the obscurity of his style[2].

This collection of texts is taken from different

[2] A very remarkable parenthesis occurs in the Epistle to the Ephesians, of the whole third chapter.

Ch. III. Ver. 10. passages [1] in the scriptures of the Old Testament; perhaps with a design to show, that the Jews in every age had been a disobedient people.

The intention of the apostle is to prove, that the Jews as a nation had by their wickedness forfeited their claim to the privileges of a peculiar people; and therefore, that they possessed no better title to the blessings of the gospel than the idolatrous heathen.

The argument is properly national, not personal. Among profligate Jews and idolatrous heathen there might be some illustrious exceptions; some eminent examples of virtue, amidst great and prevailing degeneracy. But considered as a body, both Jews and heathen were a disobedient and wicked race: so far from meriting by their conduct an extension of their privileges, they were justly obnoxious to condemnation by the law of the respective dispensations under which they lived.

—10. "*There is none righteous; no, not one.*"

There is not an individual who can plead that he has himself so fully complied with all the requisitions of the law, as to be in a strict and legal sense

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[1] *Taken from different passages;*] viz. ver. 10—12 from Psalm xiv. 1—3; ver. 13 from Psalm v. 9, cxl. 3; ver. 14 from Psalm x. 7; ver. 15—17 from Isa. lix. 7, 8; and ver. 18 from Psalm xxxvi. 1.—In some copies of the LXX. all the verses are found together in the fourteenth Psalm, which has very much the appearance of interpolation. The apostle, probably without any particular reason, set down these passages as they came into his mind; and repeats them as descriptive of the Jewish nation collectively, and by no means as applicable to any individual.

perfectly innocent and free from every offence in heart and life. Ch. III.

"*There is no one who understandeth; there is none who diligently seeketh after God.*" Ver. 11.

None have formed just conceptions of the Divine character and government; none have taken the pains they ought to have done to acquire that right knowledge upon these interesting subjects which is contained in the Law and the prophets.

"*All are turned aside: they are altogether become unprofitable: there is none who practiseth goodness; no, not even one.*" 12.

All are transgressors of the divine law. Instead of loving and doing good to others, they have neglected and abandoned their neighbour when he wanted their aid. In short, there is not one, not a single individual, who has fully performed his duty [2].

"*Their throat* is *an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have deceived: the venom of asps* is *under their lips.*" 13.

They deal so largely in fraud, falsehood, and

[2] It is difficult to say to whom the original description was intended by the Psalmist to be applied: surely, not to every individual Israelite in his day, nor even to the majority of his countrymen: perhaps he refers to his enemies only, who opposed his accession to the crown. He might possibly have too bad an opinion of his countrymen; as it is plain that Elijah had, who, when complaining of the universal degeneracy of his countrymen, was rebuked by the oracle, and told that Israel contained seven thousand pious worshipers of the true God who had not bowed their knee to Baal, 1 Kings xix. 18; and David himself acknowledges, in Psalm cxvi. 11, that it was "in haste" that he said "All men are liars."

Ch. III. Ver. 13. calumny, that their very breath is tainted, like the effluvia of an open grave, or the venom of a viper. It is dangerous to approach them.

14. 15. "*Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet* are *swift to shed blood.*"

They give vent to their malignant passions by the bitterest execrations; and where they have opportunity, they do not hesitate to gratify their revenge in the blood of those who have offended them.

16. 17. "*Ruin and misery* are *in their ways: and the way of peace they have not known.*"

All their thoughts and purposes against those who are the objects of their resentment, are revenge and mischief: and as to measures of peace and reconciliation, they never occur to their thoughts.

18. "*The fear of God is not before their eyes.*"

This is the more surprising, considering how liable they are themselves to the righteous judgement of God, for their own multiplied transgressions. But this they do not regard; and, laying aside all apprehension of a future judgement, they are determined to gratify their malignant and revengeful passions, whatever may be the consequence.

19. *Now we know, that whatsoever the law saith*[1],

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[1] None of these passages are to be found in the writings of Moses: by the *Law*, therefore, the apostle must mean the Scriptures of the Old Testament. See Doddridge. Dr. Priestley, in his judicious note upon this text, observes "that neither with respect to Jews nor Gentiles could the great mass or

it speaketh to those who are under the law: so that every mouth is stopped[2], *and the whole world stands convicted before God.* Ch. III. Ver. 19.

You will observe that all these passages which I have recited, have been taken from the sacred books of the Jews; they must therefore be considered as descriptive of the character of Jews: the heathen have no concern in them. But if such be the character of the Jews as a nation, as it is described by their own writers, there can be no doubt, that in the sight of God they are equally guilty with the heathen; and if arraigned at the divine tribunal, both Jew and Gentile must stand alike speechless, and are equally obnoxious to the righteous judgement of their Maker.

It is observable here, that the word Law is put for the Jewish scriptures in general, none of these passages being quoted from the Pentateuch, but all of them from the Psalms or the prophets.

How far the apostle's argument is strictly logical, may be doubted. The scope of it seems to be this: Your own writers give such a description of

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bulk of the people have consisted of such profligate characters as the apostle describes; for then society could not have subsisted. But what is of chief importance, though not mentioned by the apostle, is, that some of the worst vices which he here enumerates were connived at in the worship of the heathen gods, whereas all impurity as well as cruelty was forbidden in the laws of Moses; so that when the Jews were guilty of those vices, they were much more criminal than the Gentiles, whose very religion favoured them."

[2] *So that every mouth is stopped.*] "So ἵνα and the rest following should be rendered. 1 Cor. vii. 29; 2 Cor. i. 17; Gal. v. 17; Eph. ii. 9." Taylor.

Ch. III. Ver. 19. the wickedness of your nation in their time, as must necessarily lead to the conclusion, that men of such a character had justly forfeited all the privileges of the Mosaic covenant. But you will not pretend that the Jews of the present day are better than their ancestors in the time of David and the prophets. Consequently, they also have forfeited all their peculiar privileges, and stand at present upon no better ground than the idolatrous and despised heathen.

It may, however, reasonably be doubted, not only whether the cited passages were applicable to every individual, but whether they were intended by the respective writers to apply to the Jews as a nation, in the age in which they lived. The fact, however, is certain, that the character of the Jewish nation at the time when the apostle wrote, was in the highest degree profligate.

9. The apostle draws his grand conclusion, ver. 20.

20. *Therefore, by the works of a law shall no flesh be justified in his presence; for by a law* is *conviction of sin*[1].

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[1] *Conviction of sin.*] So Wakefield, επιγνωσις, *perfectior et exactior scientia.* Acts xxiv. 8. "Επιγινωσκειν, *de judice adhibetur, qui ex reo, quæstione habita, veritatem accusationis cognoscit.*" Schleusner. The law so clearly defines the nature of sin, that no one can doubt of the guilt of the offender, and of his liableness to punishment. "Law is so far from giving them a title to blessings, that it only discovers their sin, as deserving of God's wrath." Taylor.

Neither Jew nor Gentile can plead a right to the privileges of the gospel upon the ground of law; for the Gentiles having been proved to be transgressors of the law of nature, and the Jews of the law of Moses, law now serves no other purpose than the conviction of both parties, and leaves the whole human race under a sentence of condemnation, with no other refuge or dependance than the divine mercy. Ch. III. Ver. 20.

This is the important conclusion, to which it was the apostle's design to lead his readers. He humbles the haughty and supercilious Jew to a level with, if not an inferiority to, the despised Gentile; that so, being equally indebted to the Divine mercy for the blessings of the gospel, he may possess no claim to superiority under the new dispensation.

CASE III.

Jews and Gentiles united.

The apostle shows that faith alone, without the works of law, is the common and the only ground of admission to the privileges of the gospel, both to Jew and Gentile; which necessarily excludes all pleas of merit, and all claims to superiority, in those who are thus received. Ch. iii. 21—31.

1. God of his own free mercy has communicated the blessings of the gospel, through Jesus Christ, to Jew and Gentile without distinction, ver. 21—26.

Ch. III. Ver. 21. 22. *But now, the justification of God, independently of law*[1], *(even that justification of God by faith in Jesus Christ* which was *attested by the law and the prophets,) is manifested to all*[2] *who believe. For* 23. *there is no distinction: inasmuch as all have sinned,* 24. *and come short of the glory of God. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption* 25. *which* is *by Christ Jesus: whom God has set forth* as *a mercy seat*[3] *in his own blood*[4], *for the*

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[1] *Independently of law.*] See Wakefield.

[2] *To all.*] The received text adds, "and upon all:" but these words are omitted in the Alexandrine and other ancient copies, are disapproved by Griesbach, and obscure the sense.

[3] *A mercy seat.*] ἱλαστηριον. This word uniformly signifies the mercy seat wherever it occurs, both in the Old Testament and the New, and is every where rendered by that word in the public Version; and so it ought to have been translated here. See Exod. xxv. 22; Numb. vii. 8, 9; Lev. xvii. 2; Heb. ix. 5. The mercy seat was the golden lid of the ark of the covenant, upon which the Shechinah or cloud of glory rested, and from which oracles were dispensed. Christ is compared to the mercy seat, as "it is upon him," says Dr. Taylor, "the grace of God takes its stand, erects its throne, and is declared and is dispensed to us."

[4] *In his own blood.*] That is, the blood of Christ himself. "The atonement under the law was made by blood sprinkled on the mercy seat. Christ, says St. Paul, is now shown by God to be the real propitiatory, in his own blood. See Heb. ix. 25, 26." Locke. Lev. xvi. 13, 14, Aaron is required, on the day of atonement, to sprinkle the blood of the sacrificed bullock and goat upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat. Christ, being represented both as priest and victim, is here described as sprinkling and consecrating the mercy seat with his own blood. The received text reads, "by faith in his blood;" but the words δια της πιστεως, by faith, are wanting in the Alexandrine manuscript, and are probably spurious. Dr. Taylor, though he retains the words, observes, that "faith in Christ's blood is a mode of expression which occurs no where in Scripture but in this place:" probably, therefore, it did not originally occur here.

declaration of his method of *justification, with respect to the remission of sins already committed, through the forbearance of God: for the declaration,* I say, *of his* method of *justification at this present time, that he might be just*[5] *and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus*[6]. Ch. III. Ver. 25. 26.

For the perfect understanding of this difficult passage it is necessary to remember that sin, in a technical sense in the apostle's writings, signifies a state of exclusion from the covenant of God, and from its privileges and promises; and sinners are those who exist in an uncovenanted state. Such was the state of the Gentile world by nature, and of the Jews by transgression.

In contradistinction to this, righteousness in a technical sense signifies a covenant or holy state, and justification expresses the means by which sinners are brought into this state; and they are righteous or holy who have been introduced into a covenant state, and who are made partakers of its privileges, promises, and blessings. Such were the Jews under the Mosaic dispensation, and believers under the gospel.

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[5] *Might be just:*] *i. e.* "to all his creatures; admitting them into the outward privileges of the Christian church upon this sole condition, that they believe in Jesus Christ." Newcome. *Just and the justifier: q. d.* the just justifier, the equitable, the impartial dispenser of mercy to all who believe, of whatever nation or description.

[6] *Who believeth.*] Gr. "who is of the faith of Jesus." See Gal. iii. 7, 9. Οἱ ἐκ πίστεως, they who are of faith, *i. e.* they who expect justification by faith. See also Rom. iii. 30. Περιτομὴν ἐκ πίστεως, the circumcision who believe. Vide Mr. Wakefield's note.

Ch. III. Ver. 26. There are two ways by which men may be supposed to obtain admission into the gospel covenant. The first is by a claim of right on the ground of merit, because they had fully improved their antecedent blessings, the Gentile his law of nature, and the Jew the dispensation of Moses. These claims the apostle has completely refuted: the only remaining mode of admission, therefore, is by free grace or favour, through faith in Jesus as the Christ, offered by the unmerited mercy of God equally to Jew and Gentile, without any regard to the requisitions of antecedent law. This doctrine the apostle proceeds to illustrate.

21. *But now, the justification of God, independently*
22. *of law, (even that justification of God by faith in Jesus Christ* which was *attested by the law and the prophets,) is manifested to all who believe.*

The claim of right is cancelled: Jew and Gentile are equally sinners; they are equally cast out of covenant privileges, and equally liable to condemnation. But God has not left his frail and fallen creatures without help and without hope. He is even now, at this very time, inviting them to enter into a covenant state. He is publishing that new and gracious dispensation to which the law of Moses points, and which the prophets of former ages have foretold. He has chosen and constituted Jesus of Nazareth to be the promised Messiah; and all who believe in and obey him as such, are received into the new covenant, and admitted to the privileges of sons of God, without any regard

whatever to any previous institute or dispensation under which they may have lived. Ch. III.

For there is no distinction: inasmuch as all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Ver. 23.

I say all, without exception; for there is no difference between the privileged Jew and the unprivileged Gentile, both parties having equally transgressed their respective institutes, having equally failed in their duty to God, having equally forfeited their antecedent privileges, and being equally obnoxious to the sentence of the violated law.

Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is by Christ Jesus[1]. 24.

All who believe in Christ are raised from a state of condemnation to a state of life, liberty, and privilege: but not by any antecedent merits of their own. Far from it. They are introduced into this

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[1] *Redemption which is by Christ Jesus.*] "That redeeming," says Mr. Locke in his excellent note upon this passage, "in the sacred Scripture language, signifies, not precisely paying an equivalent, is so clear, that nothing can be more. I shall refer my reader to three or four places amongst a great number, Exod. vi. 6; Deut. vii. 8, xv. 15, xxiv. 18. But if any one will, from the literal signification of the word in English, persist in it against St. Paul's declarations, that it necessarily implies an equivalent price paid, I desire him to consider to whom; and that if we will strictly adhere to the metaphor, it must be to those whom the redeemed are in bondage to, and from whom we are redeemed, viz. sin and Satan. If he will not believe his own system for this, let him believe St. Paul's words, Tit. ii. 14, 'who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.' Nor could the price be paid to God in strictness of justice, (for that is made the argument here,) unless the same person ought, by that strict justice, to have both the thing redeemed and the price paid for its redemption. For it is to God that we are redeemed. See Rev. v. 9."

Ch. III. Ver. 24. new and happy state by the free, unpurchased, unmerited mercy of God, who for this purpose has appointed Jesus of Nazareth to be the great deliverer of Jew and Gentile, of bondage and misery, by publishing to the world the joyful tidings of pardon and peace.

Redemption is deliverance from bondage. In its primary sense, by purchase; but frequently, by any other means. The Gentiles were in servitude to idolatry and vice, and the Jews to the law and to pharisaic tradition. From this servitude they are redeemed by Christ. How? Not surely by paying an equivalent; but by the declarations of mercy in the gospel, as the apostle himself explains it in the verse immediately following.

25. *Whom God hath set forth* as *a mercy seat in his own blood, for the declaration of his* method of *justification, with respect to*[1] *the remission of sins already committed, through the forbearance of God.*

Jesus Christ is the messenger of God, to publish his dispensation of mercy to mankind; and to fulfill his commission, he offered up his life. He is the mercy seat, on which the cloud of glory rests; sprinkled and consecrated by his own blood, as that of old was by the blood of the appointed victim.

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[1] *With respect to.*] "Δια την παρεσιν, in relation to the passing over, &c. Δια, with an accusative, frequently signifies with respect or in relation to. See chap. viii. 10, note." Taylor. See also Newcome and Raphelius *in loc.* John xi. 15, 42, xii. 9, 30; Rom. ii. 24, iv. 23, vi. 19, viii. 11.

On this sacred basis divine mercy takes its stand, and proclaims the commencement of a new and glorious æra. It announces a dispensation of grace, in which all, whether Jew or Gentile, shall be received into favour, notwithstanding all past transgressions; and which particularly illustrates the reason of the divine forbearance, in not executing judgement upon past transgressions, since a dispensation of mercy was in the divine contemplation which should efface them all, and restore to favour, peace, and hope, all who would submit to its reasonable terms. Ch. III. Ver. 25.

For the declaration of his method of *justification at this present time, that he might be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.* 26.

Divine mercy having thus appointed Jesus to be the medium of the new dispensation, has thought fit to make it known to the world in the present age, the age in which it is our happiness to live, and which infinite wisdom has selected as the fittest and the best for the introduction of this new and benevolent scheme. And as faith in Jesus is the easy, the reasonable, and the sole condition of admission to the privileges of the new covenant, these blessings are equally open to all, whether Jew or Gentile. And thus hath God approved himself the kind parent and the equitable and impartial ruler of all his reasonable creatures. He is just to all, while he thus justifies all who believe without any exception.

This appears to me to be the true interpretation

Ch. III. Ver. 26. of this difficult and much mistaken passage; and thus understood, it affords no foundation for the commonly received doctrine of the Atonement, upon which many lay so improper a stress, and of which this passage is considered as one of the chief supports. But, in order to extract any appearance of argument in favour of this unscriptural doctrine, it is necessary—First, To interpret the word REDEMPTION, which often expresses deliverance without purchase, as necessarily including a ransom paid. Secondly, To annex the sense of *propitiation* to a word, which in the scriptures both of the Old and New Testament uniformly signifies a *propitiatory* or mercy seat. Thirdly, To receive as the genuine text a reading which is wanting in some of the best copies, and which is unwarranted by any similar phraseology in the New Testament, viz. faith in the blood of Christ. And finally, To interpret the expression, that "God may be just," as alluding to a satisfaction made to justice by the atonement of Christ, when there is no proof that such satisfaction was ever required, or such atonement ever made; and when the words admit of a sense more obvious, and much better suited to the connexion and to the train of the apostle's argument.

In this way, by false readings and erroneous interpretations, the grossest corruptions of the Christian doctrine are often obtruded upon the world, as the genuine doctrines of the New Testament and the dictates of inspiration.

2. This method of justification excludes boasting; it vindicates the impartiality of God, and lays the best foundation for the practice of virtue, ver. 27—31. Ch. III.

Where then is *boasting? It is excluded. By what law?* by the law *of works? No: but by the law of faith. For we are come*[1] *to the conclusion that a man is justified by faith independently of any works of law.* Ver. 27. 28.

What now becomes of the boasting of the privileged Jew? of his fancied superiority to the uncovenanted Gentile? It is all at an end. He must be content to rank upon a level with his heathen neighbour. And by what authority is he reduced to this state of equality? does the law of Moses place him there? No, truly. Had this law been kept, he would have had a just claim to pre-eminence; but this privilege he has forfeited by transgression, and faith is now the appointed and only mode of access to the blessings of the new covenant. And this way is open equally to Jew and Gentile. FOR, after a fair appeal to experience and to scripture, we have been compelled to this conclusion, that the possession of the privileges of the gospel is to be obtained by faith, and not by any antecedent merit in obeying either the natural or the ceremonial law.

Is *God* the God *of the Jews only?* Is he *not* 29.

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[1] *For we are come.*] "γαρ." Griesbach. The received text reads "therefore," ουν.

Ch. III. Ver. 30. *also* the God *of the Gentiles? Surely of the Gentiles also: For* it is *the same God who justifieth the circumcised who have faith*[1], *and the uncircumcised through the same faith.*

All this is perfectly agreeable to the impartial goodness of God. The Jew glories, and justly glories, in God as his God: it is a thought which inspires his heart with joy and triumph. But is the favour of God confined to the Hebrew nation only? Is he not the Maker, the Preserver, the Benefactor, the Friend and Father of all his reasonable creatures? of the heathen as well as the Jew? Surely God is the great universal Parent, and is equally kind to all his rational offspring. Well then does it become his impartial and unbounded goodness to extend the blessings of the gospel to the heathen upon the same easy terms upon which they are granted to the Jew. All are justified by faith.

Nothing can be more reasonable than the doctrine thus laid down by the apostle; and yet nothing could be more offensive to the conceited, narrow-spirited Jew, who was desirous of engross-

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[1] *The circumcised who have faith.*] περιτομην εκ πιστεως, the circumcision; *i. e.* the Jews who believe, and who expect justification by faith. There is no reason to suppose, as most expositors do, any antithesis or correlation between εκ πιστεως and δια της πιστεως. So Gal. iii. 7, 9, οι εκ πιστεως, "they who believe, who are of the party of faith, are justified with believing Abraham." In opposition to οι εξ εργων νομου, they who are of the party of the law, who expect justification by works of law. Gal. iii. 2, 5, 10.

ing the favour of God to himself, and who could not endure the thought of being depressed to a level with the heathen, whom he despised and abhorred. The apostle Paul himself was once as illiberal as the most rigid Pharisee; and the catholic, generous spirit which he now discovers was not the result of his own mature reflection, but the act of divine mercy, which transformed him at once from a savage persecutor to a humble, penitent believer, and which selected and qualified him to preach the gospel to the Gentile world. And this extraordinary change produced in the views and temper of the apostle, is a very strong presumption in favour of the divine authority under which he acted and taught. Ch. III. Ver. 30.

He concludes this argument by entering a caution against the abuse of the doctrine which he had laid down of justification by faith without works.

Do we then destroy law through faith? Far from it: yea, we establish law. 31

Can it be supposed that when I state that the only way of admission into the new covenant, and to the privileges of the gospel, is through faith in Jesus as the Messiah, without any respect to antecedent merit in obeying the natural or the ceremonial law, that I thereby mean to release believers in Christ from all regard to the law of God, and to confound the distinction between right and wrong? Nothing could be further from my thoughts than such a doctrine as this; and I shall soon take an opportunity to show not only that a belief in the gospel is perfectly reconcileable with obedience, but

Ch. III. Ver. 31. that the motives of the gospel are of the highest efficacy to purify the hearts and lives of the converted Gentiles; and that with regard to the Jew, they are beyond comparison more operative than the precepts and the sanctions of the law.

The apostle resumes this important subject in the sixth and seventh chapters; and in the mean time he proceeds to allege some additional arguments to establish his favourite principle, that under the dispensation of the gospel all men are equally regarded as the children of God; and that the descendant of Abraham has no privilege above the rest of mankind.

SECTION II.

Ch. IV. *The apostle argues, that the privileges of the gospel are the free unmerited gift of God to all mankind without distinction, from the case of Abraham, the pattern of believers; to whom promises were made for the faith which he exercised antecedently to the rite of circumcision*[1]. Ch. iv.

1. The apostle proposes the question, and suggests the test by which it might be determined in what way Abraham was justified, ver. 1, 2.

[1] The argument from the example of Abraham, pursued throughout this chapter, is so exactly similar to that which is proposed in the Epistle to the Galatians, chap. iii., that it is hardly possible that they should not have been dictated by the same person. And it is surprising, that Mr. Evanson, who acknowledges the genuineness of the Epistle to the Galatians, did not see how irresistibly this internal evidence supports the authenticity of the Epistle to the Romans.

What then shall we say[2]*? that Abraham our father obtained* justification *through the flesh*[3]*? Now, if Abraham was justified by works, he hath* somewhat in which *he may glory*[4].

Ch. IV. Ver. 1. 2.

As though the apostle had said, I have established at large, both from history and scripture, that the blessings of the gospel are the free gift of God both to Jew and Gentile, and not the reward of antecedent merit. And, to reconcile us the more to this humiliating doctrine, I am now about to

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[2] *What then shall we say?*] Others translate the sentence thus, What *advantage* then shall we say, that Abraham our father found as to the flesh? See Newcome. The meaning is much the same; but the version in the text is more in the apostle's lively manner. See chap. iii. 5, 9; chap. vi. 1, 15.—The apostle states the objection of the Jew, that Abraham was justified by circumcision, κατα σαρκα, according to the flesh, and therefore by works. But he was our *Father*, that is, our pattern; therefore the Jews are justified or brought into a covenant state by circumcision. No, says the apostle—Abraham was not justified by circumcision, but by the faith which he had before he was circumcised; and circumcision was only the sign or seal of his antecedent justification.

[3] *Through the flesh.*] κατα σαρκα. Dr. Taylor has very ably proved, in his note upon this passage, that this phrase has respect to circumcision, and the obligations it laid on the Jew. See Gal. vi. 12; 1 Cor. x. 18; 2 Cor. xi. 18; Phil. iii. 3. That learned and judicious expositor very properly states, that after the apostle has introduced his argument, ver. 1, 2, he shows that according to the scripture account Abraham was justified by faith, ver. 3, 4, 5; explains the nature of that justification by a quotation out of the Psalms, ver. 6—9; proves that Abraham was justified long before he was circumcised, ver. 9, 10, 11; that the believing Gentiles are his seed, to whom the promise belongs, as well as the believing Jews, ver. 12—17; describes Abraham's faith, in order to explain the faith of the gospel, ver. 17 to the end.

[4] *He may glory.*] See ch. iii. 27. "he may ascribe his justification to something in himself." Taylor.

Ch. IV. Ver. 2. remind you that Abraham himself, our honoured ancestor, our revered pattern, became entitled to the privileges of the covenant in the same way. Are you startled at this supposition? What! do any of you imagine that our venerable ancestor obtained his privileges by a claim of right, on the footing of prior complete obedience to positive law? If this be your judgement, we will soon bring the case to a decisive test; for if he is authorized to put in a claim of right, he has good reason to think well of himself on this account.

That this is the true sense of the apostle can be doubted by none who are at all acquainted with his abrupt and elliptical style. He does not speak of Abraham as our *father* according to the flesh, but as having *found* according to the flesh. But that which he found was justification, the blessings of the promise, and the covenant. And to find it according to the flesh is to find it by works of law, and particularly by the rite of circumcision; for this is the sense in which the word *flesh* occurs repeatedly, both in this epistle and in that to the Galatians; and the latter clause fully explains the meaning of the former, the expression "being justified by works" being used by the apostle as equivalent to that of "having found according to the flesh."

2. The apostle shows, from the scripture history, that Abraham's justification was the consequence of faith, not the reward of works, ver. 2—5.

—*But* he had it *not in the presence of God*[1]. Ch. IV. Ver. 2.

This eminent patriarch neither possessed, nor made any pretension, in the presence of God, to a claim of right, on the ground of past obedience, to a further extension of privilege.

For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was placed to his account[2] *for justification.* Gen. xv. 6. 3.

The history plainly tells us, that the patriarch was received into favour, not for any work that he had antecedently performed, but because he believed in the divine promise that he should have a numerous posterity by his wife Sarah.

Now to him who performeth a task, the recompense is placed to account not as a favour, but as a debt[3]. 4.

But to him who doth not perform a task, but who believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly[4], *his faith is placed to account for justification.* 5.

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[1] *In the presence of God.*] "The apostle considers Abraham as standing in the court, before God's tribunal, when the promise was given him." Taylor.

[2] *Placed to his account.*] ἐλογίσθη: the expression refers to a book of accounts in which a sum is placed on the credit side. "*Proprie tribuitur arithmeticis qui multas summas in unam colligunt et reducunt.*" Schleusner. In our translation it is rendered *counted*, ver. 3, 5; *reckoned*, ver. 4, 9, 10; *imputed*, ver. 6, 8, 11, 22, 23, 24. The sense in all these passages is the same. See Taylor. The term *imputed* has been so much misunderstood, that I have preferred to use the word *reckon* or *place to account*.

[3] *To him who*, &c.] "Now the pay of the workman is not reckoned a favour, but a debt." Wakefield.

[4] *Who justifieth the ungodly.*] "This," says Archbishop Newcome, "may be considered as a general character of God,

Ch. IV. Ver. 5. The man who performs a service for hire has a right to his wages, and is under no special obligation to the man who pays him his just due. But this was not the case with Abraham: he had done no work, he could claim no remuneration. He was a poor ungodly heathen, when God summoned him out of his country and promised him a posterity as numerous as the sand upon the shore. All his merit consisted in believing that God would fulfill his promise; and with this faith the Almighty was so well pleased that he entered into covenant with him to bestow still better blessings.

3. This happy state of Abraham is well described in the language which David uses upon a different subject, ver. 6—8.

6. *As David also describes*[1] *the blessedness of the man to whom God reckoneth justification without*
7. *works. Blessed* are *they whose iniquities are for-*
8. *given, whose sins are covered. Blessed* is *the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin.* Psalm xxxii. 1, 2.

Abraham must have felt himself unspeakably happy in being thus selected, though unworthy, as a person upon whom the Divine Being thought fit to bestow peculiar favour; just as the psalmist de-

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and may refer to the whole heathen world as well as to Abraham;" ch. v. 6.—Mr. Locke observes that "the apostle by these words plainly pointed out Abraham."

[1] *David describes.*] This is an illustration, not an argument. The apostle can only mean that the words of David aptly describe the case of Abraham.

scribes the case of a great transgressor, who, conscious of sincere repentance, humbly hopes in the divine mercy that his sin shall be forgiven, and is filled with joy and gratitude under a sense of his unspeakable obligation. Ch. IV. Ver. 8.

4. The apostle plainly shows, from the example of Abraham, that the blessings of the covenant were to extend to all believers without distinction, ver. 9—12.

And first he states the question, ver. 9.

Now this blessedness, cometh *it upon the circumcised* only, *or upon the uncircumcised also*[2] *?* 9.

Is this happy state, which I have been describing, limited to the natural descendants of Abraham alone, or is it extended equally to the believing heathen ? As to the patriarch himself, the mode in which he obtained this favour has been already ascertained.

For we affirm that this faith was reckoned to Abraham for justification. —9.

We have proved, by the express words of scripture, that the privileges of this patriarch were the reward not of works, but of faith ; and, that you may not imagine that the faith so rewarded was that of one who was already in a covenant state, and the consequence of circumcision, I will now show the contrary.

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[2] *Circumcised—uncircumcised.*] Gr. " circumcision or uncircumcision." The apostle perpetually uses the abstract for the concrete.

Ch. IV. Ver. 10. *How then was it reckoned to him? Was it after or before circumcision? Not after circumcision,*
11. *but before it. And he received the sign of circumcision, as the seal of that justification by faith which* he possessed *before circumcision.*

The case of Abraham is clear: he believed and was justified before the birth of Ishmael, many years before circumcision was instituted, Gen. xvii.; and that rite was appointed, not as a means of justification, but as a token that he was already in a justified state, which he had been, and was declared to be long before.

The apostle now proceeds to argue, that as Abraham was justified by faith, and that, when he was in a heathen state, and as he is expressly marked out as the pattern of all who are admitted into a state of privilege, it necessarily follows, that all who believe are to be admitted into this happy state without distinction of Jew or heathen, and whether they do or do not submit to the yoke of the law; for he was admitted antecedently to circumcision for this very purpose.

12. *That he might be the father*[1] *of all uncircumcised believers*[2], *that justification might be placed even to their account: and the father of those who are circumcised, who are not only circumcised, but who walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham which* he had *before circumcision.*

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[1] *The father.*] See Dr. Taylor's note on Rom. iv. 1.

[2] *Uncircumcised believers.*] Δι' ακροβυστιας, in a state of uncircumcision. See Rom. ii. 27, 1 Cor. xiv. 9.

To be the father of any person, or class of persons, often signifies, in the Hebrew idiom, to be an inventor, or a pattern, of any art or quality which such persons possess, or in which they excell. Thus, Gen. iv. 21, Jubal is said to have been the father of all such as handle the harp and the organ, that is, he was the inventor of those instruments and a pattern to those who use them. In this sense Abraham was set forth and declared to be the father or pattern of all believers: of heathen believers, because he was justified before he was circumcised; and of Jews, because he received the initiatory rite not as the means of justification, but as an acknowledgement that he was already justified; and consequently as a pattern to them, not of justification by the ritual law, but by a faith similar to that by which their illustrious ancestor was himself justified. Ch. IV. Ver. 12.

5. Justification cannot be appointed through law, for that would be a violation of promise and an assignment to condemnation, ver. 13—15.

Moreover, the promise that he should be heir of the world[3] was *not* made *to Abraham or to his* 13.

[3] *Heir of the world.*] Dr. Taylor supposes that the apostle means to represent the world as one great family. Abraham and his posterity are the heirs of the world, *i.e.* the first-born of this family, and therefore entitled to the better portion of the inheritance. This is ingenious; but though it is adopted by Archbishop Newcome, it appears to me to be too refined. The sense given in the paraphrase of this difficult passage, which is similar to that given by Mr. Locke, seems to me to be more natural, and more agreeable to the apostle's manner and phraseology.

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Ch. IV. Ver. 13. *posterity through law, but through justification by faith.*

The promise made by God to Abraham also proves the doctrine of justification by faith. That promise was (Gen. xvii.) that he should be the father of many nations, that God would give to him and to his posterity the land of Canaan, and that in him should all nations of the earth be blessed, Gen. xii. 3. This may be regarded as a promise that he should be heir of the world; first, that his natural descendants should possess the land of Canaan and many other countries; and secondly, that his spiritual descendants should include men of all ages and countries, whether naturally descended from him or not; but that all, in all parts of the world, who inherit his faith, should be acknowledged to be of his family, and should participate in the promise. Now it is plain from the history, that this promise to the patriarch was made to him as the reward of his faith in the divine call which induced him to quit his native land, and not as the consequence of obedience to any law, much less of conformity to the rite of circumcision, which was instituted after the promise was given, and as a token of its ratification, Gen. xvii. 10.

"The promise here meant," says Mr. Locke, "is that which he speaks of ver. 11, whereby Abraham was made the father of all that should believe, all the world over, and for that reason he is called κληρονομος κοσμυ, heir or lord of the world. For, believers of all the nations of the world being given to him for a posterity, he becomes thereby lord and possessor (for so heir among the Hebrews signified) of the world."

For if they only *who are of the law* be *heirs,* Ch. IV. Ver. 14.
faith is made void, and the promise is abrogated.

Upon the supposition that law only secured the blessing, only one nation would be heir, and that upon a different ground from Abraham himself; so that the promise would be made void in both its parts, first by the exclusion of the Gentiles, and secondly by changing the ground of justification. Abraham would not be the pattern of many nations, but of one only; nor even of that completely, for *they* would be justified through law, but *he* through faith.

Moreover, law worketh wrath: for where there 15.
is no law, there is *no transgression.*

Nor is it indeed possible that any should obtain the blessing by law only. For, as all transgression supposes a rule transgressed, and there can be no transgression without it; so, as I have before abundantly shown, in the very case where a law has in fact been given, which if observed would have ensured justification, yet such has been the frailty and the folly of those who have lived under such a dispensation, that not a single individual has uniformly adhered to the law so as to claim justification by it, but every one by transgression has become obnoxious to its condemning sentence.

6. That justification, that is, the blessing of the gospel, should be granted to faith, was necessary to the accomplishment of the promise that it should

Ch. IV. be both gratuitous and universal, extending to all the heirs of Abraham's faith, ver. 16, 17.

Ver. 16. *Therefore* justification is *from faith, that* it might be *through favour; to the end that the promise might be sure to all the posterity: not only to that* which is *of the law, but to that* which is *of the*
17. *faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, in the sight of that God in whom he believed, who giveth life to the dead, and who calleth things that are not, as though they were. As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations.* See Gen. xvii. 4, 5.

I again declare that the privileges of the gospel are granted and limited to faith alone. Why? Because the promise affirms that the blessing is both gratuitous and universal, which it could not be if it were limited to those only who are subject to the law of Moses, in which case the benefit would be confined to one nation alone; whereas, the promise of God to Abraham is, I have made thee a pattern of many nations without any distinction. In the sight of God, therefore, all who believe, in all ages and countries, are Abraham's children, and are to be justified after his pattern and in the same way. By the all-comprehending eye of God, which penetrates to the remotest period of duration, and discerns the future as distinctly as the present, the whole of this spiritual family of Abraham are seen as clearly as if they now existed; and therefore he speaks of the thing as actually done which it was

his determined purpose to accomplish, *I have made thee a father of many nations; of all who believe to the end of time.* And the great object of Abraham's faith, and in which ours resembles that of the venerable patriarch, was the power of God to raise the dead, and to bring things out of nothing into existence. Ch. IV. Ver. 17.

7. The apostle illustrates the nature and the degree of Abraham's justifying faith, being tantamount to a belief in the power of God to create anew, and to raise the dead, ver. 18—22.

He first believed that his posterity by Sarah should be innumerable, ver. 18.

Who against hope believed in hope, that he should be the father of many nations, according to that declaration, So shall thy posterity be. 18.

It is related, Gen. xv. 5, that "the Lord brought Abram forth abroad and said, Look now towards heaven, and tell the stars if thou be able to number them; and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be." Abraham was now a hundred years of age; a similar promise had been made to him twenty-five years before, in the faith of which he had abandoned his native land and all his family connexions, and had fixed his residence in the land of Canaan among strangers, relying upon the divine promise that it should afterwards be granted to, and inhabited by, a numerous race of his descendants. This was hoping against hope, believing in contradiction to all appearances; and, in effect, believing in the power

Ch. IV. Ver. 18. of God to call those into being whose existence could not be accomplished by any human means, which indeed would be the same as a new creation.

The patriarch further believed that he should have a son by Sarah, which was equivalent to believing that God would raise the dead, ver. 19—21.

19. *And not being weak in faith, he considered not*[1] *his own body now become dead, when he was about a hundred years old, nor the deadness of Sarah's*
20. *womb. Nor did he hesitate at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving*
21. *glory to God*[2]*, being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform.*

Considering the advanced age of Sarah and himself, it was as improbable that they should have a son as that a man should be raised from the dead; it was like a promise that they should themselves be so raised: and yet his faith in the divine promise was not staggered by this difficulty; he believed without hesitation. Being assured that Omnipotence itself had made the promise, he did not allow himself to reason concerning the difficulty of the performance. By the confidence which he reposed in the divine promise, he rendered to God the homage due to his infinite power, goodness and

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[1] *Considered not.*] Some good copies drop the σ. If this be the true reading, as Newcome observes, we must point thus: And not being weak in faith he considered his own body—and the deadness—and yet staggered not.

[2] *Giving glory.*] δους δοξαν, "giving up his opinion to God; resigning all supposition unto God, having no opinion on the subject, but leaving it all to God." Wakefield.

truth, under a firm conviction that he was both able and willing to perform to the utmost all that he had promised. Ch. IV. Ver. 21.

The apostle adds, that this persevering active faith was crowned with its due reward, ver. 22.

And therefore it was set to his account for justification. 22.

God having made the promise, and Abraham having accepted it, and having relied wholly upon it, and sacrificed every thing to it, God was so well pleased with his conduct in this instance, that he graciously received him into favour, and communicated privileges and blessings to him, notwithstanding the transgressions of his heathen state, to as full an amount as though, by a course of sinless obedience, he had entitled himself to future favours. All past debts were graciously cancelled, and he was entered in the divine account as innocent and righteous.

8. The apostle closes this argument by stating, that the history of Abraham's justification was recorded for the instruction and encouragement of believers in Christ in succeeding ages who are justified in a similar way, ver. 23—25.

Now it was not written for his sake only that 23.
faith *was placed to his account, but for ours also*[3] 24.

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[3] *For ours also.*] "for the sake of us also, all in future ages, Gentiles as well as Jews, who may be admitted into the Christian covenant upon this sole condition, if they believe," &c. Newcome.

Ch. IV. Ver. 24. *to whose account it will be placed, if we believe on him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.*

25. *Who was delivered up for our offences, and raised again for our justification.*

The account which is given in the book of Genesis concerning the strength and the reward of Abraham's faith, was not recorded merely for the sake of doing honour to the memory of that eminent patriarch, but for our benefit also, who live in the age in which the new dispensation is introduced. We may learn from this history, that the true posterity of Abraham, of whatever name or country, to whom the promise is made, will like him be justified by faith, and be admitted into the privileges of the new covenant without being compelled to submit to the yoke of the law; and the object of our faith, like his, is the power of God to raise the dead. He believed in a possible resurrection, when he expected, according to the divine promise, a numerous posterity by Sarah. We believe in the actual resurrection of Jesus our teacher and master from the grave; and this single act of faith is that which is set down to our account for justification: it is that which transfers us from the community of sinners to the community of saints, from the unbelieving into the Christian world.

And the fact is really as I have stated it; for Jesus was indeed delivered up for our offences; he was, figuratively speaking, offered up like a consecrated victim, by the sprinkling of whose blood we believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, are transferred

from an unholy to a holy state ; and he was raised again, that by our faith in his resurrection, we might become partakers of the privileges of the covenant of which his blood was the seal, and might be as completely entitled to these privileges as if we had acquired a right to them by the most meritorious and undeviating obedience. Ch. IV. Ver. 25.

Such is the argument which the apostle draws from the case of Abraham to establish his grand principle, that believers, whether Jews or heathen, are to be admitted to the privileges of the gospel without submitting to the yoke of the ceremonial law. Upon this subject it may be proper to remark, that it was a fact well adapted to conciliate the Jews to the apostle's doctrine, that Abraham by his faith had obtained acceptance with God many years before he submitted to the rite of circumcision, and therefore that it was not incredible, that believing Gentiles should be admitted into the privileges of the gospel without submitting to the rites of the law.

The great article of the Christian faith is, that God raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. All who believe this important fact are justified in the sight of God, that is, they are received and acknowledged as members of the Christian community. Let none therefore of the disciples of Jesus narrow the terms of Christian communion, and, by unwarrantable conditions of their own, exclude those whom Christ has received.

Ch. IV. Ver. 25. Christ was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. The apostle probably meant nothing more than that Christ was delivered up to death, and was raised again that we might be justified from our offences; that we who were heathen transgressors might by faith in his resurrection be introduced into a state of covenant privilege. At any rate, the few ambiguous words which the apostle here uses, will not support the commonly received doctrine of atonement for sin by the vicarious sufferings of Jesus Christ. The free unpurchased love of God is the foundation of all the privileges and hopes of the true Christian.

SECTION III.

Ch. V. *The apostle, having proved that the gospel is a free gift both to Jews and Gentiles, illustrates the value of its blessings.* Ch. v. 1—11.

First, the justified believer obtains peace with God, and admission into his presence and favour, ver. 1, 2.

Ver. 1. 2. *Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have access, by faith*[1], *into this grace in which we stand.*

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[1] *Access by faith.*] The words "by faith" are omitted in the Clermont and other MSS., and are indeed superfluous. Προσαγωγη, access. Raphelius, from Herodotus, shows that this, a sacerdotal phrase, signifies being introduced with great solemnity into the presence of a deity in his temple. See Doddridge.

It was the boast of the conceited Jew that he was holy, while the rest of mankind were sinners; that he was in a state of friendship and peace with God, while others were aliens and enemies; that he was the favourite of heaven, while they were under a curse; and the apostle's design in this eloquent passage is to show that believers in Christ possess all the privileges of God's ancient people, though they do not submit to the Jewish ceremonial. Ch. V. Ver. 2.

Being justified by faith we have peace with God. Being, by our belief in the doctrine and resurrection of Jesus Christ, transferred like Abraham out of an unholy into a pardoned and a holy state, without submitting to the rites of the law, we are like that eminent patriarch become friends of God, through the medium of our master Jesus Christ, who was commissioned to offer and to ratify the terms of pacification; and by faith in him, we have been introduced by him into that state of privilege and favour which we now occupy, and in which the descendants of Abraham made their boast.

Secondly, The justified believer has now also his ground of boasting, ver. —2—11.

1. In his hope, ver. —2.

—and boast in hope of the glory of God[2]. —2.

The Jew boasts in his written law, in his descent from Abraham, in his ceremonial institute, in his

[2] *Glory of God.*] "of the glory which God has in store for us." Locke. "in hope of future glory." Priestley.

Ch. V. Ver. 2. temporal promises. The believer in Christ also has his ground of exultation: he boasts not of an earthly Canaan, a transitory and fading possession, but of a divine inheritance, of the glorious hope to which he is elevated by the gospel. A possession worthy of God to bestow; to the discovery of which the philosophy of heathenism could make no pretensions; and from the hope of which the severe sentence of the law excludes all voluntary transgressors.

2. Believers also boast even in affliction, for various reasons which the apostle details, ver. 3—10.

For in the first place affliction produces patience, proof and well founded hope.

3. 4. *And not only* so, *but we boast even in afflictions; for affliction worketh patience, and patience proof*[1], *and proof hope.*

Many regard the followers of Christ with contempt and scorn; they value themselves upon their affluence, their dignity, their external prosperity, their popularity and influence. We also boast who believe in Christ: we esteem it our honour to be despised, to be oppressed, to be the objects of general reproach and scorn.

For patience, exercised by persecution, is continually improving, and the fortitude with which we

[1] *Proof.*] See Wakefield, Taylor, Locke. "Δοκιμὴ, *id quod, experientia facta, patescit et cognoscitur.*" Schleusner. 2 Cor. ii. 9, ix. 12; Phil. ii. 22. "The effect of having tried ourselves." Newcome.

suffer is a sure test of the sincerity of our profession; and the clearer proof we have of the conformity of our character to the standard of the gospel, the brighter will be our hope of an interest in all its glorious promises. Ch. V. Ver. 4.

And this hope will not put us to shame, because the love of God[2] *is poured forth into our hearts by the holy spirit given to us.* 5.

The gifts of the holy spirit, by which the Christian doctrine is confirmed, are a demonstration that all the promises of the gospel covenant shall be fulfilled, being an undoubted proof of the favour of God to those who believe in Christ, and the seal and ratification of that Being who cannot falsify himself.

These promises are further confirmed by the mission of his son to die even for those who were aliens and enemies, ver. 6—8.

Moreover while we were yet without strength[3], *even then*[4], *at the appointed time, Christ died for the ungodly*[5]. 6.

For scarcely for a righteous man 7.

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[2] *The love of God,*] *i.e.* to us, not our love to him. "The love of God is abundantly assured to our hearts by the gifts and operations of the holy spirit." Taylor. See also Locke.

[3] *Without strength.*] Mr. Locke notes four, and Dr. Taylor fourteen epithets, which are given by St. Paul to unconverted Gentiles, as such; and Dr. Taylor adds an equal number of epithets which express the external state of Christians.

[4] *Even then.*] Ετι: This is the reading adopted by Griesbach, upon the authority of the Alexandrine, Ephrem, and other manuscripts. "though we were weak, still Christ died in due season," &c. Newcome.

[5] *Died for the ungodly.*] Υπερ των ασεβων. Dr. Taylor very justly observes, "that in the following comparison the apostle

Ch. V. Ver. 8. *will one die; yet perhaps for a good man some would even dare to die. But God recommendeth his love to us, in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

The apostle, in speaking of the converted heathen, to whom chiefly the epistle is addressed, uses the same reproachful language in which the pharisaic Jews were accustomed to speak of their heathen neighbours. In their unconverted state they had been "without strength," unable to extricate themselves from their wretched condition; "ungodly," worshipers of idols, ignorant of the true God, of his attributes, of his character, of his will, and of his worship; "sinners," alienated from him, in an unholy uncovenanted state: yet even then, at the appointed time, Christ died for them.

But though it is plain that the apostle's language is intended to express their character and state as heathen, previous to their conversion, to avoid offence he uses the first person, as though he had himself been implicated in the charge; whereas, before his conversion he had been a Jew, and, as

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does not lead our thoughts to the payment of an equivalent, or to the notion of vicarious punishment, but to that benevolent disposition of mind which inclines us to do good and to be useful to others, even at our own expense and hazard. So John xv. 13: 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life (ὑπερ φιλων) for his friends.' See John x. 11, 12; 1 John iii. 16." Nor does the preposition ὑπερ necessarily imply an equivalent, or vicarious punishment. See Acts v. 41, ix. 16, xv. 26; 2 Cor. xii. 15. As Christ suffered for us, we also are said to suffer for him, ὑπερ αυτε, Phil. i. 29, surely not as a sacrifice in his stead.

touching the righteousness which is by the law, blameless. Ch. V. Ver. 8.

While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. From this general and indefinite expression some have strangely inferred, that the sufferings of Christ were properly speaking vicarious; that he suffered in the stead of others; that he endured all the torments which the elect would have endured to all eternity: that he thus became the sinner's surety, and paid the dreadful debt due to divine justice. But it is plain that the apostle's language lays no just foundation for a doctrine so absurd in itself, and so injurious to the divine character. He only says, that Christ died for us: that is, for our benefit. The connexion shows that the apostle's meaning is, that Christ died to deliver us from the condemning sentence of the law, by ratifying the new covenant, which is a dispensation of mercy.

Christ died at "the appointed season," at the time which had been marked out by prophecy, and which had been chosen by infinite wisdom as the fittest and best.

The death of Christ was an appointment of God, the result of his love. He pitied the wretched state of the heathen world, their ignorance of God, of duty, and of a future life, their inability to help themselves, and their deplorable idolatry and vice; and he determined to rescue them from their ignorance and guilt and misery, by sending Jesus Christ, his beloved son, his chosen servant, not only to teach them, but to die for them.

Ch. V. Ver. 8. And thus the love of God became eminently conspicuous. Had mankind been sinless, the love of God in giving up his son to die for them would not have been so highly distinguished. Men do not indeed usually expose their lives for the benefit of others, however just and unblameable. Although it is possible, that here and there, a generous spirit might be willing to die in order to save the life of some distinguished philanthropist, some illustrious benefactor of mankind. But where could any one be found who would submit to death for the benefit of rebels and enemies? Such, however, was the exceeding greatness of the love of God to man. Christ was sent to die, not for the innocent, not for those who had merited favour by antecedent virtue: No; he died for sinners, for enemies, for those who had forfeited their lives by their transgressions, and who could prefer no claim to mercy.

The apostle infers, from this extraordinary instance of divine goodness, that all other blessings shall be communicated, ver. 9, 10.

9. *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*

10. *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life*[1].

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[1] *By his life.*] "we shall obtain eternal salvation by that life and power to which our Lord and Saviour is exalted." Taylor. "living to intercede for us." Newcome. I rather conceive the apostle's meaning to be, not that we are saved by the life of Christ as the medium of salvation, but that this salvation

Ch. V. Ver. 10.

This is a remarkable passage, and when rightly understood will greatly assist in explaining the sense of the apostolic writings.

They who believe in Christ are "justified by his blood." But something further is necessary in order to their being "saved from wrath." They are already "reconciled to God by the death of his son;" but something more is to be done to complete their salvation. It follows, therefore, that men may be justified and reconciled; and yet, after all, they may not be saved from wrath, nor be entitled to the promised reward.

What then can be more evident than that the justification and reconciliation here mentioned mean nothing more than their admission into the Christian community, and their participation of the blessings of the gospel? From being sinners, that is, Gentiles, they are become holy; that is, separated by faith from the unbelieving world; and

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is accomplished, leaving Christ in possession of life: *q. d.* reconciliation was obtained for enemies, though the death of Christ was the necessary medium, much more will salvation be obtained for friends when no such sacrifice is requisite; but all that is to be done will be done by Christ in the continued possession of life. Mr. Locke has a long and valuable note to show that the apostle, in the first eleven chapters of the epistle, speaks of the Jews and Gentiles nationally, and not personally of single men: but I do not see the necessity of limiting the apostle's observations in the first eleven verses of this chapter to Gentile believers only: they are equally applicable to all Christians, in all ages. It seems to be a burst of feeling to which the apostle gives vent, upon the comparison of the present free and happy state of believers under the gospel, with the previous miserable condition of the Jew under the law, or the Gentile in his wretched bondage to idolatry and vice.

Ch. V. Ver. 10.

from being enemies, they are become reconciled, they are received as subjects of the kingdom of Christ. This happy change is effected by the death of Christ, which ratified that new and better covenant which is the connecting bond of this new community. If they improve their privileges, they shall be saved from wrath through him. For Christ has laid down laws and regulations which, if his professed followers adhere to and faithfully observe, shall save them from final condemnation, and put them into possession of eternal life. The apostle argues, *a fortiori*, upon this subject: You were admitted to justification and to the privileges of the gospel by a process which cost the life of the beloved Son of God. Is it not then far more credible, that if you obey the gospel of Christ you shall be finally saved by him; when you are not only regarded as friends and heirs of a promise, but when the accomplishment of this promise will be achieved at much less expense than the acquisition of your present privileges? For it will not be necessary for Christ again to suffer, but the whole scheme will be brought to perfection by the exercise of those powers with which he is invested in his risen and exalted state [1].

Well then may the believer triumph in those

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[1] "Much more, therefore, having been admitted into covenant at this time, while we were sinners, by his blood shed to ratify this covenant and to purchase a church, we shall be finally saved through him from punishment, if we live in a manner worthy our calling." Newcome.

afflictions and persecutions, which by purifying and exalting his character clear up his title to those everlasting blessings which are promised by the gospel to all who believe in it and regulate their conduct by it. Ch. V. Ver. 10.

3. Believers also boast in God, with whom a reconciliation has now taken place through Jesus Christ, ver. 11.

And not only so, *but we even boast in God*[2] *through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received this reconciliation.* 11.

Not only do we, who are believers in Christ and admitted into the community over which he presides, boast in hope of future glory; not only do we boast in those tribulations and persecutions which, by exercising our faith, eventually brighten our hope; but we even boast in God as our own. Yes; such is the abundant mercy of God, that even we, who were once idolatrous heathen, aliens, and enemies, are now permitted to look up to God as reconciled, and to call him our God in the same important sense in which he was the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And this privilege we claim through Jesus Christ, who has received and acknowledged us as his disciples and

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[2] *We even boast in God.*] Compare Rom. ix. 5. The proposed emendation of Slichtingius, Whitby, and Taylor, is very much countenanced by this passage.—*We boast*: καυχωμενοι, the present participle for the present indicative: a Hebrew idiom. See Newcome.

Ch. V. Ver. 11. friends; and through whom we have received that gracious message of reconciliation, to the terms of which we have gladly acceded, and which lies at the foundation of all our hope. We are now, as the chosen family once were, the people and the children of God.

Such is the plain meaning of the apostle's language to those who read the scriptures with an unbiassed mind. The words, as they stand in the public version, have a very uncouth sound, "by whom we have received the atonement;" but the translation is strictly just. The word atonement, at the time when this version was made, signified nothing more than reconciliation, or setting those *at one* who were before at *variance*. But of late years, this word has acquired a mystical sense; and has been used to express an action or suffering, by one person or victim, through which the anger of another person is appeased. And in this sense we are told that the death of Christ is an atonement for the sins of men: that is, that it appeases the wrath of God, and satisfies the claims of justice. But no such doctrine as this, nor any thing approaching to it, is to be found in the New Testament.

Here the apostle closes his eloquent digression concerning the great privileges of which believers gain possession when they are received into the Christian community; and he next proceeds to suggest an additional argument to establish the reasonableness of admitting all mankind to equal privileges and hopes.

SECTION IV.

The apostle argues, that as the Fall entails death upon all mankind without any antecedent demerit of their own; so the gospel, ratified by the voluntary sacrifice of Christ, entails far better blessings upon mankind than were lost by Adam; and this, without any antecedent merit on their part, ver. 12 *to the end.* Ch. V.

1. He states that all mankind are treated as sinners, and suffer death, in consequence of the sin of Adam, ver. 12.

In reference to this subject[1], *as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, even so death passed upon all men, as far as which*[2] *all have sinned.* Ver. 12.

The apostle here assumes and reasons upon the account of the Fall contained in the book of Ge-

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[1] Δια τουτο, Wherefore. "So then." Wakefield. This phrase, says Dr. Taylor, frequently signifies "in relation to the affair going before:" not by way of inference from it, but to denote a further enlargement upon it, or the advancement of something which enforces or explains it. He refers to Matt. vi. 25, xii. 31; Rom. xiii. 6; 1 Cor. iv. 17; and many other passages. "Concerning this matter." Newcome.

[2] Εφ' ῳ, as far as which. See Dr. Taylor on Orig. Sin, part i. p. 51—55. "inasmuch as," Newcome. "all have sinned; *i. e.* all have become mortal." Locke. "Επι *cum dativo constructa denotat* quod attinet ad. Act. v. 35; Xenoph. Anab. vi. 6, 13." Schleusner. *q. d.* so far as relates to which, all are sinners; *i. e.* treated as sinners. Gal. v. 13; Eph. ii. 19; 1 Thess. iv. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 14.

Ch. V. Ver. 12.

nesis, as an historical fact; and he traces an analogy between the consequences of the fall of Adam and those of the righteousness of Christ. And as the apostle was instructed by Christ himself in the nature and the excellence of the gospel dispensation, in all its comprehension and extent, we are fully authorized to admit his conclusions even though we may doubt of the validity of his arguments, and the correctness of his premises. The apostle does not say that he was inspired to assert the literal truth of the Mosaic history of the Fall: probably, he knew no more of it than we do. Perhaps he only argued *ex concesso*, upon the supposition of the fact; and certainly no reasonable person in modern times can regard it in any other light than as an allegory or fable, the moral of which is sufficiently apparent. But the apostle assumes its historic truth; and, admitting the Mosaic account to be a fact, he argues that the curses entailed by Adam's fall, and the blessings secured by the death of Christ, are equally independent of the antecedent merit or demerit of those who are the subjects of them; also, that the curse and the blessing are equally universal, but that the blessings of the gospel extend far beyond the miseries of the Fall.

It is as though he had said, the mercy of God in the gospel of Christ may be illustrated by referring to the narrative of the Fall. The first sin was the transgression of Adam; and by the law under which he was placed, this transgression was punished with death. And death was for this offence

entailed upon all his posterity; who are so far regarded as sinning in him, that they are for his transgression condemned to suffer death, without any transgression of their own. Ch. V. Ver. 12.

2. The apostle justifies his assertion, and alleges that Christ, as a public person, resembles Adam, ver. 13, 14.

For antecedently[1] *to the law sin was in the world; but sin is not charged where law is not in being.* 13.
Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned[2], 14.
after the likeness of Adam's transgression: who is a type of him who was to come[3].

You may perhaps object, that mankind died as a punishment for their own transgressions, and not for that of Adam: but that was not the case, as it stands in the record. It is true that men were sinners, from the time of Adam to the time of Moses; but they did not, like their first ancestor, sin against a law expressly denouncing death. And it would have been unjust to inflict a penalty which

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[1] *Antecedently.*] Αχρι, until. "sin was in the world all the time before the law." Wakefield.

[2] *Who had not sinned,* &c.] "even over infants, as well as others." Doddridge. But the apostle is speaking of all mankind, who suffered death, though not under a law whose penalty was death.

[3] *A type,* &c.] A figure or model, Acts vii. 44; Rom. vi. 17; Phil. iii. 17; 1 Thess. i. 7, of him who was to come, τυ μελλοντος: *i. e.* Adam; Christ, the second Adam. Sir Norton Knatchbull and Dr. Milner explain it, of all mankind who were to come; *i. e.* Adam was the type of all his posterity, who suffer as he suffered.

Ch. V. Ver. 14. had never been promulgated. Men did not die, therefore, for their own sins. And yet it is plain, that during this interval men were universally subject to the dominion of death, even though they had not, like Adam, offended against a law of which death was the penalty; no such law having been in existence, from the time of Adam to the declaration from mount Sinai. Thus it appears, that all who died antecedently to the law of Moses, died not for their own sins, but for the sin of Adam; and such, by parity of reason, is the case of all mankind.

Such is the train of the apostle's reasoning, the defect of which need not be pointed out.

He adds concerning Adam, that he is the type of him who was to come; that is, of Jesus Christ, the second Adam, the prophet who was expected to come into the world. A strong resemblance may be traced between Adam and Christ: they were both public persons, whose character and conduct entailed very important consequences upon the whole human race.

3. There is nevertheless a great disparity, both in the acts of these public persons and in the consequences of these acts, ver. 15—17.

The apostle's meaning is sufficiently obvious, but his style is obscure; for, instead of contrasting the points of comparison, fact with fact, and consequence with consequence, he contrasts the fact in one case with the consequence in the other; thus introducing a confusion of ideas which makes it

difficult to unravel the sense. What he means to state and prove is, first, that Adam's act was an act of transgression, but that of Christ was an act of obedience; secondly, that calamities and death were the result of Adam's fall, but blessings, the free gift of God, were the result of Christ's obedience; and finally, that the blessings, which are the free gift of God in consequence of Christ's obedience, greatly outweigh the miseries accruing from the Fall. Ch. V. Ver. 14.

The apostle first states the general fact, ver. 15.

But not as was *the offence, so also* is *the free gift. For if by the offence of that one* man *all*[1] *became mortal*[2], *much more has the grace of God, and the gift by grace of that other man, Jesus Christ*[3], *abounded to all.* 15.

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[1] *All.*] "οἱ πολλοί." So Wakefield, who in his usual laconic style remarks, "That οἱ πολλοὶ is equivalent to πάντες in these epistles, every one knows; and that this usage of the phrase is common to other authors. The doubtful may be referred to the introductory lines in Aristotle's rhetoric."

[2] *Became mortal.*] "ἀπέθανον" literally *died.* "All mankind are made subject to death." Taylor.

[3] *The grace of God, and the gift by grace of that other man, Jesus Christ.*] "ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι τῇ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ" literally, "and the gift by the favour or kindness of that other man," &c. as though the gift were partly owing to the favour of God and partly to the favour of Christ. I cannot think this to be the apostle's meaning, who uniformly attributes the blessings of the gospel solely to the free unpurchased goodness of God: "the favour of Christ" in this connexion, therefore, is to be understood of that free gift of which Christ was the favoured medium, through whom it was communicated and dispensed to mankind: so that it is more properly a favour through Christ, than the favour or kindness of Christ. If, after all, the literal translation "the grace or favour of Christ" is preferred, the meaning may be, that the death of Christ, which ratified the new covenant, and for this reason is represented as the

Ch. V. Ver. 15.

If the apostle had expressed himself in the clear distinct manner of a correct writer, it would have been in some such language as this:

I have indeed asserted that Adam was a type or resemblance of Christ, as both were public persons, who by their acts entailed important consequences upon mankind. But here the similitude ends: nothing can be more opposite than the nature and effects of the conduct of Adam and of Christ. The act of Adam was an offence against the law of God; that of Christ was an act of obedience. The transgression of Adam entailed death on all mankind, as the penalty of violated law. Not so the obedience of Christ: that entailed blessings in abundance. But mark the difference: the sentence of universal death was the legal punishment of Adam's sin, but the blessings resulting from the obedience of Christ are not such as can be claimed by law. Far from it: they are the free gift of God, unpurchased and perfectly optional; and yet it will be found, as indeed might reasonably be expected from a God of infinite mercy, that these free unpurchased blessings, which are the reward of the second man's obedience, that is, of Jesus Christ, are far more beneficial to all mankind, than the consequences of the fall of the first man have been calamitous.

This is obviously the apostle's meaning; but his anxiety to crowd his ideas into as few words as pos-

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source of evangelical blessings, was on his part a voluntary act of obedience, and the result of his great love to mankind. See John x. 15—18, xv. 13.

sible, and perhaps the disadvantage of dictating to an amanuensis, render his style obscure. Ch. V. Ver. 15.

It is impossible not to remark how familiarly the apostle speaks of Christ as a man, in the same manner in which he speaks of Adam as a man, and without any of those cautions, and saving clauses, which believers in the divinity of Christ adopt in modern times, and which Paul would have found it necessary to introduce had he entertained the same opinion.

It is observable how the apostle labours to impress upon the minds of his readers, that the blessings entailed through the obedience of Christ were the free gift of God, and not such as had been purchased by this obedience, and which he was under obligation to bestow. It almost seems as if he had foreseen and was actually providing against the absurd doctrine of modern times, concerning the merits and righteousness of Christ being imputed to the sinner, and giving him a claim upon the divine mercy; than which nothing can be more contrary to the general tenor of scripture and the express declarations of the apostle.

The apostle now mentions two particulars in which the blessings of the gospel outweigh the calamities of the Fall.

In the first place, the curse was entailed for one offence only; the blessing provides justification from many offences, ver. 16.

And not as in reference to one sin[1], so also is *the* 16.

[1] *In reference to one sin.*] " δι' ἑνὸς ἁμαρτήματος." Such is

Ch. V. Ver. 16. *gift; for judgement* followed *from one sin to condemnation, but the free gift from many offences to justification.*

The subjects, both of the blessing and of the curse, are the same persons; that is, all mankind. But in magnitude the effects are widely different. One sin, of one individual, is visited by the mortality of all his descendants: What, then, must be the demerit of many sins, of all the transgressions of all mankind? Yet the free gift of divine mercy extends to all; and none who are willing to accept the offer are excluded from the blessing.

Secondly, The blessings of the state to which men are advanced, far surpass those of the state which was lost by the Fall, ver. 17.

17. *Moreover, if by one offence*[1] *death reigned through that one* man, *much more shall they who receive the abundant grace and gift of justification*[2] *reign in life through that other* man *Jesus Christ.*

Had the apostle been a correct writer, the antithesis would have stood in this form: Moreover, if

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the reading of the Clermont and other manuscripts, and of the Syriac and Vulgate versions: it is marked by Griesbach as probable, and is indeed required by the connexion. But Mr. Locke is mistaken in stating it as the reading of the Alexandrine copy.

[1] *By one offence.*] "εν ἑνι παραπτωματι." This is the reading of the Alexandrine, Clermont, and other copies; and is marked by Griesbach as of considerable authority.

[2] *The abundant.*] "της χαριτος και της δωρεας," a periphrasis for τη χαρισματος, ver. 15, much more shall they who receive the transcending free gift of justification. "the abundantly gracious gift." Wakefield.

by one offence death reigned through that one man, much more shall life reign through that other man Jesus Christ, in those who receive the abundant favour and gift of justification. Ch. V. Ver. 17.

q. d. Moreover, as an additional privilege, if it be allowed that by the one offence of the first public person, namely Adam, all mankind became subject to mortality in consequence of their relation to him, much more reasonable is it to believe that the free gift of justification, which comes through that other public person Jesus Christ, the blessings of which far transcend the miseries of the Fall, shall entail life in its highest state of enjoyment and perfection upon those who have the happiness to be partakers of this invaluable gift.

It is plain, from the context, that the apostle does not mean to restrict the promised blessing of life to those only who now accept the offer of justification, but to extend it to all who are sufferers by the Fall; so that, as to number, the promised blessing will be co-extensive with that of the sufferers by the fall of Adam, and in value will far exceed those which were lost by that calamity. The gospel is now offered to all mankind, without exception; and eventually, all will be comprehended in its inclosure and will participate in its blessings.

4. The apostle draws his grand conclusion, that the superior blessings of the Christian dispensation extend to all who are sufferers by the Fall, ver. 18, 19.

Ch. V. Ver. 18. *Therefore, as by one offence*[1] judgement passed *upon all men to condemnation, so by one act of righteousness* the free gift is imparted *to all men for*
19. *justification of life. For, as by the disobedience of one man all*[2] *were constituted sinners, so by the obedience of the other man will all be constituted righteous.*

As the conclusion from the circumstances of resemblance which I have stated between Adam and Christ as public persons, it appears, that as in the case of Adam, all mankind were made subject to death, as the punishment of that one offence which he committed; so under the new dispensation, by one act of righteousness, this sentence is reversed, and the life which had been forfeited is graciously restored, in circumstances far more favourable than those under which it was lost. For, as by the transgression of the first Adam guilt was so far placed to the account of all his posterity, that all underwent the punishment of death; so, by the obedience of the second Adam, righteousness shall be so placed to the account of all those who were sufferers by the Fall, that they shall eventually be raised to life, and advanced to a state of perfect virtue and perfect happiness.

It is evident to all who are conversant with the

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[1] *By one offence.*] By the Fall, all become sufferers, though not chargeable with guilt; by the obedience of Christ to death, which ratified the new covenant, all become entitled to life by the free mercy of God, without any antecedent merit.

[2] *All.*] "οἱ πολλοι" literally "the many;" evidently used in the same sense as παντες ανθρωποι in the preceding verse. "*were constituted sinners:*"—"made sinners; that is, treated as such." Newcome. See ver. 15, note 1.

apostle's writings, that he delights in analogies and similitudes, some of which are carried to an extreme which may almost be considered as fanciful. Such, perhaps, is the allusion to the case of Abraham, in the preceding chapter; to that of Sarah and Hagar, Gal. iv. 21, and that of Melchisedek, Heb. vii., if that epistle was written by him; at any rate, these analogies are to be regarded as mere allusions and illustrations, and are not to be received as teaching abstruse and mysterious doctrines not to be found in other and plainer passages of the New Testament. A parallel is here drawn between the case of Adam and that of Christ: both of them are represented as public persons whose conduct entailed important consequences upon all mankind. Adam was a transgressor, his sin was reckoned to all his posterity, so far that all became subject to the punishment of death for his one transgression. Christ was a pattern of obedience; he devoted himself to death, and his obedience is so far reckoned to all mankind, that, through the free goodness of God, all who became transgressors by Adam's fall are justified and made righteous by Christ's one act of obedience; the sentence of death is reversed, and all are restored to life, in circumstances far superior to those from which Adam fell. But it is observable, that Christ, while performing this office, is expressly called a man, and not a single hint is any where given that, in order to accomplish the work assigned him, it was at all necessary that he should be any thing more than a man; indeed had he been

Ch. V. Ver. 19.

Ch. V. Ver. 19.

a being of superior order, the parallel would not have held. And though the blessings introduced by Christ are represented as far superior to those which were lost by Adam, yet this is not ascribed to the superior dignity of Christ, but to the free mercy of God. And it is further observable, that the blessings imparted by Christ are represented as extending to all, without exception, who are sufferers by Adam's fall.

Now all this may be very well understood as illustrating the great mercy of God in the gospel dispensation, which not only admits Jews and Gentiles to equal privileges, but which reveals the gracious purpose of God to raise all mankind from the grave, and to restore them to virtue, happiness, and immortality. But if we carry the analogy further and receive and understand the apostle literally, we soon find ourselves involved in inextricable difficulties and absurdities; the story of the Fall, as it stands in the book of Genesis, is a moral fable, and nothing else. Those who interpret it literally and who receive it as a fact, help out the story by the introduction of the devil, as an agent to inspire the serpent, of which Moses says not one word: thus they prop one fable by another, and this they call believing the inspired scripture. But if the account of the Fall is mere allegory, which undoubtedly it is, the parallel of Christ with Adam must be considered as an allegory likewise, and all the mysterious doctrines which have been deduced from the apostle's parabolical language must fall to the ground.

5. The apostle concludes his argument by stating, that though sin was multiplied by the introduction of the law, yet the grace of the gospel of Christ still prevailed against the most aggravated transgressions, ver. 20, 21. Ch. V.

Now the law made a little entrance[1] *that the offence might abound*[2]*: but where sin abounded, grace hath superabounded; that as sin hath reigned through death, so grace likewise might reign through justification unto eternal life*[3]*, by Jesus Christ our Lord.* Ver. 20. 21.

It may perhaps be apprehended, that if one transgression of a law, sanctioned by the penalty of death, introduced so much mischief and misery into the world, that the interposition of divine mercy in the gospel was necessary to rectify it, the case of those who commit many transgressions under a si-

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[1] *Made a little entrance.*] "παρεισηλθεν, *subintravit.*" Vulg. "entered in privily." Newcome. Gal. ii. 4. See Locke and Doddridge.

[2] *That the offence might abound.*] "so that offences abounded." Newcome. ἱνα πλεονασῃ, so that the offence actually abounded: not that it was the design of the law to produce sin, but that sin was in fact the result. So ἱνα πληρωθῃ does not signify that the event in question was the object of the prophecy, but that the words of the prophecy were applicable to it. Matt. ii. 15; John xviii. 9, &c. το παραπτωμα, ἡ ἁμαρτια, the offence or fall: the sin Mr. Locke supposes to refer to that particular sin against which death was denounced by law. In paradise, death was the penalty of *one* transgression only: under the law it was the penalty of many offences; but the grace of the gospel extends to the forgiveness of all: where the offence abounds, grace superabounds.

[3] *Justification to eternal life:*] *i. e.* through the gospel; which is here called justification to eternal life, because it promises eternal life to those who believe. Comp. ver. 18 and ch. iv. 25.

Ch. V. Ver. 21.

milar law must be utterly hopeless: but this is not a just conclusion.

It is true that the law of Moses, which, like that given to Adam in paradise, passes sentence of death upon every transgression, was introduced into the world, but it was only for a short time, and extended only to a single nation. In consequence of which, offences, like those of Adam, abounded; and it might naturally be feared that judgements would proportionably abound. But such was not the fact, for the gospel provides a remedy even for this aggravated case: where sin abounded, grace has superabounded. The mercy of the gospel reaches beyond all the transgressions of the law.

That as sin has shown her malignity and her power by subjecting all mankind to death for the single offence of their first ancestor; so grace, the free unpurchased mercy of God, might exhibit its unbounded authority and universal empire by rescuing from the power of death, and advancing to a happy and immortal life, all the miserable victims of the condemning sentence, whether of that law which was given to Adam, or of that which was declared by Moses; and this glorious deliverance is revealed to us by Jesus Christ, our honoured master, through whom both Jew and Gentile are blended in one happy community, in which all are regarded as justified who believe in Christ [1].

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[1] The apostle's language is thus beautifully paraphrased and expressed by Dr. Taylor: "That as sin through the law has been set upon its throne by death, which is its power and do-

Ch. V. Ver. 21.

Upon this remarkable section we may reflect, First, that the apostle most confidently teaches, that all mankind, Jew or Gentile, are equally the objects of divine favour under the gospel dispensation, the great design of which is to rescue mankind from the grave, and to advance them to life, happiness, and immortality.

Also, that his argument, if it proves any thing, proves that all, without exception, who have been sufferers by the Fall, shall be eventually raised to life and happiness.

But as the account of the Fall is precarious, and cannot be received as an historic fact, so the analogical argument borrowed from it must be regarded as proportionably precarious; and can only be considered as an illustration of the apostle's doctrine, which is no doubt true, and of divine authority, even though the argument by which it is here supported is only available as an illustration of the writer's idea.

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minion over us; so the Divine Grace might be placed upon its opposite and superior Throne through the gospel or grant of salvation unto eternal life, which grant of salvation is conferred through Jesus Christ our king and governour, and will be executed and completed by him."

PART THE SECOND.

Ch. VI. THE GOSPEL CONTAINS THE MOST POWERFUL MOTIVES TO REPENTANCE AND HOLINESS TO ALL WHO BELIEVE, WHETHER JEW OR GENTILE. Ch. vi. 1,—viii. 11.

CASE I.

The gospel is efficacious for repentance and holiness in the believing GENTILE. Ch. vi.

And the train of the apostle's argument upon this subject is, First, that the heathen, by his profession of faith in Christ, is risen to a new life; and Secondly, that he has enlisted himself into a new service.

SECTION I.

The Gentile, by his profession of faith in Christ, has entered upon a new life, ver. 1—11.

In order to illustrate the obligation of the converted heathen to a life of universal holiness, the apostle carries on a comparison between the life, the death, the resurrection, the ascension, and the present state of Christ, and the condition of a converted heathen; and without a close attention to this illustration, the apostle's argument and phraseology will be misunderstood.

The heathen, in his unconverted state, is compared to Christ while fulfilling his personal ministry in the world. Ch. VI.

The heathen, by his conversion to the Christian faith, becomes dead to his former state, as Jesus did by his crucifixion.

The convert from heathenism, being plunged into the water of baptism, becomes even buried to his former idolatry and vice, as Jesus Christ was buried when he was laid in the sepulchre.

When the converted heathen emerges from baptism he rises to a new life, a new state of existence, as Christ did when he rose from the grave.

The connexion between the converted heathen and the idolatries and vices of his former state, is as completely dissolved as that between Jesus and his enemies and persecutors since his resurrection.

And in particular the converted heathen is no more under the dominion of his former criminal habits and affections, than Christ is now in the power of those wicked rulers and persecutors who condemned him to death.

Also, the converted heathen, in his new state of existence, consecrates his whole life to God, as Jesus has consecrated to God his renewed existence, since his resurrection from the dead.

And finally, it is as unreasonable that a converted heathen should desire to return again to the follies and vices of heathenism and idolatry, as it would be for Christ himself to desire to exchange the glory and felicity of his present exalted state,

Ch. VI. for the mean and servile condition in which he passed the season of his public ministry.

This is the train of ideas in the apostle's mind; it is not for us to inquire whether it is the most accurate and logical way of reasoning upon the subject; at any rate it shows the apostle's decided judgement, that no proselyte from heathen idolatry could be regarded as a proper member of the Christian community who did not utterly renounce and disclaim all the vices of his heathen state, and yield himself up wholly to the service of God and the practice of universal virtue. With this clue the apostle's argument will become perfectly intelligible.

1. The apostle starts an objection which he immediately repels, ch. vi. 1, 2.

Ver. 1. 2. *What shall we say then, Let us continue*[1] *in sin that grace may abound? Far from it. We who are dead to sin, how shall we any longer live in it?*

q. d. I have shown that where sin abounded, grace and pardon have superabounded. This doctrine may indeed be misapprehended and perverted. The sensualist, who desires to enjoy the pleasures and to escape the condemnation of vice, may say, If the grace of God is illustrated and magnified in proportion to the magnitude of the offence, what should hinder me from indulging in sensual gratifications,

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[1] *Let us continue.*] επιμενωμεν. Griesbach marks this as the most probable reading, though he does not receive it into his text. The common reading is επιμενομεν, "shall we continue."

that the display of mercy in my pardon and acceptance may be more illustrious and wonderful? But shall we, my friends, who are converts from heathenism, and who publicly profess the doctrine of Christ, adopt a mode of reasoning so disingenuous and disgraceful? Far be the thought from us. With regard to our past heathen state, we are to all intents and purposes dead: dead to its superstitions, dead to its idol worship, dead to its impurities, its follies, and its crimes. How can we who are thus dead to heathenism, live in the practice of heathen vices? We can no more do it than a dead man can move and act as if he were alive. Ch. VI. Ver. 2.

That the apostle in this chapter addresses the heathen only is evident, because, in the next, he particularly applies to those who are under the law; and this is one instance out of many in which the apostle uses the first person, though he is only speaking of converted heathen, a class to which he did not belong. Their conversion from heathenism to Christianity he describes as passing into a new state of existence, as death to an old, and resurrection to a new life; by which bold and impressive figure he justly and beautifully indicates the wonderful change which took place in the views, the character, the hopes, and expectations of a heathen idolater when he became a convert to the Christian religion.

2. The apostle observes, that converted heathen are, like Jesus Christ, dead and buried to their

Ch. VI. former state, and raised again to a new state of existence, ver. 3—7.

Ver. 3. *What! know ye not that as many of us as have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death?*

Are you not aware that all of us who have made a public profession of our faith in Christ, have professed ourselves to be as completely extinct to the vices and idolatries of our heathen state, as Christ became dead to the world when he expired upon the cross?

4. *We are therefore buried with him by this baptism into death, that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so likewise we might walk in newness of life.*

The ceremony of immersion in the baptismal water indicates that we are, like Jesus, buried to our former state, so that we have no more connexion with it than a dead body in the grave has with the living world.

But the analogy may be carried still further: for as we soon rise from the baptismal water, as Jesus by the power of God was after a short interval raised from the grave, this implies, that we also are raised like him to a new state of existence by our profession of the faith of Christ, and that we are to order our future conversation and course agreeably to the customs and manners of the new world into which we are introduced.

It seems probable that by the expression buried with him in baptism, the apostle alludes to immer-

sion as the general practice in that age and in those countries where bathing was frequent. But this by no means proves that immersion was the universal practice in the administration of the rite, especially as the word baptize is used in the New Testament, where nothing more is meant than pouring a little water upon the hands or feet of a guest previously to his taking his place at the table. See Mark vii. 4. Luke xi. 38[1]. Ch. VI. Ver. 4.

Some learned men have translated the text thus, *that as Christ was raised from the dead with a view to the glory of the Father*[2]: and this sense admirably well suits the apostle's design, which is to show that heathen are introduced into a Christian state with a view to the glory of God, that they may consecrate their new life wholly to his service. But though this is a sense which the words will bear, and which is supported by some very learned men, yet, as it is an unusual sense in this construction, I have adopted that which is most common. The apostle proceeds.

For if we have conformed[3] *to the resemblance of his death, surely we shall also* conform[4] to that *of*

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[1] See Belsham's Plea for Infant Baptism, p. 60, Lett. v.

[2] *View to the glory.*] See Beza and Grotius *in loc.* Upon the same principle Dr. Lardner and Mr. Lindsey explain, Heb. i. 2, δι' ὃ, "with a view to whom God made the dispensations or ages." See the note in the Improved Version. "by the power of the Father." Wakefield.

[3] *Conformed.*] σύμφυτοι, planted together: hence it signifies a strict connexion or resemblance between one thing and another. See Rosenmuller. "It is here merely, *par, similis:* and has nothing to do with planting." Wakefield.

Ch. VI. Ver. 6. *his resurrection. Considering this, that our old man has been crucified with* him, *that the being of sin*[1] *might be destroyed, that we might no longer* 7. *be in slavery to sin: for he who is dead is set at liberty from sin*[2].

If by our profession of faith in Christ we become dead like him to our former state, nothing can be more reasonable than that we should rise with him to a new and better state of existence. This may be illustrated by a similitude: Our former selves, in our heathen state, were slaves to the tyranny of idolatry and sin; this heathen self is now crucified as Christ was, and by this crucifixion we are become dead to sin and sin to us: all connexion between us is totally dissolved. For as when the slave is dead slavery ceaseth, so the heathen man, the former self, being crucified and dead, heathenism and its concomitant vices can no longer pretend to domineer over us. The present man, the new self, is at perfect liberty from the old intolerable yoke.

3. Believers in Christ are, like him after he was raised, to remain in the new state of existence into which they are introduced, and ought not to return back to their former state, ver. 8—11.

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[1] *Surely*, &c.] "αλλα, *profecto, utique*." Rosenmuller. "εσομεθα, *esse debemus: ut*, τι ποιησομεν, Luke iii. 14." Rosenmuller. Wakefield says it has the force of an imperative, as Matt. v. ult.

[1] *Being of sin*.] Gr. "body of sin," that is, sin itself.

[2] *Is set at liberty*.] "δεδικαιωται literally, is justified; but as justification expresses deliverance, so to be *justified* is to be *delivered*." Taylor. Comp. ver. 18.

And we believe, that if we are dead with Christ, Ch. VI. Ver. 8.
we should also live[3] *with him.*

If we acknowledge that by our baptismal profession we symbolize a death with Christ, we ought also to admit, that we are to resemble him in his renewed life as well as in his death.

Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead 9.
dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over
him (for when he died[4] *unto sin, he died once for* 10.
all; but now he liveth, he liveth unto God): so like- 11.
wise ye account yourselves to be *dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus*[5].

Having been taught, as the fundamental principle of the doctrine of Christ, that our great prophet was raised from the dead to an immortal life, so that he can never again become subject to mortality (for having once died to his original state of frailty and suffering, he has suffered death once for all, without being ever subject to a repetition of the stroke, and being raised to life by the power of God, he dedicates his renewed and continually supported life to the glory of God), do ye therefore imitate his great example. Regard yourselves as wholly dead to your former heathen state and vicious practices, but as

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[3] *We should also live.*] συζησομεν, the Hebrew future, which expresses fitness as well as futurity. See ver. 5, and Rosenmuller's note. "we cannot but think and believe that we should lead a life conformable to his." Locke. See Wakefield.

[4] *When he died.*] So Wakefield. "Ὁ γαρ απεθανε, Ὁ *pro* Καθ' ὁ, *quantum attinet, quod attinet ad.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *In Christ Jesus.*] The received text adds, "our Lord;" but these words are wanting in the best MSS. and are omitted by Griesbach.

Ch. VI. Ver. 11. enjoying a new life through your profession of the Christian religion, which new life you are determined, like Christ, to consecrate to the service of God.

Observe here that Christ is said to die to sin, and the Roman converts are exhorted to consider themselves as also dead unto sin. It is plain, therefore, that the apostle does not mean to say that either Christ, or they, died as an expiation for the sins of others. The apostle plainly means, that each of the parties was dead to their former state, which state he calls sin; and by sin, as applied to converted heathen, he evidently intends their original state of idolatry and vice. As applied to Christ, it perhaps expresses that state of frailty and suffering to which our Lord was exposed during his personal ministry, sin and suffering being regarded by the Jews almost as convertible terms; or, it may express a state in which he was persecuted by sinners, by Jews and Gentiles, by rulers, priests and people, by whom he was charged with sin and treated as an offender.

SECTION II.

The heathen convert, by his profession of faith in Christ, is enlisted into a new service. Ch. vi. 12 *to the end.*

1. The apostle exhorts the converted heathen, in their renewed state of existence, to give them-

selves up to the service of God, and not of sin, Ch. VI ver. 12—14.

Let not sin therefore reign in your dead person[1], Ver. 12. *so as to obey it.*

Your heathen self is dead; do not act in your new and Christian state as if this dead body were revived, and re-animated by sin, and had returned to its former servitude. In other words, professing to be disciples of Christ, do not relapse into the vices of your heathen state.

Neither present your bodies[2] *to sin* as *instruments of unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as alive from the dead, and your bodies to God* as *instruments of righteousness.* 13.

You are not now to live as in your former heathen state: do not then give yourselves up to the practice of vice, as you did when you served your old master sin; but, as those who have been raised to a new life, offer yourselves to your new master, to God, and consecrate all your powers to him, and to a life of virtue in obedience to his will.

For sin must not exercise dominion[3] *over you: for you are not under the law, but under grace*[4]. 14.

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[1] *In your dead person.*] See Wakefield: *q. d.* in your dead selves. See ver. 11. The received text adds at the end of the verse, the words "in the lusts thereof," which are omitted by Griesbach on good authority. "It is necessary," says Mr. Locke, "to bear in mind through this and the succeeding chapter, that sin is here spoken of as a person striving with men for the mastery over them to destroy them."

[2] Gr. "members." See Worsley's Translation. "*τα μελη, idem denotant quod το σωμα*, ver. 12." Rosenmuller.

[3] *Sin must not, &c.*] So Wakefield, *α κυριευσει*. See ver. 8.

Ch. VI. Ver. 14. You are now under a dispensation of mercy, and not of terror; it would therefore be peculiarly unbecoming and ungrateful in you to sin against so much mercy and forbearance.

2. The apostle expostulates and appeals to their own feelings as to the disingenuousness of such a conduct, ver. 15.

15. *What then? shall we continue in sin*[1] *because we are not under the law, but under grace? Far from it.*

Reflect: put the question to yourselves. The law condemns, the gospel forgives; shall not gratitude operate more powerfully than terror? Shall we abuse the mercy of God because he is unwilling to execute justice? Surely, we spurn the thought of such base and unworthy behaviour.

3. The apostle expresses his satisfaction, that having quitted the service of sin they had entered themselves as the servants of righteousness, ver. 16—18.

16. *Know ye not, that to whomsoever ye present yourselves to yield obedience, ye are the slaves of him whom you obey, whether of sin unto death*[2]*, or of obedience unto justification?*

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[1] *Grace,*] *i. e.* the gospel, a dispensation of mercy, as distinguished from law: in this connexion the technical word grace, seems preferable to the modern term favour.

[1] *Continue in sin.*] ἁμαρτήσωμεν. "can any so far mistake this happy dispensation as to make it a reason for continuing in a sinful course?" Taylor.

Be assured it is no light matter what master you choose, whether sin or righteousness; for as is the master such will be the service, and such the wages and the reward. If you choose sin as your master, you will live in the practice of vice; and death, ruin here, and misery hereafter, will be your reward: but if righteousness be your master, you will live in obedience to the will of God; and pardon, peace, and final happiness, will be your portion. You will be entitled to all the privileges and promises of the gospel both here and hereafter. Ch. VI. Ver. 16.

But thanks be *to God, that having been the slaves of sin you have* now *obeyed*[3] *from the heart the mould of doctrine into which you were delivered.* 17.

But, though I speak hypothetically, I thank God you have not now your choice to make. In your late heathen state you were indeed slaves to idolatry and vice: you are now totally changed. You have been cast into the mould of the gospel, and you have taken a fair impression of the sacred die; you bear the image of Christ; and the inscription is holiness and universal virtue.

Having then been set at liberty from sin, ye are become the slaves of righteousness. 18.

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[2] Some good copies omit εις θανατον, to death. See Griesbach.

[3] *Thanks*, &c.] Gr. "thanks be to God that ye were the slaves of sin, but ye have obeyed," &c. The apostle's meaning is obvious: the allusion is to the melting of metal, and casting it into a die or mould to receive a new impression. See Taylor and Doddridge. thanks "that *though* ye were, &c. *yet* ye have obeyed." Newcome.

Ch. VI. Ver. 18. Though you have renounced the tyranny of sin, you do not profess to be wholly without restraint; but in your new state of existence you have bound yourselves to a new master, even righteousness, and have covenanted to submit to the laws and regulations of the community of which you are now members.

4. The apostle, apologizing for his figurative language, urges them to be as obedient to their new master, as they formerly had been to their old tyrant, ver. 19.

19. *I speak familiarly because of the infirmity of your nature*[1]. *As you have presented yourselves*[2] *as slaves to impurity and to iniquity, to* practise *iniquity; so now, present yourselves as slaves to righteousness, to* practise *holiness.*

I use the familiar comparison of a slave changing his master, that you may more easily comprehend a subject which must be new and difficult to those who have been educated in the practice of heathenism, and who can hardly form a correct conception of that total change which their new profession requires. When a slave becomes the

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[1] *I speak familiarly.*] So Wakefield. "ανθρωπινον λεγω, after the manner of men, *humano more loqui, populariter*, as opposed to the elevated language of poetry, or the subtlety and obscurity of philosophers." Rosenmuller, who gives instances of this use of the phrase. "because of the infirmity of your nature. Infirmitas, *haud raro usurpatur de intellectûs tarditate.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *Yourselves.*] Gr. "τα μελη, your members, *pro ἑαυτες*, yourselves, all your powers." Rosenmuller. See ver. 13.

property of another, his former master, as you are well apprized, loses all his authority, and all his powers are engaged to the service of his new proprietor. Upon the same principle, As in your heathen state you devoted yourselves to the service of your impure idolatries, so as to commit all manner of evil without remorse, and even as an act of respect and homage to your obscene deities; so now, being redeemed and set at liberty from your former tyrant, and having been purchased by another master, act agreeably and to your present condition, and yield an obedience as entire to your new proprietor, righteousness, and perform the duties of holiness and the works of virtue, under the dominion of the gospel, with as much zeal and activity as ever you obeyed the authority of sin. Ch. VI. Ver. 19.

5. The apostle enforces his exhortation by the consideration of the different nature and issue of the service which they have forsaken, and that to which they are now engaged, ver. 20—22.

For when ye were slaves of sin, ye were at liberty from righteousness. 20.

You could not serve two opposite masters at the same time; you could not be heathen and Christians both at once. The words sin and righteousness here, and in many parts of this epistle, express heathenism with its crimes, and the gospel with its blessings.

What fruit then had ye at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? Moreover, the end of those things is *death.* 21.

Ch. VI. Ver. 21. You now see the idolatry and the sinfulness of your heathen state in their proper light; you blush to recollect the folly of your worship and the dissoluteness of your character; and did you then at the time derive any advantage or gratification from the practice of vice, which you can now regard as any thing like an adequate compensation for this gross self-degradation? And when it is considered that such conduct must eventually terminate in final ruin, what folly can be greater than that of persisting in a bondage so odious and oppressive?

22. *But now, being set free from sin and become slaves of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*

If the question be now asked, What are the fruits of your present profession? what are the advantages of the service of God to which by your renunciation of idolatry and the profession of faith in Christ you have bound yourselves by the closest ties? the answer is ready, and there is nothing of which you need to be ashamed. The proper business of your present engagement is the practice of universal virtue; its immediate recompense, the unspeakable peace which results from it; and its ultimate reward is a resurrection to everlasting life and happiness.

6. The apostle concludes with a brief and impressive summary of the argument, ver. 23.

23. *For the wages of sin* is *death; but the free gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord,* is *eternal life.*

And, to bring the argument to a close, what I desire to impress upon the mind of the Gentile believer is, that the idolatries and crimes of a heathen state necessarily lead to condign punishment: if sin is the master, death will be the wages: death both here and hereafter, whatever may be implied in the terrible denunciation. Ch. VI. Ver. 23.

Widely different will be the lot of those who bind themselves to the service of God, and who faithfully adhere to the terms of their new covenant. They can indeed make no claim upon their Maker upon the ground of merit and of right; all have sinned, and all must plead guilty. What they receive is the gift of free, unmerited, unpurchased goodness; and this gift, this free and gracious promise, which has been revealed to us by Jesus Christ, our honoured master and revered instructor, this divine gift, is nothing less than everlasting life, a resurrection from the grave to a glorious, a happy, and an immortal existence.

Such is the apostle's argument with the Gentile converts to prove, that though the privileges of the gospel are offered to all with the most perfect freedom, without regard to antecedent merit, and without subjection to the yoke of the ceremonial law, the Christian religion, nevertheless, lays its professors under the strongest obligations to the practice of virtue in all its branches, without which, their faith will be of no avail.

CASE II.

Ch. VII. *The profession of the Christian doctrine efficacious for the sanctification of the converted* JEW. Ch. vii. 1,—viii. 17.

Under this head, the apostle first assures the believing Jew, that he is at perfect liberty to become a disciple of Christ, ch. vii. 1—4. II. He briefly sketches the case of a Jew under the law and under the gospel, ver. 5, 6. III. He describes at large the wretched situation of the awakened Jew, ver. 7—25. IV. He shows in what way the gospel operates to release believers from the condemning sentence of the law, and illustrates the opposite practical influence of the law and gospel. Ch. viii. 1—17.

SECTION I.

The apostle asserts the absolute freedom of the believing Jew from the yoke of the ceremonial Law. Ch. vii. 1—4.

Ver. 1. *Know ye not, brethren, for I* now *speak to those who know* the *Law, that the Law ruleth over a man so long as it liveth*[1]*?*

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[1] *As it liveth.*] "as long as it is in force." Wakefield. Dr. Doddridge very justly observes, that "it would be contrary to the apostle's design to suppose the sense of this to be, as our translation renders it, as long as *he* liveth, for the apostle pro-

The apostle had hitherto been addressing the converted Gentiles, who were strangers to the law of Moses. He now turns to the believing Jew, who knew the law, who was firmly attached to it, and strongly inclined to combine the ritual of Moses with the doctrine of Christ. With regard to the Hebrew Christians who resided in Judea while the temple was standing and the Jewish polity continued, they were permitted, perhaps even enjoined, to comply with the rites of the Mosaic Law, which indeed constituted a portion of the political code of the country. But Jewish believers who resided in foreign parts, as for example at Antioch, at Corinth, or at Rome, were entirely emancipated from this yoke, could they have divested themselves so far of their early prejudices, as to have acknowledged and enjoyed their Christian liberty. But in general they were too zealously attached to the rites of Moses to be willing to renounce their authority; and so long as they did not impose them upon their Gentile brethren, their prepossessions were treated by the apostle with great lenity and indulgence. Ch. VII. Ver. 1.

In the beginning of this chapter, the design of the apostle is to state, in language as inoffensive as possible, the complete abrogation of the law of Moses, and the entire emancipation of Christian believers from its authority: which he describes as the dissolution of the marriage contract by the decease of one of the parties.

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fessedly endeavours to prove that they had outlived their obligations to the law."

Ch. VII. Ver. 1. *q. d.* Having lived under the law, you understand the nature of a law, that the obligation of its authority continues till the law itself is repealed, and no longer.

2. *For the married woman is bound by law to* her *husband while he is alive: but if the husband be dead, she is discharged from the law of* her *husband. If therefore she becomes* the wife *of another man, while* her *husband is living, she is called an adulteress; but if* her *husband be dead, she is set at liberty from the law, so as to be no adulteress though she be* married *to another husband. And thus*[1], *my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law*[2] *by the person of Christ; that ye might be* married *to another,* even *to him who was raised from the dead, that we*[3] *might bring forth fruit unto God*[4].

It is worthy of observation that the apostle had represented the Gentiles, antecedent to their con-

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[1] "Ωστε for Οὕτως." Rosenmuller. "It is used in comparison for *ut, sic*, as, so." Taylor.

[2] *Ye are become dead to the law.*] "For the law is become dead to you. A hypallage like that *Date classibus austros,* Set the winds to the fleet. By this manner of expression the prejudice of the Jew is favoured, who might have been disgusted if the apostle had said the law was dead; and yet the sense is the same, because the relation is dissolved, which soever of the parties be dead." Taylor.

[3] *That we might.*] The apostle here changes the person, and joins himself with the believing Jews, in order, as Mr. Locke observes, to press his argument more strongly.

[4] *Bring forth fruit unto God.*] "and therefore the fruit which the gospel produces is living, and shall live for ever; but the fruit of sin under the law is as I may say still-born, is fruit unto death." Taylor.

version, as in a state of bondage: they were slaves to idolatry and vice; but by their profession of the Christian religion they had become free men, they were translated to the service of God; their duty was to practise virtue, and their portion everlasting life. But of the Jews who had lived under a divine dispensation he speaks with more respect. He represents them in their prior state as sustaining the relation of a wife to a husband, as in a state of affectionate subjection, not of cruel bondage. Ch. VII. Ver. 4.

Attached as the Jews were to the law of Moses, they would naturally regard an abandonment of this law as an act of disloyalty and ingratitude to God who gave it. This objection the apostle obviates by representing the law to which they had been wedded, and which it would have been highly criminal to have abandoned till it was repealed, as now dead in consequence of the mission of Christ, who had been authorized to introduce a new dispensation. Under these circumstances, to give up their connexion with the law, and to embrace the Christian profession, was no more criminal than it is in a woman to marry a second husband when the first husband is dead.

To avoid, however, the harsh and offensive expression that the law was dead, which might have alarmed the prejudices of his Jewish readers, he says, with a considerable degree of verbal inaccuracy, but with an obvious and very intelligible meaning, Ye are dead to the law; that is, The law, your first husband, is dead to you.

Ch. VII. Ver. 4. *By the body, or person of Christ*; that is, by Christ himself, who by dying upon the cross abolished the law, which was crucified with him and rose no more. But Christ himself rose, and takes the place of the law: to him, that is, to his gospel, we are now wedded; and the design of this new and blessed connexion is, that we should produce those fruits of holiness in heart and life which God will approve and accept.

SECTION II.

The apostle briefly sketches the two cases of a Jew under the law and a Jew under the gospel, ver. 5, 6.

For when we were in the flesh[1], *sinful passions* occasioned *by the law*[2] *operated in us, so as to*
6. *bring forth fruit unto death. But now*[3], *being dead*[4], *we are discharged from the law by which*

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[1] *In the flesh*,] *i. e.* under the law. See Rosenmuller, and Theodoret as quoted by him. Release from this state is described in the next verse as being discharged from the law.

[2] *Occasioned by the law*.] τα διὰ τȣ νομȣ, see ver. 8, 11, where he explains his meaning more at large. *To bring forth fruit*, see ver. 4. While wedded to the law sin was the fruit, and death the consequence. *Operated in us.* Gr. "our members," *i. e.* ourselves.

[3] *But now*,] *i. e.* under the gospel: so *now* is frequently used, Rom. iii. 21, v. 9, 11, and many other texts which Dr. Taylor cites in his note, and which he thinks may prove a key to these and some other texts.

[4] *Being dead*.] ἀποθανόντες. This is the reading of the Alexandrine and Ephrem MSS. and adopted by Griesbach. The received text reads ἀποθανόντος, that being dead, viz. the law,

we were bound, so that we may serve[5] *according to the new spirit, and not to the old letter.* Ch. VII. Ver. 6.

I am addressing myself to those who, having been educated under the discipline of the law of Moses, are now believers in the doctrine of Christ. These will not deny that the tendency of a dispensation which denounces death without mercy upon every transgression, by driving sinners to despair, tempts them to run headlong on in a course of sin, the inevitable consequence of which is death; and we ourselves have probably felt the force of the temptation. But now, this dangerous connexion with the law being dissolved and totally abolished by the death of one of the parties, we are at full liberty to enter into a new service, upon new terms, and to bind ourselves to a master who will not exact the rigorous conditions of our former tyrant, but will accept our sincere though imperfect obedience.

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which is indeed the apostle's idea; but to avoid offence he here, as in verse 4, represents believers as the dead party, though his meaning obviously is, that the law, the first husband or master, being dead, the survivor is at liberty to enter into a new connexion.

[5] *Serve*] God, or righteousness, *i. e.* our new master, *according to the new spirit*, Gr. "in newness of spirit," &c. *i. e.* agreeably to the liberal spirit of the new dispensation, and not to the servile spirit of the old letter, the dispensation which required a literal compliance with every precept under the heaviest penalties.

SECTION III.

CH. VII. *The apostle describes at large the miserable situation of the awakened Jew*, ver. 7—25.

And for the illustration of this subject he makes use of a bold prosopopœia, or supposition of fictitious persons, in order to describe the situation of a Jew who, not having heard the tidings of the gospel, is just awakened to a sense of the danger and misery of his condition under the law; and for this purpose he introduces no less than five allegorical figures, to each of which he assigns a peculiar character and office.

The first is Mind, the understanding, the principle of virtue, which always discerns and approves what is right.

Secondly, Flesh, passion, irregular affections and desires, the tendency of which is to lead the mind astray; with which, however, Mind lived in harmony till the appearance of a Third person, viz.

Law, the law of Sinai, which reveals to Mind the criminality of all exorbitant affection and desire, which pronounces sentence of death upon every transgression, and allows no hope of pardon and no encouragement to repentance.

The Fourth personage is Sin, the inveterate enemy of Mind, continually aiming at its destruction; which, nevertheless, before the appearance of Law was in a dormant state, but which, taking advantage

of the discoveries, and of the inexorable nature of Law, enters into an alliance with Flesh, *i. e.* the passions, makes war upon Mind, takes it prisoner, and reduces it to a state of the most abject, hopeless, and miserable servitude, from which wretched and dangerous state it is at last delivered by the interposition of a Fifth person, viz. Ch. VII.

Grace, the gift of God through Jesus Christ, the gospel dispensation, which, by proclaiming the joyful tidings of forgiveness, revives the spirits of Mind, animates her to renew the contest, and finally gives her a complete victory over sin and death.

From the seventh verse to the twentieth, the Mind, in a soliloquy, represents and laments over its own wretched situation. In the remainder of the chapter, the Jew in person describes his misery and his danger, and the seasonable and effectual interposition of Grace, or the gospel, for his relief.

1. The apostle introduces Mind, that is, the rational and voluntary powers, as a person complaining of insupportable bondage, but previously acknowledging the purity of the law which first made known the guilt of evil affections, ver. 7.

What then shall we say? Is *the law sin? By no means. Nay, I had not known sin*[1] *but through* Ver. 7.

[1] *I had not known sin.*] Mr. Locke remarks, "that the skill which the apostle uses in dexterously avoiding to give offence to the Jews is very visible in the word *I*, in this place. In the beginning of the chapter, where he mentions their knowledge of the law, he says *ye*. In the fourth verse he joins himself with them, and says *we*. But here and to the end of the chap-

Ch. VII. Ver. 7. *the law. For I had not known evil desire* to be sin, *if the law had not said Thou shalt not desire*[1].

When I say that evil affections were occasioned by the law, will any one suspect that I mean to charge the law of God as directly commanding vice? Nothing could be further from my intention. The law, in fact, only made known to me the nature and extent of the divine requisitions: for I should not have known that criminality attached to the affections, as unconnected with external actions, had not irregular desires been the object of an express prohibition.

2. Mind complains that Sin, her great enemy, taking advantage of the rigour of Law, roused the

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ter, where he represents the power of sin and the inability of the law to subdue it, he leaves them out, and speaks altogether in the first person, though it is plain he means all those who were under the law." See also ch. iii. 7. Dr. Taylor adds, "we may here observe another stroke of honest art, which appears to me still more masterly, and that is his demonstrating the insufficiency of law under colour of vindicating it." The fact however is, that this extreme caution of giving offence throws an almost impenetrable obscurity over the apostle's style, which is indeed abundantly compensated by exhibiting the liberality of his mind, and by the evidence which it affords of the antiquity and genuineness of the apostolic writings. No one, after the apostolic age, would have thought it worth while to have treated the Jewish prejudices with so much ceremony and indulgence.

[1] *Shalt not desire,*] *i. e.* Thou shalt not allow evil desire This is plainly the meaning of επιθυμησεις in this connexion. The word "covet" does not convey the true sense, being commonly limited to the desire of property. "I had not known *the guilt of* desire, unless the law had said Thou shalt not desire." Newcome. It was the doctrine of the Pharisees, that desire is not criminal if it does not proceed to overt acts.

dormant passions, and reduced her to a state of pollution and condemnation, ver. 8—11. Ch. VII.

But sin, taking advantage[2] *by the precept, produced in me every kind of evil desire.* Ver. 8.

It was not law which did the mischief, but sin, which availed itself of the prohibitions of the law to excite those very passions which the law forbid.

For before the law[3] *sin* was *dead, and before the law I was once alive. But when the precept came, sin came to life, and I died.* 9.

Before I studied the law and became apprized of its extent and rigour, I went on quietly, without any tormenting consciousness of guilt, or temptation to sin; I thought well of my own state: but when I understood the strictness of the law, and saw that I was already exposed to its condemnation, sin told me I could not be worse let me do what I would, and by this means it acquired an entire ascendancy over me and annihilated all resistance.

And the precept which was given *for life, itself proved* to be *for death.* 10.

For sin taking advantage by the precept deceived me, and by it slew me. 11.

The consequence was, that the very law to the

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[2] *Advantage,*] not opportunity merely. Sin used the law as an active and powerful instrument to attain its end. "Αφορμη, *omnem apparatum subsidiorum ad aliquam rem perficiendam necessariorum.*" Schleusner. "*Nitimur in vetitum semper, cupimusque negata.*" Ovid.

[3] *Before the law.*] Gr. "without the law," *i. e.* before I paid attention to it; but when the precept came, *i. e.* came to mind, when I considered it and gave attention to it. It is to be remembered that the apostle is not here speaking in his own person, but in that of an awakened Jew, who thus describes his own feelings. See Rosenmuller.

Ch. VII. Ver. 11. observance of which was annexed the promise of life, and which if I had obeyed it would have rewarded my obedience with life and happiness, was eventually a sentence of condemnation. For sin, deceiving me into the belief that I could not be worse than I was, and that the precept was impracticable, availed itself of the very discoveries of the law to seal and aggravate my condemnation.

3. This unhappy condition to which Mind is brought by no means derogates from the excellence of Law, but only serves to demonstrate the malignity of Sin, ver. 12, 13.

12. *So then, the law is holy, and the precept is holy, and just, and good.*

I mean no reflection upon the Mosaic law, it was well calculated to answer its purpose of separating the descendants of Abraham from the rest of mankind; and the particular precept which imposes restraint upon evil desire is a most reasonable injunction, and if it were obeyed would be productive of unspeakable benefit.

13. *Did then that which is good become death to me? By no means: but sin* only [1]. *So that sin appeared working death in me by that which is good; so that, through the precept, sin became exceedingly sinful.*

Law was perfectly innocent; law only delivered the precept, and declared the penalty. Sin was the

[1] *But sin only.*] I follow the punctuation of Griesbach. See Newcome's inner margin

sole cause of the mischief done, and herein sin exhibited her own peculiar malignity, in converting that which was in itself excellent, which was intended as a rule of life, and which if obeyed would have given a title to life, into an instrument of death. Ch. VII. Ver. 13.

4. Mind continues to enlarge upon its own deplorable condition, as the helpless miserable slave of Sin, whose organ it is compelled to be, without a possibility of successful resistance, ver. 14—20.

For I know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold to sin. 14.

It is of great consequence to recollect that the apostle is not speaking in his own person, but in that of a Jew under the law; who, being awakened to a sense of the evil of sin and a desire to forsake it, is thrown into despair, and hardened in guilt, by the unrelenting severity of the law. In this affecting soliloquy the understanding is stating and lamenting her cruel fate. *q. d.*

I am now clearly convinced that the law was not given merely to regulate men's external actions, but to govern their affections and their thoughts; whereas my affections are debased, and evil habits domineer over me as much as if I had been actually sold as a slave to vice.

For what I do, I know not[2]*: for what I would, that I do not practise; but what I hate, that I do.* 15.

[2] *I know not.*] ε γινωσκω, *i. e.* as some understand it, "I approve not." See Hos. viii. 4; Matt. vii. 23: or as others,

Ch. VII. Ver. 15. I am no longer under my own direction, nor subject to my own choice and approbation; I know not what I shall be driven to next; the tyrant to whom I am in bondage compels me to service which I disapprove and hate, and will not permit me to follow the dictates of my own understanding and will.

16. *But if I do that which I do not will, I assent*
17. *to the law that* it is *excellent. Now then it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me.*

Being thus irresistibly urged on to commit the wickedness which I abhor, I bear my testimony to the excellence of the law which I am thus driven to transgress, and can hardly be said to be more accountable for my conduct, when thus impelled by the tyrant sin which occupies my active powers, than the poor demoniac is when he is possessed and hurried into acts of violence by an evil spirit.

18. *For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good: for to will is present with me, but I find no* ability [1] *to perform that which is good.*

Such is the opposition between the understanding and the affections. I know well that in my inferior self, in the appetites and passions, there is always a tendency to excess; and in my present state, while under the law, they bear the sway.

"I do not understand," *inscius et invitus facio.* I am a slave no longer under my own direction. See Rosenmuller.

[1] *I find no* ability.] "οὐχ εὑρίσκω, *sed perpetrare rectum non valeo:* εὑρίσκειν, *assequi posse.*" Rosenmuller.

My best self, my understanding, enlightened by the law, is desirous to keep the commandment of God; but the inferior powers prevail, and I am utterly unable to pursue the course which my best powers dictate and approve as the most excellent. Ch. VII. Ver. 18.

In this passage the Jew himself appears to be the speaker, the apostle not being solicitous to adhere strictly to his personification.

For I do not the good I would; but the evil which I would not, that I practise. Now if I do that which I would not do, it is no longer I that perform it, but sin which dwelleth in me. 19. 20.

This may still be considered as the language of the Jew. I desire to obey the law, but I am not able; I desire to avoid transgression, but am continually impelled into it. Reason and virtue are dethroned; Sin has taken possession of my active powers, and I am no longer my own master; Sin domineers over me as the possessing spirit drives and agitates the wretched demoniac.

5. The Jew, in his own person, now proceeds to express the miserable conflict which took place in his mind while he remained subject to the law, till the mercy of God in the gospel administered relief, ver. 21—25.

I find therefore this law for me[2] *when desirous to do what is right, that evil adheres*[3] *to me.* 21.

[2] *This law for me.*] "*Dictamen dicere possis propter aliquam cum legibus similitudinem.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Adheres to me.*] "Παρακειται *sc. a latere adhærere.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. VII. Ver. 21. I experience, says the enlightened and awakened Jew, this melancholy fact, that it is become a sort of law in the moral constitution of my mind, that to the perception of moral excellence, and a desire to practise duty, are invariably conjoined vicious affections and a wicked life.

22. *For I delight in the law of God after the in-*
23. *ward man: but I perceive another law in my members, making war against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which*
24. *is in my members. O wretched me*[1]*! who shall deliver me from this dead body*[2]*?*

I have one self, says the unhappy Jew here personated, my inward man, my reason and my judgement, which approves the law of God and delights in the practice of it. But I have another self, the law of the members, the appetites and passions which are continually waging war with my better self, which bring my reason into captivity to my inferior powers, and which bind me as a slave to vice and folly; I am tied to this carnal self as to

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[1] *O wretched me!*] So Newcome. Gr. "O wretched man I."

[2] *This dead body.*] Gr. "the body of this death." "This continual burden which I carry about with me, and which is cumbersome and odious as a dead carcase tied to a living body, to be dragged about with it wherever it goes." Dr. Doddridge; who notices the allusion to that species of torment, and justly adds that "a more forcible and expressive image of the sad case represented, cannot surely enter into the mind of man."

> *Mortua quinetiam jungebat corpora vivis,*
> *Componens manibusque manus, atque oribus ora,*
> *Tormenti genus, et sanie, taboque fluentes,*
> *Complexu in misero, longâ sic morte necabat.*
>
> VIRGIL. Æneid. lib. viii.

a dead body, a noisome putrid carcase, which I loath and abhor, from which I continually desire and struggle to be released, but without effect. Such is my miserable and forlorn condition: to whom can I now look for relief? What friendly arm will rescue me from destruction? Ch. VII. Ver. 24.

But the unhappy captive at length hears of deliverance: a voice exclaims,

The grace of God[3] *through Jesus Christ our Lord.* 25.

q. d. Hark! what tidings do I hear? A voice from heaven, proclaiming deliverance! It is GRACE, the favour of God, through Jesus Christ my Lord: it is the gospel of peace, which is revealed through Jesus Christ; which announces liberty to the captive, and a free pardon to the penitent. I am now inspired with a glorious hope, and can yield a cheerful and sincere obedience.

The discourse concludes with a brief recapitulation.

So then, I, the same person, with my *understand-* —25.

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[3] *The grace of God.*] ἡ χαρις τȣ Θεȣ· this is the reading of the Clermont and other manuscripts, and of the Latin Vulgate. It is ably supported by Mr. Locke, and it best suits the connexion. The miserable slave cries, Who can help me? A voice answers, Grace: the gracious gift of God: the gospel. This introduces a new person, who rescues the prisoner by slaying his adversary sin. The common reading is comparatively tame: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Abp. Newcome's note, however, is very pertinent: "I am delivered through, or by means of Jesus Christ, by whom we have greater assistances, stronger motives, clearer discoveries, and more gracious terms of final acceptance."

Ch. VII. Ver. 25. *ing am a servant to the law of God, but with* my *flesh to the law of sin.*

I have represented myself, says the enlightened Jew, as divided into two persons, the understanding and the passions: the former approving and desirous to yield obedience to the law of God; the latter prone to evil, and enslaving the superior powers to vice; the consequence of which is, hopeless subjection to the condemning sentence of the law, from which nothing but the gospel can extricate the despairing transgressor.

SECTION IV.

Ch. VIII. *The apostle shows in what way the gospel operates, to release believers from the condemning sentence of the law; and illustrates the different practical influence of the law and the gospel.* Ch. viii. 1—17.

1. The apostle directly affirms, that believers in Christ are exempted from condemnation, ver. 1.

Ver. 1. There is *then, now, no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus*[1].

Under the law no man could escape from condemnation; because no one, however enlightened

[1] The received text adds, "who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit;" which words are omitted by Griesbach, upon the authority of the Ephrem, Clermont, and other manuscripts and versions. The same words occur in a more suitable connexion at the end of ver. 4, from which they were probably transferred to this by the mistake of some early transcriber.

or however virtuous, could pretend to sinless obedience, and law shows no mercy to the penitent transgressor. But this rigid severity, and consequent misery, is abolished by the gospel, which repeals the sentence of death with respect to all who truly believe, and who become approved members of the community of which Christ is the head. Ch. VIII. Ver. 1.

2. This great deliverance is effected by the gospel; which, by abolishing the severity of the law, gives the believer a victory over sin, ver. 2—4.

For the law of the spirit of life by Christ Jesus, has set me at liberty from the law of sin and death. 2.

The law of the spirit of life is the gospel: which is called a law, because it prescribes a rule of conduct, and enforces that rule by the most powerful sanctions. It is a law of the spirit, or a spiritual law, because its precepts are wholly moral, and is not like the Mosaic institute, to which it stands opposed, a law of rites and ceremonies, which for that reason is called carnal. The gospel is also a law of life, because it reveals the doctrine of a future life, and opens the way to it for all sincere believers in Christ.

And it is this glorious gospel which sets the captive and suffering Jew, who is awakened to a sense of his danger and misery, at liberty from the yoke of the old dispensation, which, by plunging him into despair, hurried him into sin, and then, by an irrevocable sentence, condemned him to death.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 3. *For what it was impossible for the law to do, because it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin*, hath done: he *hath condemned sin*[1] *in the flesh*[2], *so that the righteous precepts of the law might be fully performed by us, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.* 4.

Here observe, that the great design of the law was to destroy sin, and to deter men from the practice of it, by denouncing the penalty of death.

Nevertheless, this important object could not be effected by the law, which, as we have seen in the case just described, only served to drive men to despair and to harden them in vice.

The law was *weak through the flesh*, because

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[1] *He hath condemned sin.*] Κατεκρινε· "The prosopopœia," says Mr. Locke, "whereby sin was considered as a person all the foregoing chapter, being continued here, the condemning of sin cannot mean, as some would have it, that Christ was condemned for sin, or in the place of sin; for that would be to leave that person alive which Christ came to destroy. But the plain meaning is, that sin itself was condemned or put to death.

[2] *In the flesh.*] εν σαρκι: *i.e.* says Mr. Locke, "in the flesh of Christ, for in him was no sin." Rosenmuller explains it, "*destruxit vim pravarum cupiditatum in nobis*, he destroyed sin in us;" and Koppe, "*punivit peccatum in homine aliquo nempe in Christo*, he punished sin in the person of Christ." "God condemned or destroyed sin in the flesh, so that it shall not reign in our mortal body." Taylor. It must be owned, that the apostle often changes the sense of his words without giving notice of the change; but as in this discourse flesh is repeatedly put for the law, and spirit for the gospel in opposition to it, I am willing to adhere to this sense where it is not absolutely necessary to change it. And in this instance I understand condemning sin in the flesh to signify, enabling the Jew, who had been the slave of sin under the law, to subdue and mortify it by faith in the gospel.

it imposed a burdensome and painful ceremonial, which had no power to obtain forgiveness and to clear the mind from guilt. But this effect of destroying sin in the flesh, of subduing it in the hearts of those who, living under the law, were enslaved to sin, God has graciously accomplished. Ch. VIII. Ver. 4.

He has sent Jesus Christ, his own son, the chief of all the prophets of God, and the first-begotten from the dead, to accomplish this great work. And to this end, he was born a Jew; and like other Jews he was subject to the ceremonial law, and there was nothing in his appearance which would lead any one to conclude that he was in any respect superior to the rest of his countrymen.

He was sent for sin, or *upon the subject of sin*[3]. The design of his mission was to take away sin, by introducing a new and spiritual dispensation consecrated with his own blood, which offered mercy to the penitent sinner, and released him at once from the rites, and from the curse of the law.

The gracious design and the happy result of all is, that the righteous precepts of the law, which, though it required the practice of virtue, was unable to enforce obedience, might be and actually are fulfilled by those who believe in Jesus, who are not

[3] Locke and Whitby, and most other commentators, interpret the phrase περι ἁμαρτιας, as signifying an offering for sin. But Dr. Taylor justly observes, that its proper and natural sense is, *about, concerning, in relation to*, sin: "And therefore," says he, "I doubt not it has relation to all that Christ has done to deliver us from the condemning and reigning power of sin, that we might be freed from the guilt of sin, and that the body of sin might be destroyed."

CH. VIII. Ver. 4. nominal believers only, but practically such; and who regulate their conduct, not by a rigid adherence to the rites and ceremonies of the law, but by the precepts and the spirit of the gospel.

3. The apostle describes and contrasts the character and state of those who live after the flesh and after the spirit; or, in other words, the adherents to the law, and the converts to the gospel [1], ver. 5—9.

5. *For they who are according to the flesh, mind the things of the flesh; but they who* are *according to the spirit, the things of the spirit.*

They who are devoted to the law, occupy themselves wholly with legal observances and ceremonial institutions; while they who embrace the gospel, who understand its nature and imbibe its spirit, are indifferent to external rites, and attend wholly to moral obligations.

6. *Now, the minding of the flesh* is *death, whereas the minding of the spirit* is *life and peace.*

Let it be further considered that they who place their confidence in the law to the rejection of the gospel, cannot possibly escape its condemning sentence; while they who rely upon the mercy of the gospel, and who comply with its terms, shall be saved from condemnation, and shall enjoy pure and uninterrupted happiness.

[1] This is the interpretation which I assign to the words, flesh and spirit; though with some diffidence, being aware how often the apostle changes the meaning of his terms without any previous notice.

Because the minding of the flesh is *enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be, and they who are in the flesh cannot please God.* Ch. VIII. Ver. 7. 8.

An obstinate adherence to the Mosaic ritual, now that it is superseded by the gospel, must be highly offensive to God, being an insolent rejection of his offer of mercy. If indeed the votary of the law could fully act up to the requisitions of the law, the case would be different. But this is impossible. The most active zealot for the law is, notwithstanding all his zeal, a condemned transgressor. Nor can it possibly be otherwise; for human nature is utterly incapable of a complete conformity to the terms of the law, and therefore they who seek for justification from the law only, must appear as convicted offenders in the sight of God.

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, seeing that[2] *the spirit of God dwelleth in you; but if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him.* 9.

But though I express myself with this apparent severity in regard to the obstinate adherents to the law, I am persuaded, my brethren, that this character does not apply to you; but that you are all

[2] *Seeing that.*] "ειπερ, since." Newcome, who refers to 2 Thess. i. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 3, 17; and adds, "The Christians at Rome are spoken of as a collective body, and are supposed to be spiritually-minded, because they were strongly obliged so to be, having received the extraordinary gifts of God's spirit. However, the apostle adds, to be Christ's indeed, they must have the mind or disposition of Christ." See ver. 10.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 9. sincere believers in Christ, and interested in the blessings of the gospel: for though you may not be so much distinguished as other churches are by spiritual gifts and miraculous powers, yet it is evident that the spirit of the gospel, which is the spirit of God, resides in you in a more important sense, in its moral influence upon your characters and lives. And be assured that he who does not in this sense possess the spirit of Christ, whatever his pretensions in other respects may be, will never be acknowledged by him as his disciple, nor admitted to those honours and rewards which are promised to the faithful and obedient.

4. By the sincere profession of the Christian doctrine, they are become dead to their former state, and alive to the hopes, the spirit, and the privileges of the gospel, ver. 10, 11.

10. *But if Christ* be *in you, the body indeed* is *dead because of sin, but the spirit* is *life because of justification* [1].

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[1] *Body—spirit.*] In this difficult and elliptical phraseology, I take σωμα, the body, to be used in the same sense as σαρξ in the preceding context, as expressing the law or the state of things under the law; and πνευμα to mean the gospel or the gospel state, *q. d.* the true believer in Christ renounces the law, because it leaves him in a state of condemnation and supplies no motives to exertion; but the gospel is a living principle, which announces pardon, and thus becomes a source of life and activity. I prefer this interpretation, because it retains the proper force of δια before an accusative. Mr. Locke, Dr. Taylor, and others, taking σωμα and πνευμα in a moral sense for evil and good affections and principles, render δια with respect to sin, and to righteousness.

If you are true believers in the doctrine of Christ, and acknowledged members of the Christian community, you are completely separated from your former state, as a living person from one that is dead; and the law is justly abrogated, because it was incompetent to subdue sin, and left its adherents under a sentence of condemnation. Ch. VIII. Ver. 10.

But the gospel lives; it rescues the believer from the sentence of the law, and so it becomes a living principle of holiness and virtue.

But if the spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he who raised up Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, because of his spirit[2] *which dwelleth in you.* 11.

If you are indeed members of the Christian community, if you are true worshipers and faithful servants of God, who attested and authenticated the divine mission of Jesus Christ by raising him from the dead, you thereby ensure your title to all the promises and privileges of the gospel covenant.

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[2] *Because of his spirit.*] This is the reading of Griesbach, upon the authority of the best manuscripts. The received text reads, διὰ τὸ ἐνοικοῦντος, by his spirit, &c.

By enlivening the mortal body, Mr. Locke understands "deliverance from the reign of sin in the body by the spirit of God, which is given to believers, and dwells in them as a new quickening principle and power." But as the actual resurrection of Christ is twice mentioned by the apostle in this sentence, I think it more probable, with Dr. Taylor and others, that the apostle is here speaking of a real resurrection to life and happiness, which is promised to those who receive and obey the gospel. Observe how directly and repeatedly the resurrection of Christ is here attributed to the Father, and not to any power inherent in Christ himself.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 11. And be assured, that the omnipotent Being who performed that glorious miracle, by which the founder and head of this new dispensation was made in his own person, not only the proof, but the pattern and the pledge of immortality to his followers, will in due time raise you also to a happy and immortal life, as the promised reward of that spirit of faith and purity which was implanted in you by the gospel, and which has been exemplified in your conduct.

5. Hence it follows, that the disciples of Christ are released from all obligation to observe the ceremonial law, ver. 12, 13.

12. *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the*
13. *flesh, that we should live after the flesh*[1]; *for if ye live after the flesh you will die, but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body*[2], *you shall live.*

The great conclusion from the preceding obser-

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[1] *Therefore, brethren,* &c.] Dr. Taylor thinks that the apostle here draws his grand conclusion from the doctrine which he has advanced in the two preceding chapters, relating to the efficacy of the gospel for the sanctification both of the Gentile and the Jew, and that the remainder of this chapter is addressed to believers in general, both Jew and Gentile. Mr. Locke thinks that the case of the Jew is finished in the seventh chapter, and that the whole of the eighth is addressed to believers in general: I have followed the division of Griesbach.

[2] The word *body* is here plainly used in the same sense as flesh in the preceding verse, *i. e.* the law; and this confirms the interpretation given, ver. 10. It must however be acknowledged, that "της σαρκος, the flesh," is the reading of some of the best copies.

vations, and that to which I desire to draw your particular attention, is this: That we who are disciples of Christ are under no obligation of allegiance to the law; and the reason is that which I have so often stated, namely, that if you seek for acceptance with God upon the ground of legal obedience only, you must fall under the condemning sentence of that inexorable dispensation; whereas, if by accepting of the offers, and acting up to the liberal spirit of the gospel, you vanquish those vicious habits which are stimulated and confirmed by the severity of the law, you will be received into favour, and will eventually be put into possession of that everlasting life which is promised by the gospel. Ch. VIII. Ver. 13.

6. Of this privilege the gift of the holy spirit is a satisfactory evidence, as it both proves that God avows the relation of a father, and generates a filial spirit in those who possess it, ver. 14—17.

For as many as are led by the spirit of God, these are the sons of God. 14.

All who have been induced by the consideration of the miraculous powers communicated to Christ and his apostles, to embrace the doctrine of Christ, are nominally sons of God; and if they are practically influenced by the spirit of the gospel, they are really such, and heirs of immortality.

For ye have not again[3] *received the spirit of* 15.

[3] *Again received*, &c.] This expression implies, that the apostle here considers himself as still addressing those who had before been under the yoke and bondage of the law.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 15. *bondage to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, by which we cry Abba,* that is, *Father.*

Those of you who were formerly subject to the law, and who suffered under the weight of its yoke, and were alarmed by the inexorable severity of its denunciations, are now relieved from your bondage and your terror. Very different indeed is the spirit of the new dispensation, of which you now have the happiness to be members. From slaves you are become children; from bondage you have been introduced to liberty: and from a habit of regarding the author of our existence as an unrelenting judge, we,—for I was myself formerly in the same state of bondage and terror from which you have been recovered,—we, and all who enter into this new covenant, are allowed and encouraged to address our Maker as a father and a friend, to love him as our best benefactor, and to yield a filial and cheerful obedience to his commands.

16. *The spirit*[1] *itself beareth witness with us*[2], *that we are the children of God.*

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[1] *The spirit itself beareth witness.*] As no apostle had yet visited Rome, and as the apostle himself expresses his desire to visit them, in order to impart some spiritual gift, which was the prerogative of the apostolic office (see Rom. i. 11), it is probable that the Roman Christians neither themselves possessed, nor perhaps had often witnessed the operation of miraculous powers; but they had no doubt received credible and satisfactory evidence of their existence, which had probably been the ground of their receiving the Christian faith.

[2] *With us.*] Gr. "with our spirits;" that is, with ourselves. The spirit of a man is a man himself, as the spirit of God is God himself. 1 Cor. ii. 11. See also Gal. vi. 18; 2 Tim. iv. 22; Philem. ver. 25.

Those gifts of the holy spirit, of the existence of which, though you may not yourselves possess them, you have no doubt been credibly informed, and which constitute the proper proofs of the resurrection of Christ, and of the divine original of the gospel, are the most satisfactory evidence that we can possess or desire that we are taken into the new covenant, that we are no longer subject to the terrors of the law, and that we are adopted into the family of God, and acknowledged by him as his children. Ch. VIII. Ver. 16.

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and co-heirs with Jesus Christ. 17.

And be it remembered, this title is not an empty name; for, as on our part it implies duty and affection, so on the part of God, who condescends to acknowledge the relation of a father, it implies an engagement to treat us as children, and particularly to provide an inheritance for us; an inheritance similar to that of which Jesus Christ, the first-born son, our dear elder brother, has already been put into possession, namely, a resurrection from the grave, to a new, a happy, and immortal life.

PART THE THIRD.

Ch. VIII. THE GOSPEL SUPPLIES ALL BELIEVERS, WHETHER JEW OF GENTILE, WITH THE BEST CONSIDERATIONS TO SUPPORT AND FORTIFY THE MIND IN THE SEASON OF PERSECUTION AND TRIAL, AND WITH THE MOST POWERFUL MOTIVES TO PERSEVERANCE. Ch. viii. 17 *to the end.*

1. Fellowship in suffering with Christ is the appointed condition of participation in his glorious reward, —17.

Ver. 17. *Seeing we suffer*[1] *with* him, *to the end that we may be also glorified with* him.

The sufferings of Christ were the necessary preliminary to his glorification; and if we aspire to participate in his reward, we must be content to take it in the same way: we must be willing to suffer with him and for him. And surely we cannot complain if we are only called to share in the fate and fortune of our glorious leader.

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[1] *Seeing we suffer.*] "Observe," says Dr. Taylor with his usual judgement, "how prudently the apostle advances to the harsh affair of suffering. He doth not mention it, till he had raised their thoughts to the highest object of joy and pleasure, the happiness and glory of a joint-inheritance with the ever blessed Son of God. This, with the additional consideration that we suffer with Christ, would greatly qualify the transitory afflictions of this world, and dispose them to attend to the other arguments he had to offer."

2. The severity of the suffering bears no proportion to the value of the reward, ver. 18. Ch. VIII.

For I compute[2] *that the sufferings of the present season* are *not worthy* to be compared *with the glory which will hereafter be manifested to us.* Ver. 18.

The sufferings and persecutions which in the present state we are constrained to endure for the sake of our profession of the gospel are sometimes very severe, and difficult to be borne, and what no wise man would voluntarily submit to without sufficient reason; and you well know that I, as the apostle of the Gentiles, have my full share of them. But whatever the world may think or say, I can assure you, that in submitting to these sacrifices and privations I have not been influenced by a spirit of enthusiasm or fanaticism, but have acted under the calm and deliberate conviction of judgement. For I have carefully counted the cost; and I find upon accurate computation, that all I can do, or suffer, for the sake of Christ and his cause is nothing, and less than nothing, in comparison with that state of glory and happiness of which he is now in possession, and in which all his faithful and persevering followers shall hereafter participate. Under all your sufferings, therefore, keep this immense preponderance of advantage continually in view.

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[2] *I compute.*] Λογιζομαι, "I find upon computation." Doddridge. "I look upon the sufferings of this present time as of no consequence with respect to," &c. Wakefield. ουκ αξια, "as of no weight." "*Vox deducta ex rebus quæ ponderantur.*" Rosenmuller.

CH. VIII. 3. This glorious and happy state of things is that to which suffering nature instinctively points, and irresistibly tends, ver. 19—22.

VER. 19. *For*[1] *the earnest longing*[2] *of the creation*[3] *waiteth for this manifestation of the sons of God*[4].

I may add, that the actual state and condition of mankind makes it probable, not only that the virtuous believers in Christ will be put into possession of the promised inheritance, but that even they who

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[1] *For,*] or *moreover.* This word introduces a collateral observation: not an inference from what goes before.

[2] *Earnest longing.*] "αποκαραδοκια, *vehemens desiderium*, καραδοκειν, *caput exserere spectatum aliquid.*" Schleusner. "The ardent expectation even of the whole race of mankind considered in general as God's creatures; earnestly desiring a better state than this, like a poor prisoner, who often puts his head out of the window of his jail, and looks for relief." Dr. Taylor; who observes from Dr. Whitby, that "in the sacred dialect desire and expectation is ascribed to creatures in reference to the things they want, and which tend to their advantage, though they explicitly know nothing of them. Thus, the Messiah before he came is called the desire of all nations. Hag. ii. 7."

[3] *Of the creation.*] κτισεως· the word creation or the creature in this text, I agree with Dr. Taylor in explaining of all mankind, and especially of the unbelieving world, see Mark xvi. 15, Col. i. 23; which interpretation he has justified in his notes. The various senses in which the word has been understood in this passage by different expositors may be seen in Rosenmuller *in loc.*

[4] *Manifestation of the sons of God.*] αποκαλυψιν, κ. τ. λ. *i. e.* the season when true believers shall be manifested to be indeed the sons of God by being put into possession of the promised inheritance. Locke and Wakefield translate *to* the sons of God, and suppose a reference to the preceding verse, in which glory is mentioned as hereafter to be manifested to true believers. That the genitive case is sometimes used objectively Mr. Locke argues, from Rom. i. 5. *et sim.* Either way the apostle's meaning is the same.

are at present excluded, will ultimately attain a similar state. Ch. VIII. Ver. 19.

For the whole unchristianized world, in their present condition, are like prisoners in a dungeon, wishing and waiting for relief, and stretching out their necks from the window of their prison, looking and longing for their expected deliverer.

Not indeed that they have correct ideas of their actual state, nor any explicit expectation of any thing better in reserve. But, bewildered in error, and enslaved to vice, they feel their misery, however ignorant of its cause, and have some title to hope, though they may not themselves be aware of it, that the benevolent and impartial Creator of all, who provides so munificently for the happiness of the virtuous believer who is taken into the relation of a son, will not ultimately forsake any of his rational and intelligent creatures. The happiness of those who are first chosen to salvation may be considered as a pledge and earnest of the eventual felicity of all mankind; so that, as the first fruits are holy and happy, the whole mass shall in the end be holy and happy too.

(For the creation was made subject to vanity[5]*;* 20.

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[5] *To vanity.*] " το ματαιον, *quodvis mutabile, caducum.*" Rosenmuller. The apostle plainly refers to the state into which mankind were brought by the Fall. I follow Locke, who includes this verse in a parenthesis, except the two last words, which are connected with ver. 19. The creation waiteth, &c. in hope, that it shall itself be set free. Dr. Taylor objects, that this construction would imply, that all mankind wait, &c.; and such no doubt was the apostle's meaning, if he has any mean-

Ch. VIII. Ver. 20. *not wilfully* [1], *but by reason of him who made* it *subject* [2].)

And there is good reason why all mankind as well as believers should expect some improvement in their condition; for, according to the account in the books of Moses, mankind were originally created innocent, happy, and immortal, but were soon reduced to their present frail and degraded state, not

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ing at all. His argument is, that as all mankind were brought into their present forlorn state, not by their own fault, but by the transgression of another, it is but reasonable that they should eventually be extricated from their miserable condition; and that the salvation of believers, who became such by no merit of their own, but by the free grace of God in giving privileges to them which were denied to others, is a good ground to hope that all will eventually be advanced to the same holy and happy state.—The argument here is similar to that in chap. v. 12.

Observe, the apostle argues upon the assumption, that the Mosaic account of the Fall is historically true. But the argument is equally valid, whether that narrative be an historical truth or an allegorical fiction.

This is one of the strongest passages in the New Testament, in favour of the Universal Restoration of all mankind to virtue and happiness; nor do I see what sense can be made of it upon any other interpretation.

[1] *Not wilfully.*] ουκ' εκοντα. Compare Heb. x. 26, 2 Pet. iii. 5. "not by its own criminal choice." Dr. Taylor.

[2] *On account or by reason of him who made it subject:*] δια τον υποταξαντα. In consequence or upon occasion of Adam's sin, God subjected mankind to vanity. See Taylor. It is disputed who is the person intended by τον υποταξαντα. Mr. Locke understands it of the devil, who was the tempter; Dr. Taylor of God, who instituted the penalty and passed the sentence. The construction seems to require that Adam should be understood: *q. d.* mankind were made subject to vanity, not through their own voluntary act, but on account of the transgression of Adam; in which they had no concern, but which by the divine constitution involved in its consequences the whole human race. "*Propter creatorem.*" Rosenmuller.

by any voluntary act or fault of theirs, but by the folly and transgression of their first ancestor; in consequence of which they were, by the awful sentence of God, made subject to sin and death. It seems equitable, therefore, that in due time they should be restored to their original state; and the reward which is promised to the virtuous believer is a pledge and foretaste of what is ultimately intended for all. And the painful consequences of their vanity and folly in the present state, as they excite a wish of a better condition of existence, may be figuratively represented as an earnest, though virtual, expectation of it. Thus they wait, Ch. VIII. Ver. 20.

In hope, that even this very creation[3] *also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.* 21.

Having been placed by their wise and good Creator in circumstances of such great natural and moral disadvantage, without any fault of their own, it is reasonable to expect that he will not leave them there to perish, and to curse their existence, but

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[3] *Even this very creation.*] See Wakefield. "και αυτη ἡ κτισις·" the expression is universal and emphatic. The self-same creation which suffered by the Fall, is to be set free from the bondage of corruption, and to receive the blessing of liberty. "The creation itself," Dr. Taylor well observes, "is all mankind, as well as Christians." But he adds, "this is to be understood of mankind only so far as, by answering the ends of their creation, they are prepared for immortality." It is observable, however, that the apostle uses no such limitation: he extends the promise to all who suffer by the Fall. All, without reserve, shall be brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God: *i. e.* all shall be restored, first to virtue and then to happiness.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 21. that he will ultimately advance them to a better and a happier state; and the accession of true believers (who without any antecedent merit were placed in circumstances of superior privilege,) to the happiness promised by the gospel, forms a strong moral presumption that even the unbelieving world, who without any fault of their own were naturally placed in a state of servitude to idolatry, and sin, and death, shall in their turn likewise be rescued from their cruel tyrants, be put into possession of their moral liberty, be adopted into the family of God, and be made partakers of the glorious and divine inheritance.

22. *For we know that the whole creation groaneth together, and is in labour together unto this day.*

And this in fact is all that I mean, when I state that the unbelieving world are longing after a better state of things. They have indeed no explicit expectation of it, nor have they any just ideas of the means by which they were brought into their present forlorn condition, or of the wise and merciful designs of God for their recovery and restoration. But they feel their ignorance, their weakness, and their misery; and their wise men and philosophers are labouring, but to little purpose, to remedy the evil. They are as it were in the pangs and throes of child-birth; and their moral state is so desperate that it seems almost to demand a divine interposition to rescue his human offspring from destruction. Such is the present state of the heathen world, of

which it is impossible that you who reside at Rome, the imperial city, the chief seat of idolatry and vice, can be ignorant. Ch. VIII. Ver. 22.

Such are the glorious topics of consolation which the apostle suggests to his suffering friends, and by which he animates them to persevere in their attachment to the Christian faith. Not only are they encouraged to hope for a reward which will, beyond all comparison, outweigh their present sufferings, but they are taught to regard their own election to present privileges and their future exaltation to happiness, as an argument that all their brethren of mankind, not even excepting their enemies and their persecutors, will ultimately share in the same happiness and glory. For as he has proved in the former part of the epistle, that believers have been favoured with inestimable privileges without any antecedent merit, so he here argues, that it is but equitable that they who have been placed in circumstances of great moral disadvantage without any fault of their own, should eventually, in their turn, be advanced to the same privilege and happiness as their brethren; so that the whole human race will in the end equally share in the love and favour of the great Universal Parent.

4. The apostles themselves, and the primitive believers in Christ are in a similar state of suffering and persecution, ver. 23.

And not only they, *but ourselves also, who have* 23.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 23. *the first fruits of the spirit*[1], *even we*[2] *groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption,* that is, *the redemption of our body*[3].

And further, that you may not be discouraged by the sufferings you are called to endure, remember that you are not only fellow-sufferers with the unbelieving world, and with the mass of believers in general, but that we who are the apostles of Christ, and all those who are now living who saw Christ in the flesh, who conversed with him, who were witnesses to his resurrection, and participated in the earliest communication of the holy spirit, though we occupy the most honourable and the most important stations in his service, and are veterans in his cause, have no pre-eminence of exemption from suffering; on the contrary, our sufferings are uninterrupted and uncommonly severe, so that we have no consolation under incessant troubles of body and mind, but that of looking forward, with ardent expectation, to the glorious period when our

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[1] *The first fruits of the spirit:*] *i. e.* the apostles, and they to whom the spirit was communicated on the day of Pentecost. Or possibly, those believers who were favoured with the gifts of the holy spirit; which were the first fruits and the earnest of the promised inheritance, and which had not yet been communicated generally to the believers at Rome.

[2] *Even we.*] Dr. Taylor has offered some good reasons to prove, that St. Paul by this expression alludes to the apostles and the earliest converts to the Christian faith.

[3] *Of our body:*] *i. e.* our whole person. See ch. xii. 1. Redemption, "απολυτρωσις, *est liberatio ab incommodo aliquo, hoc incommodum του σωματος est ipsa ejus fragilitas. Ab hac fragilitate, corpus liberabitur non in morte, sed in resurrectione.* 1 Cor. xv. 42, &c." Rosenmuller. See 2 Cor. iv. 17, v. 1—4.

privilege as children of God, and our title to the heavenly inheritance, shall be fully acknowledged by our resurrection to immortal life and happiness. Ch. VIII. Ver. 23.

It is worthy of remark here, that the consolation of the apostle and of the primitive believers, was derived, not from the hope of an intermediate state between death and the resurrection, of which they appear to have entertained no expectation, but from the hope of a resurrection, which indeed they probably anticipated as very near at hand.

5. As hope was the first inducement to the profession of the Christian religion, so it ought to reconcile the true believer to patient expectation of its glorious object, ver. 24, 25.

Moreover, we were saved[4] *by this hope.* 24.

As a further consideration to reconcile our minds to a suffering state, I would observe that the gospel does not promise immediate possession of perfect happiness, it only excites a hope of a future resurrection to a glorious and immortal life; and it was this hope that induced you to renounce the error and idolatry of your heathen state.

But hope that is attained[5] *is no longer hope,*

[4] *We were saved.*] εσωθημεν. Wakefield renders it, "we were saved under this hope." To be saved is to be rescued from our former state of bondage and to be introduced into the liberty of the Christian community. This hope is the hope of the "redemption of the body," a resurrection to an immortal life and happiness. This glorious hope was our inducement to embrace the Christian religion, and is our support under all our trials and persecutions.

[5] *Hope that is attained.*] Gr. "seen." See Wakefield.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 24. *for what any one has attained, how can he yet hope for?*

As the gospel only professes to excite hope, it would be unreasonable to be dissatisfied if this hope be not immediately fulfilled; for the attainment of the object of hope would produce a total change in the state of the believer. Hope would then be converted into possession, and would cease to be, what it now is, the ruling principle of the Christian life.

25. *But if we hope for what we have not attained,* then *do we with patience* [1] *wait* for it.

If we entertain a reasonable hope of some future advantage, we make up our minds to wait till the proper season comes, and we are not childishly fretful and impatient if we are not put into possession before the regular and appointed time. So let us act in the Christian life, and, animated by a well-founded hope of joy unspeakable in a future state of existence, let us bear the evils of the present time with fortitude and resignation.

6. This spirit of patience and of hope qualifies the prayers of true believers in Christ, and renders them acceptable to God, ver. 26, 27.

26. *Furthermore* [2], *this spirit also assists* [3] *our infir-*

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[1] *Do we with patience wait.*] "απεκδεχομεθα pro δει απεκδεχεσθαι." Doederlein *apud* Rosenmuller. "let us wait with patience." Wakefield; who says, that this sense is favoured by the Arabic Version.

[2] *Furthermore.*] "ωσαυτως, præterea." Rosenmuller. Dr. Taylor says, "This word always in N.T., signifies *in like manner*, agreeably to what is mentioned just before."

mities; for we know not what to pray for as we ought[4]; *but this spirit itself intercedes for us with groans that are not expressed*[5]. *But he who searcheth the heart knoweth the mind of the spirit*[6], *because it intercedes for the saints according to the will of God*[7]. Ch. VIII. Ver. 26. 27.

The spirit which the apostle here intends, is that which he had just described, the spirit of hope, of patience, and of resignation, which are the leading virtues of the Christian character.

By a figure, not unusual with the apostle, he personifies these virtues, and represents them as interceding with God in secret groans for those who are

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[3] *Assists.*] συναντιλαμβανεται, joins by taking up the burden at the other end: "*Personificatur το πνευμα ut ἀμαρτια supra*, c. vii. 17—20. *Sensus est, ipse ille animus noster Christianus, quo Deum veneramur et amamus, nobis affert magnum fructum et solatium in calamitatibus.*" Rosenmuller. "The spirit lendeth us his helping hand." Doddridge.

[4] *We know not*, &c.] "*Sæpe incidere casus ubi Christiani, rebus pressi adversis, nesciant quomodo voluntati Dei conformare debeant preces suas, an gravitatem miseriarum deprecari, an vero patienter ferre debeant, quæ sibi contingant voluntate Dei.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *Groans that are not expressed.*] "*Suspiriis tacitis, i. e. per breves mentis cogitationes, quum dicimus, O Deus Pater, tibi permitto res meas,*" &c. Rosenmuller.

[6] *The mind of the spirit.*] φρονημα, the temper and disposition of mind. Comp. ver. 6. This expression is very intelligible if it refers to the inward feelings of the true believer; but it is difficult to give it a proper sense if it applies to God himself, or to a subordinate spirit acting upon the human mind. "He knows, that is, he discerns and approves." Amos iii. 2; Ps. i. 6; Rom. xi. 2; 1 Pet. i. 2.

[7] *According to the will of God.*] "*Nihil aliud expetimus a Deo, nisi quod sit κατα Θεον, congruat cum consilio Dei.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 27. at a loss to know what to ask for themselves. Thus the spirit is said to assist their infirmities.

Without the aid of this spirit, human nature would grow impatient under trials and sufferings, and would be importunate for relief. But hope and patience, the hope of the gospel, and that patient fortitude which is generated by Christian principles, restrain the temper, and though they cannot stupify the feelings, nor suppress the sigh, yet they humble the spirit in the presence of God, they restrain intemperate language, and they bow the mind into calm and quiet subjection to the divine visitations, and into a humble and dutiful acquiescence in the present state of suffering and trial, till the appointed season of deliverance comes.

And that great Being who is acquainted with the secrets of all hearts, sees all that passes in the mind of his suffering servants; he knows all their trials and how heavily they press upon them, and he sees and approves all their silent resignation and their patient hope: nor will he suffer this excellent spirit to go without its due reward.

For this spirit intercedes for his chosen and devoted servants agreeably to his own will; or, in other words, God is better pleased with this silent dutiful resignation to his will, and hope in his mercy, than he would be with the most clamorous importunity for relief.

This interpretation of the text appears to me to be by far the most just, spirited, and appropriate, and it solves every difficulty. The apostle could

not, by the spirit in this connexion, mean the gifts of the holy spirit, for of these the Roman Christians did not then generally participate; and it would be extremely difficult to make sense of the passage, if by the spirit we should understand, as most interpreters do[1], a divine influence, or, that of any inferior agent upon the mind, to direct believers in their prayers. How can God, or any spirit subordinate to the Supreme, be said to make intercession for the saints with unutterable groans? Ch. VIII. Ver. 27.

7. The apostle adds, as a further topic of consolation, the assurance, that to true believers in Christ all things co-operate for good, ver. 28.

And we know that all things co-operate for good to those who love God, to those who are invited according to his *purpose.* 28.

Whatever sufferings and persecutions it may be our lot to endure, there is one consideration which may well allay all discontent and reconcile us to our condition. We are assured, beyond all reasonable

[1] *Most interpreters,*] even without excepting Mr. Locke and Dr. Taylor. The interpretation which I have given is that of Rosenmuller, who refers to a German divine named Junckheim, in a work published A.D. 1775. Dr. Priestley also gives a similar interpretation: "By spirit in this place," says Dr. P. "is not to be understood the holy spirit, properly so called, or the power of working miracles, but that principle of a new life which the apostle supposes to be introduced by the gospel, in opposition to the flesh, or the principle by means of which men are subject to death and liable to condemnation. The workings of this spirit, or new principle, though we cannot always express them in words, the apostle says that God knows and approves; so that it may be considered as something within us that pleads with God for us."

Ch. VIII. Ver. 28. doubt, that all the circumstances of our present state of trial are ordered in wisdom and mercy; all shall contribute to prove, refine, and confirm the virtues of the Christian character, so that no suffering of any kind or degree shall be permitted which shall not be overruled to a greater good, provided that we persevere in our Christian profession, and having been invited into the Christian community by the free mercy of God, agreeably to his eternal plan of wisdom and benevolence, we manifest our sense of his distinguishing kindness by loving him with all our hearts and devoting our lives to his service.

8. The apostle having alluded to the eternal purpose of God in the gracious dispensation of the gospel, proceeds to state, that all his plan of mercy shall be carried into complete effect, and that all who are included in his wise and benevolent design, shall be justified in this life and shall be made happy for ever, ver. 29, 30.

29. *For those whom he foreknew he also predestinated* to be *conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren;*
30. *and whom he predestinated, those he hath also invited; and whom he hath invited, those he hath also justified; and whom he hath justified, those he hath also glorified.*

The eternal foreknowledge of God, and his free choice of the Hebrew nation to be his peculiar people, of his own good pleasure, independent of all

antecedent merit of their own, is a topic much insisted upon in the Old Testament; and, being familiar to the pious Jews, it is very naturally and frequently applied, by the writers of the New Testament, to the case of those who were invited and admitted into the Christian community; and Paul having been educated among the Pharisees, who were strict predestinarians appears to have retained a peculiar partiality to this doctrine, and frequently introduces it in a way which, though strictly true and perfectly consistent with the divine character, and with the most enlightened philosophy, is, nevertheless, by many, thought to be unguarded, and even dangerous to good morals. It has also excited, in the minds of some, a most unreasonable prejudice against the apostle's writings; while others have endeavoured to vindicate him, by interpreting his words in a sense which they will not bear. Ch. VIII. Ver. 30.

The apostle however, in this instance, needs no apology. His assertions will be found to be strictly true; though they may perhaps require explanation, to guard against consequences to which possibly he did not advert.

For those whom he foreknew, he *predestinated* to be *conformed to the image of his son* [1]. 29.

[1] "This," says Dr. Taylor, "is the foundation, and this is the finishing, of the wonderful scheme. The foundation is the free purpose of God's grace; the finishing is our conformity in glory to the Son of God." He agrees with Mr. Locke, that the apostle, in this passage and to the end of the chapter, has a principal view to the encouragement of the Gentile converts.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 29.

From the ages of eternity, when the whole plan of providence was present to the Divine mind, having decreed that at the destined period Jesus of Nazareth should appear in the world, as the deliverer of mankind from ignorance and idolatry, from vice and misery; and that he should be raised from the dead, and put into possession of an everlasting inheritance, God at the same time foresaw, that it would be right that some should believe in him, should become his disciples, and participate in his reward: and upon this foresight he did from the beginning determine to introduce into existence a certain number of human beings, and to place them in those circumstances and to expose them to those influences which would produce the effect required, of forming them to a resemblance to Christ, both in his character and state.

That he might be the first-born among many brethren [1].

Or, in other words, that he who was the first-born might not stand alone, or be one of a small number only; but that many, a great multitude, yea eventually the whole human race, might attain the same character and the same happiness.

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[1] *That he might be the first-born,* &c.] The apostle here expresses his meaning indirectly. Believers are predestinated, not that Christ might be the first-born, for that he is by his resurrection from the dead, Col. i. 18; but that he, being the first-born, might have many brethren. A similar phraseology occurs, Gal. iii. 22: "The scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe:" where the apostle's meaning plainly is, that none but those who believe should be entitled to the promise.

And whom he predestinated, them he also invited[2]. Ch. VIII. Ver. 30.

All who are predestinated to salvation by Christ, either have been or in due time will be so invited to accept of the reasonable terms and the gracious offers of the gospel; they either have had or shall have such means of information of their understandings and conviction of their judgement, and shall have such motives applied to their affections and will, that they either have been, or will be, induced sincerely and practically to admit the truth of the gospel, to acknowledge Christ as their master, and to govern their conduct by the views and principles of the gospel.

And whom he hath invited, them he hath also justified.

All those who have been, or, who will be, induced to accept the invitation of the gospel, of whatever nation or profession, whether Jew or Gentile, will be admitted into the new covenant, they will be acknowledged as the reconciled and holy people of God, and will be entitled to all the privileges which were once peculiar to the Hebrew nation; and if they are practical believers they shall in due season be acknowledged as his children and be put into possession of the promised inheritance.

And whom he hath justified, these he hath also glorified[3].

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[2] *Invited.*] "called by his preachers; justified by admission into covenant with him; glorified intentionally." Newcome.

[3] *Glorified.*] "This," says Dr. Doddridge, "is a memorable

Ch. VIII. Ver. 30.

They who in the eternal councils of the Almighty are foreknown as those who will accept the offers, and comply with the terms of the gospel, are by the eternal decree of God ordained to eternal life: it is determined that they shall enter into the joy of their Lord, and shall be with him where he is. And so certain is it that the purpose and the promise of God shall be fulfilled, that though ages of ages may possibly intervene, it may nevertheless be spoken of as already accomplished in the view of that all-comprehending Being to whom things which are not are as though they were, and in whose sight a thousand years are as one day.

Observe here, that the apostle speaks very familiarly of an event which exists only in the eternal immutable purpose of God as having actually taken place, even though it had not then, nor has yet come to pass. They who were foreknown, and predestinated, and invited, and justified, are also said to be glorified; that is, in the divine decree, which at the appointed time will assuredly be fulfilled: which to the all-comprehending mind of God appear as though they actually existed, in reference to which things that are not are spoken of as though they were.

Let it not then be said, that those Christians per-

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instance, and there are scores and perhaps hundreds more, in which things that shall certainly and speedily be done are spoken of as done already." See Improved Vers. *in loc.* whom he justified, them he also glorified: "viz. in his purpose." Locke. "and whom he hath justified, those he hath *in purpose* glorified also." Newcome.

vert the plain language of scripture, who understand our Lord's assertion of his existence before the time of Abraham, and of the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, as an existence and a glory which he possessed only in the divine decree; for if it is quite necessary, in the case before us, to interpret the glorification of true believers as an event hitherto only existing in the divine mind, it is equally reasonable to explain the existence and glory attributed to Christ, as existing only in the divine decree. And it is only by a calm comparison of the language of scripture in different passages, and a familiar acquaintance with scripture phraseology, that the true meaning of the sacred writers can be satisfactorily elicited. Ch. VIII. Ver. 30.

The apostle suggests this gracious and immutable purpose of God for the salvation of true believers, as a consideration which might reconcile the minds of those who are thus predestinated, invited, and justified, to the difficulties and sufferings of an intermediate state of persecution and trial; and surely no topic could be better adapted to soothe and tranquillize the mind, and to reduce it to a complete acquiescence in the divine appointments.

9. The apostle concludes this portion of his discourse with expressing his admiration of the unspeakable goodness of God, in the gift of his son; and his cheerful conviction, that as nothing can alienate the love of God from the true believer, so that nothing shall alienate the heart of the believer

Ch. VIII. Ver. 30. from the love of God, and Christ, and the gospel, ver. 31—39.

[1.] Since God is their friend, and has given up his son for them, all things are theirs, ver. 31, 32.

31. *What then shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who* is *against us?*

And now, my brethren, what can I add to what I have already said, to assure you of your admission into the new covenant, and to reconcile you to the difficulties of a suffering state? If God be for us, as I have proved that he is; if he acknowledges us as his people and his children, as I have proved that he does; who is against us? who will dare to dispute our claim, or what apprehension need we entertain of danger, even from adversaries the most powerful and malignant? They can never invalidate our title to the love of God, nor hurt us while we are under the protection of omnipotence.

32. *He who spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all*[1], *how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

Why should we doubt the mercy of God? why should we hesitate at the accomplishment of his promises, however rich and wonderful? He has done that for us which we could least have expected: he has sent Jesus, the son of his love, the holiest and best of men, and the greatest of the pro-

[1] *For us all.*] "Gentiles as well as Jews." Locke, Newcome.

phets, to proclaim the joyful tidings, to publish the new covenant, to invite all without distinction to come to him for rest; and more than this, he delivered him up to his enemies to put him to a public and ignominious death, to seal his doctrine with his blood, and to open the way to life: can you, after this, doubt whether God is sincere? will he not now fulfill all his promises, and exceed all your hopes? Ch. VIII. Ver. 32.

[2.] No charge can be made good against the chosen people of God, so as to put them out of the pale of his covenant, and to alienate his love from them, ver. 33, 34.

Who shall accuse the chosen of God? Will God? he who justifieth them[2]? 33.

After this glorious display of the mercy of God to all who believe in Jesus, Gentiles as well as Jews, who will now say that they who are thus chosen to salvation shall be excluded from the holy community of the people of God, for not complying with the ceremonial law, or for any other supposed offence? Will God, who alone has a right to judge

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[2] *Will God*, &c.] "I here follow," says Dr. Doddridge, "the pointing proposed by the learned and ingenious Dr. Sam. Harris in his *Observations*, (p. 54, 55,) which greatly illustrates the spirit of this passage, and shows how justly that author adds, that it is remarkably in the grand manner of Demosthenes. "This," says Archbishop Newcome, "is the punctuation of Augustin, quoted by Lardner, *Cred.* part II. vol. x. 288; and of Locke." It is adopted by Newcome, by Griesbach, and many others. "Who shall be the prosecutor of those whom God hath chosen?" Locke.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 33. in the case, impute this omission as a crime, and cast them out of his covenant? What! God, the immutable Being! who first chose them for his people, and who now declares them to be justified in his sight by faith only, without the works of the law! What can be more absurd than such a supposition? And who shall dare to accuse, if God justifies and acquits?

34. *Who* is *he that condemneth? is it Christ? he who died? Yea rather, who hath even been raised again? who is even at the right hand of God*[1]*? who is even interposing*[2] *for us?*

Who will presume to exclude those from the community of the people of God, whom God himself has chosen and justified? All judgement is committed to the Son. Will Christ condemn

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[1] *Right hand of God.*] The place of dignity and authority. To suppose that a local situation is alluded to, which, however, it is too probable that many do contemplate, is gross anthropomorphitism. "*Rex regum, dominus dominantium. Id enim per dexteram Dei significatur.*" Grotius; who refers to his note upon Matt. xx. 21.

[2] *Interposing.*] "maketh intercession." Public Version. "intercedeth." Newcome; who observes, that "the word may be understood of intercessory prayer." "He manageth our concerns for us." Wakefield. "Εντυγχανω, proprie, *adeo, convenio aliquem quacunque de causa,* Act. xxvii. 24. (2) *precibus aliquem adeo.* εντ. ὑπερ τινος, sensu forensi, *causam alicujus agere et commendare;* simpliciter, *intercedere pro aliquo, pro commodo alicujus facere aliquid, adjuvare, opem ferre.* Rom. viii. 27, 34; Heb. vii. 25." Schleusner.

The word *intercede* is applied to Christ only twice in the New Testament: and it is so obvious that it properly signifies nothing more than to act for the advantage of another, that it is surprising to think how a doctrine so mysterious and unscriptural as the popular doctrine of Christ's intercession, could be erected upon so slender a foundation.

whom God accepts? What! Christ! he who died to reconcile sinners to God! yea, who was raised again to establish their justification, and to prove the validity of the new covenant? Yea, who ascended to heaven, and is now invested with authority over the church, and who is ever watchful over its interests, appointing and directing its ministers, and qualifying them for their work by the gifts of the holy spirit? And if Christ, the appointed judge, does not pass sentence upon those who are chosen and accepted through faith alone, shall any presume to wrest his authority out of his hand, and to condemn those whom God has chosen, and whom Christ acknowledges? for whom he died and rose again? and whom he has taken under his immediate care? Ch. VIII. Ver. 34.

Being placed at the right hand of God is a phrase expressive of dignity and authority, and the word translated *intercede*, which is applied to our Lord in this passage, and in the epistle to the Hebrews (ch. vii. 25), expresses not merely praying for another, but any kind of interposition on his account. The apostle here seems to refer to that sensible authority which Christ exercised over the church in the apostolic age, and particularly to the communication of the holy spirit. These personal interpositions and communications of the spirit were withdrawn when the apostles closed their commission. But it by no means follows that our Lord is not personally present at all times with his church, superintending and managing its concerns, though

Ch. VIII. Ver. 34. in an invisible and imperceptible manner, so as not to authorize personal addresses to him. And in this sense it may truly be said, that he ever lives to intercede for us; to interpose in the concerns of the church, and to promote its prosperity and success.

[3.] As nothing can alienate God from his chosen people, so the apostle expresses his confidence, that no difficulties, no persecutions, either present or to come, shall alienate their affections from God, and Christ, and the gospel, ver. 35—39.

35. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* After all this rich display of divine mercy in choosing us, in saving us, in justifying us freely against every accuser, in placing us under the care and enrolling us in the community of Christ, our great leader and kind intercessor, who, or what, is there that can tempt us to apostatize from his service, and to forfeit our allegiance?

—35. Shall *tribulation, or imprisonment*[1], *or persecution*[2], *or hunger, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

36. *(As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long*[3]*: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter*[4]*.) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him who loved us.*

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[1] *Imprisonment.*] στενοχωρια. Comp. 2 Cor. xii. 10. See Wakefield.

[2] *Persecution.*] διωγμος· "wrongful usage." Wakefield.

[3] *All the day long.*] "ολην την ημεραν. *Mortis periculo expositi summus quotidie.*" Rosenmuller. We are daily exposed to the danger of death.

[4] *Destined for the slaughter.*] See Doddridge.

As disciples of Christ, we are liable to troubles of every kind, we are exposed to imprisonment, to barbarous usage, to be deprived of food and clothing, to a variety of dangers, and to the sword of the executioner; so that the words of the Psalmist concerning his countrymen, Ps. xliv. 22, describing the cruelty of their enemies in their captivity, are literally applicable to the state of believers in Christ, that they are every moment exposed to a violent death like innocent and unresisting sheep who are reserved for the knife. But shall these dangers, shall these sufferings, shall death itself, whatever form of horror it may wear, tempt us to desert our Christian profession, and to forsake our beloved master? God forbid. Nay, so far are we from being intimidated by these terrors which set themselves in array against us, we even bid them a proud defiance; we trample them under our feet, we triumph over them all, in the name of our great Master, who loved us and who gave himself for us, who hath set us a glorious example of suffering virtue, and has infused into us those principles and that spirit which enable us to make light of every danger and of every suffering in his sacred cause. Ch. VIII. Ver. 37.

For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers[5], *nor* 38.

[5] *Nor angels*, &c.] ουτε αγγελοι, κ. τ. λ. Locke and many other commentators understand the latter words, principalities and powers, of the civil magistrate; but they seem puzzled how to interpret the word *angels*, which, however, they generally explain, of evil angels.—"Nor the temptations of the most powerful evil angels, if we were actually exposed to them." Newcome. Perhaps

Ch. VIII. Ver. 39. *things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature*[1], *shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which* is *in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

I am justified in using this triumphant language, because I feel a firm and a joyful confidence, that there is nothing formidable in death, and nothing alluring in life; that there is nothing which the ecclesiastical or the civil power can say or do, to intimidate or to persuade; that there is nothing which we are now suffering or can hereafter suffer; that there is no extreme of any kind, whether of prosperity or adversity; in short, that there is no imaginable consideration which now can, or ever will be able to influence us to abandon our Christian profession, or to forego those exalted privileges, those precious promises, and those glorious hopes, of which we are now in possession, through the infinite mercy of God revealed by our blessed Lord and Master Jesus Christ, whose disciples it is our glory to profess ourselves, and whose authority we never will renounce.

Perhaps the apostle means nothing more than the civil and ecclesiastical powers. The same expression seems to be applied, 1 Pet. iii. 22, to denote the Jewish hierarchy. In a similar sense similar expressions appear to be used by the apostle, Eph. i. 20, 21, vi. 12; see Locke's Notes, Col. ii. 15. In the Apocalypse, the angels of the seven churches are commonly understood to be the ministers of the churches; and in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, *angels* probably signify former prophets and messengers of God. See Wakefield and the Improved Version *in loc.*

[1] *Creature.*] "κτισις, any other matter." Newcome.—"*Nec res ulla alia.*" Grotius.

In this eloquent paragraph it is obvious to remark, how plainly the apostle warns the Christian converts of the dangers and sufferings to which they exposed themselves by the profession of the Christian faith. It was no trifling concern for a person to avow himself a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth. He must be prepared to make great sacrifices, to endure great hardships, and to expose even life itself to the utmost hazard: and yet converts increased every day. How convincing must have been that evidence which could overpower the most inveterate prejudices, and induce men to embrace the Christian doctrine in circumstances so unfavourable! Ch. VIII. Ver. 39.

We may further remark, that those greatly mistake the sense of the apostle who deduce from his words what is commonly called the doctrine of perseverance; by which they mean, that if a person has once been sincerely virtuous, he will never finally apostatize and perish. This is a very dangerous tenet, contrary both to daily sad experience and to the plainest declarations of scripture. The apostle does indeed express his joyful confidence, that he and his fellow-christians at Rome should never be either seduced or terrified into apostasy from Christ. But this is a very different case from the doctrine I am now stating, which probably never entered into the apostle's mind.

I shall close this portion of the epistle with the judicious and forcible remarks of Dr. Taylor:

"The conclusion of this chapter," says he, "is

Ch. VIII. Ver. 39. the most elegant and sublime piece of writing I remember ever to have read. It is founded on the grand and solid principles of the gospel. It breathes the true spirit of Christian magnanimity; raises our minds far above all things created, and shows in a bright and heavenly view the greatness of soul, and the strong consolation which the gospel inspires. God grant it may stand clear before our understandings, and be transcribed into all our hearts! They who despise the gospel, despise all that is great and glorious and happy."

PART THE FOURTH.

THE APOSTLE TREATS OF THE PRESENT REJECTION OF THE JEWS; OF THE INVITATION AND ADMISSION OF THE GENTILES INTO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH; AND OF THE ULTIMATE RESTORATION OF GOD'S ANCIENT PEOPLE. Ch. ix—xi.

SECTION I.

Ch. IX. *The apostle announces and vindicates the present rejection of the Jews, and the invitation and admission of believing Gentiles to the character and privileges of the people of God.* Ch. ix. x.

I.

The apostle, with great delicacy and great reluctance, but with great seriousness and solemnity,

announces the present rejection of his countrymen from their state of covenant with God, ch. ix. 1—5. Ch. IX.

I declare the truth in Christ[1]*: I do not speak falsely, my conscience bearing testimony with me* that it is *in the holy spirit*[1]. Ver. 1.

As the apostle of the Gentiles, I now announce a melancholy truth, which I have in charge from Christ: I solemnly assure you it is no forgery of mine; my conscience bears its testimony, that the awful purpose has been revealed to me by the holy spirit.

That I have great grief and incessant pain in my heart, (for I myself once *gloried in being an alien from Christ*[2]*,) on account of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.* 2. 3.

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[1] "*In Christ,*" "*in the holy spirit:*"] *i. e.* by authority from Christ—revealed by the spirit. "as a disciple of Christ—as one enlightened by the holy spirit." Newcome.

[2] *For I myself,* &c.] "for I also was once an alien from Christ." Wakefield; to whom we are indebted for the elucidation of this difficult passage, which most, if not all the critics who preceded him seem to have totally misunderstood. He illustrates the phrase by the Ευχομαι ειναι of Homer, "I profess myself to be:" and justly adds, "this solution makes the passage rational and plain."

Ὁς νυν πολλον αριστος ενι στρατῳ ευχεται ειναι.

ILIAD. A. v. 91. 73.

Achilles here contemptuously represents Agamemnon as boasting of his superiority to the other chiefs: so the apostle not only *was* an alien from Christ, but he *gloried* in his enmity to him, and in being a savage persecutor of his disciples. It is this circumstance that he now reflects upon with deep regret; and laments that so many of his beloved countrymen are actuated by the same spirit. Archbishop Newcome renders the clause, "I could wish that I myself were accursed by Christ." Dodd-

Ch. IX. Ver. 3. I am indeed unwilling to name it; for my heart is filled with anguish at the recollection which continually haunts me, which indeed is never absent from my thoughts: namely, that the great mass of my countrymen, my brethren of the Jewish nation, are now, what I once madly boasted myself to be, aliens from Christ and his doctrine, haters of his name; and thus excluded from all the benefits of the new covenant. Such is indeed their miserable state.

The delicacy of the apostle's address upon this occasion is very striking. He begins with the solemn annunciation of a message from God. And what does he announce? Apparently nothing more than this: That he having once been an enemy to the gospel and excluded from its benefits, is now full of trouble and anguish on account of his countrymen; and there he stops, leaving it to the reader to judge what was the cause of the distress which he then felt, and which it was too painful for him to name explicitly.

The apostle calls the Jews his kinsmen "accord-

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ridge, after Waterland, renders it, "after the example of Christ," 2 Tim. i. 3: both very far from the simplicity and pertinence of Wakefield, whose interpretation appears to be confirmed by a similar phraseology, Gal. iv. 12, which in the common version stands "be as I *am*, for I *am* as ye *are*;" which hardly makes sense. "Γινεσθε ὡς εγω, ὁτι καγω ὡς ὑμεις·" "Be as I *now* am, for I *once* was as you *now are*;" that is, alienated from Christ and his doctrine, and attached to the rites and ceremonies of the law. I have long seen my error, and felt the benefit of the change: may you see yours, and act and profit as I have done.

ing to the flesh;" by which every reader understands, his natural relations: nor does any one imagine that he has any secret reference to supernatural kindred. Let this be remembered, when the same language is applied to Christ. Ch. IX. Ver. 3.

The apostle now proceeds to enumerate the privileges of God's ancient people, the original possession of which greatly aggravates the disgrace and misery of their present rejection.

Who are Israelites[1]. Who have the honour of being descended from him who was chosen before he was born, to be the heir of the promise; and to whom a name was given as a pledge of the divine favour. 4.

Whose is *the adoption*. Who are called sons of God; being as it were new born, by their deliverance from the servitude of Egypt, and their inheritance of the land of Canaan, which God had promised to their forefathers. Hos. xi. 1.

And the glory. Who were honoured with a visible symbol of the divine presence; first, in the pillar of cloud and fire which directed their march

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[1] *Who are Israelites.*] "who are the descendants of Israel, the adopted sons of God, Exod. iv. 22, 23; among whom God displayed the glorious symbol of his presence; with whom he entered into covenant by Abraham and Moses, see Eph. ii. 12; to whom he gave the law of the two tables, and afterward the ceremonial ordinances; to whom illustrious promises were made by their forefathers and by the prophets; whose ancestors were the patriarchs: and of whom, as to his human lineage, Christ descended, who is over all, Eph. i. 22, 23; Phil. ii. 9; Matt. xxviii. 18. God, Matt. i. 23; Heb. i. 8; John i. 1. blessed for ever, Rev. v. 12, 13." Newcome.

Ch. IX. Ver. 4. through the wilderness; and afterwards in the Shechinah or cloud of glory, which rested upon the mercy seat.

And the covenants. To whom belonged the two tablets of stone on which the ten commandments were engraven by the finger of God himself, which were the terms of the covenant which God condescended to establish between himself and the Jewish people: and to which, if they had faithfully adhered, they would never have been rejected.

And the giving out of the law: in a solemn and public manner, from Mount Sinai.

And the religious service. A ritual of worship instituted by God himself; and adopted, first in the tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple.

And the promises. The promise of the possession of the land of Canaan and of being supported there; also, of triumphing over all their enemies, as long as they continued faithful to the covenant: and finally, the promise of the Messiah, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed, and under whose reign righteousness and peace should be established, universally, and for ever.

5. *Whose* are *the fathers.* Who have the honour of being descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: a family who were selected by the wisdom of God from the rest of the world, and to whose posterity the covenant was limited.

Of whom is *Christ according to the flesh.* Who may boast of Christ himself as their countryman and kinsman; descended from the same distin-

guished ancestors, and subject to the same laws, to the same dispensation of rites and ceremonies. It may here be important to remark, that the phrase "according to the flesh," as applied to Christ, no more indicates a superior extraction, different from that of the flesh, than it does when applied (ver. 3) to the apostle Paul. It is a mere Jewish idiom, expressing natural consanguinity. Ch. IX. Ver. 5.

Whose is the God over all[1], *blessed for ever-*

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[1] *Whose is the God,* &c.] ὢν ὁ for ὁ ὤν. This most probably is the true reading, agreeably to the judicious conjecture of Slichtingius, Whitby, and Taylor, though it is not authorized by any manuscript, version, or ecclesiastical authority: but the connexion seems to require it. It is next to impossible that the apostle, when enumerating the distinguishing privileges of his countrymen, should omit the greatest privilege of all; namely, that God was in a peculiar sense their God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This he has before mentioned, as the boast of the Jews, ch. ii. 17; and as the chief glory of believers in Christ, who succeed to the privileges of God's ancient people, Rom. v. 11; and he could not avoid repeating it here. And the verbal misplacing of ὁ ὤν for ὢν ὁ is so very inconsiderable, that it might easily escape the pen of some early transcriber: perhaps of the apostle's own amanuensis.—A similar construction, suggested by a learned friend, occurs in Callimachus:

συ δ' ἐξελεο πτολιαρχους
Αυτους, ὢν ὑπο χειρα γεωμορος, ὢν ἰδρις αιχμης,
Ὢν ερετης, ὢν παντα.

Ἐπιγρ. εις ΔΙΑ, 73.

If the common reading should be preferred, the proper translation would be that of Erasmus, Dr. Clarke, Mr. Locke, Mr. Lindsey, and many others, viz. *who is over all, God* be *blessed for evermore;* or, *God who is over all* be *blessed for evermore.*—Mr. Lindsey says, (Sequel, p. 204,) that this clause "was read so as not to appear to belong to Christ, at least for the first three centuries. Origen calls it rashness to suppose that Christ is God over all." See also Clarke on the Trin. No. 539, and Taylor *in loc.*

Ch. IX. Ver. 5. *more. Amen.* And to crown the catalogue of Jewish privileges, they have a right to boast in that God who is the Lord of universal nature, the ruler of all the nations of the earth, unchangeably glorious and happy, as in a peculiar sense their Father and their God: who owned the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as his first-born among the families of the earth, and who provided for them a distinguished inheritance among the nations.

Thus the apostle expresses his extreme regret that a nation, to which he was so closely allied, which was naturally so dear to him, and which had been so pre-eminently distinguished by its sacred privileges from all other nations, should now be rejected because of its unbelief.

II.

The apostle states and replies to certain objections which are opposed to the doctrine which he here announces concerning the rejection of God's ancient people, ver. 6—24.

Obj. 1. This dispensation is no violation of the divine promise, ver. 6—13.

Not that by any means the word of God has ailed.

It may perhaps be objected, that God cannot cast the Jewish nation out of his covenant; for this would direct breach of his promise, which is impossible.

[1.] The apostle replies to this by stating, that

the promise was originally limited to a select number, and was not applicable to all who might claim the benefit of it, whether they complied with the conditions or not. Ch. IX. Ver. 6.

For all the posterity *of Israel* are *not* the true *Israel* [1].

It is perfectly analogous to the manifestations of the divine mercy in the Old Testament, that when a promise is made in general terms, it is to be understood with reasonable limitations. Upon this principle the promises made indefinitely to the descendants of Jacob, are to be understood as limited to those only who, meeting the conditions of the covenant, were thereby proved to be Israelites in purview of the promise; which many of Jacob's natural descendants are not.

[2.] The apostle further illustrates the limitation of the divine promise by the entail of it upon the descendants of Abraham by Sarah, to the exclusion of all the rest, ver. 7—9.

Nor, because they are the posterity of Abraham, 7.
are *they all* his *children; but, the posterity of Isaac*

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[1] *For all the posterity,* &c.] Dr. Taylor, with Mr. Locke, interprets this passage, *q. d.* "the whole body of natural-born Jews are not the whole of the Israel of God;" implying that the Gentiles also were included in the promise made to Abraham. But I cannot think that the apostle's words will bear the sense put upon them by these able expositors. The common interpretation appears to me unquestionably the true one: *q. d.* the promise is not so universal as to extend to all natural-born Israelites, without exception.

Ch. IX. Ver. 8. only *shall be called thine*[1]. *That is, the natural descendants* are *not* the *children of God*[2]; *but the children of the promise* only *are accounted the* true *offspring*.

Abraham had children by Hagar and Keturah as well as by Sarah, and he was anxious for their welfare; but he could not prevail to have their names enrolled in the covenant. The answer of God to the patriarch's importunity was a peremptory declaration, that the promise should be limited to the posterity of Isaac, Gen. xvii. 20, 21. This shows, that though the promise was made indefinitely to Abraham's descendants, it was in fact limited to the line of Isaac. And the promise to Jacob and his descendants must be understood with similar limitations.

9. *For this* is *the word of promise, At this very time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son.*

I have heard thee, saith the oracle, Gen. xvii. 20, for Ishmael, and I will make him a great nation; but my covenant will I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.

[3.] The apostle further illustrates the conduct of Divine Providence, in limiting the application of an indefinite promise, by the case of Jacob and

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[1] *The posterity*, &c.] Gr. "through Isaac thine offspring shall be called." Newcome.

[2] *The natural descendants*, &c.] Gr. "they that are the children of the flesh." Newcome.

Esau: the preference of Jacob being declared before the twins were born, ver. 10—13. Ch. IX.

And not only this, *but Rebecca also having conceived by one person*, namely, *our father Isaac*, exhibits a similar example[3]. Ver. 10.

Isaac is not the only instance of a special limitation to an indefinite promise; for though the covenant was established with Isaac and his descendants, it did not extend to both his children, but was limited to one only, who was chosen by the free mercy of God. And Rebecca, who had conceived twins by Isaac, was favoured with a memorable oracle which establishes this important fact.

For before their birth, when the children *had done neither good nor evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not according to works, but to* the will of *him who inviteth, it was said unto her, that the elder shall serve the younger: as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.* 11. 12. 13.

When Rebecca, in her state of pregnancy, being alarmed with respect to the event, expressed her

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[3] *Exhibits a similar example.*] The sense is defective, and requires to be filled up. Archbishop Newcome supplies it in this manner: "but Rebecca also *had the word of promise*," &c. The former seems more intelligible, it being the design of the apostle to show that an indefinite promise is not to be understood in an absolute sense. The promise was made to the posterity of Abraham, but it was limited to his posterity by Isaac; and here again the promise is made to the children of Isaac, but it is limited to the descendants of Jacob. So the promise is made to the children of Israel, but it is limited to those who are the true Israel.

Ch. IX. Ver. 13.

feelings and her fears in the presence of God, the oracle vouchsafed a gracious answer, Gen. xxv. 22, 23. It was announced to her that she was about to be the mother of two children, each of whom would be the founder of a great nation; but that the younger would be the most powerful, and that he would in fact be the inheritor of the promise, and that the descendants of the elder brother should be in subjection to those of the younger. Now observe, this arrangement was made before they were born, and before it was possible that either of them should be capable either of right or wrong, and consequently the designation of the younger was not the reward of merit, nor the rejection of the elder the consequence of demerit; but all depended upon the sovereign will of God, who, for wise but unknown reasons, invited the one and rejected the other. And in this sense we are to understand the declaration of God by the prophet Malachi (ch. i. 2.), "Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated." Not that God is capable of loving or hating any of his rational offspring without reason; but *q. d.* Without any regard to their character and merit I have, for reasons not divulged to mankind, appointed the posterity of Jacob to the possession of privileges which are not granted to the descendants of Esau [1].

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[1] Upon this passage it is obvious to remark, that the words *love* and *hatred* do not in this connexion express affections of the mind, (for what indeed can be more absurd than to attribute human passions to a Being of unchangeable benevolence?)

Obj. 2. The present rejection of the Jewish nation is not an act of injustice, upon Ch. IX.

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but simply the purpose of the divine Being to place one of the persons alluded to in favourable and the other in unfavourable circumstances; to select one as the heir of the promises in preference to the other, and that antecedently to any personal merit or demerit on their part: and it is also evident that the posterity, and not the persons of the individuals named, were the objects of the prophecy, and that the distinction between them relates, not to their condition as individuals, but to their national privileges.

Hence we may take occasion to observe, that the scriptures ought to be read with due consideration and reflection; that much of its language is to be understood in a qualified sense; and particularly that where human passions, such as love, hatred, indignation, and the like, are ascribed to God, these expressions are never to be understood literally, but that they refer solely to dispensations of natural good or evil, with which individuals may be respectively visited, but which all flow equally from infinite benevolence under the direction of infinite wisdom.

Also, though the reason of the appointment of some to advantages and privileges which are denied to others may often not be discoverable by human sagacity, we are not for that reason to suppose that the great common Parent of mankind acts arbitrarily and from caprice; for infinite wisdom always governs its choice by the best motives, though they may be imperceptible or incomprehensible by the human intellect. It is also obvious, though it is not the immediate subject of the apostle's discourse, that the same principles must and do apply to individuals as to communities. The Maker of all things appoints to every human being the circumstances of his birth, his talents, his constitution, his connexion, his education, his early impressions, his moral principles, the result of which is his moral and social habits, his character, his success in life, and his ultimate condition and state. God is the cause of all causes, all things come to pass according to his purpose, and, whatever inequalities may appear in his conduct to individuals, no one shall ever have reason eventually to complain of injustice; and in the grand result, all his creatures shall have reason to be thankful for their existence, and he will shine forth as the kind impartial parent, benefactor, and friend of all his reasonable and intelligent offspring.

Ch. IX. the principles of the Jewish scriptures, ver. 14—18.

The apostle first states the objection, ver. 14.

Ver. 14. *What shall we say then?* is *not God unjust? Far from it.*

'We allow that an indefinite promise is not always to be taken in its most extensive sense; but is it not injustice in God from a number of equally unoffending individuals to select some for evil, and others for good? to appoint our ancestors to participate in his covenant, and so to order our circumstances that we should be rejected?' The apostle meets this supposed objection with a direct negative, and proceeds to suggest those considerations which he regarded as a satisfactory reply, and which to the Jews must necessarily have appeared conclusive, because they consist of cases in point taken from their own scriptures: *q. d.* God has actually pursued the conduct to which you object, and has claimed a right to act in this sovereign and arbitrary manner with his creatures, and therefore you cannot dispute it.

[1.] God, in his reply to Moses, expressly challenges the right to dispose of his favours as he pleases, ver. 15, 16.

15. *For he saith to Moses, I will show mercy on whom I please to show mercy, and I will have compassion upon whom I please to have compassion.*

When that highly favoured servant of God was desirous to see the divine glory, probably alluding

to some glorious vision which he supposed to be contained within the pillar of cloud from which the oracle was delivered with an audible voice, the Divine Being, in his reply, Exod. xxxiii. 19, condescendingly intimates that his essence was invisible, and that nothing of his nature could be understood by man but his benevolence. I will cause all my goodness, says he, to pass before thee; and even this attribute he exercises in a way beyond the comprehension of man, and which must often appear arbitrary and capricious. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. And from hence the apostle argues, that if he chose to reject the present Jews, though he had chosen their ancestors, he was only exercising a prerogative which he claimed as his right. Ch. IX. Ver. 15.

So then, it is *not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who showeth mercy.* 16.

Upon this principle, Jacob and his posterity were selected to inherit the promise, very much against the inclination of Isaac and the exertions of Esau. Esau was the elder son and the father's favourite, who designed the blessing for him, and sent him out to prepare the venison, that he might eat and pronounce the blessing: in the mean time Jacob came in, and surreptitiously obtained it; so that Isaac's purpose and Esau's dutiful labours were defeated by the fraudulent act of Jacob, and the blessing was entailed upon him; not indeed as the reward of a lying fraud upon his aged father, which

Ch. IX. Ver. 16. deserved severe reprehension, but because God, for wise and good reasons, had determined before he was born that the promise should, independently upon Jacob's character, be entailed upon his family; and he has a right freely to withdraw, what he thus freely, and independently of all antecedent merit, gave. See Gen. xxvii., to which the apostle alludes.

[2.] God has exercised the same sovereign right in the case of Pharaoh, ver. 17, 18.

17. *Moreover*[1], *the scripture saith to Pharaoh, For this very purpose have I raised thee up*[2], *that I may show forth my power in thee, and that my name may be celebrated through all the earth.*

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[1] *Moreover.*] γαρ. This particle is here used as introducing a collateral argument, not as alleging a reason for an antecedent assertion.

[2] *Have I raised thee up.*] "I have restored thee to health and preserved thee alive," &c. Taylor; who with Whitby, Ainsworth, and others, translates Exod. ix. 15, "For now I stretched out my hand and I had smitten thee and thy people with pestilence, and thou hadst been cut off from the earth, but in very deed, &c." Dr. Whitby adds, "hence we learn how alien from the truth and from the import of the words is that exposition which saith, For this cause have I created thee, or raised thee to be the king of Egypt." But if it was consistent with the Divine character to restore Pharaoh to health and to preserve his life, in order to place him in a situation in which his obdurate guilt would magnify the Divine power and justice in delivering the Israelites, and in the punishment of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, it would have been equally consistent with the justice and benevolence of God, as no doubt in fact it was, to give him life at first, and to place him in circumstances in which this was the foreseen and intended result. The difficulty, whatever it be, is not to be got rid of merely by removing it a little further off.

The case of Pharaoh is another example of a public person who, by the sovereign pleasure of God for reasons not communicated to man, was placed in circumstances of great moral disadvantage. For of him it is recorded, Exod. ix. 15, 16, that Moses declared to him, in the name and by the authority of God, that he had restored him from the plague with which he had been smitten, and had raised him up from the bed of sickness, for the express purpose of exhibiting him to the world as an awful monument of divine power and justice; to show to what degree of depravity the repetition of crime might debase the mind; and likewise to warn presumptuous sinners, that guilt, however hardened by practice or protected by power, was never beyond the arm of divine justice, which at the appointed time would never fail to seize its victim, and to visit the obdurate offender with punishment proportioned to his crimes. Ch. IX. Ver. 17.

So then with whom he pleases he deals mercifully, and whom he pleases he treats harshly[3]. 18.

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[3] *He treats harshly.*] I have adopted the interpretation of Rosenmuller: "*Ergo pro suo arbitrio hunc benigne, illum, minus benigne, vel duriter tractat.*" This sense best keeps up the opposition in the two clauses of the sentence, and seems best to support the apostle's conclusion. Most interpreters, however, adopt the common translation, "whom he will he hardeneth," referring to Exod. x. 27., xi. 10, and other texts, in which God is said to harden Pharaoh's heart. And the latter interpretation seems to lay a better foundation for the following objection, Why doth he yet find fault? This passage has given rise to the inextricable controversy among theologians, whether, and in what sense, God is the *author* of moral evil. In no sense, however, can it be admitted that God is the *approver*

Ch. IX. Ver. 18. Thus it appears that the sovereign ruler of the world not only claims a right to place his creatures in circumstances more or less advantageous, as he pleases, but that he has actually exercised this right in various instances, which those who profess to receive the Mosaic writings as of divine authority can neither deny nor impeach. And if he had a right to select Isaac and reject Ishmael, to choose Jacob and abandon Esau, to save the Hebrew nation by Moses, and to punish and destroy Pharaoh and the Egyptians, who shall deny that in these times he has an equal right to admit into his covenant the believing Gentiles, and to reject the unbelieving Jews?

Obj. 3. The apostle, upon general principles, vindicates the character of God as a righteous governor in the rejection of the Jews, ver. 19—24.

19. *Thou wilt then say to me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will*[1]?

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of evil; though it cannot be denied, except by those who deny the foreknowledge of God, that he often places his creatures in those circumstances, the certain and foreseen result of which will be the production of a great mass of guilt and misery.

[1] *Why doth he yet find fault?* &c.] If the common interpretation of ver. 18 be adopted, "whom he will he hardeneth," the objection, "Why doth he yet find fault?" is very natural, and can never be satisfactorily answered by those who maintain the doctrine of absolute and arbitrary decrees. Nor is the answer of the apostle, as commonly understood, much to the purpose; for, instead of vindicating the justice of God, it only appeals to his power, and silences the objection by urging, that it is useless for a creature to complain.

But if the apostle's assertion is that God, at his good pleasure, places some of his creatures in circumstances of moral

Possibly some Jewish reader, not immediately discerning the scope of the argument, may be ready to say, Well, and what is all this to us, and how are we to blame? did any one ever object to the right which God exercised of selecting the Hebrew nation as his peculiar people, and of rejecting Esau and punishing Pharaoh? Ch. IX. Ver. 19.

The apostle silences the objector by reminding him, that the same principles which apply to the conduct of Divine Providence towards the heathen nations, are equally applicable to the case of the Jews.

[1.] He reminds the objector, that the sovereign

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and political advantage, and others in circumstances of corresponding disadvantage; and if he illustrates this conclusion to the satisfaction of the Jew by the examples of Ishmael and Isaac, of Esau and Jacob, the objection then stands thus: Be it so: Isaac and Jacob, and their posterity, are selected and preferred; Ishmael, Esau, and Pharaoh, are rejected and cast away; all has taken place according to the divine decree. Nobody resists, nobody complains; why then is God dissatisfied? why does he will to introduce a change, to choose the Gentile, to reject the Jew?

To this question the apostle's answer is full in point, and completely satisfactory. He first shows, ver. 20, 21, that God has the same right to dispose of one class or nation that he has of another, and that none of his creatures have a right to complain of their situation because of the inferiority of their advantages. And secondly, he argues, ver. 22—24, that no one could charge God with injustice if he deprived a nation of privileges which they had long neglected and abused, and imparted them to the Gentiles, who were prepared to receive and to improve them well.

Thus the apostle's reasoning is perfectly conclusive; and this circumstance is highly favourable to the interpretation which Rosenmuller gives of the 18th verse, which is different from that of all other expositors which I have seen.

Ch. IX. Ver. 19. Lord and proprietor of all has an undoubted right to place his creatures in whatever circumstances he pleases, ver. 20, 21.

20. *Nay but, O man, who art thou that disputest with God? shall the work say to the workman,*
21. *Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, out of the same mass to form one vessel for an honourable and another for a dishonourable use?*

q. d. You are very well content with the rejection of Esau and the destruction of Pharaoh and his host; but you do not like that the Jews, in similar circumstances, should be treated in a similar manner. But why not? What claim has a Jew upon his Maker above a heathen, to entitle him to a preference? Shall a vessel say to its former, Why was not I cast in a better mould, or made applicable to a more useful or ornamental purpose? May a potter from the same mass of clay form vessels for very different purposes, each useful in its place; and shall we deny to God the same sovereign authority over all his works; the right to place some of his creatures in circumstances of great natural and moral advantage, and others of corresponding disadvantage; and again, if he pleases, to reverse their condition, to depress those who were uppermost, and to raise those who were depressed? and shall any in these circumstances presume to charge their Maker with injustice?

[2.] To bring the matter home, the apostle chal-

lenges the objector to say why the Jew, who has abused his privileges, should not be cast off, and the Gentile, who is willing to accept of mercy, should not be received, ver. 22—24. Ch. IX. Ver. 21.

What *if God bore with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction, resolving to manifest his wrath and to make known his power*[1] *?* 22.

Suppose a nation highly distinguished by its privileges: suppose this nation to have abused its privileges, to have rebelled against its God, to have disobeyed his authority, and to have persecuted his prophets and messengers; suppose that God in his mercy bore long with these provocations, and used various means to reclaim a disobedient people, which notwithstanding all the means of recovery hardened itself still more in wickedness, rendering themselves the worthy objects of divine indignation and becoming ripe for destruction; and supposing that after all this forbearance God should at last resolve to manifest his displeasure, to reject them from his favour, and to make an awful display of his power and justice in the ruin and condemnation of a guilty nation, who shall in this case presume to arraign the wisdom and equity of the divine government, and to charge God with injustice?

And resolving *likewise to make known the riches of his glory towards the vessels of mercy which he has before prepared for glory, even towards us* 23. 24.

[1] The apostle's extreme reluctance to express in plain terms the rejection of the Jews, renders his language obscure, though his meaning is sufficiently evident.

Ch. IX. Ver. 24. *whom he has invited, not only from among the Jews, but from among the Gentiles also.*

And suppose further, that God being resolved to exhibit examples of mercy as well as of justice, and particularly to manifest the glorious riches of his gospel to those whom he has selected as vessels of mercy, and who, having been placed in situations in which they were taught the necessity and importance of heavenly aid, were prepared for accepting the offers of the gospel; and suppose that agreeably to this benevolent purpose, he by his appointed messenger invited all persons of all nations to accept these inestimable blessings, and that he receives into covenant all who believe in the mission of Jesus Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, and rejects all who decline to accept the gracious proposals of the gospel; who will presume to arraign the wisdom and equity of the divine government in such a case as this, or to say that God is either unwise or unjust?

III.

The rejection of the Jewish nation in general, the admission of the Gentiles to a state of privilege, and the reasons of this dispensation, are distinctly marked by the prophets Hosea and Isaiah, ch. ix. 25—33.

1. The fact is stated by the prophet Hosea, ver. 25, 26.

25. *As he also saith in Hosea, I will call those who*

were not my people, my people; and her who was not beloved, beloved. Ch. IX. Ver. 25.

In Hos. ii. 23, it is written, "I will sow her unto me in the land; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say *to them which were* not my people, Thou *art* my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God." It is plain from these words, that a people who had been rejected by God were to be admitted into his covenant; and this is applicable to the Gentile world, as well as to the Jews when restored after a state of rejection.

And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, Ye are *not my people, there shall they be called sons of the living God.* 26.

Again, it is written Hosea i. 10, after God had threatened to reject the Israelites, "Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, Ye *are* not my people, there it shall be said unto them, *Ye are* the sons of the living God[1]." In both these passages it is evident

[1] It is so plain from the context of the passages cited from Hosea, that the prediction refers to the restoration of the rejected Israelites, that I can by no means accede to the interpretation of Dr. Taylor, that the object of the prophecy is the substitution of the Gentiles in the place of the rejected Jews. Archbishop Newcome explains the prophecy of the restoration from the Babylonian captivity; but I incline to the opinion of those expositors who interpret the glowing language of the prophet as applicable to an event not yet accomplished. See Newcome's Translation of Hosea.

Ch. IX. Ver. 26. from the context, that the prophet foretells the restoration and prosperity of Israel after a previous rejection, amounting almost to extermination; and in this view they might be properly cited by the apostle, in his delicate and covert manner, as including a previous rejection, which was the unpalatable doctrine he had immediately in view, under the pleasing anticipation of an ultimate glorious restoration.

Nevertheless, as the apostle introduces the succeeding quotations from Isaiah, as particularly applicable to the Jews, he plainly intimates that those from Hosea are applicable to the state of the Gentiles; and if so, he quotes them in the manner in which the scriptures appear to have been usually cited by the Jews of that age by way of accommodation, not as expressing the original meaning of the prophet, but as language which was applicable to the doctrine which he meant to express. How far the apostle might himself be disposed to lean upon arguments of this nature, it may be difficult to ascertain, nor is it of much consequence; it is sufficient that his doctrine is true, though his reasoning may not always be conclusive.

2. The rejection of the Jews is an event explicitly foretold by the prophet Isaiah, ver. 27—29.

27. *But Isaiah crieth out concerning Israel, Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of*
28. *the sea, the remnant* only *shall be saved. For he*

will accomplish[1] *and speedily finish his righteous account; surely the Lord will make a short reckoning upon the land.* Ch. IX. Ver. 28.

This quotation is made from Isa. x. 22, 23, and the apostle quotes literally from the LXX., or Greek translation of the Old Testament, which does not exactly agree with the Hebrew. The prophecy was written soon after the captivity of Israel by the Assyrians, and Judah is threatened with a similar doom; it is foretold that the invasion should be speedy and exterminating, so that a small remnant only should escape and be restored. This prophecy the apostle cites as descriptive of the present state of the Jews, who, like their apostate ancestors, were now, with the exception of a small remnant, rejected from the covenant of God.

And as Isaiah had foretold, Unless the Lord of Hosts had left us a seed, we should have become as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrha. 29.

This passage is taken from Isaiah i. 9, in which the prophet describes some desolating judgements which threatened to lay waste the whole Jewish nation, had not God mercifully reserved a small rem-

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[1] *He will accomplish,* &c.] "λογον, κ. τ. λ. *perficiet enim et subito absolvet rem pro veracitate suâ.*" Rosenmuller. "συντελειν λογον, *rem perficere.* συντεμνειν, *breviter absolvere: de causis forensibus quæ celeriter absolvuntur.*" Idem. "ὁτι λογον, κ. τ. λ. *rem sic decretam exsequetur Dominus in terrâ.* ὁτι *redundat, vel vertendum, utique, profecto.*" Idem.

The Alexandrine manuscript leaves out the words εν δικαιοσυνη—συντετμημενον, which makes the sense clearer, and the passage is so quoted by Eusebius. See Griesbach, and Dodson on Isa. x. 23.

Ch. IX. Ver. 29. nant, which, like a seed remaining in the earth, might again sprout up a vigorous and flourishing plant: in this language the apostle describes the present forlorn state of the Jewish nation, as rejected, but not utterly hopeless.

3. The cause of this dispensation is explained, ver. 30—33.

In the first place the fact itself is distinctly stated, ver. 30, 31.

30. *What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue justification, have obtained justification, that justification, however, which is by*
31. *faith; but that Israel, who pursued a law of justification, hath not attained the law* [1].

What now is the true state of the case? In plain words, the Gentiles, who had no expectation, and no desire of being admitted into covenant with God, have had the offer made to them, and many of them have accepted it, and have been freely admitted into the community of God's chosen people, by their profession of faith in Christ as the Messiah. Whereas the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God's own ancient people, who highly valued this privilege and were desirous above all things to retain it, and who adopted what they thought the right means for this purpose, have lost their object, having failed in the means which they employed,

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[1] *The law.*] The received text adds "of justification;" but the word δικαιοσυνης is omitted in the Alexandrine, Clermont, and other valuable copies.

and being defective in their obedience to the written law. Ch. IX.

The apostle next shows what the mistake was into which the Hebrew nation had fallen, the consequences of which had been so very fatal, ver. 32, 33.

Wherefore? Because they pursued it *not by faith, but as* if it were to be attained *by the works of the law.* Ver. 32.

It may naturally be asked, How could it happen that Israel, so proud of her privileges, so intent upon justification, so unwearied in the employment of what were believed to be the necessary means, should after all be defeated and disappointed in her main object? The answer is obvious: Israel could not bear to submit to the new condition; they would not hear of faith in a crucified Messiah as the means of acceptance with God, but sought after justification in the old way by obedience to a law, the precepts of which they had repeatedly broke, and under the condemning sentence of which they lay without the hope of relief.

For they stumbled against that stumbling stone, as it is written, Behold I lay in Sion a stumbling stone, and a rock to strike against; and no one who relieth upon it shall be ashamed[2]. 33.

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[2] *No one—shall be ashamed.*] The apostle quotes from memory and from the LXX. translation; and to answer his purpose he cites from two prophecies, Isaiah xxviii. 16, viii. 14, blending them together so as to express his own meaning in scripture language, probably by way of accommodation only, and because the unpleasing truth would be less offensive when expressed in the words of scripture. The apostle seldom men-

Ch. IX. Ver. 33.

To receive as a prophet of God a man who had been born at Nazareth, rejected by the chief priests and pharisees, condemned as a blasphemer, and crucified as a malefactor, and to acknowledge and submit to him as the promised Messiah, was a difficulty which these unhappy Israelites could not surmount; and their sad case may be described in words taken from the prophet Isaiah, ch. xxviii. 16: "Thus saith the Lord, Behold I lay in Sion for a foundation a stone," which though it is there justly described with respect to some, as "a tried stone, a precious corner stone, and a sure foundation," will be what the same prophet represents, ch. viii. 14, "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel." And in truth upon this stone they have now fallen from that high eminence which they once held, and are so broken as scarcely to retain the remains of life. Yet still, it is added by the prophet, whosoever believeth in him who is the antitype of this figurative representation, whosoever builds upon this great and precious foundation, shall never be put to shame: for it is a foundation that will never fail; and though at present it is rejected by the house of Jacob, there is reason to hope that this blindness to truth and to their best interest will not always last.

IV.

The apostle laments that his countrymen have

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tions the rejection of his countrymen without suggesting a hint that this rejection would be neither total nor final; and this was probably his reason for inserting the concluding clause.

grievously mistaken the proper means of justification and acceptance with God, which he particularly describes, and shows from the Jewish scriptures, that it is offered to all who believe, without distinction of Jew or Gentile, ch. x. 1—13. Ch. X.

1. The apostle, while he bears the most hearty good will to his countrymen, is yet constrained to declare, that notwithstanding their earnest desire to abide in covenant with God, they had totally mistaken the means, by misunderstanding the design of the law, chap. x. 1—4.

Brethren, the affectionate desire[1] *of my heart, and my supplication to God for them*[2], is *for their salvation*[3]. Ver. 1.

I assure you, my beloved associates in the faith of Christ, that whatever the treatment may have been which I have received from my countrymen, I harbour no resentment against them, but love them sincerely; and that my earnest affectionate wish and prayer for them all is, that they may escape from the condemnation of the law by embracing the doctrine of Christ.

For I bear them testimony that they have zeal for God[4]*: but not according to knowledge.* 2.

[1] *Affectionate desire.*] Ευδοκια. "In the accomplishment of which I should find the greatest complacency." Doddridge.

[2] *For them.*] This is the reading of the Alexandrine, Clermont, and other copies, and is adopted by Griesbach. The received text reads, "for Israel."

[3] *Salvation.*] "that they may be saved." Newcome: who explains, "that they may enter into the covenant of salvation here, and into the glories of heaven hereafter."

[4] *Zeal for God.*] Gr. "zeal of God." This is the well known

Ch. X. Ver. 2. If they lose their high state of privilege, it is not because they are indifferent about it; for I bear them testimony that they are solicitous above all things to maintain their near relation to God as his peculiar people: but they are grievously mistaken in the means which are necessary for this purpose.

3. *For being ignorant of God's* method of *justification, and seeking to establish their own*[1], *they have not submitted to the justification of God.*

Not being aware that the method of justification by the law is now superseded, and being unacquainted with the new method which God hath lately instituted, of justification by faith; they have sought to secure the divine favour by an unreasonable attachment to ceremonial institutions, and have neglected to inquire into, or have refused submission to, that which is appointed by God.

4. *For Christ* is *the end of the law for justification to every believer.*

The design of the Mosaic institute is to lead to a more generous and enlarged dispensation. Its figures and its prophecies are fulfilled in Christ; whose mission from God, as the saviour of the world, is now proposed as the object of that faith which is the ground of justification.

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form of the Hebrew superlative, and may signify nothing more than extraordinary zeal. Yet still the object of their zeal was, to remain in their station as the peculiar people of God: both these objects were probably in the apostle's contemplation.

[1] *Their own.*] This is the reading of the Alexandrine and Clermont copies, and of the Vulgate Version. The received text adds, δικαιοσυνην, justification.

2. The apostle distinctly explains the different requisitions of the gospel and the law, ver. 5—10. Ch. X.

First, he states the requisition of the law; namely, unfailing obedience, ver. 5.

For Moses describeth the justification of the law, That the man who performeth them shall live by them. Ver. 5.

This is an exact quotation from Lev. xviii. 5. The Mosaic law, by which the Jews sought justification, cries, "Keep the commandments and live." This condition the apostle has before shown to have been violated by the Jews; and consequently that justification is not to be obtained by rigorous unrelenting law.

The apostle next describes the language of the new dispensation; which requires faith in the divine mission and resurrection of Christ, as the reasonable and practicable mode of admission to the privileges of the new covenant, ver. 6—10.

But the justification by faith speaketh thus: Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to conduct Christ down. 6.

To descend from heaven, was a familiar phrase among the Jews, to express the divine authority of a doctrine or a prophet. So our Lord saith, Matt. xxi. 25, "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or of men?" And the meaning of the apostle is this: The language of the new dispensation is, Entertain no doubt concerning the divine mission of Christ: do not say, Who shall go to heaven to fetch him down from thence? as

Ch. X. Ver. 6. if he had not yet been manifested to the world. For Christ has already appeared on earth as a messenger from God, and has fully established his claim to a divine mission.

7. *Or who shall descend into the abyss? that is, to bring Christ up again from the dead*[1].

Nor may you entertain any doubt of the resurrection of Christ. You must not ask, "Who will descend into the region of death, to bring up Christ from the grave?" as if you doubted whether he were already risen. No one who doubts concerning the mission and resurrection of Jesus Christ can with any propriety be admitted into the community of which Christ is the head, or to participate in its blessings and privileges.

8. *But what saith it?*

Having seen what the new dispensation forbids, let us now consider what it requires: and to this the answer is very easy.

—*The doctrine is near thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart*[2]; *that is, the doctrine of faith which we preach.*

You need not go far to seek an answer. All of you who have been converted to the faith of Christ, have been taught it already; you have all learned

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[1] *That is, to bring Christ*, &c.] "For that is the same thing as to set aside the resurrection of Christ from the dead." Wakefield.

[2] *The doctrine is near*, &c.] These words, and those in the sixth verse, are a quotation from Deut. xxx. 11, 13; but it is plainly by way of accommodation, the apostle not meaning to build any argument upon it.

to receive it as a truth of the highest importance: it is, in fact, that doctrine concerning faith in Christ, upon which we, who are authorized to preach the gospel, continually insist, as the principle which lies at the foundation of our hope. Ch. X. Ver. 8.

That if thou confess with thy mouth that *Jesus* is *Lord, and believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* 9.

If you make a public profession that you acknowledge Jesus of Nazareth as your master, and that you bow to him as a teacher sent from God; and if you seriously and sincerely believe that he was raised to life after his crucifixion, by the power of God; you thus become a member of the community of believers, and are entitled to the privileges of the people of God: you are rescued from the yoke of the law, and from the bondage of idolatry and superstition, and are introduced into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

And it is reasonable that such privileges should be entailed upon a sincere belief, and a public profession.

For, with the heart man believes to justification; and with the mouth profession is made to salvation. 10.

If faith is sincere, it is known and accepted by God; and if this faith is publicly professed, the believer is publicly received into the Christian community; and is rescued from the dominion of ignorance and darkness, idolatry and vice.

In this passage the apostle states, in the clearest

Ch. X. Ver. 10.

language, the fundamental article of the Christian faith; all that is necessary to entitle a man to be admitted into the community of believers, and to be acknowledged as a Christian brother. "If thou confess with thy mouth that Jesus is Lord, or Master, and believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." How widely different is this truly apostolic symbol, not only from the long catalogue of mysterious and self-contradictory articles, which are the boast, and the disgrace, of many churches calling themselves Christian, but also from that shorter and simpler confession of faith erroneously called the Apostles' Creed, into which various articles are introduced to which the apostles were strangers! Nor can we ever hope to see pure Christianity firmly established, till these human formularies are laid aside; and professing Christians become willing to return to the primitive simplicity of the gospel doctrine, and to own as brethren all who believe in the resurrection of Jesus and who acknowledge him as their Master.

Be it further remembered, that the *public profession* of truth is represented by the apostle as essential to an interest in the blessings of the new covenant. What men believe in their heart, it is required that they shall profess with their lips, and not shrink from any disgrace or persecution which may be the result of a fearless profession. If any are now ashamed of Christ and his words, the time is coming when he also will be ashamed of them.

3. The apostle appeals to the scripture, to confirm his doctrine, ver. 11—13. Ch. X.

Moreover the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame. Ver. 11.

I have already shown (ch. ix. 33), that the prophet Isaiah, ch. xxviii. 16, proclaims security to those who believe, and who build upon the true foundation. And it is observable that he by no means limits the promise to the Hebrew nation: his expressions are general and indefinite, and include all believers of all ages and countries.

For there is no distinction of Jew and Greek; for the same Lord[1] *over all is bountiful to all who call themselves by his name: for whosoever taketh upon himself the name of the Lord shall be saved*[2]. 12. 13.

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[1] *The same Lord,* &c.] "all have the same Lord, abundantly kind (πλεσιων) to all that call themselves by his name." Wakefield.

[2] *Whosoever taketh upon himself the name of the Lord.*] Επικαλεσηται. So Wakefield. In the public version, "whosoever calleth upon," &c. The word will bear either sense. "I cannot but think that 'all who call upon him,' ver. 12, signifies all who are open and professed Christians." Locke; who, in justification of his interpretation, observes, "that it will be an ill rule for interpreting St. Paul to tie up his use of any text he brings out of the Old Testament to that which is taken to be the meaning of it there." Dr. Taylor, who does not quite approve of Mr. Locke's remark, vindicates the apostle's method of quoting scripture, by observing, "that he did not always quote in the same manner, or, for the same purpose." He adds, 1. Sometimes his intention goes no further than using the same strong expressions as being equally applicable to the point in hand, Rom. x. 6, 7, 8, 18.—2. Sometimes the design is only to show that cases are parallel, or that what happened in his time corresponded to that which happened in former days, Rom. ii. 24, viii. 36, ix. 27, 28, 29, xi. 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, xv. 21.—3. Sometimes the quotation is intended only to explain a doc-

Ch. X. Ver. 13. You observe that the prophet makes no national distinctions. Nor is it reasonable that such distinctions should exist any longer; for God is equally related to all his creatures, the kind impartial parent and benefactor of all: and therefore all men of all nations who sincerely serve him, and who profess their regard to him in the way that he has appointed, shall be accepted by him. And to this doctrine the prophet Joel bears his testimony, as well as Isaiah. For he expressly declares, that in the times to which he alludes, all that worship God, and profess themselves his servants, shall be accepted by him and rescued from guilt and misery, Joel ii. 32.

V.

The apostle vindicates the mission of the preachers of the gospel; though it was foreseen, that the offer of its blessings would be accepted by the Gentiles and rejected by the Jews, ch. x. 14 to the end.

1. None could ever become professors of the doctrine of Christ, if missionaries were not authorized to teach it, ver. 14, 15.

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trinal point, Rom. i. 17, iv. 6—8, 18—21, ix. 20, 21, x. 15, xv. 3.—4. Sometimes to prove a doctrinal point, Rom. iii. 4, 10—19, iv. 3, 17, v. 12—14, ix. 7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 17, x. 5, 11, 13, xii. 19, 20, xiii. 9, xiv. 11.—5. Sometimes to prove that something was predicted or properly foretold in the prophetic writings, Rom. ix. 25, 26, 33, x. 16, 19, 20, 21, xi. 26, 27, xv. 9—13.

How then can they take his name[1], *on whom they have not believed?* Ch. X. Ver. 14.

How can any call themselves after the name of Christ, and thus become entitled to the blessings of the gospel, if they do not believe in his divine mission?

And how can they believe on him of whom they have not heard?

How is it possible that men should believe Jesus to be a prophet of God, if they never even heard his name?

And how can they hear without a preacher?

If no one will undertake to teach, how could any one ever learn?

And how can there be preachers, unless they be sent? 15.

To preach the gospel to good purpose requires peculiar qualifications. It is not every one who presumptuously intrudes into the office of a teacher that is duly qualified for it. A man, to preach effectually, must receive a commission from God, and be suitably endowed with those gifts and powers which are necessary to excite the attention of unbelievers, whether Jews or heathen, and to fix conviction on the heart.

The apostle is here speaking of the first teachers

[1] *How can they take his name,* &c.] "How can they call themselves the disciples of a master, and take his name as the followers of his doctrine, whom they never regarded?" Wakefield. Gr. "How shall they," &c. These are instances in which the future indicative has a modal sense, after the Hebrew idiom.

Ch. X. Ver. 15. of the gospel; who could have little hope of success unless they were properly appointed and instructed by the apostles and evangelists, and invested with those spiritual gifts and powers which in the apostolic age were necessary to rouse the attention and to subdue the heart. And to such persons in a peculiar and appropriate sense may be applied the words of the prophet Isaiah.

As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of those who publish good tidings of peace, who publish good tidings of good things!

These words are borrowed from Isaiah, lii. 7, and in their primary sense they express the joyful acclamations of the watchmen of Jerusalem, when they first discover upon the mountain tops the heralds who are sent to announce the approach of Jehovah at the head of his chosen people; whom he hath redeemed from the Babylonian yoke, and is conducting through the wilderness to their own country: and well does it describe the joy of those who justly appreciate the joyful tidings of deliverance from the yoke of the law, and the bondage of heathenism, which were announced by the first authorized publishers of the gospel of Christ.

The apostle now draws his conclusion, ver. 17.

17. *So then, this faith* cometh *by hearing, and this hearing by the word of God*[1].

[1] *So then.*] αρα αν: the form in which the apostle introduces his grand conclusion. This transposition of the 16th and 17th verses, as suggested by L'Enfant, is so necessary to clearing up the apostle's reasoning, that the propriety of it can scarcely be doubted, though it is unsupported by authorities.

Thus it appears, that all who believe in Christ, believe in consequence of suitable instruction; but this instruction can only be communicated by those who derive their authority from God, and are duly qualified by him for the successful discharge of their office. Ch. X. Ver. 17.

2. The apostle argues, that the want of success is no objection against the divine commission of the first preachers of the gospel, ver. 16, 18.

An objector may perhaps urge the fact,

But all have not obeyed the gospel; and he may hence conclude, that God did not authorize the preachers of it: for, if he had, no doubt they would have been successful. 16.

This, however, the apostle remarks, is by no means a certain conclusion:

For Isaiah saith, Lord, who[2] *hath believed our report?*

And this language he uses, Isa. liii. 1, when speaking under the character of the Messiah. But if the Messiah himself complains of his want of success, it can be no objection against his messengers, that their disappointment is similar to that of their master.

This is one instance among many, of the apostle's sudden change of persons without particular

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[2] *Lord, who,* &c.] Isa. liii. 1. The word Lord being found here and in John xii. 38, and also in all the copies of the LXX. has probably by some inadvertence been lost from the Hebrew text. See Dodson's Isa. *in loc.*

Ch. X. Ver. 16. notice. An objection is started and the answer given, while the current of the discourse remains unbroken by any formal change in the construction.

It may also be observed, that the apostle is very happy in his quotation from Isaiah; for the words being the complaint of the Messiah himself, the reply at once stops the mouth of the objector.

The apostle proceeds:

18. *But I say, Have they not heard? Yea, verily: their voice went forth to all the earth, and their words to the extremities of the world.*

Can it be denied, that the preachers of the gospel have performed their duty? Have not the glad tidings been circulated far and wide, both among Jews and Gentiles? Undoubtedly they have; and that to such an extent, that it may be said, in the language of the Psalmist, Psalm xix. 4, "that the light of the gospel, like that of the natural sun, has diffused itself over every part of the habitable world."

Let it be remembered, that this language was used by the apostle within less than thirty years after our Lord's resurrection; for the epistle to the Romans was written about A.D. 58. And this early and rapid diffusion of the gospel can in no way be satisfactorily accounted for, but by the gifts and powers with which the first teachers were endowed. The hand of the Lord was with them, and therefore multitudes believed, and turned to the Lord.

3. Though the Jews have not received the gospel, this is an event which, how little soever to be expected, and how deeply soever to be regretted, is no more than what the prophets themselves have foretold, ver. 19—21. Ch. X.

But I say, Hath not Israel known[1] *?* Ver. 19.

It cannot be denied that the gospel has been sufficiently published to the Jewish people; but have they acknowledged its authority? Is it possible, when messengers were sent, with manifest credentials of a divine commission, to proclaim the tidings and to offer the blessings of the gospel, that while the Gentiles listened and obeyed, the Jews should have been so ignorant and so besotted as to turn a deaf ear to the message from heaven, and to reject the grace of the gospel? Can human folly and depravity be equal to so absurd and perilous a determination? Alas! it is but too true. Yet their rejection of the message from heaven is no

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[1] *Hath not Israel known?*] "known this." Newcome. Mr. Locke says, "In this and the next verses St. Paul seems to suppose a reasoning to this purpose: viz. That they did not deserve to be rejected, because they did not know that the Gentiles were to be admitted." And most of the commentators interpret the text upon this principle, I think erroneously: for the apostle having stated the unsuccessfulness of the ministry as an argument in the mouth of an objector against the authority of the gospel missionaries, continues his reply to this objection to the end of the chapter. He divides the objection into two parts: ver. 18, Have they not heard? Answer, They have; as it was foretold that they should. Ver. 19. Have they acknowledged and received the gospel? Answer, No; as it was foretold that the Gentiles would embrace the offers of the gospel, but that the Jews would reject them. That the word γινωσκω sometimes bears the sense of επιγινωσκω, is well known. See Schleusner.

Ch. X. Ver. 19. objection to its truth and authenticity, but the contrary; for this conduct, strange as it is, both of Jews and Gentiles, was actually and in the clearest language foretold by the Jewish prophets.

First, Moses saith[1], *I will move you to jealousy by* those who are *not a people: I will provoke you to anger by a nation void of understanding.*

Deut. xxxii. 21, God denounces his anger against apostate Israel; and as they, his chosen people, had excited his jealousy and provoked his indignation by introducing idols as rivals of his authority, and co-partners in his worship; so will he provoke them to jealousy by selecting as his people those who are not now his people, that is, the believing Gentiles; and will excite their indignation by the favours which he will bestow on a people enlightened by his word, but who are now treated as ignorant and brutish by the Jews, who value themselves on their superior light, while they reject the wisdom which is from above.

20 *But Isaiah*[2] *very boldly saith, I was found by them who sought me not: I was made manifest to*
21. *those who inquired not after me. Whereas con-*

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[1] *Moses saith*, &c.] "The design of Moses," says Dr. Priestley, "was to describe the low state to which the Jews would be reduced in consequence of their disobedience, so as to be oppressed and insulted by the meanest nations; but the apostle applies all this to the provocations the Jews would receive from the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, whom they held in the greatest contempt." Dr. Taylor, however, contends, that the text as it stands in Deuteronomy, is full to the apostle's purpose.

[2] *But Isaiah*, &c.] "In the passage here alluded to it is probable the prophet only meant the Israelites, whom he was de-

cerning Israel he saith, I have stretched forth my hands all the day long toward a disobedient and a gainsaying people. Ch. X. Ver. 21.

And to conclude: nothing can be more plain and decisive than the language of Isaiah concerning both the Jews and Gentiles, Isaiah lxv. 1, 2. When God is represented as being found and made manifest to those who were careless and indifferent to this great discovery, the Gentiles only can be intended; because, at no time could it be said that the Israelites were indifferent to the high privilege of being the children of God. And it is no less obvious, that the Jewish nation falls under the second description, of refusing the invitations of mercy, and rejecting the offers of the gospel: not because they were indifferent to the object, but because they would not believe the testimony which was given to the divine legation of Jesus and his apostles.

From all these considerations, therefore, the conclusion however lamentable is undeniably true, that as the case now stands, the unbelieving Jews, who at present constitute the main body of that unhappy nation, are rejected from their former state of covenant with God, and are deprived of the honours and privileges which appertain to a covenant state;

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scribing as having apostatized to idolatry." Dr. Priestley.—Bishop Lowth, however, Mr. Dodson, and most other commentators, understand the prophet's language in its primary sense, as describing the call of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews.

Ch. X. Ver. 21. while the believing Gentiles, having listened to the invitations and complied with the terms of the gospel, are admitted into the family of God, and are allowed to participate in those privileges, which were formerly limited to the posterity of Jacob.

SECTION II.

Ch. XI. *The apostle proceeds to show, that this rejection of the Jewish nation is neither total nor final; and that while it lasts, it answers very important purposes under the divine administration, which their ultimate restoration, here expressly foretold, also will.* Ch. xi. *throughout.*

I.

This rejection of the Jewish nation, even at present, is not total, ch. xi. 1—10.

Ver. 1. *Do I say then, that God has rejected his people? Far from it.*

I have but too undeniably proved, that the great mass of the Jewish nation are at this time rejected by God, on account of their unbelief: they have refused the offers of the gospel; they are no longer a peculiar people. But do I mean to be understood in so rigorous a sense, as if God had excluded every individual of his ancient people from the hope of mercy, and from participating in his favour? Very far from it: all are not unbelievers, and therefore all are not under the sentence of condemnation.

1. The apostle himself was a happy exception from the general doom. Ch. XI. Ver. 1.

For I am myself an Israelite of the race of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

If the rejection were so universal as the question supposes, I must myself be lost; for no person has better pretensions than I have, to a descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But instead of being rejected from the covenant, I am not only admitted as a believer, but have been honoured with the apostolic character and mission.

2. There is still a remnant of faithful worshipers, as in the time of general apostasy in the days of Elijah, ver. 2—6.

God hath not rejected his people whom he fore-knew. 2.

God foresaw that though the Jews as a nation would reject the gospel, and would therefore be rejected by him, a certain portion of individuals would nevertheless manifest a different spirit, and would become believers in Christ. And these, so far from rejecting, he would receive into favour, and admit to all the privileges of the new covenant.

Do ye not know what the scripture saith in the history of *Elijah? how he complained to God against Israel*[1]*? "Lord, they have slain thy pro-* 3.

[1] *How he complained,* &c.] See Taylor and Macknight. The received text adds the word *saying,* which is wanting in the best copies. "how he addresseth God." Abp. Newcome. "*Sicut* ΕΝΤΥΓΧΑΝΕΙΝ ΥΠΕΡ ΤΙΝΟΣ *est negotium alicujus commendare, ita* ΕΝ-

Ch. XI. Ver. 3. *phets and have digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.*"

Do not you recollect, at the time of the general apostasy of Israel in the days of Elijah, when Jezebel, the idolatrous wife of Ahab, had put to death all the prophets of the true God whom she could find, and had given orders for the execution of Elijah himself; how that prophet, having escaped into the wilderness, and being questioned by the oracle why he had abandoned his post, is reported, 1 Kings xix. 14, to have replied in the language of complaint against his countrymen, that they had so universally apostatized to idolatry, that having pulled down the altars of the true God and massacred his prophets, he was now the only true worshiper of God that was left in the country; and that it was in vain for him to return, and to reclaim them to their duty, for he knew that orders had been issued to put him to death?

4. *But what saith the divine oracle to him? "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bended the knee to Baal."*

The prophet was greatly mistaken in his calculations; for the number of true worshipers, of those who secretly adhered to the God of Israel, and who resolutely abstained from every idolatrous act, was far beyond what he had calculated. He thought himself quite alone: but the oracle, having ordered

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τυγχανειν κατα τινος est aliquem accusare." Rosenmuller.—"how he appeareth before God with respect to Israel." Wakefield.

him to consecrate certain persons as instruments in the hands of providence for the extermination of idolatry, adds, ver. 18, "This will not be the extermination of all the inhabitants of Israel. Solitary as you may suspect yourself to be, you have many associates: and when all the idolaters are slain, I have still reserved seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." Ch. XI. Ver. 4.

And so also in the present time there is a remnant according to the election of favour. 5.

Thus, to all appearance, in the present age, the Jews are nearly as unanimous in their rejection of Christ as their ancestors were in the worship of Baal. A superficial observer would conclude, that almost to a man they resisted the truth, and were persecutors of all who professed it. But this judgement would be erroneous: there are still a few, a select number, a small remnant, who believe in Jesus; and who, in opposition to the great mass of their countrymen, joyfully accept the proffered mercy, and through the free and abundant favour of God are admitted into the community of true believers.

But if it be of favour, it is *no more of works; otherwise favour would cease to be favour* [1]. 6.

Observe, I say, that they are chosen through favour, by the free unmerited goodness of God: after

[1] The received text adds, "but if by works, then it is no more through favour, otherwise work is no more work:" but these words are wanting in the Alexandrine, Ephrem, and other manuscripts and versions, and are omitted by Griesbach.

Ch. XI. Ver. 6. having forfeited all claim to continuance in their former state of privilege, they are now admitted into the new and better covenant, by faith, and not by legal observances; for if they could make good their claim by works of law, they would obtain that as a right which they now receive as a free gift, to Jews as well as to Gentiles.

This observation the apostle crowds in, to recall to the attention and impress upon the minds of his readers a due sense of that important doctrine which he had established at large at the commencement of the epistle, that the dispensation of the gospel is the free unmerited gift of God.

It cannot be amiss to remark here, that the faithful servants of God have no reason to be discouraged in evil times. In seasons of general apostasy there have always been, as in the times of the prophet, a chosen few who have been the depositaries of truth and virtue; and who, however unknown or unnoticed by the world, are all under the eye and protection of an omniscient and a faithful God, who will at the proper season appear to plead his own cause, and to reward those who preserve their allegiance in times of prevailing declension.

3. The chosen number having been thus admitted to the privileges of the gospel, the residue, that is, the great mass of the Jewish nation, are excluded, agreeably to the declarations of their own scriptures, ver. 7—10.

7. *How is it then? what Israel seeks, that he hath*

not attained; but the elect[1] *have attained it, and the rest are blinded.* Ch. XI. Ver. 7.

What now is the real state of the case? It is plainly this: that high state of privilege, and peculiar relation to God, which the Israelites always affected, and to which they continually aspired, they have failed in securing; not indeed altogether and universally, for a select number, a small proportion who have submitted to the terms of the gospel, have obtained it; and with less external pomp, and less of ceremonial detail, they are as rich in privilege as the Jewish nation ever was in its highest prosperity. But the bulk of the nation, labouring under a judicial blindness and hardness of heart, have not known the day of their visitation, and have rejected the offers of peace.

As it is written (Isaiah xxix. 10, Deut. xxix. 4), 8.
"*God hath given to them a spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this day.*"

Such is the amazing stupefaction which has seized the Jewish nation at this time, and such their gross inattention to the extraordinary scenes which have passed before them, and so obstinately have they resisted even the evidence of their senses, and rejected the repeated offers of mercy, that the emphatical language of Isaiah and of Moses is not too strong to express the folly of their conduct.

And David saith (Ps. lxix. 22, 23), "*Let their* 9.

[1] *The elect.*] In the original, "the election."

Ch. XI. Ver. 10. *table become a snare, and a net, and a trap, and a recompense unto them*[1]. *Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and keep their back continually bent down.*

As the just retribution of this wilful blindness, the imprecation of David upon his malicious enemies may be regarded as prophetic of the present state of my unhappy countrymen. Let that which should promote their comfort betray them into misery; let them never discern their true interest, and never rise from their depressed and miserable condition.

II.

The rejection of the Jewish nation is not final, but in the mean time it is productive of great benefit to the Gentiles; and their ultimate restoration will produce still greater advantages: so that the chosen Gentile has no right to insult the rejected Jew. Ch. xi. 11 to the end.

1. The fall of Israel is not final; but, being the means of exalting the Gentiles, will, by exciting emulation, operate to their own recovery, ver. 11.

11. *I say, then, Have they stumbled so as to fall?*

[1] Mr. Wakefield observes, that "there can be no doubt of an error in the last words of this verse, as unfaithfully exhibiting the sense of the original author:" he adds, "it is surprising that our apostle should choose to quote so punctually from the version of the LXX., so outrageously absurd as it is in many places." Mr. W. approves "the Syriac Version as more agreeable to the uniformity of Hebrew composition." "Let their table become a snare to them, and what should be a recompense a stumbling-block." The common translation, agreeably to the

Far from it: but through their lapse, salvation[2] is come *to the Gentiles, to excite their emulation.* Ch. XI. Ver. 11.

I acknowledge and I lament the present unbelief and rejection of my countrymen. But let me not be misunderstood: is it supposed that I have asserted that they are so fallen as never to rise again? I never intended any such thing. In fact, their rejection of the gospel has been the cause of its being offered to the Gentiles; for in all places the tenor of our commission was, first to offer it to the Jews. But the acceptance of the gospel by the Gentiles, and their consequent privileges, while the descendants of Abraham are left in a forlorn and wretched state, will eventually induce the Israelites themselves to reflect upon their disgrace and misery, and to aspire to the recovery of their long lost privileges, which are now in the possession of those who were formerly regarded as greatly inferior to themselves.

2. The restoration of the Jews to their former privileges, will be far more beneficial to the Gentiles than their rejection and unbelief, ver. 12—16.

But if their lapse be *the riches of the world, and their diminution the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness!* 12.

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literal sense of the Hebrew, reads thus, "Let their table become a snare before them, and *that which* should *have been* for *their* welfare, *let it become* a trap. Let their eyes be darkened that they see not, and make their loins continually to shake."

[2] *Salvation.*] "When the Jews rejected the gospel, it was immediately preached to the Gentiles." Newcome. Salvation, *i. e.* admission to the privileges of the gospel. See ver. 26, note.

Ch. XI. Ver. 12. I have said, and it is true, that the Jews having rejected the offer of the gospel which was first made to them, we were authorized to make the same offer to the Gentiles, who, happily for themselves, listened to it and embraced it: so that they were made rich by the folly of the Jews. But when the Jewish nation itself becomes wise and embraces the doctrine of Christ, it cannot be doubted that their conversion will be still more beneficial to the Gentile world: for, being then animated by the benevolent spirit of the gospel, they will actively exert themselves to diffuse its blessings.

13. (*For I direct my discourse to you Gentiles, in-*
14. *asmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles I honour my ministry, if by any means I may excite to emulation my kindred, and may save some of them.*)

The apostle introduces this appeal to the Gentiles in a parenthesis, to show that in what he was about to advance, it was by no means his intention to disparage them, but merely to excite the emulation of his own countrymen and kinsmen: *q. d.*

I am aware that I am writing to a church chiefly consisting of Gentile converts; and it is my honour that my apostolic commission is specially directed to the Gentiles: and so far from undervaluing the object of this mission, I glory in it as a high distinction, and feel a peculiar affection for converted heathen: and this I state as a preliminary fact, that you may not suspect that in the language which I may use upon this subject, I have any intention to degrade you, or to represent you as in a state of

inferiority. My only design is, if possible, to rouse the dormant spirit of my beloved countrymen, and to excite their emulation to participate in the privileges which you now possess. Which happy event, whenever it takes place, will not fail to make a great addition to the privilege and happiness of the Gentile world. Ch. XI. Ver. 14.

15. *For if their rejection* be *the reconciliation of the world, what* will *the reception* of them be, *but life from the dead*[1]?

If, as I have just stated, the unbelief and folly of the Jewish nation, and their contempt of the gospel, have been the means of bringing the gospel to the Gentiles, who have accepted it, and have been admitted to all the privileges of the people of God, what will the ultimate conversion of the Jews be, but a resurrection to life? They who are now dead to every virtuous principle, to every generous feeling, to every cheerful hope, and are excluded from the community of believers like a dead carcass from the living world, will then be animated by all the vivifying, invigorating, and benevolent principles of the gospel, and will be as active in promoting its doctrine, its temper and spirit, as they are now in-

[1] *Life from the dead.*] "Meaning to the world, to us Gentile Christians." Dr. Taylor, who explains the text, as meaning that the Gentile Christians shall, by the conversion of the Jews, be advanced to a state of improvement as much superior to that in which they antecedently were as life to death. Perhaps the sense may be, that the Jews being raised to life by their conversion to the Christian religion, will infuse a new spirit into the Gentiles. The elliptical style of the apostle renders his meaning ambiguous.

Ch. XI. Ver. 15. sensible to its excellence, and hostile to its interests. And this active zeal of the converted Israelites, cannot fail to be attended with the most reviving and beneficial effects upon the Gentile church. Nor can it be doubted, that this most desirable event will be accomplished in its season.

16. *For*[1] *if the first fruit* be *holy, so also is the mass; and if the root* be *holy, so also* are *the branches.* See Numb. xv. 20, 21.

As a cake of the first meal after the harvest, offered as the law directs, consecrates the whole mass of bread, and as the virtue of the root must naturally be communicated to the branches, so Abraham and his immediate descendants, being the root and the first fruits of the Hebrew nation, and being freely chosen by God, and consecrated to his service, and taken into his covenant, are a pledge, notwithstanding present unfavourable appearances, that Israel shall not be finally and totally rejected, but that in due time they shall again be reclaimed, and restored to the honours and privileges which their ancestors possessed.

3. Under the emblem of wild branches engrafted upon a good stock, the apostle warns the converted Gentiles not to insult the rejected Jew, ver. 17—22.

17. *Now if some of the branches were broken off, and thou being a wild olive-tree wert grafted in among*

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[1] *For.*] The Alexandrine copy instead of δε reads γαρ, which suits the connexion best.

them, and wert made a partaker with them of the root and fatness of the olive-tree, boast not against the branches: but if thou boast, remember *thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.* Ch. XI. Ver. 18.

The apostle's meaning is sufficiently intelligible, though his illustration is inconsistent with general usage; as the wild scion is never grafted into the good stock, and if it were, it would not be improved by it. The meaning of the apostle, however, is obvious. The Jewish nation were originally the chosen people of God, and as such, were possessed of many valuable privileges, which at one time they improved, and bore fruit in proportion, honourable to themselves, acceptable to God, and useful to others. They are now degenerate, the barren useless branches are broken off, and their place supplied by scions from a different stock; upon which it is expected that good fruit will grow. But let not these engrafted boughs set themselves up against the natural but discarded branches. Let not the accepted Gentile taunt and insult the rejected Jew: the ancient, but now revolted and discarded people of God, are objects of compassion, rather than of contempt. But if you, the favoured Gentile, will indulge your sarcasms against the degraded Jew, recollect that you are not so much his superior as you may imagine. The Gentile is more in debt to the Jew than the Jew to the Gentile: in fact, the Hebrew nation owe nothing to the Gentiles; while all the privileges of converted Gentiles are but the accomplishment of the promise made to Abraham.

Ch. XI. Ver. 18. Thus strenuously does the apostle plead for kindness to his countrymen, even in their fallen and rejected state: but with how little success, the sad history of the ancient people of God, from the apostolic age to the present hour, too plainly demonstrates. Surely it ill becomes those whose Saviour was of the Jewish nation, to insult and persecute those whom he calls his countrymen: still less does it become the true disciples of Jesus to imitate that unhappy people in the worst feature of their character.

19. *Wilt thou say then, The branches have been broken off, that I might be grafted in?*

Wilt thou plead in defence of this contemptuous treatment of the fallen Jew, that he is cast away as a worthless branch, to make room for thee as a fruitful bough?

20. *Well. They were broken off for unbelief, and thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but*
21. *fear. For if God spared not the natural branches,* beware *lest he spare not thee.*

True; it cannot be denied that you who are expected to bear fruit, are substituted in the room of the withered branch. Yet this affords no cause for boasting. The Israelites lost their interest in the covenant, because they would not attend to the credentials of the true Messiah. And remember, you took their place, not upon the ground of antecedent merit, but solely because you were wise enough to accept the offers of the gospel: and while you continue to believe in Christ, you will be acknowledged

as members of his church, and entitled to the privileges of believers; but no longer. If temptation and persecution cause you to apostatize, all your privileges are forfeited. Instead, therefore, of insulting the fallen Jew, be solicitous to maintain your own station, and to guard against apostasy: for if you fall away, God will no doubt deal with you as he now deals with his ancient people. Ch. XI. Ver. 21.

Behold, therefore, the goodness, and the severity of God: towards those who have fallen, severity; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his *goodness*[1]; *otherwise, thou also shalt be cut off.* 22.

Reflect seriously upon the diversity of the divine dispensations towards different characters, as they improve or neglect their respective privileges; how severe to his ancient people who have apostatized from his covenant! how kind to thee who art admitted into their place; not upon the ground of merit, but of pure and undeserved mercy: which mercy will doubtless be continued as long as it is valued and improved! But if you, like Israel, neglect and despise your privileges, you, like them, shall be cut off, and cast away.

4. Under the same symbol the apostle represents the propriety, and probability of the restoration of Israel, if they should receive the Christian faith, ver. 23, 24.

And they also, if they do not continue in unbe- 23.

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[1] *In* his *goodness.*] "deserving his kindness." Newcome.

Ch. XI. Ver. 24. *lief, shall be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out from the olive-tree naturally wild, and contrary to nature wert grafted into a good olive-tree, how much more shall these, who were the natural* branches, *be grafted into their own olive-tree?*

But if, arguing from the severity of God, we conclude that the Gentile believers will be discarded, if they should apostatize like the Jews, much more, arguing from the goodness of God, may we conclude that if the Jews abandon their unbelief, they shall again be received into favour. It may indeed appear impossible to graft a withered and a severed branch again into the parent stock: but nothing is too hard for God. And if you, a wild branch of a wild olive-tree, have contrary to nature been grafted into the good olive-tree, it is surely still less improbable, that they who were originally branches of the good olive-tree should be restored to their primitive state.

The apostle's meaning is very clear, though his parallel does not hold; for in the culture of fruit, no such thing is known as the grafting of a wild scion into a good stock in order to improve it; or, the restoration of a withered branch to the parent tree. But the writer's object being to make himself understood, he did not concern himself about the correctness of his similitude.

5. The apostle directly asserts that it is the plan of providence announced in prophecy, that the Is-

raelites shall in due time be restored to favour, ver. 25—27. Ch. XI.

Moreover, brethren, I would not have you ignorant of this mystery[1], *lest you should have too high an opinion of yourselves, that a partial blindness hath happened to Israel, till the complement of the Gentiles*[2] *shall have entered in.* Ver. 25.

And, to put an end to all doubt upon this subject, and to prevent Gentile believers from being unduly elated at their present temporary superiority over the fallen Israelites, I now announce to you, as a part of that revelation with which I am entrusted, and which was formerly unknown, that this blindness of the Jewish nation to the claims of their Messiah, and their obstinate rejection of him, is but partial and temporary; it neither extends to the whole nation, nor will it be perpetual: and it is permitted in the plan of providence to take place at present, and they unwittingly give up their station in

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[1] *This mystery.*] "this hidden truth which I now reveal. See 1 Cor. xv. 51, on which place Dr. Wall defines a mystery to be, what God purposes to do, but that purpose of his, has not till now been declared." Newcome.

[2] *The complement of the Gentiles.*] το πληρωμα· not as is usually understood, till the whole body of the Gentiles is completely introduced into the church, but till the Gentiles who being the complement, or that portion which when added to the Jews makes the church complete, have obtained an entrance into the church. So that the Jews are described as leaving the church to make way for the Gentiles; but not as waiting till all the Gentiles are come in before they return again. Comp. ver. 12, 15. For this sense of the word πληρωμα, see Eph. i. 23, and Locke on that passage. See also Matt. ix. 16, where πληρωμα signifies the patch that is put in to fill up the rent in an old garment. See Macknight's note on ver. 12.

Ch. XI. Ver. 25. the church, in order to make room for the accession of the Gentiles, who in the divine contemplation constitute an integral portion of the universal church, without which it would not be complete, and who take advantage of the secession of their elder brethren, the Jews, to enter, and to occupy their proper station in the church.

26. *And so all Israel will be saved*[1]; *as it is written, The deliverer will come out of Sion, and he will*
27. *turn away impiety from Jacob; and this* shall be *my covenant with them when I shall take away their sins*[2].

Thus Israel, having in part left their place to make room for their Gentile brethren, when this end

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[1] *Will be saved,*] *i. e.* "will be converted to Christianity." Newcome.—"They are said to be saved, because, by their coming into the Christian church they shall have the means of salvation bestowed upon them. See ver. 11." Macknight.—"The first step the goodness of God took in execution of his purpose of election, was to rescue them from the sin and idolatry of their heathen state, and to bring them into the light and privileges of the gospel. With regard to which the language of scripture is, that he *saved* them. 1 Cor. i. 18, vii. 16, x. 33; Eph. ii. 8; 1 Thess. ii. 16; 1 Tim. ii. 4; 2 Tim. i. 9." Taylor's Key, No. 93, 94.

[2] *As it is written,* &c.] The quotation is from Isaiah lix. 20, 21, in the LXX., which differs materially from the Hebrew. Bishop Lowth and Mr. Dodson both prefer the reading of the LXX. in ver. 21; and Mr. Dodson supposes that the clause "when I shall take away their sin" has been dropped both from the Hebrew and the LXX. The Hebrew is thus translated in the public version: "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words that I have put into thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever."

shall have been accomplished, and the Gentiles have been received into the church, they who went out shall be invited back, and shall all find safety and peace in the church of Christ. Thus shall the prophecy of Isaiah be fulfilled, Isa. lix. 20, 21, the sense of which is, that a great deliverer would in due time arise among the Jews, who would put an end to all idolatry and apostasy, and who would restore them to that state of privilege from which they had fallen, and from which they would never apostatize again. Ch. XI. Ver. 27.

Upon this paragraph it may be remarked, that the word *mystery* is here used to express, not what is now unintelligible, but what being formerly unknown is now revealed, and which the apostle was commissioned to publish; such was the ultimate restoration of the Jews to the privileges which they had forfeited.

Further, when it is said, that "all Israel shall be saved," the meaning is, not that every individual shall be brought into a state which shall ensure his final happiness, but that all shall be introduced into the community of believers and become partakers of its privileges; they shall cease to be outcasts from God; the sentence of outlawry shall be reversed. This is one instance out of many in the writings of the apostle, in which the word salvation expresses present privilege, not ultimate happiness.

The prophecy is quoted chiefly from the LXX. or Greek translation; it differs a little from the Hebrew, and is probably in this instance more correct. It appears to be a prophecy of the advent of the Mes-

Ch. XI. Ver. 27. siah, for the purpose of recovering and restoring Israel; it finishes abruptly, and in the original it is a promise of the perpetuity of the new covenant which probably the apostle had also in view.

6. Though the temporary rejection of the Jews may be incidentally beneficial to the Gentiles, yet the gracious purposes of God towards his ancient people shall not be revoked, ver. 28, 29.

28. *With respect to the gospel,* they are *enemies because of you; but with respect to the election,* they
29. are *beloved because of* their *fathers. For the free gifts and the invitation of God* are *not to be repented of.*

The true state of the case is this: The moral condition of the Israelites may be considered in a twofold view, as it regards the success of the gospel, and as it regards the purpose and promise of God. With respect to the former, the Jews are permitted to fall away through unbelief, and to exclude themselves from the blessings of the covenant, to make room for you Gentiles, to whom the gospel is offered, in consequence of the rejection of it by God's ancient people.

But with regard to the purpose of God, who selected this favoured people as the depositaries of his will, and the heirs of his mercy, and who promised to their pious forefathers, that their posterity should be eminently blessed, he still loves them for their fathers' sake, and will eventually fulfil every promise. For all his promises are founded upon a cer-

tain fore-sight of every event; so that his counsels are not liable to be changed by any unforeseen occurrence; not even by the evil affections, or perverse conduct of any of his creatures. For while, as in the present case, he overrules the apostasy of the Jewish nation for the production of a greater good, he will not suffer their apostasy and guilt to interfere with his kind designs towards them, but will fulfill all his gracious promises to his ancient people to their utmost extent; and by means abundantly efficacious, though at present not revealed, he will reclaim the posterity of Abraham to the privileges and blessings which their ancestors possessed, and which he promised to their descendants. Ch. XI. Ver. 29.

7. The design of providence in permitting the unbelief, first of the Gentiles, and now of the Jews, is, that each in their turn should be, and should acknowledge themselves to be, objects of mercy, ver. 30—32.

Moreover, as ye formerly were unbelievers in God, but now, through their unbelief, have become objects of mercy; so, likewise, these are now become unbelievers through the mercy shown to you[1], *that they also may become objects of mercy.* 30. 31.

[1] *Through the mercy shown to you, that,* &c.] τῳ ὑμετερῳ ελεει, ἱνα, κ. τ. λ. "even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy." This is the public version, and most generally adopted. But the version in the text better corresponds with the arrangement in the original; and is thus explained by Mr. Locke: "As you the Gentiles formerly stood out, and were not the people of

Ch. XI. Ver. 31.

As a further illustration of the wisdom of divine providence in the present rejection of the Jews, it may be observed, that you Gentiles were formerly aliens from God, but that the privileges of the gospel having been offered to you in consequence of the rejection of them by the Jews, you wisely accepted them as a free gift, as an act of the free grace and mercy of God. And in the same manner, the Jews, having now become unbelievers, and that in a great measure in consequence of the free admission of the Gentiles into the church, are now

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God, but yet have now obtained mercy so as to be taken in *through the standing out of the Jews*, who submit not to the gospel, even so they now have stood out, *by reason of your being in mercy admitted*, that they also—may again hereafter be admitted." Dr. Taylor objects that this interpretation involves the apostle in a contradiction, viz. "that the Gentile was taken in because the Jew stood out; and the Jew stood out because the Gentile was taken in." It is plain that the apostle means to make a verbal antithesis, in which he often delights; but, as Dr. Doddridge well observes, the writer refers to different periods. The Gentiles were rejected because they continued idolaters, when Abraham believed, and his posterity were taken into covenant: now, under the gospel dispensation, Abraham's posterity are rejected because they disbelieve; and one great cause of their unbelief is the mercy shown to you by the free offer of covenant blessings unincumbered with ritual obligations. See Acts xiii. 46, xxii. 22. And the great design of all is, that the Gentiles now, and the Jews eventually, may obtain the same blessing; and that it may be obtained by both parties, not as a right, but as a free gift; not as the reward of merit, but as the boon of mercy.

Mr. Wakefield translates the passage, "So have they now disobeyed the mercy shown to you, and will hereafter obtain mercy." But as in the next verse he translates απειθεια *unbelief*, it seems better to adhere to the same signification through the whole context. It is clear, however, that this learned critic did not approve the construction of the public version. Rosenmuller gives both interpretations.

placed in a situation from which there can be no hope of relief but from free and unmerited mercy. Ch. XI. Ver. 31.

For God hath included all[1] *together in unbelief, that all might be objects of mercy.* 32.

Such was the plan of the all-wise providence of God. It was his will to hide pride from man, and that all should know that the invaluable privileges of the gospel covenant, and the promise of eternal life, were not the reward of human merit, but the free gift of abounding mercy. And to this end he permitted both Jew and Gentile to fall into a state of ignorance, and vice, and misery, from which nothing could extricate them but the arm of unbounded mercy. All, through unbelief, are become prisoners of his justice; that all might be, and might be made sensible that they were, the objects of his mercy: to which, and not to their own antecedent merits, they are wholly indebted for the blessings of the gospel.

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[1] *Hath included all*, &c.] συνεκλεισε, "has locked them up together." Taylor. See Luke v. 6; Gal. iii. 22, 23, "God has put up together in a state of revolt from their allegiance to him, all men, both Jews and Gentiles, that through his mercy they might all, both Jews and Gentiles, come to be his people: *i. e.* he has suffered both Jews and Gentiles in their turns not to be his people, that he might bring the whole body both of Jews and Gentiles to be his people." Locke. To which may be added, what neither of these great critics appears to have sufficiently attended to, viz. that the main design of these dispensations is, that the whole might be, and might appear, and be acknowledged to be, an act of mercy, and not the reward of merit.

Mr. Locke and Dr. Taylor, in their very judicious notes upon this passage, have shown that the apostle in the whole of this discourse, is treating of national privileges, and not of personal character.

Ch. XI. Ver. 32.

8. The apostle bursts out in an eloquent apostrophe, upon the unsearchable wisdom of the divine counsels, challenging any one to advance any just claim upon his administration, and ascribing glory to the great all-comprehending mind; and thus he concludes his present subject and the argumentative part of his epistle, ch. 33—36.

33. *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable* are *his judgements, and his ways not to be traced*[1]!

Upon the review of the conduct of divine providence towards Jews and Gentiles, at one time selecting, and at another time rejecting, each of these great portions of mankind as the objects of peculiar favour, while we admit with the fullest assurance of conviction the infinite wisdom of the divine government, we are constrained to acknowledge our total ignorance of the reasons of the divine conduct, and our utter incapacity to explain why privileges are granted at one time and denied at another, or why they are communicated to some and withheld from others.

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[1] *O the depth*, &c.] Mr. Locke justly observes, that "this emphatical conclusion seems in a special manner to regard the Jews; whom the apostle would hereby teach modesty and submission to the over-ruling hand of the all-wise God, whom they are very unfit to call to account for his rejecting them, and dealing so favourably with the Gentiles. His wisdom and ways are infinitely above their comprehension; and will they take upon them to advise him what to do? Or is God in their debt? This is a very strong rebuke to the Jews; but delivered, as we see, in a way very gentle and inoffensive."

For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Ch. XI. Ver. 34.

Who among the sons of men can pretend to understand or to explain the reasons of the divine conduct in every particular? though, as I have already shown, some general explanation may perhaps be given. But who is there that will pretend to form a true judgement of the divine dispensations, from beginning to end, and to exhibit them in so clear and satisfactory a light that it may appear as if he had even suggested the plan to the Supreme Being?

Or who has first given to him, and it shall be paid him again? 35.

Who can say that his Maker is his debtor? let him make out his claim, and full payment shall be made.

The apostle alludes to the folly and presumption of the Jews; who fondly dreamed that they had an hereditary and indefeasible right to privileges superior to those of the Gentiles, whom they despised and hated; and of whose equality to them in the divine favour, and in a covenant state, they could not endure to hear. *q. d.* If the Jews have sustained any injury, let them make out their case, and it shall be redressed. If their Maker is their debtor, let them produce the account, and it shall be discharged. But what can equal the folly and presumption of those who, either directly or by implication, advance so extravagant a claim?

For of him, and through him, and to him, are *all things: to him* be *glory for ever. Amen.* 36.

Ch. XI. Ver. 36.

The unreasonableness of the supposition that a poor helpless dependent creature can lay his Creator under obligation is most manifest, if we recollect that the universal plan of the providential and moral government of God originates in his own infinite wisdom and benevolence; that it must therefore be perfect in its conception; that it is carried into effect by his almighty power: it cannot, therefore, be defective in the execution. And, whatever judgement frail and erring mortals may pass on the minute and detached portions which fall under their notice, it cannot be doubted, that when the glorious scheme is complete it will appear most worthy of the divine perfections, and productive of the greatest possible sum of virtue and happiness: so that the great Maker of all will have no cause to disavow his work, or to complain that in any particular it has fallen short of his magnificent design. And for this glorious scheme let his matchless wisdom, power, and goodness, be for ever admired and celebrated by all his creatures. Amen.

THE SECOND DIVISION OF THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS, CONTAINING PRACTICAL EXHORTATIONS.

THE APOSTLE HAVING FINISHED THE *DOCTRINAL* AND *ARGUMENTATIVE* PART OF THE EPISTLE, THE REMAINDER CHIEFLY CONSISTS OF *PRACTICAL EXHORTATIONS AND ADVICES.* Ch. xii. *to the end of the Epistle.*

FIRST, The apostle exhorts believers, in consideration of their free admission to the privileges of the gospel, to adorn their profession by the practice of Christian virtue, and by a faithful performance of the duties of their respective stations in the church, *ch. xii. throughout.* SECONDLY, Upon Christian principles he urges the practice of all civil and social duties, *ch. xiii. throughout.* THIRDLY, He recommends mutual candour to those who differ upon things indifferent; and particularly to those who held different opinions concerning the holiness of days and distinctions of food, *ch. xiv.—xv.* 13. FOURTHLY, He apologizes for his freedom; relates his success; and expresses his intention of visiting Rome in his way to Spain, after having finished his mission at Jerusalem; requests their prayers, and adds his blessing, *ch. xv.* 13 *to the end.* FIFTHLY,

The epistle concludes with many salutations, the usual benediction, and a doxology, *ch. xvi. throughout.*

SECTION I.

Ch. XII. *The apostle urges upon the Christians at Rome, the regular and diligent practice of Christian duty, from the consideration of the great mercy of God in admitting them to the privileges of the gospel.* Ch. xii.

1. He exhorts them to make an entire surrender of themselves to God, ver. 1.

Ver. 1. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God*[1], *that ye present yourselves*[2] *a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God,* which is *your rational service.*

q. d. You cannot but be deeply apprehensive of the great mercy and compassion of God in communicating the gospel to you, and in admitting you to a participation of its privileges upon such easy and merciful conditions: I entreat you, therefore,

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[1] *Mercies of God.*] "Οικτιρμων, *insignia illa beneficia quæ misericordiæ Dei debemus.*" Rosenmuller. "these compassionate kindnesses." Wakefield.

[2] *Present yourselves.*] Gr. "your bodies;" *i. e.* your whole persons.—*A living sacrifice: i. e.* in contradistinction to a dead victim.—*Holy.* "*Sanctum in lege dicitur quicquid Deo oblatum est: quod vero sine ritu esse debebat.* Lev. i. 3, 10." Rosenmuller.—*Rational service.* "*Opponitur ritibus et cæremoniis.*" Rosenmuller.—"*Sacrificium mente animoque offerendum. Oppositum* Θυσια ζωων αλογων." Koppius.—"That religious service of reason which ye owe." Wakefield.

my beloved brethren, and, as a joint-partaker with you in the blessings of the gospel, I implore you to make a suitable return to the divine goodness. Animal sacrifices are no longer required: the death of a victim is not enjoined. But there is one sacrifice which may still be presented: it is that of your living selves: it is the consecration of your whole persons to God; and that for the performance, not of a ceremonial, but an intellectual worship. And under the new dispensation assure yourselves that this service of reason, this consecration of your whole life to God and duty, will alone be acceptable to a Being of perfect moral rectitude. Ch. XII. Ver. 1.

2. The apostle exhorts them to a behaviour agreeable to their profession, and not according to the fashion of the world, ver. 2.

And be not fashioned according to this world; but be transformed by the renewing of your mind[3], *so that ye may exhibit in yourselves that will of God which* is *good, and acceptable, and perfect.* 2.

No longer act as the heathen do, whose immoralities I have faithfully pourtrayed. But, having entered into a new profession, consider yourselves

[3] *Be ye transformed.*] "*Sed aliam personam induite emendatione animi vestri.*" Rosenmuller.—*That ye may exhibit*: δοκιμαζειν· "show in yourselves." Wakefield.—"*Ut exploretis* (*et probetis*) *quid Deus velit* (*a vobis fieri*)." Rosenmuller. "that ye may search out." Newcome.—*That will of God.* "*Post* θελ. Θεϐ *ponendum esse videtur comma.*" Rosenmuller.—"το αγαθον, *rectum, honestum.* τελειον, *labe carens, perfectum, quod omnes suas partes habet.*" Rosenmuller.—Dr. Taylor understands this verse as addressed to the heathen, and the former to the Jews.

Ch. XII. Ver. 2. as new persons, and let your mind be disciplined to its new and holy state: so will you experience in yourselves, and exhibit to others, the will of God. You will be living patterns of what God requires; namely, a conduct right in itself and flowing from good principles, well-pleasing to God and man, and consistent throughout, without any allowed deviation from the practice of virtue.

3. The apostle charges the believers at Rome not to be too much elated by their privileges, but to act as becomes them in their respective stations, ver. 3—5.

3. *For by the favour*[1] *granted to me, I charge every one among you not to be elated above what he ought to think; but to think with moderation, according to the measure of faith which God has distributed to each.*

And to enforce this exhortation more especially upon the Gentile believers, in virtue of my aposto-

[1] *Favour.*] "χαρις, *munus apostolicum.*" Rosenmuller. See Rom. i. 5, xv. 15; 1 Cor. iii. 10; Eph. iii. 8.—"μη ὑπερφρονειν, *ne quis superbiat, vel immodestè de se sentiat.*" Rosenmuller.—"πιστεως, *uti Deus cuivis mensuram aliquam* scientiæ *tribuit.*" Id. This appears to me to be the true meaning of πιστις in this connexion: christian knowledge. Dr. Taylor and Mr. Locke suppose an allusion to miraculous gifts; but it does not appear that the Roman believers as yet possessed any; for the apostle, ch. i. 11, expresses a wish to visit them, for the express purpose of imparting some spiritual gift to them. But we know, from chap. xiv., that the believers at Rome consisted both of Jews and Gentiles; and that the latter, having no regard to distinctions of days or of food, were disposed to treat the more scrupulous Jewish believer with contempt. This seems to be the spirit to which the apostle here alludes.

lic office, I strictly charge you all, without exception, and those in particular who may possess more extensive and correct ideas of gospel liberty than others, not to be too much elated by their superiority over their less informed brethren; but let them remember, that if their own faith is more correct, and their own views more enlarged, than those of their brethren, they are indebted for this advantage, not to their own merit, but to the gift of God. Ch. XII. Ver. 3.

For as in one body we have many members, but all these members have not the same office: so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and each of us severally fellow members thereof[2]. 4 5.

Let not the enlightened Gentile convert despise his over-scrupulous Jewish brother, who may not be altogether emancipated from the bondage of the law. For in your respective stations you are all incorporated in the Christian church, and are members of the mystical body of Christ, which would not be complete if any individual were wanting. Being thus intimately united to him as your common Head, far from despising each other, you should cultivate kind affections and mutual sympathy.

4. The apostle directs to an active and faithful

[2] *Each of us severally.*] So Wakefield. This image of the Christian church as a body, of which individuals and particular churches are severally members, and Christ the Head, from which life and sense and vigour are dispensed to the whole, is a great favourite with the apostle, who introduces it and argues upon it in many of his epistles. See 1 Cor. xii. 12; Eph. iv. 25, v. 30.

CH. XII. discharge of their respective offices in the church, ver. 6—8.

VER. 6. *Having therefore different gifts according to the favour granted to us*[1], *if it be prophecy*, let us prophesy *agreeably to the analogy of faith*[2].

Each of us being members of Christ's mystical body, let each keep the place and perform the office belonging to it. In our respective stations in the church some are better qualified for one office, and some for another: one has a peculiar talent for public preaching, and is perhaps appointed to the office of a presbyter. Let him then in this way edify the church: only let him adhere to the rule of faith,

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[1] *The favour granted.*] κατα την χαριν την δοθεισαν. This is a repetition of the phrase used in ver. 3, where it unquestionably expresses the apostle's appointment to his apostolic office. It is probably used in a similar sense here, and might perhaps be more intelligibly translated, "having therefore different duties or qualifications" (χαρισματα, in allusion to χαρις), "according to the office assigned to us," &c. He then goes into detail of preachers, deacons, catechists, almoners, &c. This seems to be the true meaning of the passage, though it has almost escaped the notice of the commentators.

[2] *Let us prophesy.*] "If to explain the scriptures, let it be agreeable to the faith." Wakefield. If the Roman believers were not endowed with spiritual gifts, this lowest sense of the word prophecy is that in which it is to be understood in this passage. "Prophecy," says Dr. Priestley, in his note upon the text, "often signifies exhortation; and indeed nothing that the apostle says in the course of this epistle implies that the Christians at Rome had as yet received any miraculous gift of the spirit, nor does it appear that any apostle had been there to impart them; and it was by the imposition of their hands that those gifts were ordinarily communicated. In this manner it pleased God to distinguish the twelve apostles." Perhaps προφητεια may be used to express the office of the presbyter or bishop, as the next exhortation relates to the office of deacon. "πιστις, *est scientia ut*, ver. 3." Rosenmuller.

and interpret the scripture consistently with the doctrine of Christ, as far as his knowledge extends. Ch. XII.

Or if the office of a deacon, let us attend *to the deaconship*. Ver. 7.

If we are placed in a lower situation in the church, and our office is to supply the tables of the poor, let this work be done faithfully and impartially. See Acts vi.

The instructor also to instruction, the exhorter to exhortation. 8.

Let him whose office it is to teach the young and the uninformed, be diligent in his work, and acquire the happy talent of communicating knowledge in the most agreeable manner; and let him whose province it is to exhort or to console, acquire a familiar acquaintance with the most powerful motives to duty and the most efficacious topics of consolation, and urge them at the most convenient seasons and in the most impressive manner.

He that distributeth, let him *distribute with simplicity*[3]; *he that presideth, with diligence*[4]; *he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.* —8.

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[3] *Distributeth.*] It is commonly believed that the apostle is here speaking of private charity, but he probably continues to address his advice to the officers of the church. See Taylor and Schleusner. Dr Taylor supposes that the deacons are addressed; but they have been mentioned before. Perhaps the distinction may be, that the deacons were to attend to the secular concerns of the church, and to the poor members of the community; and the distributors, or almoners, to the external poor.—ἁπλοτητι in this connexion, impartiality, as well as liberality. "with an honest and disinterested mind." Taylor.

[4] *He who presideth.*] ὁ προϊσταμενος. The sense given in the paraphrase is adopted by Dr. Taylor from Lord Barrington's

Ch. XII. Ver. 8. Let him who is appointed to distribute the alms of the church to strangers, or to the poor, distribute with an impartial hand. Let those who preside over charitable distributions, or who undertake to patronise or provide for the persecuted brethren, perform their duties with attention and zeal. And let such as are engaged in offices of humanity to the sick and afflicted, discharge the necessary and painful duties of their station with that ready and cheerful spirit which doubles the blessing to the sufferer, and exhibits in the most engaging manner the excellence and efficacy of the principles of the gospel.

5. The apostle recommends mutual affection, humility, diligence, and zeal, ver. 9—11.

9. Let *love* be *undissembled. Abhor evil; adhere to goodness* [1].

The profession of the gospel requires fraternal affection among the followers of Jesus. Let that affection be sincere. Abhor all malignity and mischief; and cherish in your hearts the kindest and best affections.

10. Be *tenderly affectionate one to another, with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.*

Let your affection to each other resemble that of

Misc. Sac. Essay I. It is confirmed by the use of the word προστατις, Rom. xvi. 2. Phebe, a deaconess, is spoken of as a succourer of many.

[1] *Abhor*, &c.] Gr. "abhorring—cleaving:" a Hebraism, familiar to the apostle.

the nearest kindred; and do not individually and eagerly affect pre-eminence, but readily give place to others who may have a better claim. Ch. XII. Ver. 10.

Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit; availing yourselves of opportunity[2]. 11.

Whatever business you undertake, perform it thoroughly and with dispatch. Be always on the alert: ready for action. And whatever be the duty of the present hour apply to it; and let no temptation divert you from it.

6. The apostle exhorts to the practice of various duties, and particularly recommends such as were adapted to a suffering state, ver. 12, 13.

Rejoice in hope[3]*!* 12.

Many of you are sufferers in one shape or another for your faith in the gospel. Let that hope which the gospel inspires cheer your spirits.

Be patient in tribulation.

Animated by such glorious prospects, bear present trials, however severe, without murmuring or dejection.

Persevere in prayer.

Look up to God: pour out your heart before him: cast your care upon him.

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[2] *Availing yourselves,* &c.] τῳ καιρῳ δελευοντες· "serving yourselves of the opportunity." Wakefield. This is the reading of the Clermont and other manuscripts: it is adopted by Griesbach, and best suits the connexion. The Alexandrine, Vatican, and many other copies read Κυριῳ, "serving the Lord," which is the Received Text.

[3] *Rejoice in hope!*] "Si res adversæ ingruunt, Christiani debent memores esse se non carere spe." Rosenmuller.

Ch. XII. Ver. 13. *Communicate to the wants of the saints* [1].

Be liberal in your benefactions to your indigent brethren.

Pursue hospitality [2].

Be kind to strangers, and especially to believers who, being persecuted at home on account of their Christian profession, may find it difficult to obtain admission into the houses of those who were formerly their friends. Look out for such, and do not wait till they come to your door: search for them in the places of public resort; bring them to your houses, and entertain them in the best way that prudence will admit.

7. The apostle recommends good will to persecutors, sympathy, humility, and self-diffidence, ver. 14—16.

14. *Bless those who persecute you: bless, and curse not.*

Let not any provocation, nor any injury which you may receive on account of your Christian profession, induce you to retaliate upon your persecutors: but speak mildly, even to those whose language and conduct are most malignant.

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[1] *Wants of the saints.*] Rosenmuller observes, that this epistle was written about the time of the famine in the reign of Claudius, Acts xi. 28, when many strangers flocked to Rome.

[2] *Pursue hospitality.*] διωκετε, seek occasions for hospitality. Hospitality was a virtue of great importance, when the want of inns rendered it difficult for strangers to obtain accommodations. And Dr. Doddridge observes, after Blackwall, that many Christians might be banished their native country for their religion, and perhaps laid under a ban of excommunication; which would render it a high crime to receive them into their houses.

Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep: having the same dispositions towards each other[3]. Ch. XII. Ver. 15. 16.

Sympathize with each other: avoid a narrow selfish spirit. Enter into the cases of your brethren. If they are cheerful, rejoice with them; if they mourn, participate in their sorrows. Let every one feel for another as for himself.

Affect not superiority, but be guided by the humble[4]. *Be not wise in your own conceit.*

Know your proper place: do not set yourselves up above your brethren, but be willing to yield pre-eminence to others. Take for your examples those who are of a humble spirit, who rather decline than covet distinction. Be not puffed up with the conceit of superior wisdom.

8. The apostle warns against revenge, and enjoins honourable and peaceful behaviour, ver. 17, 18.

Render to no one evil for evil. 17.

The spirit of the gospel prohibits all retaliation and revenge.

Be commendably prudent in the sight of all men[5].

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[3] I follow Wakefield in joining this clause to the 15th verse, and borrow his translation.

[4] *Affect not,* &c.] φρονειν τα ὑψηλα, *malo sensu est, velle semper antecellere alios.* Οἱ ταπεινοι h. l. *non sunt vitæ statu, sed mente humiles.* συναπαγεσθαι τινι, aliàs, *in partem sinistram dicitur. Sed Paulus usus est hoc verbo in meliorem partem. Ducamini exemplo demissorum.*" Rosenmuller. "Be guided by humility." Wakefield.

[5] *Be commendably prudent.*] q. προνοεισθε καλως. I follow

Ch. XII. Ver. 17. Let your conduct in the world be so governed by prudence, as to entitle you to respect, and to guard you from reproach.

18. *If it be possible, to the utmost of your power, live peaceably with all men.*

Offer no provocation to any; give no intentional offence; be circumspect in your conduct: do all you can to promote peace and quietness. After all, peace may not be in your power; but let not the blame of contention rest with you.

9. The section concludes with an earnest dissuasive from revenge, ver. 19—21.

19. *Beloved, avenge not yourselves, but yield to anger*[1]; *for it is written, Vengeance belongeth to me; I will recompense, saith the Lord.*

Though you have an unquestionable right to stand upon self-defence, yet if a man is violently angry it will be advisable not to increase his irritation by fruitless opposition, but to leave his fury to exhaust itself in empty words. And if he should even proceed to mischief, and should commit injury, do not retaliate evil: for no one can be an impartial judge in his own cause. If you have no just means

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Rosenmuller, who, with More, interprets καλα as the adverb καλως: *q. d.* "*coram omnibus hominibus vivite caute. Ut formula* prospicere bene, *describat hominem providum, prudentem, cautumque.* 2 Cor. viii. 21."

[1] *Yield to anger:*] *i. e.* as some explain it, "give place to, make way for, the anger of God." So Chrysostom understands it; and Rosenmuller says that the connexion requires this sense. So Archbishop Newcome: see his note. Mr. Wakefield renders it "the anger *of another:*" which is the sense that I prefer.

of redress, commit your cause to God. He claims this prerogative as his own: 'To me (saith he) belongeth vengeance and recompense.' Deut. xxxii. 35. And in due time he will call the offender to account. Ch. XII. Ver. 19.

Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for by doing this thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head[2]. *Be not overcome by evil*[3], *but overcome evil with good.* 20. 21.

In the mean time, endeavour by forbearance and kindness to bring your adversary to repentance, and to save him from ruin. Not only abstain from all acts of revenge, but abound in those of benevolence; relieve his sufferings, supply his wants, anticipate his application. If his heart is not unusually hard, this conduct will soften him, and bring him to a better temper. In the best sense of the words, you will heap coals of fire upon his head; you will melt

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[2] *Coals of fire*, &c.] This sentence is a quotation from Prov. xxv. 22, where it is added, 'and the Lord shall reward thee.' *Id si feceris dolorem ipsi injicies maximum.* As some understand it, 'you will fill him with remorse.' According to others, 'you will aggravate his final condemnation.' See Rosenmuller. But this latter surely is a very unworthy motive, and by no means likely to have been the intention of the apostle. The sense given in the paraphrase is most agreeable to the spirit of Christianity, and therefore most probably the true meaning of the passage. See Doddridge *in loc.*

[3] *Overcome by evil.*] "This," says Dr. Priestley in his note on this text, "is a very happy expression. By calling *doing evil* a *being overcome of evil*, implies a weakness of mind in giving way to it, and that doing good is a conquest over evil principles: so that there is great heroism and magnanimity in virtue, and as great weakness and meanness in vice."

Ch. XII. Ver. 21. him into penitence, and cast his mind into a new mould.

Upon the whole, suffer not evil affections to be excited in you by the bad conduct of others; but subdue the evil passions of others by your own gentleness, forbearance, and generosity.

SECTION II.

Ch. XIII. *The apostle inculcates the practice of all civil and social duties upon Christian principles.* Ch. xiii.

1. The apostle strongly presses the duty of obedience to the civil power, ver. 1—5.

Ver. 1. *Let every one be subject to the supreme authori-*
2. *ties. For there is no authority but from God, and those which exist are appointed by God: he, therefore, who setteth himself against this authority, resisteth the appointment of God; and they who resist will bring upon themselves condemnation.*

The Jews regarded themselves as living under a theocracy, or a special divine government, acknowledging no law but that which was given by God to Moses upon mount Sinai, and owning allegiance to no sovereign but God himself. Hence they held all other governments in contempt and detestation. And not only were they impatient of the Roman yoke in their own country, but were prone to sedition in other nations where they were settled. They had been expelled from Rome for their turbulent

spirit by the emperor Claudius, a few years before this epistle was written, and had but lately been permitted to return. The believers in Christ, who originally consisted chiefly of Jewish converts, were for some time confounded with the Jews, and some of them might be disposed to embrace the Jewish principles of civil government, and to conclude, that by their conversion to the faith they were released from all subjection to the civil power, and that they owed no allegiance but to God. It is to rectify this misconception that the apostle gives the advice contained in this portion of his epistle [1]. Ch. XIII. Ver. 2.

Let every one be subject to the supreme authorities [2]; and let none of the holy community of believers in Christ imagine, that by taking upon himself this sacred profession, he is released from the allegiance which he owes to the civil power: but let all obey the sovereign authority. 1.

For there is no authority but from God; and those which exist [3] *are appointed by God.* —1.

It is a mistake to suppose that Moses is the only divinely commissioned legislator, and that the Jew-

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[1] "*Hanc doctrinam, Imperatoribus non esse præbendum obsequium, Judæi sine dubio hauserunt e doctrina Pharisæorum.* Joseph. Antiq. xviii. 2, 4." Rosenmuller.

[2] *Supreme authorities.*] "*intelligendi sunt summi magistratus in universum: ac imprimis Imperatores Romani. Nam ὑπερεχειν dignitatis quandam præstantiam præ aliis indicat.* Joseph. B. I. vii. II. i." Rosenmuller. The supreme imperial power.

[3] *Those which exist.*] In the received text "the authorities" which exist; but the word authorities (εξουσιαι) is omitted in the Alexandrine, Cambridge, and other manuscripts, and by Griesbach.—*Are appointed by God.* "All other governments derive their power from God as well as the Jews." Locke.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 1. ish government is the only one which derives its authority from heaven. There is a sense in which civil government, as such, is derived from God; because it is for the happiness of mankind to form themselves into civil communities for mutual protection and security: and therefore it is the will of God that such communities should exist. And there is also a sense in which the actually existing governments are of divine appointment; because, in their different forms, they have for wise and good reasons been permitted to establish themselves in the world; and so they are to remain, unless very substantial reasons require a change.

2. *He, therefore, who setteth himself against this authority, resisteth the appointment of God*[1]; *and they who resist, will bring upon themselves condemnation*[2].

He who resisteth lawful authority, and who would introduce anarchy and confusion, opposes an institution which God has appointed for the benefit of

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[1] *He who setteth himself,* &c.] So Wakefield. "αντιτασσεσθαι, *per vim se opponere. Quicunque se opponit regi, idem est ut si se opponeret majestati divinæ.*" Rosenmuller.—"The sense is, that Christians, by being Christians, are not any way exempt from obedience to the civil magistrate, nor ought by any means to resist them; though, by what is said, ver. 3, it seems that St. Paul meant here, magistrates having and exercising a lawful power. But whether the magistrates in being, were, or were not such, and consequently were, or were not to be obeyed, *that,* Christianity gave them no peculiar power to examine. They had the common right of others, their fellow citizens, but had no distinct privileges as Christians." Locke.

[2] *Condemnation.*] "They who resist, will be punished by those powers which they resist." Locke. "*Puniuntur tum a magistratibus, tum, alia ratione, a Deo ipso.*" Rosenmuller.

mankind. And he who opposes the existing authorities, and endeavours to overthrow them under any pretext whatever, incurs a most serious responsibility: for he opposes that which God in his providence has permitted to exist; and of which he wills the continuance, till the evils which result from its existence exceed those which will follow from its overthrow. And they who thus resist the civil power, must of course expect the vengeance of the penal laws; and if they oppose it wantonly, inconsiderately, and unjustly, they will incur the displeasure of heaven. Ch. XIII. Ver. 2.

The apostle does not mean to affirm, that all resistance to tyrannical authority is in all cases unlawful. God forbid. That would be the extreme of injustice. Nor does the apostle's argument warrant such a conclusion. All evil is in some sense of divine appointment; and it is no more unlawful to put an end to a tyrannical and oppressive government, because such a government is, in the course of providence, permitted to exist, than it is unlawful to use every possible means to put a stop to the pestilence; because that likewise is an evil under the direction of God. And, in fact, a reformed government when once introduced and settled, is as much the appointment of God, as that which has been displaced by it. But it was no part of the apostle's intention, nor was it the object of his mission, to enter into political discussions.

For these rulers[3] *are not a terror to good works,* 3.

[3] *These rulers.*] Οι γαρ αρχοντες. So Wakefield. *Are not a*

Ch. XIII. Ver. 3. 4. *but to evil: wouldest thou then not be afraid of the authority? do that which is right, and thou wilt be praised by it; for it is the minister of God to thee for good.*

The rulers to whom I allude, and whom it would be impious to resist, are such as perform their important duties with fidelity; who protect the virtuous, but are a terror to evil-doers. If, therefore, you would avoid the frowns of those who are in power, perform your duty, and the power of the virtuous magistrate will be your protection: for such is the design of providence in the appointment of civil institutions.

—4. *But if thou do evil, be afraid; for it beareth not the sword in vain*[1]*; for it is the avenging minister of God for the punishment of the evil-doer.*

If, indeed, you violate the laws of the community, if you deceive, oppress, and injure your neigh-

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terror, &c. It may seem surprising, that the apostle speaks so respectfully of Nero's government. And some have argued from this fact, the disgraceful and degrading doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance, even under the most tyrannical and arbitrary governments. But this epistle was written in the third or fourth year of Nero's reign; and it is to be remembered, that the government of this emperor for the first few years was temperate and just. When Paul was himself a prisoner at Rome, there were believers even in Cesar's household, Philip. iv. 22. And Burrhus, the preceptor of Nero, and prefect of the Pretorian guard, is said to have favoured the Christians.—*It is the minister.* So Wakefield.

[1] *It beareth not the sword*, &c.] This expression seems to imply, that in extreme cases, the civil magistrate has a right to take away life. But surely this authority should be very sparingly used. Wilful murder seems to be almost the only offence which will justify capital punishment.—*It is*, &c. *for the punishment.* So Wakefield.

bour, you have reason to be afraid; for a just magistrate will do his duty, and will use his authority for visiting the wicked with condign punishment. For he is as much the instrument of God to execute his righteous judgement upon the wicked, as to protect and reward the virtuous. Ch. XIII. Ver. 4.

Therefore, it is necessary to yield subjection, not only on account of punishment[2], *but also for conscience sake.* 5.

Upon the whole, therefore, it behoves you to live in due subjection to a just government, not only through fear of punishment, but from a sense of duty, and from obedience to the will of God.

2. The apostle exhorts to a conscientious discharge of what was due to the established government, ver. 6, 7.

Moreover, for the same reason, pay tribute likewise; for they are servants of God, continually attending to this particular object[3]. 6.

Be as strictly conscientious in the payment of your proportion of the public contributions, as in performing your civil and social duties. Magistrates are the servants of God; whose duty it is, to devote their whole time and all their powers to the

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[2] *On account of punishment.*] διὰ τὴν ὀργήν. Wakefield. Newcome.

[3] *Attending.*] "They employ their care, time, and pains, for the public weal." Locke. "A very delicate lesson is obliquely conveyed to the magistrate," ver. 3, 4, 6. Newcome. "for they who attend to this business, are public servants of God." Wakefield.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 6. service of the public, to administer justice, and to preserve peace. They are fully entitled to ample remuneration from the public purse. To defraud them, therefore, of their just dues, is an act of dishonesty, and will be visited as such by the just judgement of God, who will protect the rights of his faithful servants.

7. *Therefore, render to all their dues: tribute, to whom tribute* is due; *custom, to whom custom*[1]; *reverence, to whom reverence; honour, to whom honour*[2].

Pay, therefore, to every individual the respect which is due to him. Pay taxes and customs to those who have a right to demand, and are appointed to receive them. Let those who are in power be respected and obeyed. Let superiors in age or office, who adorn their stations by their virtues, be honoured as they deserve. And let not the Christian religion be reproached as tending to dissolve the bonds of society.

Upon the whole, we may remark with how much prudence and caution the apostle urges his exhortations upon the subject of political obligations.

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[1] *Tribute—custom.*] "Ὁ φορος *tributum denotat quod personis imponitur—το τελος, vectigal, quod pro mercium transportatione solvitur.*" Rosenmuller. Doddridge well observes, that this passage is directly levelled at a favourite notion of the Jews; that, as the peculiar people of God, they were exempted from obligation to pay tribute to the Gentiles, though without pointing them out in an invidious manner.

[2] *Reverence—honour.*] "φοβος, *reverence*, expresses the inward disposition, see Eph. v. ult. τιμη, *honour*, expresses the conduct and external behaviour proceeding from it." Doddridge.

While he strongly inculcates the duties of subjects, he indirectly, but clearly and pointedly, lays down the duties of magistrates; and though he says nothing concerning the lawfulness of resistance to a tyrannical power, his arguments for obedience only apply to the civil authority when it is exercised for the benefit of the community, and fulfills the purposes for which it was instituted[3]. Ch. XIII. Ver. 7.

3. The apostle recommends universal good will as the sum of social virtue, ver. 8—10.

Owe nothing to any man but mutual love; for he who loveth his neighbour[4] *hath fully performed the law.* 8.

Incur no debts; for they will entangle and distress you. But to this injunction let there be one exception. Regard benevolence, and a constant disposition to perform kind offices, as a debt owing to all mankind. Universal benevolence is a pre-

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[3] "The apostle, without entering into any question about the lawfulness of government, or, in what cases it was lawful, and in what unlawful [to resist], considered it as the duty of Christians to submit to that government which they found established. He represents the government they were under, as that to which God had thought proper to subject them, and in which they ought to acquiesce. These maxims, therefore, are to be considered as applying to the particular circumstances of the times in which the apostle wrote, and it is absurd to plead them in favour of a government manifestly unjust and tyrannical, from which it is in the power of the people to relieve themselves." Dr. Priestley.

[4] *Loveth his neighbour.*] So Wakefield; and this is the true sense of the passage. Literally, "the other," or "another," which in the English idiom takes away the universality of the rule.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 8. cept of indispensable obligation under the Christian law. And it is the whole of Christian duty. For he, who truly loves his neighbour, will not fail to perform every act of social virtue.

9. *For that* commandment, *Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal*[1], *Thou shalt not covet, and every other commandment, is summed up in this* one, *Thou shalt*
10. *love thy neighbour as thyself. Love doeth no ill to* its *neighbour; therefore, love* is *the fulfilling of the law.*

The law of the second table consists chiefly of prohibitions of injustice. And all its precepts, whether negative or positive, are comprehended in the single rule, Love your neighbour as yourself; or, in other words, Always do to others, what, in an exchange of circumstances, you might reasonably desire that others should do to you. Acting upon this principle, you will infallibly steer clear of all injustice; and will, in fact, abound in acts of benevolence. So true it is, that Love, and that alone, is the complete accomplishment of social duty, and of obedience to the law of God, both in the letter and the spirit.

4. The apostle enforces these duties from the consideration of the brevity of human life, and

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[1] *Thou shalt not steal.*] The received texts adds, "Thou shalt not bear false witness." But these words are wanting in the oldest and best manuscripts, and Griesbach has excluded them from his text.

the excellence of Christian privileges, ver. 11— 14. Ch. XIII.

And this let us do, *considering the season, that it is now time for us to arise from sleep; for our salvation*[2] *is nearer now than when we* first *believed. The night is far spent; and the day is drawing near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness, and put on the apparel*[3] *of light.* Ver. 11. 12.

[2] *Our salvation:*] *i. e.* as is commonly understood, the second coming of Christ to raise the dead, and to reward the just; which was expected by the primitive believers, and probably by the apostles themselves, to take place in a very few years, (see 2 Thess. ii. 1,) and before the generation then existing became extinct. See Locke and Grotius *in loc.* But though the lapse of ages has demonstrated the vanity of this expectation, yet the argument holds good to every individual: for to every human being, the appearance of his Lord to judgement will succeed instantaneously to the moment of dissolution, though ages of ages should intervene. "Σωτηρια, *salutis cognitio.*" Rosenmuller; who explains the passage thus: *q. d.* We ought the rather to lay aside all indolence in the discharge of Christian duty, as our knowledge of the gospel is so much improved since we first professed the Christian faith. But this, which is also the interpretation of Macknight, seems a harsh interpretation. Dr. Taylor disapproves of Locke's and Grotius's supposition, that the apostle was mistaken in the time of our Lord's appearance to judgement.

[3] *The apparel.*] "τα ὁπλα, *instrumenta, arma, sed et vestes.*" Rosenmuller.—"The attire." Newcome: see Beza and Wakefield.—"Observe," says Dr. Taylor, "the lively and beautiful metaphor. This present imperfect state of trial, the apostle compares to the night. And the salvation and glory we all have in prospect, to the day. He supposes Christians may be asleep, negligent of their most important concerns, or immersed in sensuality. He, as the apostle of Christ and preacher of the gospel, knocks at the chamber door, and calls to them, 'It is high time to awake out of sleep: the day appears, the glorious day of your everlasting salvation: Awake, awake; throw off your loose clothes, which cover you in the night, and in which it is unseemly to appear before men; and put on that comely dress which is agreeable to the day, and gives a decent and ho-

Ch. XIII. Ver. 12. And let us be the more earnest in the discharge of duty, considering how short and precarious the opportunity is, which still remains. We have no time to lose. If we have hitherto been negligent and slothful, it becomes us now to rouse our spirits to activity and energy, and not to lose another hour. For the season of the accomplishment of our Christian hopes is rapidly advancing; and is now nearer than when we first professed faith in Christ, though we were then told that it was near at hand. The judge is at the door; the night of darkness and ignorance is past; we cannot plead that we do not know our duty. Let us then no longer practise the vices of our heathen state, but let us act as professors of the pure religion of Jesus. Let us put off our night clothes by which we should be encumbered and disgraced, and put on the useful and ornamental apparel of the day.

13. *As being in the day*[1], *let us walk gracefully, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in debauchery and wantonness, not in strife and envying.*

The religion of Jesus is broad day-light; it admits of no concealment. The disciple of Jesus is

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nourable appearance in the world.' Meaning that disposition and conversation which is agreeable to the gospel, lovely in the eyes of mankind, and which fits us to appear among the blessed in the realms of light."

[1] *As being in the day.*] "ὡς εν ἡμερᾳ, as in the day-time." Wakefield.—"Gracefully, becomingly." Newcome.—"ευσχημονως, *qui decentem quandam inducbant personam.*" Rosenmuller. "Let us walk honourably and gracefully: so ευσχημονως exactly signifies. Dr. Milner renders it, Let us walk with a grace." Doddridge.—*Not in debauchery*, &c. "Κοιτη, *alias* cubile, *hic*, concubitum *denotat.*" Rosenmuller.

to act in retirement, as if he were under constant inspection. Let us, therefore, at all times, and in all places, behave with the decorum which we should think necessary if we were under the public eye; and let us ever shun those hateful vices, which even they who practise them are ashamed to avow, and endeavour to conceal under the darkness of the night. Ch. XIII. Ver. 13.

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for irregular desires[2]. 14.

Study the character of your master, Jesus Christ, and array yourselves in those virtues which shone so conspicuously in him; this will be your most appropriate and most glorious dress; this will secure universal esteem and affection. But as for those gross vices, which are so common among the idolatrous heathen, renounce them all together, as utterly inconsistent with the character of a disciple of Christ.

SECTION III.

The apostle recommends mutual candour to those who entertained differences of opinion concerning things indifferent, and particularly concerning the distinctions of meats and days. Ch. xiv. *throughout.* Ch. XIV.

1. The apostle advises generally, that those who

[2] *Make no provision,* &c.] "*Et corporis curam agite sic, ut cupiditates non incendantur.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. XIV. entertain scruples should be treated with indulgence by those who have none, ver. 1.

Ver. 1. *Moreover, receive kindly him who is weak in faith*[1], *not censuring* him because *of* his *doubts*[2].

The society of believers at Rome consisted of converts both from Jews and heathen. The Jewish Christians, still attached to the law of Moses, adhered scrupulously to all its distinctions concerning the lawfulness of different kinds of food, and the holiness of certain days. These the apostle

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[1] *Him who is weak in faith.*] Rosenmuller observes, that faith here signifies not an assent to doctrine, but a persuasion concerning the lawfulness or unlawfulness of a practice: one who is weak in faith, therefore, is one who is doubtful in points of practice. "Not fully persuaded," says Mr. Locke, "of his Christian liberty in the use of some indifferent thing."

[2] *Not censuring* him because *of* his *doubts.*] μη εις διακρισεις διαλογισμων· *q. d.* ενεκα διαλογισμων, not to vexatious censures because of his doubts. See Acts xi. 2. They of the circumcision contended with Peter, διακρινοντο, *q. d.* angrily disputed with, and censured Peter. See also Jude ver. 9. Macknight renders the words, "not in order to the strife of disputations."—"διακρινειν, *dijudicare*, Matt. xvi. 3; 1 Cor. vi. 5; διαλογισμοι, *cogitationes*, Matt. xv. 19, *q. d. ne in ipsius sententiam curiose inquiratis, eamque severe damnetis.*" Rosenmuller; who nevertheless adds, that others interpret the sense, *q. d.* do not quarrel on account of opinions; others, *q. d.* ανευ διακρισεως και διαλογισμω, without doubting or disputing; but he prefers the first. "not unto doubts and reasonings." Wakefield; who reads δια λογισμων as two words. "Live together in a free and friendly manner, without any regard to the differences among you, about the lawfulness of any indifferent things." Locke. "Do not teaze and disquiet them with grievous censures or vexatious disputes about their sentiments." Dr. Taylor; who remarks in his note, that the apostle, by "him that is weak in faith, means the Jew, who he knew assuredly was in the wrong; yet he uses him very tenderly, and avoids saying any thing of him that was harsh or overbearing."—"Not teazing him with controversies about things in doubt." Dr. Priestley.

calls "weak in faith." Not fully understanding the extent of Christian liberty; and making themselves uneasy with unfounded scruples. On the other hand, the Gentile believer, not having been accustomed to lay stress upon distinctions of this nature, felt no scruples upon the subject: all days, all kinds of food, were alike in his estimation. And these two classes of believers, as too frequently happens in similar circumstances, were disposed to entertain an ill opinion of each other. The Jew would not hold communion with the Gentile believer, the laxity of whose conduct in these particulars gave him a bad opinion of his character, and led him to conclude, that though he professed to believe in Christ, he was little better than a heathen. While the more enlightened, and free thinking Gentile, not making sufficient allowance for the early prepossessions of his Jewish brother, was disposed to look down upon him with contempt, as a weak and narrow-minded bigot. The apostle, who, most evidently, both here and elsewhere, decides the question in favour of the liberty of the Gentile believer, is, nevertheless, very anxious that the two parties should entertain their separate opinions, and observe their respective practices, in the exercise of mutual candour and good will. They were both influenced by the same motive, a desire to do credit to the doctrine which they professed; and therefore both were equally acceptable to God, and neither party was authorized to condemn the other. He therefore strictly enjoins the Jewish believer, not to anathematize the Gen-

Ch. XIV. Ver. 1.

Ch. XIV. Ver. 1. tile professor; and the Gentile believer, not to despise and insult his Jewish brother; and requires, that while each follows his own judgement each should allow his neighbour to do the like in all cases of mere ritual institution, which did not interfere with the great law of moral rectitude. The Gentile brethren appear to have been the more numerous party, and he begins with them, *q. d.* I have been exhorting you to mutual benevolence. Let it particularly appear in this case. Kindly entertain your less informed brother; bear with his long established prepossessions, and do not wound his spirit, and irritate his feelings, by treating his conscientious scruples with levity and contempt.

2. The apostle states the specific cases in which the parties differed, and enjoins mutual forbearance, ver. 2—6.

2. *For one believeth that he may eat any* kind of food; *another, who is weak, eateth* only *herbs.*

The Gentile believer, who has just conceptions of Christian liberty, pays no regard to ceremonial distinctions, but eats one kind of food as freely as another; while the Jewish convert, still adhering to the engagements of the law, and fearful lest, in a heathen country, he should, notwithstanding all his care, expose himself to ceremonial pollution, judges it to be the safest course to abstain altogether from animal food, and confines himself wholly to a vegetable diet, with regard to which the law laid him under no restrictions.

Let not him who eateth, despise him who eateth not; and let not him who eateth not, condemn him who eateth: for God has accepted him. Ch. XIV. Ver. 3.

Let not the Gentile believer, flushed with the possession of his liberty, treat his Jewish brother with contempt; and view him as a weak and silly bigot, because of his conscientious scruples. Nor, on the other hand, let the scrupulous, and self-denying Jewish believer, denounce judgement upon the free thinking and free living Gentile Christian, as though he were insincere in his profession, and no better than a heathen; for in this judgement he would be very much mistaken: for I have authority to assure him, that under the gospel covenant the heathen convert is admitted into favour, without subjecting himself to any of those ceremonial restraints, which, for wise reasons, were imposed upon the Israelites by the law of Moses.

Who art thou that condemnest another man's domestic? to his own master he standeth or falleth: but he shall be established; for God is able to establish him. 4.

How unbecoming is it in any one to interfere officiously in the domestic economy of another; to condemn the servant for disobedience, when the master finds no fault! Who then art thou that art thus passing sentence upon thy fellow servant? what are thy claims, and where is thy commission to exclude from Christian fellowship all those who do not adopt thy ceremonial scruples? You are not his judge; let him answer for himself; and await

Ch. XIV. Ver. 4. the decision of him to whom alone he is amenable. Nor need he fear an unfavourable sentence. Whatever your erroneous judgement may suspect or denounce, if, in these indifferent matters only, he is deficient, he shall maintain his character and station in the church, and shall be accepted in the end. For God is able and willing to support and establish him in the Christian faith without the observance of ceremonial institutions, as well as if he subjected himself to the burdensome yoke of the law.

5. *One man esteemeth one day above another: but another man esteemeth every day* alike [1]. *Let every one freely enjoy his own opinion* [2].

The converted Jew observes his sabbaths, his new moons, his fasts, and his festivals. The Gentile believer, unaccustomed to sabbatical distinctions of every kind, regards all his time as equally appropriated to God, and does not esteem any one day as more holy than another. Be it so. Let every

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[1] *Esteemeth every day* alike.] "Κρινει πασαν ἡμεραν, *sc.* ισην. *quemvis diem pariter sanctum habet: κρινει æstimat, ut* 1 Cor. ii. 2." Rosenmuller. See also Raphelius.

[2] *Let every one freely enjoy his own opinion:*] "πληροφορεισθω Πληρ. *pleno motu in aliquid feror, et est navium, quæ plenis velis agitantur et in portum feruntur.*" Schleusner. "Let every man freely enjoy his own sentiment, and go on in his own way without impediment or censure." Doddridge; who observes, in his note, "How strong a text this is for the right of private judgement!" It is surprising that the obvious and important meaning of this passage should have been so generally overlooked, and that a sense should have been commonly given to the passage, which, to say the least, is obscure and irrelevant; *q. d.* "Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind:" an exhortation which is not always practicable.

one act as in his conscience he judges right. Let him enjoy his liberty, without censure and without restraint. Ch. XIV. Ver. 5.

He who regardeth the day regardeth it *to the Lord*[3]; *and he who disregardeth the day disregardeth* it *to the Lord.* 6.

Positive institutions are nothing in themselves: it is the motive only which gives the observation of them a moral complexion. Whether a man abstains from all labour and recreation upon a particular day of the week, or whether he allows himself in both equally on every day, is in itself a matter of perfect indifference: but if one observes the day as a day of rest, because he thinks that God requires it, and that Christ is honoured by it, while he retains that conviction, he does well in regulating his conduct accordingly. And on the other hand, if another conscientiously believes that God has imposed no such restraints, and that the Christian doctrine, as a law of liberty, is more honoured by the disregard of all sabbatical distinctions, he also does equally well in following the dictates of his judgement. The observer and the nonobserver of holy seasons are alike acceptable to God, if they conscientiously obey the dictates of their respective understandings, and act in obedience to the will of God, and in a way which they deem most honourable to their Christian profession.

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[3] *Regardeth it to the Lord.*] "regardeth it to a master." Wakefield; and in this way he translates the word, ver. 8, 9.

Ch. XIV. Ver. 6. There is no meaning in language if the apostle does not here pronounce that all *sabbatical distinctions* are abolished under the Christian law. The apostle uses the utmost latitude of expression: whatever is fit and lawful upon one day is fit and lawful upon another, without any distinction between the first, or the seventh, and any other day of the week. But mark, the apostle is not treating upon the subject of Christian worship. This is undoubtedly a duty of universal obligation, which, for the sake of order and decency, must necessarily be carried on at some convenient and appropriate season. Nor is he to be understood as saying any thing to contravene that ancient and useful practice, which the Christian church in all ages has derived from the apostles, of observing the first day of the week as a Christian festival for the religious and joyful commemoration of the death of Christ, and of his resurrection on the third day. The opposition made by the apostle is to sabbatical impositions, not to religious institutions.

—6. *Also*[1], *he who eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth thanks to God; and he who abstaineth from eating*[2], *abstaineth to the Lord, and he giveth thanks to God.*

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[1] *Also.*] This connecting particle is added in Griesbach's second edition, upon the authority of the most valuable manuscripts.

[2] *He who abstaineth,* &c.] Gr. "he that eateth not to the Lord, he eateth not." The apostle's meaning is obvious; viz. that both the person who had no scruples, and he who had scruples, acted from the same motive, a desire to approve him-

Similar observations may be applied to the question concerning different kinds of food. The believer who lays himself under no ceremonial restraint, but who eats indifferently of any kind of wholesome food which is placed before him, without a scruple and without asking any question, acts thus because he thinks it an honour to the Christian religion that it lays no stress upon such distinctions; and he thanks God for his Christian liberty. On the other hand, he who abstains from certain articles of diet, because they are forbidden by the law of Moses, believes that he shows respect to the Christian institution by associating the profession of it with the discipline of the law; and he thanks God, that by combining the requisitions of both covenants, he can secure, as he believes, the benefits of both. And thus both parties in their respective practice being influenced by the same motives, are equally admitted by Christ, and equally approved by God; and therefore they ought to be mutually candid and tolerant to each other. Ch. XIV. Ver. 6.

3. It is the true spirit of the Christian religion, that they who believe in it should devote themselves wholly to their Master and his cause, ver. 7—9.

For none of us liveth to himself, and no one dieth to himself. 7.

By the law of our profession, self, the great idol of the unbelieving world, is totally annihilated.

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self the true disciple of Christ: but there is an ambiguity in the literal translation which it was thought expedient to avoid.

Ch. XIV. Ver. 7. Neither the attainment of wealth, nor the gratification of the passions, nor the preservation of liberty, nor social enjoyments, nor the love of life, nor the fear of death, are any longer suffered to predominate in the breast, or to maintain any undue influence over the mind. When a man becomes a believer in Christ, he learns to look beyond himself, and to direct his regards to worthier objects.

8. *For whether we live, we live to the Lord*[1], *or whether we die, we die to the Lord: whether, therefore, we live or die, we are the Lord's.*

By our profession of the Christian doctrine we enlist ourselves in the service of a Master, and in that service we must live and die. If the cause in which we embark may be best promoted by active exertion, however laborious, we must be willing to live, and to exert our powers, whatever they be, not in those situations which we would choose for ourselves, and which are most easy and commodious, but in those in which the Master places us, and in which we may be most useful. If the state of things be such, that the Master's cause will be best promoted by the sacrifice of life and all its enjoyments, the man who loves his Master and his service, and who breathes the spirit of his profession, does not hesitate a moment to make the most costly sacrifice; happy in the opportunity of testifying his gratitude and zeal. In life and in death

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[1] *Live to the Lord*, &c.] Τῳ Κυριῳ· "to this master." Wakefield: *i. e.* to God. See ver. 6.

the true believer has but one paramount object in view; and that is, to approve himself the faithful and dutiful servant of the Master of his choice. Ch. XIV. Ver. 8.

For to this end Christ both lived and died, and rose again[2], *that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.* 9.

And that Master is Christ, the prophet of Nazareth, once in a humble and suffering state; now exalted and triumphant. He lived, and died, and rose again, not for his own benefit, but for that of all mankind, both the living and the dead. He descended to the grave that he might rise again, and might exhibit himself as the prince and leader of life; the example and the pledge of immortality to those who inhabit the dark mansions of the tomb. And he was raised and exalted to glory, that he might possess universal dominion; and that the whole race of mankind, under his benign administration, might be conducted to virtue, life, and happiness. His design was not to aggrandize himself, but to do the will of his heavenly Father, by raising mankind to glory and immortality; and nothing can be more acceptable to him, than that his disciples should manifest a kind and forbearing spirit towards each other.

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[2] *Lived and died, and rose again:*] εζησε, και απεθανε, και ανεστη. This is the reading of the Clermont manuscript. The received text reads, "και απεθανε, και ανεστη, και ανεζησεν," both died, and rose again, and revived. The reading which Griesbach selects is, "και απεθανε, και εζησεν," he both died and lived. The copies vary, but the sense is nearly the same.

Ch. XIV. 4. The account which each is to render of himself to God, makes it particularly unbecoming to indulge in mutual censures, ver. 10—12.

Ver. 10. *But thou, why dost thou condemn thy brother? and thou, why dost thou despise thy brother? since we shall all present ourselves before the tribunal of God*[1].

If we were made responsible for each other, there would be some reason why we should interfere with each others conduct; but, as each individually is to answer for himself at the tribunal of God, and to abide the award due to his own character, how unbecoming and how culpable is it to sit in judgement upon one another! Why then do you, the Jewish believer, presume to pass a sentence of condemnation upon your Gentile brother? And how is it that you, the Gentile convert, not satisfied with quietly enjoying your own liberty, behave with a supercilious air to your more scrupulous brother, who still owns subjection to the impositions of the Mosaic law? Nothing can be more unbecoming, or more remote from the genuine spirit of Chris-

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[1] *Present ourselves before the tribunal of God.*] See Wakefield. *God*, is the reading of the Alexandrine, Clermont, and other manuscripts. *Christ*, is the received text, which Griesbach prefers. Dr. Priestley remarks, that "the judgement-seat of Christ, and that of God, are the same; not because Christ is God, but because he acts in the name and by the authority of God, which is fully expressed when it is said that 'God will judge the world by Jesus Christ.'" Mr. Dodson contends that *God* is the true reading. See his note on Isa. xlv. 23. Archbishop Newcome observes that in this verse, and also in ver. 3, "it is the Jewish convert *judges*, and the Gentile convert *despises*."

tianity, than such a conduct as this in either party. Ch. XIV. Ver. 11.

For it is written, As *I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall acknowledge God*[2]. *So then, every one of us must give an account of himself to God.* 12.

The language of the Jewish prophet (Isaiah xlv. 23), foretelling the conversion of the heathen nations, does in effect declare the same awful truth, that God is the universal judge. For God is represented as announcing, in the most solemn manner, that every individual of the human race shall acknowledge his authority and submit to his jurisdiction. It follows, therefore, that every human being will be accountable to God for his own character and behaviour; and consequently, that it is his duty and his wisdom to prepare for his own account, and not to sit in judgement upon others.

5. The apostle warns those who entertain just views of Christian liberty, not to indulge their liberty in such a manner as to ensnare the minds of their less enlightened brethren, ver. 13—21. 13.

Let us then no longer judge one another, but do

[2] *It is written,* &c.] The received text in Isaiah xlv. 23, which the apostle here cites, stands thus in the public version: "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear." Mr. Dodson thus corrects the text and the translation: "By myself I have sworn, saith Jehovah (truth is gone forth from my mouth, the word, and it shall not be revoked), that to me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess to God." See Dodson *in loc.*

Ch. XIV. Ver. 13. *ye judge this rather*[1], *not to lay a stumbling block, or a snare*[2], *in* your *brother's way.*

Instead of wasting our time, and disgracing our character, by uncharitable censure on the one hand, or contemptuous scorn on the other, let those who understand the liberty of the gospel, and the little stress which it lays upon things indifferent, rather resolve upon laying a voluntary restraint upon themselves, and not use their liberty in circumstances which may mislead others, and tempt them to do what they believe to be wrong.

14. *I know, and am fully assured by the Lord Jesus*[3], *that nothing* is *unholy in itself; but to him who esteemeth any thing to be unholy, to him* it is *unholy.*

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[1] *Let us judge—do ye judge.*] κρινωμεν—κρινατε. The apostle uses the same word in different senses. *q. d.* Let us not judge, *i. e.* Let us not censure, one another; but rather do ye judge, *i. e.* determine not to lay a stumbling block. "Let us not judge—but do ye rather determine." Wakefield.

[2] *A stumbling block—a snare.*] προσκομμα, a stumbling block. "*Offendiculum, lapis, vel obstaculum aliquod, in via positum, in quod si quis impingit, cadere, aut cespitare debet.*" Schleusner.—σκανδαλον, a snare. "*Lignum incurvum quo tendicula seu decipula sustinetur, et in quod impingens animal ipsam tendiculam in se subita ruina evertit.*" Schleusner. See Wetstein *Nov. Test.* tom. i. p. 302.—"A piece of wood which supports a trap, which falls on its being moved; and so may with peculiar propriety signify, whatever may be the occasion of ensnaring another, and drawing him into sin and mischief." Doddridge. Bishop Pearce thinks that the words η σκανδαλον are a marginal gloss. See Newcome.

[3] *Assured by the Lord Jesus.*] "I know and am satisfied that under the Lord Jesus." Wakefield. This makes excellent sense; but it seems more probable that the apostle alludes to the instruction which he had personally received from Jesus Christ. See Gal. i. 12.

I was once a Pharisee, brought up in all the scru- Ch. XIV. Ver. 14.
ples of that ceremonious sect; but when it pleased our Lord Jesus Christ to invite me into the church, and to reveal his gospel to me, that I might be qualified to instruct others, he then made known to me the nullity of those distinctions upon which I formerly laid so great a stress; so that I am now fully convinced that no wholesome food is unlawful in itself, and that all ceremonial distinctions are abolished under the new covenant. Still, however, if any one thinks otherwise, it is unlawful for him to eat food which he believes to be forbidden. Nor can he innocently relax from ceremonial restraints till his mind is more enlightened.

But if, because of food thy brother be disquieted, 15.
thou no longer walkest in love: Destroy not him[4] *by thy food for whom Christ died*[5].

If you eat without regard to ceremonial distinction, you act innocently so far as you are yourself concerned; but if your conduct gives uneasiness to

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[4] *Destroy not him.*] "Lead him not to eat food contrary to his own conviction;" ver. 23. Newcome. Rather, *Do not compel him to apostatize.* As those who were converted to the Christian religion are said to be *saved,* so they who apostatize from it may be described as *destroyed;* because they have returned to those courses which lead to destruction, and from which it is probable that they will never be reclaimed. See Heb. vi. 4—9; 2 Pet. ii. 20—22.

[5] *For whom Christ died.*] The death of Christ ratified that new covenant, to the privileges of which both Jews and Gentiles were equally admitted, 1 Cor. xi. 25. Christ, therefore, died for all who had by baptism professed faith in his mission, and had been regularly admitted into that holy community of which he was the head.

Ch. XIV. Ver. 15. your neighbour, if it induces him to think ill of his Christian brother, if it excites prejudices against the Christian faith, or if it tempts him to indulge in a liberty which in his conscience he believes to be unlawful, you are the means of harassing his mind, and exposing him to self-reproach. This is not kind, and the consequences may be more serious than you imagine; for who can tell to what issue a disregard to the remonstrances of conscience, even in cases comparatively indifferent, may eventually lead? Do not then, my enlightened brother, by the imprudent exercise of your Christian liberty, impel to apostasy and expose to ruin, one whom Christ has owned as a disciple, and whom he has admitted into that community which he has consecrated by his blood.

16. *Let not then your*[1] *privilege become a subject of reproach.*

Do not use your Christian liberty so as to ensnare your brethren, and thus to excite prejudice and occasion reproach, either to yourself or to the gospel which you profess.

17. *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink*[2], *but justification, and peace, and joy, in* the *holy spirit.*

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[1] *Your privilege.*] Gr. "good." Many manuscripts and versions read "our," which Wakefield prefers; who also translates αγαθον privilege, which is more intelligible.—"*Liberta.*" Rosenmuller.—"Let not then your liberty, which is a good you enjoy under the gospel, be evil spoken of." Locke. Dr. Taylor gives the same sense, and refers to 1 Cor. x. 29, 30, with Locke's paraphrase upon it.

[2] *Is not meat and drink.*] The apostle's meaning is well expressed in Mr. Locke's paraphrase: "The privileges and advan-

That happy and privileged state to which you are advanced, and in which you glory, does not consist merely or chiefly in your emancipation from ritual distinctions: these are the least and lowest of your privileges. Your happiness, as believers in Christ, consists in your acquittal from the condemning sentence of the law; in your reconciliation to God, from whom you were formerly alienated by wicked works; and finally, in the gift of the holy spirit, which being the earnest of our admission into the family of God, excites a joyful assurance that we are the heirs of immortal life. Possessed of these glorious privileges and exalted hopes, can we for a moment hesitate whether we should practise a little self-denial in a case in which the most important interests of our brethren are endangered? Ch. XIV. Ver. 17.

Moreover, he who in these things is the servant of Christ, is *well pleasing to God, and approved by men.* 18.

I add further, that as these are the great privileges of the gospel, so every one who, under the in-

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tages of the kingdom of God do not consist in the enjoyment of greater variety of meats and drinks," &c. *q. d.* It is true that the gospel indulges more liberty in this respect than the law, but this is the least of its claims upon our gratitude: the blessings it confers are so unspeakably more valuable, that we may well be willing to sacrifice these trifles to the good of our neighbour. Joy in the holy spirit is mentioned as one of the privileges of the gospel. The Roman converts had not indeed yet received the holy spirit: but they probably knew and conversed with many who had received it, or at least they possessed abundant evidence that the spirit had been communicated, and of the important purpose for which it had been sent. See Rom. viii. throughout.

Ch. XIV. Ver. 18. fluence of these high privileges and of these glorious hopes, yields a cheerful and uniform obedience to Christ as his master, and to the laws and requisitions of the gospel; and who, happy in the consciousness of his own liberty, avoids laying a stumbling block in the path of a less enlightened brother, is an ornament to his profession, and will secure by his judicious and exemplary conduct both the favour of God and the approbation and love of all wise and good men.

19. *Let us therefore pursue the things which tend to peace and mutual edification.*

Since all who believe in Christ are at peace with God, partakers of the same distinguished privileges, and co-heirs of the same eternal inheritance, let us not contend about trifles, but let us all endeavour to live in peace; and instead of judging and condemning one another, let us to the best of our power promote each others improvement in knowledge and in goodness.

20. *Do not for the sake of meat destroy the work of God*[1].

All who believe are, as such, the workmanship of God; created anew by Jesus Christ, and by the profession of the gospel brought as it were into a new world. Do not, for want of a little self-denial in the article of food, deface the work of your Maker, and tempt your less enlightened brother to

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[1] *The work of God:*] *i. e.* "a Christian. 1 Cor. ix. 1; Eph. ii. 10; Phil. i. 6. *Destroying him*, here and ver. 15, is causing him to apostatize, or renounce the Christian faith." Taylor.

desert a profession which gives countenance to what he apprehends to be unlawful indulgences; or to comply with a practice which, however innocent in you, would in him be a virtual renunciation of his allegiance to Christ. Ch. XIV. Ver. 20.

All things indeed are *pure, but* it is *wrong for a man to eat so as to cause another to stumble*[2].

All kinds of wholesome food are innocent and lawful considered in the abstract; but he cannot be pronounced guiltless, who, by inattention to the views and prepossessions of others, tempts his brother to do what he thinks wrong.

It is *right neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine,* 21.
nor to do any thing else *by which thy brother is made to stumble, or is ensnared, or is made weak*[3].

Upon the whole, it is right to abstain from every thing, however innocent and agreeable, and to live even upon bread and water, rather than by self-indulgence in any article, however innocent, to ensnare the mind of a weaker and less informed professor, and tempt him, either to do what he believes to be wrong, or to abandon the faith of Christ as being inconsistent with the institutes of Moses and the law of God.

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[2] *To cause another to stumble.*] "to cause offence." Newcome.—"who maketh others stumble by what he eateth." Wakefield.—"The eating ought to be avoided when it cannot be done without endangering another man's stumbling, and falling away from the gospel." Taylor.

[3] *Or is ensnared, or is made weak.*] η σκανδαλιζεται, η ασθενει. These words are wanting in the Alexandrine, Ephrem, and other manuscripts and versions. Griesbach retains them, but Wakefield drops them; and Archbishop Newcome says they have the appearance of a gloss.

Ch. XIV. Ver. 21. This advice of the apostle as a general rule is excellent: Let nothing be done, however innocent in itself, which might induce well-meaning but uninformed persons to do what they believe to be wrong, which in them might be attended with the worst consequences.

The rule, however, like other general maxims, has its limits. If the wise were invariably to submit to the foolish, and the well-informed to the ignorant, the reign of prejudice and of superstition would be perpetual. Christian liberty must not be sacrificed to ignorance and error. Paul himself continued to associate with the Gentile believers at Antioch, when Peter through fear of giving offence withdrew, and for his duplicity and timidity was justly rebuked. A wise and good man will not give unnecessary offence: he will endeavour calmly to reason with, and to instruct, the weak and the prejudiced; he will at all times exercise discretion, and walk in love; but he will not see it to be his duty wholly to resign the liberty with which Christ has made him free.

6. The apostle offers general advice to each party, ver. 22, 23.

22. *Thou hast faith with regard to thyself*[1]; *retain*

[1] *Thou hast faith with regard to thyself.*] Συ πιστιν εχεις κατα σεαυτον· "Hast thou confidence in thyself?" Wakefield; who mentions in his note, that the Æthiopic connects κατα σεαυτον with the preceding words; and "much better thus," says he, "in my opinion." Upon this authority I adopt the same punctuation: Griesbach, in his last edition, states, that

it *in the presence of God. Happy* is *he who condemneth not himself in that which he alloweth.* Ch. XIV. Ver. 22.

I now address a word of advice to the Gentile believer. You are satisfied with regard to yourself, that no stress is to be laid on things indifferent. Be it so: retain your principle; and act upon it at all times as in the presence of God, and accountable to him. You will then be under no temptation to make an improper use of your liberty. And let me remind you, that it is a great happiness to be preserved from carrying liberty to an improper excess, so as to overstep the boundary of things lawful, while we mean not to exceed the limit of things indifferent.

But he who has scruples, is condemned if he eat; because he eateth *not from conviction: and whatever is contrary to conviction is sin*[2]. 23.

But as to the believing Jew, who still retains his allegiance to the law, and scruples the use of what

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some authorities read thus: "The faith which thou hast with regard to thyself, retain in the presence of God. Συ πιστις ην, κ. τ. λ. The public Version reads, "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God." Dr. Taylor observes, that "there is no necessity for reading the first clause interrogatively; and he does not know that κατα ever signifies *to*; but frequently, *with respect to*, and so it should have been translated here. It is an exhortation not to keep his faith private to himself, not to suppress his sentiments, but to retain them steadily, and never to do or say any thing inconsistent with them." See Dr. Taylor's excellent note upon the text.

[2] Griesbach upon the authority of the Alexandrine and many other copies and versions, here introduces the doxology, which in the received text is placed at the end of the sixteenth chapter; but though it does not seem to stand well in that place, the admission of it here interrupts the apostle's argument, which is continued to the thirteenth verse of the next chapter.

Ch. XIV. Ver. 23. to others appears indifferent, while he entertains these opinions, he must not indulge himself in those liberties which are familiar to the Gentile, for if he does, he is self-condemned, and justly; because he acts against his conscience. And he who acts contrary to the dictates of conscience, though it be only in comparative trifles, is really guilty of a moral offence; the consequences of which may be more serious than the offender apprehends, or is willing to believe.

Ch. XV. 7. The apostle enforces mutual forbearance, and self-denial, from the example of Jesus Christ, ch. xv. 1—4.

Ver. 1. *But we who are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.*

However cautious scrupulous persons ought to be with regard to themselves, we, who have no such unnecessary scruples, ought to be very kind and tolerant to those who have; and ought not to gratify our own taste at the expense of their feelings, and the hazard of their principles.

2. *Let every one of us please* his *neighbour for* his *good, to edification* [1].

Let every one endeavour by mutual compliances and voluntary self denial to please his neighbour, and to keep him in good humour; so far as this

[1] *For his good*, &c.] The apostle sets a limit here to a person's acquiescence in the prejudices of weaker brethren. They are to be yielded to, only so far as may be necessary for their benefit and edification, that their less enlightened consciences may not be ensnared.

may contribute in any way to his good, and to his edification in the faith of Christ. Ch. XV.

For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them who reproached thee have fallen upon me[2]. Ver. 3.

Our Lord and master Jesus Christ, whose perfect example we ought always to set before our eyes, upon no occasion consulted his own gratification in preference to the good of others; but the whole tenor of his ministry was a course of labour and self-denial for the benefit of mankind. And with this view he submitted to the grossest insult and indignity, so that the words of the psalmist, Psalm lxix. 9, may be literally applied to him, that he was the object of hatred and reproach to all those who were the haters and revilers of God and truth.

For whatsoever things were formerly written for our instruction, were written, that through patience, and comfort of the scriptures, we might have hope. 4.

The examples of patient suffering under reproach and persecution, recorded in ancient history, and particularly in the Jewish scriptures, were written for our information and encouragement; that we may learn to bear self-denial, reproach, and persecution with the same faith and fortitude with which they have been supported by good men in former days; and may be encouraged to hope, that our trials, like theirs, shall come to a happy termination.

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[2] *The reproaches,* &c.] This is a quotation from Ps. lxix. 9, which contains many passages strictly and literally applicable to Christ. But ver. 5, 6, make it impossible to regard it as a prophetic psalm in which Christ is the speaker throughout.

Ch. XV. 8. He prays that God would grant them a spirit of concord and unanimity, ver. 5, 6.

Ver. 5. *Now may the God of patience and consolation*[1] *grant you mutual unanimity according to Christ*
6. *Jesus*[2], *that with one consent* and *with one voice, you may give glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*[3].

And now may that great Being, who is the fountain of all good, who can support the heart, and fill the mind with comfort in the most trying seasons, endow you with that harmony of spirit which is so essential and ornamental to your Christian profession, even though you may not perfectly agree in judgement concerning things indifferent. That so

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[1] *May the God of patience,* &c.] It is usual with the apostle, after recommending some particular virtue, to address a prayer to God, as the God of that virtue, to enforce it upon the minds of the persons to whom he writes. We have another instance of the same sort, ver. 13 of this chapter.

[2] *According to Christ Jesus:*] *i. e.* "according to the will and to the example of Christ." See Newcome and Wakefield. "agreeably to the spirit and precepts of our Lord Jesus Christ." Taylor.

[3] *And one voice, you may give glory,* &c.] Gr. "one mouth." I agree with Dr. Taylor, that "the apostle is persuading them to a cordial coalition in public worship; and gives each party a substantial reason why they ought to unite their hearts as well as their voices. But as it would be more difficult to persuade the Jew, therefore he plies him with several quotations out of scripture." "We see here," says Dr. Priestley in his excellent note upon this text, "that all our works and duties respect the one true God, that they are what we owe to him, and also, that this one true God is the same that is usually called the Father, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by no means Jesus Christ himself. Little could this apostle imagine, that his writings could ever be thought to countenance any other doctrine."

you may unite together with cordial affection in the same acts of public worship, and may not be prevented by diversity of opinion upon ceremonial customs, from addressing your common prayers and thanksgivings to him, who, being the God and Father of our common master Jesus Christ, is equally the God and Father of all his true disciples, whether, with the believing Jew, they adhere to the rites of their forefathers, or, with the believing Gentile, they hold themselves absolved from the ceremonial institutions of the law. Ch. XV. Ver. 6.

9. The apostle finally urges mutual conciliation from the consideration, that both Jew and Gentile are equally admitted to the privileges of the gospel, the former on the ground of promise, and the latter of unmerited mercy, ver. 7—12.

Therefore, receive one another, as Christ has also received you, to the glory of God[4]. 7.

And now I repeat, at the conclusion of this discourse, the advice with which I began, that you should receive and love one another as brethren, notwithstanding any differences of opinion concerning ritual observances, as Jesus Christ has admitted you all, without distinction, into the possession of the privileges and hopes of that glorious com-

[4] "*You to the glory of God.*"] "This I conceive denotes the gospel state, into which believing Jews and Gentiles were taken, and which he signifies by *glory*, ch. ix. 23; and describes to be eminently glorious, 2 Cor. iii. 7—11." Taylor. *Us* is the reading of the received text, but the best copies read *you*. See Griesbach.

Ch. XV. munity of which God has appointed him to be the head.

Ver. 8. *For I declare*[1], *that Jesus Christ became a minister of the circumcision, for the sake of the truth of God, to confirm the promises* made *to the fathers.*

You ought to receive, and to live in Christian fellowship with one another; for I solemnly declare, that Jesus Christ was sent to invite you both to the privileges of the new covenant. And first, to the Jewish nation, to confirm the truth of God, and as an accomplishment of the divine promise made long ago to the ancestors of the chosen people.

9. *But, that the Gentiles should glorify God for* his *mercy's sake*[2], *as it is written, For this cause I will acknowledge thee among the Gentiles, and will sing praise to thy name.*

And I also assure you, that Christ was equally sent as a minister of peace to the Gentiles; not,

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[1] For *I declare.*] γαρ is the reading of the best copies, and marked by Griesbach as the preferable reading, though not admitted into his text. The illative particle is most suitable, because the apostle is assigning reasons why Jewish and Gentile believers should unite in Christian worship. The received text reads δε, Now *I declare.*

[2] *Should glorify God,* &c.] Perhaps the apostle's meaning in these two verses would be more clearly expressed in this manner: For I aver that Christ was sent as a minister of God to the Jewish nation, to verify the divine promise to their ancestors; but he was sent to invite the Gentiles into the glory of God, *i. e.* into the gospel covenant, not in consequence of any promise to their ancestors which might entitle them to the blessing, but solely as an act of mercy. Yet being received by Christ, they ought to be acknowledged by the Jewish believers. So that the expression, that the Gentiles should glorify God, means the same thing as being "received to the glory of God," ver. 7.

indeed, as a blessing to which they had any claim, either of merit, or by promise; on the contrary, they are admitted to participate in the glorious privileges of the gospel, solely upon the footing of mercy. But being thus admitted into the new covenant through mercy, they have a right to be received into fellowship by their elder brethren of the Hebrew nation, who had a claim by promise, agreeably to the language of their own scripture, Psalm xviii. 49, For this cause I will celebrate thee among the Gentiles; I will sing praises to thy name: where it is plain that the psalmist associates the heathen with himself in an act of thanksgiving to God for his great mercy. Ch. XV. Ver. 9.

And again the scripture *saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, together with his people,* Deut. xxxii. 43. 10.

And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and repeat his praise, all ye people, Ps. cxvii. 1. 11.

Where the Jews, the ancient people of God, are called upon to echo back the praises which are uttered by the Gentiles.

In these remarkable passages, Moses the lawgiver of Israel, and David the ancestor of the Messiah, express their readiness to unite with Gentiles in acts of praise, and urge, or at least set an example to their countrymen to do the same.

And again, Isaiah saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and one who shall rise up to rule over the Gentiles, and in him shall the Gentiles hope, Isaiah xi. 10. 12.

Isaiah goes still further than either Moses or

Ch. XV. Ver. 12. David. He expressly foretells, that a descendant from the stock of Jesse shall reign over the whole Gentile world, who shall become the willing subjects of his government, and the happy expectants and partakers of the blessings of his auspicious reign. This prophecy is accomplished in Jesus, the true Messiah, the anointed king of God's ancient people; who invites the Gentile nations to submit to his dominion, and who, receiving them as his lawful subjects, of course requires their fellow subjects to acknowledge their rights, and to admit them as fellow citizens of the same holy and happy community.

10. The apostle concludes the section with a prayer, that God would increase in their hearts that spirit of peace and love which he had so earnestly recommended, ver. 13.

13. *Now may the God of hope*[1] *fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the holy spirit*[2].

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[1] *The God of hope.*] See ver. 5, and the note there. He here addresses the divine Being as the God of *hope*, as he there addresses him as the God of patience and consolation.

[2] *Through the power of the holy spirit:*] *i. e.* through the promises of the gospel, which are confirmed by the powerful operations of the holy spirit. Of these the Roman believers must have had abundant evidence, though, not having been yet visited by an apostle, they had not themselves been the subjects of these powers. Dr. Taylor explains the clause, "through the mighty working of the holy spirit conferred upon you as the earnest and pledge of it." But by whom were these gifts conferred? It is possible indeed, and even probable, that some of the eminent persons whose names are mentioned in the sixteenth chapter, had received the holy spirit from the hands of an apostle, perhaps of Paul himself, before they settled at Rome. But

Ch. XV. Ver. 13.

And now to draw to the conclusion of this long argument, as no good is to be obtained without the blessing of the most High, may that God who is the author of hope, and who hath imparted the gospel, which is the great foundation of hope, both to Jews and Gentiles, grant success to these earnest exhortations! May he fill your hearts with peace; peace with God, peace of mind, and peace with each other! they will then overflow with joy; and faith will be manifest in its fruits. Of such a temper of mind, hope is the natural consequence; the inseparable associate: hope that is founded upon the promises of the gospel, and confirmed by the gifts of the holy spirit. And a better wish I cannot form, a more important petition I cannot offer for my Christian brethren at Rome, than that of this glorious hope they may ever possess an abundant portion.

It cannot be doubted, that the apostle's pious prayer was heard, and that his wise and benevolent advice produced its proper effect. So that when he was sent in chains to Rome a few years afterwards, he would find that a spirit of peace and mutual conciliation had taken place of the spirit of bitterness, and party zeal. And it is much to be desired, that believers in all ages should learn from this excellent epistle, that a spirit of candour, of conciliation, and

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it is most probable, that spiritual gifts were not frequent among the believers at Rome. Mr. Wakefield translates the clause, "that ye may abound in this hope under the influence of an unspotted mind;" not, I think, in the spirit of the apostle's style.

Ch. XV. Ver. 13. of mutual kindness, is far more acceptable to God, and far more becoming the Christian character, than the warmest zeal either for or against the observance of ceremonial institutions.

SECTION IV.

The apostle apologizes for the freedom of his advice; he claims this privilege as the apostle of the Gentiles: he gives a modest account of his success, and announces his intention to visit Rome in his way to Spain, after having executed the commission he had undertaken to carry the contributions from Macedonia and Achaia, to the church at Jerusalem; requests their prayers, and concludes with his blessing. Ch. xv. 14 *to the end.*

1. The apostle pleads his commission to the Gentiles as an apology for the freedom of his remarks, ch. xv. 14—16.

14. *But I am myself persuaded, brethren, concerning you, that ye are also full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able even to admonish one another.*

Though I thus exhort and pray for you, it is not that I have any doubt either of your knowledge or of your candour; for I believe that you are perfectly well informed with respect to your duty, in the case which I have mentioned; that you are perfectly well disposed towards each other; and if at

any time any member of your society should be deficient either in knowledge or in charity, that you are perfectly capable of setting him right in his judgement, or of reminding him of his duty, without the interference of others who have no relation to you. Ch. XV. Ver. 14.

Nevertheless, I have written to you, brethren, putting you in mind, somewhat freely, in part, because of the favour[1] *which is given me by God,* 15.
that I should be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, officiating in the gospel of God, that this oblation of the Gentiles[2] *may be acceptable, being sanctified by the holy spirit*[3]. 16.

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[1] *In part, or, partly, because of the favour,* &c.] The apostle has written freely to remind them of their duty. But why write at all, if they were so well disposed and so well qualified as he describes? Partly, no doubt, because, excellent as they were, they might be improved by his good counsels. This he insinuates, but does not express. And partly, because, being the apostle of the Gentiles, he was entitled to give his advice and to require their attention.—χαριν, favour, *i. e.* the apostolic office. See ch. i. 5, xii. 3; and the notes there. There is a difficulty among interpreters, how to connect the words απο μερους. Many connect them with "τολμηροτερον, *q. d. paulo liberius.*" Rosenmuller. "I have written to you rather freely upon some points." Wakefield. Dr. Taylor translates the words, "with respect to part of you;" and explains them as alluding to the Gentile believers, whom he had addressed with more than ordinary freedom. Rosenmuller says they may be joined with εγραψα, *q. d.* In some parts of this letter I have written freely. In the paraphrase they are connected with δια τον χαριν, *q. d.* I have written freely, partly because, &c. The amiable modesty of the apostle, and his desire to avoid assuming an air of superiority, make his language obscure.

[2] *Oblation of the Gentiles.*] So Wakefield. See Isa. lxvi. 20. The terms are sacrificial. The apostle speaks of the Gentiles as an offering, and himself as the priest. See Locke.

[3] *Sanctified by the holy spirit.*] "The gifts of the holy spirit to Gentile believers, were a proof of their being accepted by God, and were a public criterion of their separation from the

Ch. XV. Ver. 16. It may then naturally be asked, why I intrude advice if it be not wanted. My answer is, that I have offered these free admonitions, partly, to call your attention to that great favour which God has conferred upon me, by investing me with the office of preaching the gospel of Christ to the Gentiles; that so, as an officiating priest, I might collect into the sacred temple of the Christian community, the great body of believing Gentiles, and might present them as an acceptable offering to God; who has given the most public and satisfactory assurance of his willingness to accept this oblation, by the mission of his holy spirit, like the celestial fire, to consecrate them to himself [1].

The signal honour thus conferred upon me is a sufficient warrant for the freedom with which I have offered my advice, even though I am not personally known to you.

2. The apostle takes occasion modestly to report the great success of his mission, ver. 17—21.

17. *I have therefore* cause *of glorying through Christ Jesus, in things pertaining to God* [2].

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unbelieving world. Being sanctified and cleansed, not by any external rites, but by the gifts and virtues of the holy spirit." Taylor. See Acts x. 17; Rom. viii. 16.

[1] "The Gentile converts were sanctified, or devoted to God by the holy spirit, which descended upon the apostles and others in the form of fire, as victims were consecrated to God by the fire of the altar." Dr. Priestley.

[2] *Things pertaining to God.*] The same phrase occurs, Heb. v. 1, where it is used of the things which were offered to God in the temple ministration. See Locke.

Having been thus appointed to the high office of the apostleship to the Gentiles, I have not been negligent in performing its duties; and I have indeed some reason to boast of the success of my labours in the service of God, in spreading the Christian faith; which success is wholly to be attributed, not to any merit or ability in me, but to the presence and aid of Jesus Christ. Ch. XV. Ver. 17.

For I will not presume[3] *to speak of any thing,* 18.
but what Christ has done through me for the obedience of the Gentiles in word and deed[4]*, by mighty* 19.
signs and wonders through the power of the holy spirit; so that from Jerusalem, and round about, even as far as Illyricum, I have fully declared[5] *the gospel of Christ.*

For, to speak the truth without any exaggeration (for, whatever some may do, I would not presume to take the credit of labours and successes which are not my own), I have myself, in the execution of my apostolic mission, taken a circuit from Jeru-

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[3] *I will not presume,* &c.] *i. e.* either I will not boast of labours and successes in which others have had perhaps a principal share—or, I will not boast in any thing of my own, but only so far as I have been supported by Christ, and an instrument in his hands. See Taylor. "For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me." Newcome, who includes these words in a parenthesis.

[4] *In word and deed,* &c.] *q. d.* in profession and practice; or hath wrought through me—by word and deed, "by the manner in which he hath enabled me to speak, and the things which he hath strengthened me to perform." Doddridge. See Rosenmuller. "the *holy* spirit." This is the reading of the best copies. The received text reads the "spirit of God." See Griesbach.

[5] *Have fully declared:*] *i. e.* so as not to leave any considerable place behind, where the gospel has not been made known.

Ch. XV. Ver. 19. salem to Illyricum; and in every place of consequence which lay in or near my course, and where the gospel was unknown, I have promulgated the joyful tidings with success. Yet, far from arrogating to myself the honour of this splendid achievement, I most readily acknowledge that I was merely an instrument in the hand of Christ, my master, who qualified me for this great undertaking, first by instructing me in the gospel, and afterwards by endowing me with those spiritual gifts and miraculous powers, which excited the attention of the heathen, and subdued them to the gentle yoke of the gospel; so that they not only professed faith in it, but yielded a ready obedience to it.

20. *Being studious indeed, so to preach the gospel, not where Christ had been named, lest I should*
21. *build upon another man's foundation*[1]; *but as it is written, They to whom nothing*[2] *was related concerning him shall see, and they who have not heard shall understand,* Isa. lii. 15.

My reason for studiously and even ambitiously

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[1] *Being studious—lest I should build, &c.*] "*earnestly striving,* even to an ambitious desire." Newcome.—The apostle here seems to allude to those false apostles, who intruded themselves into the churches which he had planted, and of whose conduct he so bitterly complains in his epistles to the Galatians and the Corinthians. See Gal. i. 6, 7, iv. 17; 2 Cor. x. 9—18.

[2] *They to whom, &c.*] St. Paul quotes from the LXX.; and, as the text is cited by Justin and by Origen, who professes only to quote the LXX. where it agrees with the Hebrew, Mr. Dodson infers that the Hebrew in this case ought to be corrected by the LXX. The text stands thus in the public Version from the Hebrew text,—"that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard shall they consider."

selecting those places for the exercise of my apostolic mission where the gospel was altogether unknown, was, that I might not appear unhandsomely to clash with the labours of my brethren, and to covet the reputation of building up a church where others had undergone the more toilsome labour of laying the foundation, and had made the first converts to the faith: a delicacy which has not always been observed with regard to myself. And in this way I fulfill the words of the prophet Isaiah, who, in the introduction to his celebrated prediction of the humiliation and succeeding exaltation of the Messiah, announces, that his salutary doctrine shall be taught to those who had no previous intimation of his appearance; that is, to the heathen world. Ch. XV. Ver. 21.

3. The apostle announces his intention to visit Rome in his way to Spain, after he had executed the commission he had undertaken of carrying the contributions from Macedonia and Achaia, to the church at Jerusalem, ver. 22—28.

Therefore, I have been often hindered from coming to you. 22.

You may naturally suppose, that it has long been my earnest wish to preach the gospel at Rome; and I should gladly have been the first to communicate the joyful tidings to the imperial city. But the duties of my mission making it imperative upon me to preach the gospel, and to settle churches every where in my way, I was necessarily precluded from accomplishing my desire.

Ch. XV. Ver. 23. *But now having no longer* any *object*[1] *in these regions, and having had for many years a great*
24. *desire to come to you, whensoever I take my journey into Spain*[2], *I hope, as I pass by, to visit you, and to be set forward thither by you, after having first been satisfied in some measure with your* company.

But these obstacles exist no longer; for having now fulfilled my mission in these parts, and there being no other place where my ministry is particularly required, I hope shortly to gratify the earnest wish I have long entertained, and to make you a visit in my way to Spain. And having enjoyed your company, though but for a short time, I hope to be assisted by you to proceed on my journey.

25. *But now I am going to Jerusalem, to perform*
26. *a service to the saints. For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased*[3] *to make a certain contribution*

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[1] *Object.*] Gr. "place," or "business." Newcome.—"scope." Wakefield. "*non amplius opportunitatem habens.*" Rosenmuller. See Heb. xii. 17. He had fulfilled his mission, there was no *place* to which duty called him where he had not preached the gospel.

[2] *Whensoever I take my journey into Spain,* &c.] The received text adds, "I will come unto you, for," &c. which words are omitted in the best copies, and by Griesbach.

[3] *Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased,* &c.] "It hath pleased *those* of Macedonia," &c. Newcome.—The Christians in Judea were in general poor; but many of the believers in Macedonia and Achaia appear to have been persons of rank and property; who could well afford and were well disposed to send relief to their indigent and suffering brethren; being sensible of the obligation they were under to the Jewish believers for the communication of the invaluable blessing of the gospel. How much the apostle interested himself in raising a contribution upon this occasion, appears from the directions which he

for the poor saints in Jerusalem. They have indeed been pleased to do this, *and they are debtors to* the Jews. *For if the Gentiles have participated in their spiritual* things, *they ought also to minister to the* Jews *in worldly* things. Ch. XV. Ver. 27.

I cannot, indeed, be with you immediately; for I am engaged in a charitable service, which makes it necessary for me to set off immediately for Jerusalem. The opulent believers in Macedonia and Achaia have made a very liberal contribution for the relief of their indigent and persecuted brethren in Judea; and the donation is of such a magnitude, that my colleagues and I, in connexion with other deputies selected from the churches, have undertaken the charge of it to the place of its destination. Our Gentile brethren have indeed contributed largely upon this occasion, and with hearts overflowing with generosity. And they have done well; they have acted as they ought. For, after all, the balance of obligation is much in their favour. The Jews have communicated to them the blessings of the gospel; life, hope, and immortality. Well then may they expect in a season of distress, to share liberally in those worldly possessions in which

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lays down concerning it in the two epistles to the Corinthians; where he not only urges various motives to induce them to contribute largely, but promises, that if the collection is sufficiently respectable, he will himself accompany Luke and others, who had undertaken the charge of delivering it to the believers at Rome. This is the journey which he had in view when he was writing to the Romans. See 1 Cor. xvi. 1—6; 2 Cor. viii. 9.

Ch. XV. their Gentile brethren abound. So that the kindness is mutual and reciprocal.

Ver. 28. *When, therefore, I shall have performed this, and have sealed*[1] *to them this fruit, I will pass by you into Spain.*

As soon, therefore, as I shall have dispatched this business, and have executed the commission I have undertaken of delivering this grateful fruit of Christian liberality safe into the hands of those for whom it is intended, I will set off from Jerusalem upon my intended mission into Spain, and will call upon you in the way.

4. The apostle, after expressing his confidence, that his visit to them would be eminently beneficial, entreats an interest in their prayers for his protection and success, and concludes with his apostolical benediction, ver. 29—33.

29. *And I know, that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ*[2].

Whether providence may permit me to accomplish my purpose I know not. But of one thing I am assured; that at whatever time, or in whatever manner, I may visit my friends at Rome, I shall bring the blessing of Christ with me in all its fullness; I shall lay before you the whole plan of the

[1] *Sealed*, &c.] "consigned to them this fruit of love." Newcome.—"*consignari solent quæ deponuntur.*" Grotius.

[2] *The blessing of Christ.*] The received text reads "*of the gospel* of Christ:" the sense is the same. The word *gospel* is omitted in almost all the most ancient copies, and is dropped in Griesbach's last edition.

gospel in all its simplicity, beauty, and perfection; and shall confirm it by the gifts of the holy spirit. This is no vain boast of mine; for I am specially called by Christ, and appointed to this service. And I am conscious of that within me which assures me, that at Rome in particular my ministrations will be eminently useful. Ch. XV. Ver. 29.

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the spirit[3], *that ye strive together with me in prayers to God for me, that* 30. 31.
I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea; and that my service at Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints[4]; *that by the will of God I may come to you with joy, and may refresh myself with you.* 32.

But though I desire and hope to visit you, and am confident that my proposed visit will be productive of the highest benefit to you, it is quite uncer-

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[3] *By the love of the spirit.*] "*per illam dilectionem quam in nobis effecit spiritus sanctus, nempe per doctrinam Christi.*" Rosenmuller.—"by the love *which is the fruit* of the spirit." Newcome.

[4] *May be acceptable to the saints.*] "*Optat ut Judæo-christiani christianos ex gentibus ament, conspecta eorum in se beneficentia.*" Rosenmuller. See 2 Cor. ix. 12, 13. "The Jews," says Dr. Taylor, "were generally treated as objects of contempt and insult through the whole Roman empire. The apostle was in hopes, this liberal contribution sent by the Gentile Christians, converted by Paul's ministry, would engage the affections of the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem, on their part much prejudiced against the reception of the Gentiles into the church and covenant of God, without submitting to the law." He adds, "I make no doubt, this is an instance of St. Paul's zeal and prudent endeavours to establish a good harmony between Christian Jews and Gentiles."

Ch. XV. Ver. 32. tain, both when and how I may be permitted to execute my purpose; to effectuate which, I must first obtain leave of him whose servant I am, and by whose orders I move in every step of my progress. I earnestly entreat you, therefore, my brethren, by your affectionate regard to our common master Jesus Christ, the success of whose gospel will, I trust, be promoted by my intended visit, and by that kindness of heart which is the genuine effect of this new and spiritual dispensation, that you will unite earnestly with me in your prayers to God for me. First, that I may escape from the murderous fury of the Jews, who are hardened in unbelief, and whose rage is particularly directed against me, who having been once a persecutor like themselves, am now a zealous and successful teacher of the gospel among the heathen. Also, that the present which I bear to the Hebrew Christians from their Gentile brethren, may be received with a becoming spirit; that it may be accepted with gratitude, and may be the means of conciliating the affection of the Jewish believers, and abating their prejudices against their Gentile brethren. And finally, that God of his good pleasure may give success to my purposes and hopes, that so I may fulfill my intention of visiting you in my way to Spain, and may enjoy the satisfaction which I promise myself in witnessing your Christian spirit, and in contributing to your edification in the gospel.

33. *Now may the God of peace* be *with you all. Amen.*

To conclude: whether the visit which I propose, take place at an earlier or be deferred to a later period, or whether it be altogether laid aside, my earnest desire is, that you may at all events secure the protection of One, who is infinitely better able than I am to promote your true interest. May you enjoy the presence and favour of Almighty God; to whom we are permitted through the grace of the gospel to look as a God at peace with us, reconciled to us, graciously acknowledging the character of a father, and engaging to provide every thing good for us; and to whom we cannot make a more acceptable return than by living in peace and mutual affection with each other, notwithstanding any differences of opinion which may prevail concerning rites and forms! May God be with you, and all will be well! Amen. Ch. XV. Ver. 33.

The pious apostle's prayer was in part granted. He was permitted to visit Rome: and when he came thither, it was indeed in the fullness of the blessing of Christ; which is evident from those admirable epistles which he wrote while he was a prisoner there, and which are still extant for the instruction and edification of the church in every age. But the earnest desires of himself and of his friends were in part denied; and the plan which he had formed for executing his purpose was totally disappointed.—Whether he was ever permitted to extend his apostolic mission to Spain, is quite uncertain; and though he visited Rome, it was as an ambassador

Ch. XV. Ver. 33. in bonds. Very soon after his arrival in Jerusalem upon the benevolent errand of conveying to his poor brethren the liberal contribution of the Gentile believers, he was seized by his unbelieving countrymen, of whose malice he expresses his just apprehension, and was by them restrained for two years from the exercise of his public ministry: after which he was sent a prisoner to Rome, where he continued in bonds for two years longer. And while there, by the fortitude and magnanimity with which he suffered, by the excellent epistles which he indited, and by the instructive discourses which he delivered, he probably contributed more to the promulgation of Christian truth than he could have done in any other circumstances. Thus was the great design of his mission and ministry accomplished, though in a manner widely different from that which he originally expected or intended.

Let those who, like this eminent apostle, are earnestly bent upon promoting Christian truth, learn from his example humbly to acquiesce in the occasional disappointment of those plans of usefulness which they had formed for themselves, and to which they were most fondly attached. Let them resign themselves to the disposals of divine providence, content to act their part in the best manner they are able in the sphere which is allotted to them. Every one has his peculiar province assigned to him by the great master of the drama; who can never be mistaken in his selection of the instruments which he employs: every one has his proper talent

and post of service. The deficiency of some shall be supplied by the ability of others; and in the end, nothing shall be wanting to the harmony and perfection of the wise and benevolent plan. Ch. XV. Ver. 33.

SECTION V.

The apostle sends his salutations to his Christian friends at Rome, interspersed with various expressions of affection and esteem. He offers his parting advice; and concludes with a benediction and doxology. Ch. xvi. *throughout.* Ch. XVI.

1. The apostle sends salutations to his Christian friends; and begins with recommending to their regard the person who was the bearer of his letter, ver. 1—16[1].

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[1] Dr. Priestley well observes, in his notes on this chapter, that "the conclusion of most of Paul's epistles, though least valuable as to their direct use, are highly valuable indirectly, and as an evidence for the truth of Christianity; so many particular persons and circumstances being mentioned as give them the most unsuspicious appearance of genuine epistles, and exclude all idea of forgery. Indeed there are no epistles come down to us from ancient times that have such clear evidence of genuineness as these: and accordingly, it does not appear that it was ever called in question."

"If this case be considered," continues this admirable writer, "it will be found absolutely impossible to admit the genuineness of these epistles,—*i. e.* their having been actually written by the apostle Paul while he was engaged in preaching the gospel, in the midst of business and so much contention, when all his motions were watched by his enemies and false friends,—without admitting the truth of the facts which he mentions in

Ch. XVI. Ver. 1. 2. *I recommend to you Phebe, our sister, who is a deaconess*[1] *of the church which* is *at Cenchrea, that ye receive her in the Lord, as is worthy of saints; and that ye may assist her in whatsoever business she may have need of you, for she has been a helper*[2] *of many, and of myself also.*

Cenchrea was a sea-port, at a small distance from Corinth, from which city this epistle is dated. It seems that a church, that is, an organized assembly of believers, had been formed at Cenchrea; of which church Phebe, a female of respectability who was

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them as at that time known to all, especially the miraculous gift of the spirit, and such a reception of Christianity in that early period, while the facts were recent, and open to every man's examination. And the truth of these implies the truth of Christianity: that is, they necessarily lead us to conclude, that they were facts admitted by those who were best qualified to examine their truth, and who had every motive for doing it with impartiality, that Christ preached the doctrines which are ascribed to him in the gospel history; that he wrought many miracles in support of his divine mission; that he was publicly crucified, and that he actually rose from the dead. These facts, with those which are necessarily implied in them, are all that we ought to understand by Christianity."

[1] *A deaconess.*] See Dr. Taylor's excellent note upon this subject, and a very pertinent quotation from Cornelius Nepos. Newcome observes, that there were deaconesses in Bythinia in the time of Pliny. Epp. x. 97.

[2] *A helper.*] προστατις· one whose office it was to show hospitality to strangers. Rosenmuller. Two uncial manuscripts read παραστατις, which Locke and Bowyer conjecture to be the true reading, alluding to the word παραστητε in the preceding clause; *q. d.* protect her, for she has been the protectress of many, and also of myself. She was probably a person of property and consequence, or she would hardly have had occasion to visit Rome upon business of her own.—"*Metaphora elegantissima, petita a militibus, qui in acie sibi adstant, mutuoque sunt auxilio, unde* παραστατι *dicuntur.*" Rosenmuller.

intrusted with the care of this epistle, was a distinguished member. She was deaconess of the church. The office of a deacon was, to provide for the poor, to visit the sick, to instruct, admonish, and comfort, as occasion might require. And as in Greece it would have been reckoned indecorous for men to have performed these offices for the female sex, women of character and probity were appointed to it. Ch. XVI. Ver. 2.

It appears that this excellent woman was a person of considerable property and of great hospitality: she delighted in doing good; she employed her opulence and her influence in entertaining and succouring those who were in want, and particularly the persecuted believers in Christ. The apostle himself acknowledges his obligations to her kindness.

The affairs of this eminent Christian called her to Rome; and the apostle trusts her with the charge of his important epistle. He earnestly recommends her to the favour and protection of the believers at Rome; and requests, not only that they will treat her with the respect due to her character and station in the church, but that they will afford her the same assistance in the prosecution of her concerns which she had so liberally and so frequently afforded to others, and to himself in particular.

Salute Priscilla[3] *and Aquila, my fellow labourers in Christ Jesus; who for my life laid down their own necks: to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.* 3. 4.

[3] *Priscilla.*] Many of the best copies read *Prisca*, which is adopted by Griesbach.

Ch. XVI Ver. 4. It appears from this salutation, that Aquila and Priscilla, who had left Rome upon the decree of Claudius for the banishment of the Jews, were now returned, that decree having expired at the death of the emperor. The apostle had found them at Corinth, Acts xviii. 2; 1 Cor. xvi. 19; had lodged in their house, and had maintained himself by working with them in their occupation. He had probably converted them to the Christian faith; and such was their affectionate attachment to him, that they accompanied him to Ephesus: and while Paul was engaged in missionary labours to Jerusalem and elsewhere, they remained at Ephesus, instructed Apollos in the faith, and having recommended him to the believers in Achaia, they returned to Rome upon the death of Claudius. It appears from the apostle's grateful acknowledgement, that upon some emergent occasion, probably during the riot at Corinth which was suppressed by Gallio, they had exposed themselves to imminent danger on his account. Of this instance of faithful friendship he here expresses his affectionate recollection; and justly adds, that his friends were entitled to the thanks, not only of himself, but of all the Gentile churches, to the instruction and edification of which the apostle's whole life was devoted.

5. Salute *also the church that is in their house.*

—their pious family, and all their friends and neighbours who from time to time assemble in their large and commodious habitation for Christian worship.

Salute Epænetus my beloved friend, *who is the first fruits of Asia*[1] *to Christ.* Ch. XVI. Ver. 5.

—who was the first person in the proconsular Asia that was induced by my preaching to abandon heathen idolatry, and to profess faith in Christ; who has always acted in the spirit of his profession, and for whom I entertain the warmest friendship, though, as he is now settled at Rome, I can no longer enjoy his society.

Salute Mary, who has taken much pains for us[2]. 6.

—who has been useful to us in our ministry while she remained with us; and who, I doubt not, is equally active and useful in her present station.

Salute Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow-prisoners; who are in reputation among the apostles, who also were believers *in Christ before me.* 7.

Of these once eminent and useful Christians we know nothing more than what the apostle here relates: that they were his relations, that they were pious believers in Jesus while he was a cruel persecutor of the faith; that they were persons whose faith and zeal had recommended them to the notice and friendship of the apostles; that after the conversion of their kinsman they had probably joined him in his missionary labours, and had been

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[1] *Asia.*] This is the reading of the best copies, and of Griesbach. The received text reads *Achaia.*

[2] *For us.*] Many good copies read, for *you*, or among you; which reading is adopted by Mr. Wakefield.

Ch. XVI. Ver. 7. fellow-sufferers with him in the cause of truth; and that being now settled at Rome, they were deservedly distinguished by the apostle's affectionate remembrance.

8. *Salute Amplias, my beloved* friend *in the Lord.*
9. *Salute Urbanus, our fellow-labourer in Christ:*
10. *and Stachys, my beloved* friend. *Salute Apelles, approved in Christ.*

—whose faith has passed through a severe trial with safety and honour.

Salute those who are of Aristobulus's household.
11. *Salute Herodian my kinsman: salute those of the* household *of Narcissus*[1] *who are* believers *in the Lord.*

Of these families some of the members are eminently pious believers in Christ, though others may still unhappily continue in unbelief. Assure my brethren that they are not forgotten by me, even though they should rank among the menials of the household.

12. *Salute Tryphæna and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, who has laboured much in the Lord.*

These were Christian women, who, by their active services in those offices in the church which were particularly assigned to females, had entitled themselves to the special notice of the apostle.

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[1] *Narcissus.*] Narcissus was a freedman of Claudius, of whom mention is made by Suetonius in Claud. § 28; and by Tacitus Ann. xii. 57. See Rosenmuller. As some believers were of Cesar's household, it is not impossible that this courtier was the person named by the apostle.

Salute Rufus[2], *chosen in the Lord; and his mother*, who is *also mine*. Ch. XVI. Ver. 13.

Rufus, who was an eminent Christian at Rome when this letter was written, might possibly be the son of Simon the Cyrenian who had been compelled to bear the cross of Christ; for Mark, who wrote his gospel for the benefit of the believers at Rome, remarks, chap. xv. 21, that he was the father of Alexander and Rufus. He is said to be chosen in the Lord, as being a believer of distinguished eminence. And the apostle sends his salutations to the mother of Rufus, whom he calls his own mother: probably on account of her maternal kindness and attention to him upon some former occasions.

Next follows a list of names to which no mark of distinction is annexed, but who without doubt were eminent Christians, and well known at Rome at the time when the apostle wrote.

Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, 14.
Hermes[3], *and the brethren with them. Salute Philologus and Julias, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints*[4] *that are with them. Salute* 15. 16.
one another with a holy kiss[5].

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[2] *Rufus.*] See Newcome *in loc.*

[3] *Hermes.*] Supposed by Origen and many of the ancients to have been the author of a work of great antiquity, called "The Shepherd."

[4] *All the saints.*] "From the great number of persons," says Dr. Priestley, "to whom the apostle sends salutations at Rome, we see how well informed he was of the state of Christians there, and of the characters of those who composed that infant church." He adds, "it is well observed by protestants, that among so many salutations of Paul to the Christians at

Ch. XVI. Ver. 16.

This mode of salutation at the breaking up of Christian assemblies, was introduced among them from the Jewish synagogue. It seems to have given offence to the heathen, and to have been the occasion of many calumnies; for which reason it was soon discontinued.

All the churches[1] *of Christ salute you.*

The reputation of your faith and zeal is widely diffused; the churches of Christ every where rejoice in it, and hail your progress in truth and love with their warmest benedictions. Those who are near, and who know of my writing, send their fraternal salutations; and the rest would join us if it were in their power.

It has been well observed, that the number of salutations to eminent individuals introduced into

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Rome, no mention is made of Peter, who, according to the catholics, was then settled at Rome, and the proper bishop of the place; and from this it is reasonably inferred that he was not there at that time. Indeed it is far from being probable that he ever properly resided in that city."

[5] *A holy kiss.*] See Doddridge's note. "This mode of salutation," says Dr. Priestley in his note upon this passage, "is said to have been derived from the custom of the Jews; and was given by the men apart and the women apart; for in the synagogues the men and women always sit in separate places. Such also was probably the custom of the primitive Christians; and it is observed in many places of Christian worship at this day. The kiss of charity, as it was called, we find by early writers, was given immediately before the administration of the Lord's Supper, after the prayer which preceded it." See also Rosenmuller.

[1] *All the churches.*] The received text excludes the word *all*, which is admitted into the text by Griesbach upon good authority. It must, however, be taken in a very restricted sense; *q. d.* all in this neighbourhood, &c.

this epistle, constitute a presumptive proof of the genuineness of the epistle itself. An impostor could have had no inducement to encumber his letter with them; and the epistle being shown, as it probably would be, to every individual mentioned in it, each would become a voucher for its authenticity. Ch. XVI. Ver. 16.

The following reflections of Dr. Doddridge upon this section are so pertinent, that they require no apology for introducing them:

"We find that some of these pious and much esteemed friends of the apostle were women, of whom he speaks with great regard as of persons whom divine grace had made very useful in the church; who had been helpers of many, and particularly of him, who had laboured, yea had laboured much in the Lord. Let not that sex, therefore, think that it is cut off from the service of Christ, because the ministry is appropriated to men. Eminently useful have many of them been. The most valuable ministers have often been assisted by them in the success of their work; while their pious care, under the restraint of the strictest modesty and decorum, has happily and effectually influenced children, servants, and young friends; yea, has been the means of sowing the seeds of religion in tender minds, before they have been capable of coming under ministerial care."

2. The apostle cautions the believers at Rome against the artifices of designing men, who would

Ch. XVI. take advantage of their unguarded simplicity, to introduce erroneous and mischievous doctrines, which would disturb the peace of the church, ver. 17—20.

Ver. 17. *Now I beseech you, brethren, to mark those who cause divisions and* lay *stumbling blocks*[1], *contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid*
18. *them: for such are not servants of our Lord Christ*[2], *but of their own appetite; and by soft words and fair speeches they deceive the hearts of the innocent*[3].

As I know something of the state of your society, though I have never had the happiness to visit you, I cannot conclude my epistle without entreating you to be upon your guard against the artifices of an enemy of which you do not appear to me to be suf-

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[1] *Those who cause divisions*—lay *stumbling blocks.*] The apostle does not expressly mention the Judaizing teachers, who probably at this time were only beginning their attempts to corrupt and seduce the believers at Rome; but he describes these hypocritical adversaries to truth and peace in terms so similar to those which he applies to the false apostle, 2 Cor. xi. 13, 14, that there can be little doubt that he alludes to men of the same description. These Judaizing teachers, however, seem to have met with little success in the church at Rome; partly, as it is reasonable to believe, because of the contempt in which the Jews and their ceremonies were held by the Romans, and partly because of the seasonable cautions which the apostle suggests in this epistle. See Dr. Priestley's note on the passage.

[2] *Our Lord Christ.*] In the received text, *our Lord Jesus Christ*. the word *Jesus* is not found in the best copies, and is dropped by Griesbach in his last edition.

[3] *By soft speeches*, &c.] "χρηστολογιας, *blandis verbis*—ευλογια, *laus, celebratio alterius*—ακακος *fere convenit cum* απλους *in significatione, et dicitur de homine ingenuæ simplicitatis, qui nec ipse fraudibus utitur, nec aliis inesse suspicatur.*" Rosenmuller.—"by fair speeches and flattering forms of address." Doddridge.

ficiently apprized. I have already noticed some among you who lay too great a stress upon certain legal ceremonies and distinctions; but there are others also, who, if not narrowly watched, would carry this spirit further still, and would impose upon you the whole rigour of the ceremonial institute. Those enlightened teachers who brought the gospel to you, understood its spirit too well to impose this yoke upon you; and whoever attempts to do it will introduce contention and confusion into the church, and will ensnare the consciences of weak and well meaning believers. Against such men I solemnly warn you: mark them well; avoid them; be not deceived by them. They do not show themselves at first: they talk so smoothly and so kindly, they seem quite forgetful of themselves and wholly attentive to your interest, and anxious for your salvation; so that good and well meaning persons, who, thinking no harm themselves, do not suspect evil in others, are easily taken in and deluded by them. But they are greatly mistaken in them; for these smooth-tongued teachers are not the ministers of our great Master, the true Messiah, who has never given them a commission to preach in his name: nor do they mean either to promote his interest or yours: their only object is to make gain of you, and to promote their own sordid and selfish purposes.

Ch. XVI. Ver. 18.

For your obedience hath come abroad unto all men: *I rejoice, therefore, on your account; but yet I would have you wise concerning that which is good, and simple concerning that which is evil.*

Ch. XVI. Ver. 19. I give you this advice because hitherto your conduct has been irreproachable; and your proficiency in the gospel is universally celebrated. I rejoice on your account; and I wish you to sustain your reputation, by retaining just and liberal views of the Christian doctrine, and by remaining in happy ignorance of those sad corruptions by which in other churches it has been injured and defaced.

20. *But the God of peace will speedily crush the adversary*[1] *under your feet.*

If you take warning, and steadily resist the first encroachments of this antichristian spirit, you will soon detect its imposture and subdue its power; and God, the author and lover of peace, will give you a complete victory over it, so that it shall not be able to corrupt the doctrine of the church, nor to destroy its peace.

And this was in truth the actual state of the Roman church. Whether it might be owing to the faithful warning of the apostle, or to any other cause, it so happened, that, whatever other corruptions and errors were introduced into the church at Rome,

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[1] *The adversary.*] Gr. "Satan."—"bad men, the instruments of Satan: persecuting Jews." Newcome; who refers to Le Clerc, Whitby, and Grotius. "By Satan here," says Dr. Priestley, "most interpreters suppose to be meant the Jews, who were the great adversaries of Christians at that time, and that the apostle had a view to the destruction of Jerusalem and the entire dispersion of the Jews; as this epistle was written within eight years of the breaking out of the Jewish war. But it is perhaps more probable that he here meant all evil in general, considering this world as a state of trial, and looking forward to a better state."

the Judaizing teachers, who succeeded so well in the Eastern churches, and who were so great an annoyance to the apostle in Asia and in Greece, made little or no impression upon the believers at Rome. Ch. XVI. Ver. 20.

The favour of our Lord Jesus Christ be *with you*[2].

May the gospel, which is the free gift of God to mankind, through the ministry of our Master, Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah, remain with you in its purity and its power, and be possessed by you in the fullness of its blessing.

3. The apostle sends the salutations of his friends at Corinth to their brethren at Rome, and adds his own repeated benediction, ver. 21—24.

Timothy my fellow-labourer, and Luke, and Jason, and Sosipater[3], *my kinsmen, salute you.* 21.

Timothy was the apostle's faithful companion and assistant in his various and perilous missions; and it appears from Acts xx. 4, that he was with the apostle at Corinth at the time when this letter was written: also, that he accompanied him back to Asia, together with Sosipater, who was a native of Berea. Luke was probably the historian and evangelist who was also unquestionably with the apostle at this time; and Jason was an opulent and respect-

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[2] Be *with you.*] The received text adds, "Amen;" which is wanting in the best copies, and omitted by Griesbach.

[3] *Sosipater.*] Dr. Doddridge justly observes, that the circumstance of Sosipater being in company with the apostle is one argument for fixing the date of the epistle.

Ch. XVI. Ver. 21. able citizen at Thessalonica, who entertained the apostle and his companions at his house and protected them from the fury of the populace. These pious believers are mentioned by the apostle as his relatives; and they all unite in testifying their cordial affection to the believers at Rome, and in sending their kind and respectful salutations.

22. *I, Tertius* [1], *who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord.*

Though employed by the apostle as his amanuensis, I take the liberty in my own name to send you my christian salutations and cordial good wishes.

23. *Gaius, my host, and that of the whole church, saluteth you.*

Gaius, a Christian brother, in opulent circumstances, an early convert to the faith, whom I myself baptized, with whom I reside during my stay at Corinth, 1 Cor. i. 14, and whose hospitable mansion is open to every one who is employed in the honourable mission of the gospel, greets you with his christian salutation.

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[1] *I, Tertius:*] or Silas, says Dr. Doddridge; Tertius, the third, being considered as the Latin translation of Silas from the Hebrew. So also Dr. Priestley interprets: but this is uncertain, for the Latin interpretation of Silas in the New Testament is Silvanus. The apostle used an amanuensis; probably because it was difficult to him to write Greek characters. The epistle to the Galatians is the only one which he wrote throughout with his own hand: in the rest he satisfied himself with authenticating them by writing the salutations. Gal. vi. 11, 1 Cor. xvi. 21. Dr. Doddridge very properly adds, "I submit it to consideration, whether some of the intricate and some of the unfinished sentences which we meet with in these epistles might not be owing to this method of writing by an amanuensis."

Erastus, the treasurer of the city[2], *and Quartus a brother, salute you.* Ch. XVI. Ver. 23.

One holding a high office under the government of the country, yet not disdaining to avow himself a disciple of the humble Jesus. The other a man of distinction, a professed believer, and probably well known to the believers at Rome.

I again annex the apostolical benediction:

The favour of our Lord Jesus Christ be *with you all. Amen*[3]*!* 24.

4. The apostle closes the epistle with a suitable doxology, ver. 25—27.

Now unto him[4] *that is able to establish you* 25.

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[2] *Treasurer of the city.*] " οικονομος, *administrator, dispensator pecuniarum publicarum. Fuerunt hi viri magnæ dignitatis et auctoritatis in urbibus; unde apud Josephum* οικονομοι *et* αρχοντες *conjunguntur.* Ant. xi. 6, 12." Rosenmuller.—Treasurer of Corinth. Grotius's note is, *Vides, jam ab initio, quanquam paucos, aliquos tamen fuisse Christianos, in dignitatibus positos.*" Newcome; who also cites Matt. xxvii. 57; Luke viii. 3; John iii. 1; Acts vi. 7, xiii. 1, 12, xvii. 4, and some other texts, to show that the first converts to Christianity were not always persons of the lower ranks of life.

[3] *The favour,* &c.] This verse is omitted in some ancient copies, and in a few it is placed after ver. 27.

[4] *Now unto him,* &c.] Many of the best copies place this doxology at the end of chap. xiv., to which also Griesbach transfers it. But to me it appears to interrupt the thread of the discourse: I leave these verses, therefore, in their usual place, which is the situation they hold in the Ephrem, Clermont, and other manuscripts and versions, not without some considerable doubt, as it is quite unusual with the apostle to finish an epistle with a doxology after the blessing. Some have thought that the epistle at first concluded at the fourteenth chapter with the doxology and blessing, and that not being sent so soon as was ex-

Ch. XVI. *according to my gospel*[1], *and to the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revealed mystery*[2] *which was kept secret under the ancient dispensa-*
Ver. 26. *tions*[3], *but hath now been made manifest through*[4] *the prophetic writings, and*[5] *according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations for* their *obedience to the faith.*
27. *To the only wise God,* even *to him*[6] *through Jesus Christ,* be *glory for ever. Amen.*

And now, my brethren, upon a review of the important subjects of this lengthened epistle, of the

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pected, the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters were added by way of postscript. This was the opinion of Knatchbull and Mill. See Doddridge.

[1] *My gospel.*] Entrusted to Paul as the apostle of the Gentiles; not in opposition to the doctrine taught by Peter and James, as Mr. Locke suggests. See Dr. Taylor *in loc.*

[2] *The revealed mystery.*] Gr. "revelation of the mystery." See Newcome.—"The mystery is the calling of the Gentiles. Eph. i. 9, iii. 3—9; Col. i. 25—27." Locke.

[3] *Ancient dispensations.*] 'secular times,' or in the times under the law: so called from the division of times into jubilees. So χρονοι αιωνιοι is used 2 Tim. i. 9, Tit. i. 2: God's purpose of taking the Gentiles to be his people under the Messiah could not be said to be a mystery at any other time than while the Jews were the peculiar people of God. See Locke's excellent note.

[4] *Through the prophetic writings.*] The received text reads, *and through,* &c.; which conjunctive particle is omitted in the Ephrem and other manuscripts, by which the sense is made more clear. This particle is also omitted by Wakefield.

[5] *And according,* &c.] The particle *and* is introduced here upon the authority of the Syriac and Æthiopic versions. See Griesbach and Wakefield.

[6] *Even to him.*] "Μον. σοφ. Θεῳ, δια I. X. ᾧ, *illud* ᾧ *in versione recte omittitur, est enim Hebraismus.*" Rosenmuller; who nevertheless supplies τϐτῳ before δια κ. τ. λ. that the doxology may appear to be offered to the Father through Jesus Christ.

free unmerited grace of God to Jew and Gentile, of the sanctifying power and comforting influence of the gospel; of the call of the Gentiles, of the present temporary rejection and ultimate restoration of the Jews; and of the beneficial tendency of the gospel to render all who sincerely embrace it virtuous and happy, I cannot but call upon you to unite with me in devout acknowledgements and thanksgivings to God for this new and glorious dispensation by Jesus Christ. Ch. XVI. Ver. 27.

To Him therefore who is able to confirm you in your adherence to that gospel, which it is my honour to be commissioned to dispense, and which is the true and only doctrine of Jesus Christ, which reveals the mystery of the invitation of the Gentiles to equal privileges with the Jews without subjection to the yoke of the law; a mystery which was unknown and unsuspected in former ages under the reign of the law, but which is now apparent to those who understand the true scope and meaning of the prophetic writings; and which is still more plainly taught by those who have received a commission, from that God whose truth and mercy are unchangeable, to publish these joyful tidings to the Gentiles, for the purpose of converting them to the faith, and putting them into possession of these glorious privileges: to Him, I say, who is able to establish you in your adherence to this new and gracious dispensation; to God, whose wisdom alone was equal to the contrivance and arrangement of this benevo-

Ch. XVI. Ver. 27. lent scheme; even to Him who, by the mission of his beloved son and faithful servant Jesus Christ, has carried it into complete effect, to Him be ascribed our best and highest acknowledgements of gratitude and praise, now and for ever. Amen. [1]

[1] The postscript to this epistle happens to be correct. The epistle to the Romans was in fact written from Corinth, by Phebe a deaconess of the church in Cenchrea; but this postscript is not to be found in the earliest and best manuscripts; and in general the postscripts to the epistles are of no authority whatever.

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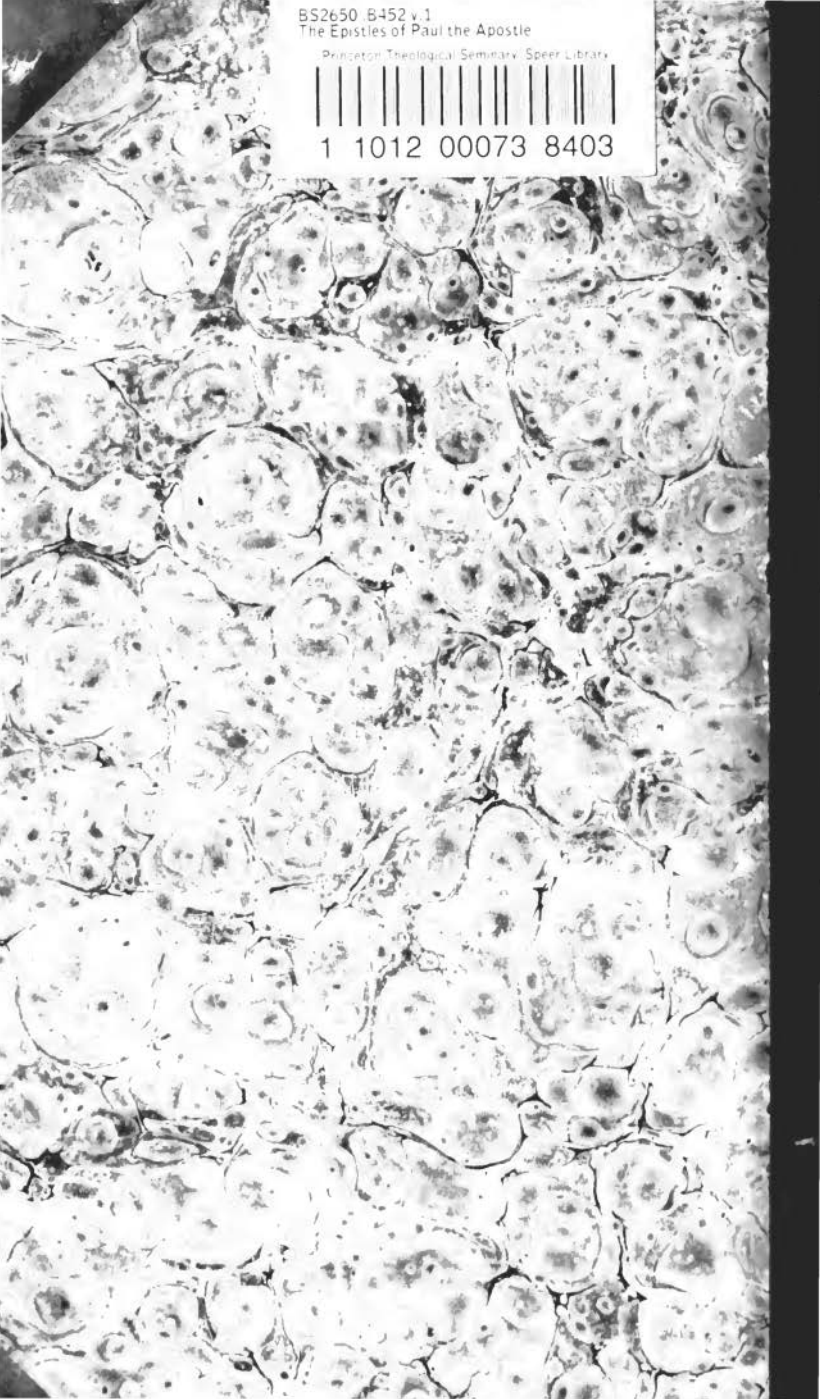
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THE EPISTLES

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TRANSLATED.

VOL. II.

THE EPISTLES

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TRANSLATED,

WITH

AN EXPOSITION, AND NOTES,

BY THE REV. THOMAS BELSHAM,

MINISTER OF ESSEX-STREET CHAPEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

"*Affer animum rectum et simplicem, veritatis supra cætera amantem,* "*præjudiciis vacuum. Ne protinus tanquam nova, tanquam inaudita et* "*absurda damnaveris, quæ tibi nova, tibi inaudita, et absurda occurrent.* "*Ea quæ dicimus, non cum aliorum judiciis, non cum vulgi inveteratis* "*opinionibus compone, ut inde rem æstimes, sed cum autoris divini verbis,* "*scopo, ipsoque rationis filo. Hinc tibi veritas petenda est: hinc de nobis* "*ferenda sententia. Equidem nos sicubi lapsi, aut D. Autoris mentem non* "*satis assecuti sumus, amice admoniti, ultro manus dabimus, gratesque in-* "*super accumulabimus.*" SLICHTINGIUS Præf. ad Heb.

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THE FIRST EPISTLE

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

THE CORINTHIANS.

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

CORINTH was a town standing upon the isthmus which separates the peninsula of the Peloponnesus from the rest of Greece. It was well situated for commerce, and was a populous and opulent city, and a Roman colony. The inhabitants were ingenious, inquisitive, and industrious; but they were also luxurious, debauched, and profligate even to a proverb.

The gospel was preached by the apostle Paul at Corinth, about A. D. 52. See Acts xviii. He first taught in the synagogue with considerable success; and Crispus the chief ruler, with his family, and probably Sosthenes, were converted to the Christian faith. But the Jews in general opposing and blaspheming, the apostle desisted from speaking to

them, and addressed his instructions to the Gentiles; and, having been encouraged by a vision, he prolonged his visit at Corinth for a year and six months. During this time, he resided with Aquila and Priscilla, who, having been driven from Rome by the decree of Claudius which banished the Jews, had established themselves at Corinth, where they were probably converted to the Christian faith by the preaching of the apostle. With these disciples the apostle chose to make his abode, and maintained himself by working with them in their occupation of tent-makers, or, as some interpret the word, makers of musical instruments[1]. This art the apostle had learned in his youth according to the laudable custom of the Jews, of instructing young persons who were intended for the learned professions in some manual employment. In the meantime, the apostle preached the gospel with great success, and made numerous proselytes, notwithstanding the violent and tumultuous opposition of the Jews, who endeavoured, but in vain, to instigate the Roman proconsul to put him to death, or to expell him from the city. Of the converts to the faith, some were Jews, but the majority were heathen; some were poor, and others opulent; some were ignorant, while others valued themselves upon their attainments in the learning and philosophy of the age. It also appears, that many of them were endued with spiritual gifts, some of which, at least,

[1] See Bishop Marsh's translation of Michaelis, vol. iv. p. 184.

they exercised at discretion. Also, some time after the departure of the apostle, Apollos, a man of great zeal and eloquence, who had been instructed in the Christian doctrine at Ephesus by Aquila and Priscilla, visited Corinth and confirmed the new converts in their adherence to the faith.

Nevertheless, after the departure of Apollos, the newly formed church at Corinth soon fell into great disorder. Some Jewish zealot, who appears to have been a man of considerable property and influence, a man of parts and address, an eloquent speaker, a philosopher, and perhaps a Sadducee, formed a party in opposition to the apostle, professing to teach them a more refined system of Christian philosophy, derived from ancient Hebrew traditions, denying the resurrection of the dead, and relaxing the obligations of Christian morality. This dangerous teacher succeeded but too well in alienating the minds of many of the giddy and volatile Corinthians from the simple and offensive truths, and from the self-denying precepts of the gospel, as well as from their veneration and affection for their first teacher; while others adhered to the apostle's doctrine, and remained strongly attached to his person and authority. Thus the church was divided into two parties, one of which ranged themselves under the standard of the false apostle, and thought and spoke meanly of the doctrine and the authority of Paul; while the wiser and better part of the society adhered to their first teacher, and, in their zeal to support the authority of the apostle, almost forgot the

allegiance which was due to Christ, his master and theirs. In consequence of this factious and schismatical spirit, Christian discipline was greatly relaxed, the most flagrant irregularities were introduced into public worship, a litigious spirit had sprung up in the society, and immoralities of an enormous kind had not only passed without censure, but had been made a subject of boasting.

In this state of things, though the affections of many were alienated, yet the majority still entertained so high a regard for the authority of the apostle, that they agreed in writing an epistle to him to ask his opinion and advice concerning some questions which were then disputed among them; particularly concerning the expedience of marriage, the connexion of believers and unbelievers in the conjugal relation, the comparative excellence of spiritual gifts, the lawfulness of eating flesh which had been offered to idols, and perhaps the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. This epistle was conveyed to the apostle Paul at Ephesus, by Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, three distinguished members of the Corinthian church, who were selected for this purpose. It should seem, that in their own epistle, the Corinthians took no notice whatever of the disorderly state of their society nor of the party spirit which prevailed among them. These the apostle learned from other sources; and in this epistle, which he wrote in the spring of A.D. 56, in reply to theirs, he animadverts with becoming spirit upon their flagrant misbehaviour, previ-

ously to his discussion of the questions which they had proposed.

The first Epistle to the Corinthians is one of those epistles the genuineness of which has never been called in question by any writer, ancient or modern. It professes to be the production of Paul the apostle of Jesus Christ; and it has been acknowledged and cited as such by a numerous succession of writers from the earliest antiquity to the present day. This succession begins with Clement, the bishop of Rome, the contemporary and friend of the apostle, who appeals to this document in a letter addressed some years afterwards to the same church, which is still extant. Eusebius, the learned bishop of Cesarea in the fourth century, who took great pains to settle the canon of the New Testament, places the epistle of Paul to the Corinthians in the catalogue of those books whose authenticity had never been disputed.

And there is no work which bears more distinct intrinsic evidence of its genuineness than this epistle. The many undesigned coincidences with the history of the evangelists, and particularly of Luke, together with numerous incidental enlargements, omissions, and variations, and frequent allusions to persons, circumstances, facts, and controversies, which could have had no existence but in the apostolic age, and in such a society as that at Corinth, are so obvious and striking, that the proof of authenticity arising from them is most satisfactory

and decisive. This argument has been stated in the clearest light by the late learned Dr. Paley in his masterly disquisitions on the Epistles of Paul. No impostor would have encumbered his work with so many needless details, and with such a mass of obscure hints and allusions: and had he attempted it, he could with difficulty have escaped detection.

The acknowledged genuineness of this epistle is a fact of the greatest importance, and affords an irresistible proof of the truth and divine authority of the Christian religion. For the apostle states as matters of public notoriety, facts which could have no existence if Christianity were false, and which no person in his right mind would have appealed to, if they had been capable of contradiction: I mean in particular, the existence and the abuse of miraculous powers in the Corinthian church. The epistolary form of writing is peculiarly adapted for the exhibition of historical evidence. And this is the pincipal use of the epistolary parts of the New Testament. But of all the epistles of Paul, there is none which contains a clearer or stronger proof of the divine original of the Christian doctrine, than that which we are now about to explore. If all the other writings of this great apostle were to be rejected and lost, the epistle to the Corinthians alone would contain ample testimony both to the origin and to the excellence of the Christian revelation; and in this view it is worthy of the most serious perusal and attentive regard.

THE EPISTLE contains TWO GENERAL DIVISIONS, with a suitable INTRODUCTION and CONCLUSION.

The apostle INTRODUCES the epistle to the Corinthians with an appropriate salutation: he thanks God for the abundance of their spiritual gifts; and expresses his hope of their Christian perseverance, ch. i. 1—9.

PART THE FIRST.

The apostle remonstrates with the believers at Corinth, concerning gross and scandalous irregularities which had been reported to him as prevailing in and disgracing the church, and earnestly presses the reformation of these abuses. This portion of the epistle extends from the tenth verse of the first chapter to the end of the sixth chapter.

SECT. I. The apostle testifies his great disapprobation of the party spirit, by which the church was rent; and in particular, he strongly objects to the practice of setting up ministers as heads of parties, like the different sects of philosophers, to the neglect of Christ, the only head of the church, from whom all the teachers of the gospel derive their commissions and qualifications, and to whom they are finally accountable, ch. i. 10 *to the end of the fourth chapter.*

SECT. II. The apostle condemns the unbecoming lenity of the church in the case of an incestuous

offender, whom he requires them immediately to exclude from Christian fellowship, ch. v. *throughout.*

Sect. III. The apostle rebukes the litigious spirit of the Corinthian converts; forbids them to carry their controversies into heathen courts; and requires them to settle their disputes by arbitration among themselves, ch. vi. 1—11.

Sect. IV. He remonstrates against fornication, and every species of impurity, to which the Corinthians were notoriously addicted, and which were strictly prohibited by the law of Christ, ch. vi. 12 *to the end.*

PART THE SECOND.

The apostle replies in detail to the various questions which had been proposed to him by the Corinthians in their epistle, and gives his judgement in the several cases which were referred to his decision, with great delicacy, propriety, and dignity, intermixing his reply with much important instruction and advice with respect to doctrine, discipline, and practice. This Part extends from the beginning of the Seventh to the end of the Fifteenth chapters.

Sect. I. The apostle answers the questions proposed to him, concerning the expediency of marriage under the existing precarious circumstances of the church, and the lawfulness of forming or continuing the conjugal connexion with unbelievers; and

he avails himself of the opportunity to give prudent advice to those who have already entered, or, are desirous of entering into the conjugal state, and to believers of every station in life, ch. vii.

Sect. II. The apostle treats at large, concerning the lawfulness of eating meat which had been offered to idols; and having first combated the pleas of the Corinthians in favour of the innocence of this practice, he peremptorily decides, that to participate of the idol's feast in the idol's temple, is a palpable and pernicious act of idolatry; but that the use of the flesh of a victim when purchased in the market, or partaking of it at the table of a friend, was not unlawful, though in certain circumstances it might be inexpedient, ch. viii—xi. 1.

Sect. III. The apostle offers advice concerning decorum in appearance and dress, and particularly concerning the custom of wearing a veil in public worship, ch. xi. 2—16.

Sect. IV. The apostle reproves those, who, by their irregularity and excess, had assimilated the Lord's Supper to an idol's feast; he reminds them of the evil consequences of their misbehaviour, relates the history of the institution, and subjoins some useful warnings and advice, ch. xi. 17 to the end.

Sect. V. The apostle treats of the comparative value of spiritual gifts; he recommends Christian benevolence as preferable to them all; he speaks highly of the gift of prophecy; he reproves their ostentatious exhibition of the gift of tongues; and

gives directions for the regular exercise of spiritual gifts in their public assemblies, that all may be instructed and edified by them, ch. xii—xiv.

SECT. VI. The apostle, in opposition to the Sadducean doctrine which had been introduced at Corinth, asserts in the most peremptory language, the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; its inseparable connexion with the resurrection of Christ; and its unspeakable importance. He enlarges upon the solemnity and grandeur of that awful event; he bursts into an exclamation of joy and triumph; and concludes with an earnest exhortation to the practice of universal virtue, upon Christian principles, ch. xv. *throughout*.

CONCLUSION.

The apostle, in the concluding chapter, offers some directions for collecting a contribution for the indigent believers in Judea: he promises to visit them speedily; he suggests some miscellaneous advices; he sends his salutations; he denounces an anathema upon those who reject the gospel; and he closes with the apostolical benediction, ch. xvi. *throughout*.

THE FIRST
EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

THE APOSTLE'S INTRODUCTION.

THE apostle introduces his epistle to the Corinthians with an appropriate salutation. He expresses his thankfulness to God for the abundance of spiritual gifts conferred upon them in attestation of the gospel; and his cheerful hope of their perseverance in their Christian profession. Ch. i. 1—9. Ch. I.

1. The apostle, joining the name of Sosthenes with his own, greets the Corinthian church with a cordial salutation, ver. 1—3.

PAUL, the *called*[1], the *apostle of Jesus Christ*, Ver. 1.
through the will of God, and Sosthenes our *brother*,
to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those 2.
who are *sanctified by Christ Jesus*, who are *called*,
who are *holy, together with all in every place who*
take upon themselves the name of our Lord Jesus

[1] The *called*, the *apostle*.] "not called to be an apostle." Bishop Pearce; who observes, that κλητος never signifies *called to be*, and that it must be construed by itself, ver. 24; also Rom. i. 6, viii. 28, &c.

Ch. I. Ver. 3. *Christ*[1], *both their* Lord *and ours, favour* be *unto you and peace from God our father, and* from *the Lord Jesus Christ.*

It has been remarked that Paul is the only apostle who applies to himself the epithet "the called;" in which he unquestionably alludes to that extraordinary miraculous call of Christ by which he was converted from a cruel persecutor to a zealous teacher of the gospel, of which distinguishing mercy he entertained an habitual and most grateful sense.

Agreeably to the *will of God*, he had been appointed to and qualified for the apostolic office. There were others, his opponents, who without any proper call had thrust themselves into that honourable function; and who, setting themselves up as the rivals of the apostle, were desirous of seducing the minds of the Corinthians from Christian truth.

With true Christian humility, the apostle joins the name of Sosthenes with his own in the salutation with which this epistle is introduced. It appears, from Acts xviii. 17, that Sosthenes was an inhabitant of Corinth, a man of note, a ruler of the synagogue, who had probably been converted to Christianity by the preaching of Paul; and who, for that reason, had been persecuted by the unbelieving Jews. He was now with Paul at Ephesus,

[1] *Who take upon themselves*, &c.] Wakefield, Locke, Hammond, Lindsey's Second Address, p. 273. Whitby, who contends for the common translation, "that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus," does not deny that the words will bear the other interpretation.

Ch. I. Ver 3.

and is glad to embrace the opportunity of the apostle's writing to express his affectionate remembrance of his former friends, fellow-christians, and fellow-sufferers.

To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are *sanctified by Christ Jesus;* who by their faith in Christ are separated and set apart from the rest of the world: *who are called,* that is, invited to participate in the privileges of the Christian community: *who are holy,* who are now admitted into the same state of favour which was once the peculiar privilege of the descendants of Abraham, who are by profession consecrated to God.

Together with all in every place, throughout the country in the vicinity of Corinth (2 Cor. i. 1), who take *upon themselves the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;* who profess to be the disciples of Christ, and who call themselves by his name. This appears to be the true sense of the apostle's language, and not, as our translators and others render it, "who call upon the name of Christ Jesus our Lord:" a phraseology which would encourage religious addresses to Christ: a practice absolutely inconsistent with the spirit and tenor of the gospel, which requires that all religious worship should be directed to the Father only: who is the only invisible Being that we are sure is with us at all times, and who is both able and willing to afford his suppliant creatures all needful protection and assistance.

The disciples of Christ call *themselves by his*

Ch. I. Ver. 3. *name:* they profess to receive him as their instructor, and to obey him as their Master.

He is our master and teacher; and not only ours, but the common master and lord of all who acknowledge his divine character and mission, and who ought therefore to cherish a mutual affection to each other, in consequence of their mutual relation to their common head.

As the best wish he can form for his Christian friends, the apostle prays that they may enjoy favour and peace from God, and from the Lord Jesus Christ; the continuance of the invaluable blessings of the gospel, by which they are brought into a state of reconciliation and peace with God.

2. The apostle thanks God for the communication of the gospel to the Corinthian church, and for the liberal distribution of spiritual gifts; and expresses his hope that the believers at Corinth will persevere in their attachment to the gospel, ver. 4—9.

4. *I give thanks to my God always on your account, for the free gift of God which has been granted you in Christ Jesus.*

I am truly and at all times thankful that you have been favoured with the knowledge of the gospel of Christ, the free and unmerited gift of God to mankind.

5. *That in all things you have been enriched by him, in all doctrine*[1] *and* in *all knowledge.*

[1] *Doctrine.*] Wakefield; and Pearce, who says that λογος is never used for the gift of tongues.

That you have been fully instructed in the doctrine of Christ, and have been enriched with that knowledge which is the most valuable treasure. Ch. I. Ver. 5.

Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed among you. 6.

The evidence of the truth of the Christian doctrine having been exhibited in a form so convincing and impressive, that you could not hesitate to acknowledge its divine authority.

So that, waiting for the manifestation[2] *of our Lord Jesus Christ, you are deficient in no gift*[3]. 7.

Expecting, as you are taught by the Christian doctrine, the glorious appearance of our great Master, Jesus Christ, to raise the dead and to judge the world, you have been furnished in the mean time with an abundant supply of spiritual gifts to establish your faith in those sublime and awful truths.

He[4] *will also confirm you to the end,* so that you may be *blameless in that day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were* 8. 9.

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[2] *The manifestation.*] Bishop Pearce applies this expression to the destruction of Jerusalem. *q. d.* after that awful catastrophe these miraculous powers will disappear, Christianity being then fully established in the world. It is not impossible that the apostle might expect these events to be coincident, or nearly so. See 2 Thess. ii. 1.

[3] *Deficient in no gift.*] Dr. Priestley observes, that the apostle with much address praises the Corinthians as far as he justly could, having many disagreeable truths to tell them afterwards.

[4] *He also.*] A writer in Bowyer, and many judicious critics think the antecedent here referred to is God, ver. 4. Some think the intervening verses should be in a parenthesis. Wakefield transposes the 8th and 9th verses.

Ch. I. Ver. 9. *called into the communion of his son Jesus Christ our Lord.*

And I doubt not that God, who has invited you to the privileges of the gospel, and has afforded you evidence so completely satisfactory of its truth and divine authority, will still continue those spiritual gifts which are most undeniable evidences of the Christian faith. And being thus convinced of the truth, you will exemplify the spirit of the gospel, and will persevere in the practice of those virtues which may best qualify you for appearing at the judgement seat of Christ. That God who invited you into the holy community of which Jesus is the head, will faithfully perform his part: be not you deficient in yours. He will supply you with all the necessary means of stability and perseverance. Let it be your concern, my brethren, to improve them well.

PART THE FIRST.

THE APOSTLE REMONSTRATES AGAINST CERTAIN GROSS AND SCANDALOUS IRREGULARITIES WHICH HAD BEEN REPORTED TO HIM AS PREVAILING IN AND DISGRACING THE CHURCH AT CORINTH. Ch. i. 10—vi.

Ch. I. Ver. 10.

SECTION I.

He testifies his great disapprobation of the party spirit which prevailed at Corinth; and reprobates the practice of setting up ministers as heads of parties, like leaders of the different sects of philosophy, to the dishonour of Christ, their only Master, and, under God, the sole head and lawgiver of the church, ch. i. 10—iv.

I.

The apostle having heard of the dissentions and schisms which prevailed at Corinth, reminds the Corinthians that the disciples of Christ acknowledge but one Master, who claims and is entitled to their entire allegiance, ver. 10—17.

1. He expresses his great concern at the account which he had received, of the divided state of the Corinthian church, ver. 10—12.

Ch. I. Ver. 10. *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree, and that there be no schisms among you; but that you be knit together in the same mind, and in the same sentiment.*

I beseech you, brethren. The apostle by this kind language expresses his affectionate regard for the Christians at Corinth, and his earnest desire to succeed in the object of his request.

By the name[1] *of our Lord Jesus Christ.* This is the only instance in which the apostle uses this form of address. The Lord Jesus Christ is the common Master of all professing Christians: of him the whole family of heaven and earth are named. Jew and Gentile are now no longer separated by invidious distinctions, but are united to each other by their common union with him. They all bear the common appellation of Christians, which they take from him; and by the dear and venerable name of Christ their Master, the apostle requests that they would discard all bitter animosity, and live together in peace.

That there be no schisms among you: that you be not divided into sects and parties, like the Gre-

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[1] *By the name*, &c.] "If any one," says Mr. Locke upon this passage, "has thought Paul a loose writer, it is only because he was a loose reader. He that takes notice of St. Paul's design will find that there is not a word scarce, or expression, that he makes use of, but with relation and tendency to his present main purpose: as here intending to abolish the names of leaders they distinguished themselves by, he beseeches them 'by the name of Christ,' a form that I do not remember he elsewhere uses."

cian philosophers; as though the Christian community was distributed under different heads, and acknowledged different founders, but that ye may be knit together in the same mind and in the same sentiment. Not that they should entirely agree in opinion and in their judgement upon all subjects, for this would be impossible; but that all professing subjection to Christ, as their common Master, should think well of each other, notwithstanding any minute differences of opinion: that they should live together in unity, and not disturb the peace of the society by divisions into factions, and ranging themselves under different leaders. Ch. I. Ver. 10.

For it has been certified to me concerning you, my brethren[2], *by some* of the family *of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. I mean this, that each of you saith, I am of Paul, or I of Apollos, or I of Cephas, or I of Christ.* 11. 12.

The apostle renews the expression of his tenderness, when he is entering upon the disagreeable subject of their animosities, in order to conciliate their regard and secure their attention.

It has been conjectured[3] that Fortunatus and Achaicus, the bearers of the letter from Corinth, were the sons of that pious matron here mentioned, who communicated to the apostle a faithful statement of the divisions of the church at Corinth.

[2] *My brethren.*] Mr. Locke observes "that 'brethren,' a name of union and friendship, is used here twice together by St. Paul in the entrance of his persuasion to them to put an end to their divisions."

[3] *It has been conjectured.*] By Grotius, and others.

Ch. I. Ver. 12. One said I am of Paul; another, I of Apollos; another, I of Cephas. They considered Christianity as a system of philosophy, the teachers of which were the heads of different sects, under which they were at liberty to range themselves. It will afterwards appear, from the apostle's own declaration [1], that Apollos and Peter were not the persons really set up in opposition to himself, but the false apostle; probably, an eloquent Sadducean philosophic Jew, whom the apostle does not choose to name, and therefore borrows the names of his friends and fellow-labourers to illustrate his meaning and to strengthen his argument.

It seems reasonable to believe that the clause, "and I of Christ," is not genuine [2]; for probably all the Corinthians would call themselves disciples of Christ, though of different schools; and in a subsequent passage (ch. iii. 22), where the same heads of parties are repeated, the name of Christ is omitted.

2. These divisions were unauthorized by Christ, none of the preachers of the gospel were entitled to set themselves up as the heads of parties, and the

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[1] *The apostle's own declaration.*] 1 Cor. iv. 6. See Locke.

[2] *Not genuine.*] See Pearce; who also argues from the question in the following verse, "Is Christ divided?" which would be improper if he was only regarded as the head of one faction. The Letter of Clemens makes no mention of Christ as one of the heads of a party in the Corinthian church. A writer in Bowyer suspects that the name should be Crispus. See Bowyer's *Crit. Conj. on N. T.* Neither of these conjectures is supported by authority; though that of Bishop Pearce appears highly probable.

apostle himself had never pretended to it, ver. 13 —17. Ch. I.

Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized into the name of Paul[3]*?* Ver. 13.

Has Christ authorized this distinction of parties in the church? Has Paul or any other person suffered for you in the sense in which Christ suffered, whose death was the seal of his mission, put an end to the Jewish economy, and introduced a new dispensation of which he is the head, and from whom we all take our common and honourable name? Were you baptized into the name of Paul, or of any other person, so as to profess in this solemn and public manner, your faith in him, and your subjection to him as your master? Were you not all baptized into the name of Christ, professing your subjection to his authority, and acknowledging him only as your master and head?

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[3] *Name of Paul.*] "It is something remarkable," says Dr. Priestley in his note upon this text, "and greatly in favour of the evidences of Christianity, that none of the disciples of Christ endeavoured to supplant him. They all acted in subordination to a crucified master, how much soever they were opposed to each other; and there was no want of emulation among them. In this they were all united, acknowledging one master, even Christ. This was not the case with respect to Mahometanism: several persons set up on his plan, and in opposition to him. With respect to Christ, this was never attempted; nor could it possibly have succeeded, if the attempt had been made."

Mr. Locke observes, "that to be baptized into any one's name, is solemnly by that ceremony to enter himself a disciple of him into whose name he is baptized, with profession to receive his doctrine and rules, and submit to his authority: a very good argument here why they should be called by no one's name but Christ's."

Ch. I. Ver. 14. 15. 16. 17. *I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius, so that*[1] *no one can say that ye were baptized*[2] *into my name. I also baptized the household of Stephanas: as to the rest, I know not that I baptized any other, for Christ sent me not* so much[3] *to baptize, as to preach the gospel.*

As the apostle had so many enemies every where, who were disposed to calumniate his character, and to misrepresent his conduct; he is glad and thankful that he had given them so little occasion for doing it at Corinth, and that he had baptized so very few, that no person could with any plausibility pretend that he had baptized into his own name, and set himself up as the head of that party.

He had baptized only Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, and Gaius a person of note, distinguished afterwards for his hospitality to Christian strangers,

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[1] *So that,*] ἵνα, expressing not the *design*, *q. d.* lest any one should say, but the *event*, viz. so that no one can say. "This sense of ἵνα is often mentioned by commentators on the gospels, where a prophecy is said to be fulfilled. See also John v. 20; 2 Cor. i. 17, vii. 9; Gal. v. 17; Rev. viii. 12." Bishop Pearce.

[2] *Ye were baptized.*] ἐβαπτισθητε is the reading of the Alexandrine and Ephrem manuscripts. The received text is, "that I baptized into my own name." See Griesbach and Pearce.

[3] *Not* so much *to baptize as to preach.*] "The writers of O. and N. T.," says Bishop Pearce, "almost every where, agreeably to their Hebrew idiom, express a preference given to one thing before another, by an affirmation of the thing preferred, and a negation of the contrary." The following texts he specifies as illustrations of his remark. Matt. vi. 19, 20, ix. 13, x. 20, xii. 7; Luke xxiii. 28; Mark ix. 37; John vi. 27, vii. 16, ix. 4, xii. 44; Acts v. 4; Rom. ix. 13; 1 Cor. vii. 4, ix. 8, x. 24, xv. 10; Eph. vi. 12; Col. iii. 2; Heb. xiii. 9; 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4; 1 John ii. 15.

for which he is celebrated both by Paul and John. He recollects that he had also baptized Stephanas and his household, who were the first converts to the faith of Christ in the region of Achaia. Ch. I. Ver. 17.

The apostle was sent both to preach and baptize, but his chief business was to preach the gospel, this being the most important concern: the rite of initiation might be administered by persons of inferior rank in the church, who had more leisure than the apostles, and whose situation in life would effectually preclude them from all suspicion of endeavouring to establish themselves as the leaders of sects, and the founders of new systems, either of philosophy or Christianity.

II.

The apostle, in a long digression, describes the gospel as a system of sublime philosophy, which, though in the highest degree offensive both to Jew and Gentile, and taught by men who had no pretensions to birth, or learning, or eloquence, was nevertheless a science of the most sublime nature, and the highest importance, confirmed by divine interposition, and efficacious beyond all others for reforming the world, ch. i. 17—ch. ii. 16.

1. The doctrine of Christ, though treated as folly by the world, was nevertheless held in the highest estimation by those who understood it, and had been eminently successful in exposing the folly of the wisdom of the schools, ver. 17—21.

Ch. I. Ver. 17. *For Christ sent me to preach the gospel, not in wise discourses*[1] *lest the cross of Christ should be rendered useless.*

The Christian doctrine was not taught by the apostle with the subtlety and refinement of a system of philosophy, nor was he authorized to teach it in this way. It consisted of a few plain facts, that Jesus, who had been crucified, was the Christ, that he had been raised from the dead, that he was now exalted to be a prince and a Saviour, and that all sincere believers in him should be ultimately saved by him. These important facts admitted of no sophistical embellishments, and every attempt to refine upon them would lessen their practical effect.

18. *For the doctrine of the cross is indeed folly to those who are perishing; but to us who are saved, it is the power of God.*

Unbelievers, Jews, and heathen, who reject the hope of a life to come, regard the doctrine of salvation by a crucified man, as consummate folly; but we, who by the sincere profession of Christianity are entitled to an interest in its blessings, plainly see, that this humble doctrine is supported by the power of God, both in the splendid mira-

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[1] *In wise discourses.*] εν σοφια λογῳ, in the common translation, "with the wisdom of words." Wolfius conjectures, that Paul uses εν σοφια λογῳ for εν σοφῳ λογῳ, or εν σοφοις λογοις· which Pearce does not disapprove, though he prefers his own conjecture εν λογῳ σοφιας, the doctrine of wisdom, a phrase which recurs ch. xii. 8; whereas σοφια λογῳ does not occur again. The apostle evidently means the style of the philosophers.

cles by which it is confirmed, and in the glorious success with which it is accompanied. Ch. I.

For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will abolish the sagacity of the sagacious. Ver. 19.

These words, taken from Isa. xxix. 14, are a denunciation of punishment upon the Jews for their wickedness; but the apostle cites them by way of accommodation, to express the success of the Christian doctrine in overturning all the proud systems of the Jewish and Grecian philosophy.

Where is the wise man? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Has not God infatuated the wisdom of this world[2]*?* 20.

What is become of the heathen philosopher? where is the Jewish scribe? where the acute and eloquent disputant? what can all their learning and ingenuity avail to obstruct the progress of the gospel? what effect have they in instructing and reforming the world? How much superior in energy and success is that gospel, which they affect to despise! and how mean and contemptible are those vaunted systems, in comparison with the doctrine of the man who was crucified! The vain professors and teachers of these systems call them wisdom, and value themselves as the only wise men, the great philosophers of the age; but God has pronounced,

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[2] *Has not God infatuated.*] An allusion to Isa. xxxiii. 18, vid. Doddridge. The apostle describes the triumph of the gospel over the systems of human philosophy, in allusion to the triumph of the Jews over the armies of the king of Assyria.

Ch. I. and, by his efficacious blessing upon the doctrine they despise, has demonstrated, that their pretensions to wisdom are splendid folly.

Ver. 21. *For after that, through the wisdom of God, the world by this wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the preaching of this foolishness*[1], *to save those who believe.*

For wise and good reasons, which it may not be in our power to discover, God did not permit the world to make clear discoveries of his attributes and will, by the exercise of reason, and the acuteness of philosophy; but while he refused to employ these means, and permitted the philosophers to lead their disciples into the grossest delusions, he was pleased to render the preaching of that doctrine which the world called foolishness, efficacious to the salvation of those who received it, and who yielded a practical regard to it.

2. The doctrine of Christ, however offensive to the prejudices both of Jew and Gentile, contains an admirable display both of the wisdom and power of God, ver. 22—24.

22. *And while*[2] *the Jews require signs, and the*

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[1] *The preaching of this foolishness.*] Gr. "by this foolishness of preaching," μωρια κηρυγματος for μωρον κηρυγμα, as in ver. 17. See Pearce. "It pleased God in his wisdom to save believers by this foolishness which we preach." Wakefield.

[2] *And while.*] Επειδη και. Mr. Locke justly remarks, that these words are not "idle and insignificant." He conceives the apostle's reasoning in ver. 22—24, to be a repetition and application of the reasoning in ver. 21, *q. d.* "Since the Jews require, &c. and though our preaching, &c. be a scandal, &c. yet we

Greeks seek after wisdom, we indeed preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Gentiles foolishness; yet to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, we preach Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Ch. I. Ver. 23. 24.

The Jews, not satisfied with the miracles wrought to prove Jesus to be the Messiah, continue to require signs from heaven. The Greeks, the philosophers, who treat all miracles with contempt, ask for refined speculations, for subtle arguments, and for glowing eloquence. While these are seeking after their respective objects, holding all other speculations and systems in contempt; we, the apostles of Christ, are at the same time propagating a doctrine the most offensive to the principles and prejudices of both; we are disgusting the unbelieving Jews, by teaching that their Messiah is a crucified man; and are exposing ourselves to the contempt of the philosophic Gentile, by insisting upon the doctrine of the resurrection, which they regard as impossible; and by appealing to the evidence of miracles, which they disdain as absurd. Nevertheless, that chosen band, however small and despised, of Jews and Greeks, who have been induced by the invitations of the gospel to accept of its offers, actually discover

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have what they both seek; for both Jew and Gentile, when they are called, find the Messiah to be the power of God and the wisdom of God."

The Jews require signs.] σημεια is the reading of the best copies, instead of σημειον, a sign, which is the received text.—*To the Gentiles.* Εθνεσι is the preferable reading to Ἑλλησι, Greeks. See Griesbach.

Ch. I. Ver. 24. in that sublime doctrine all that scornful unbelievers are seeking after in vain; they see in Jesus Christ the power of God, confirming his doctrine by miracles, by the resurrection of Jesus, by the effusion of the spirit, that true sign from heaven, and by the success of the gospel; and they see the sublimest science, the truest philosophy, in a doctrine, the tendency and design of which is to make those who embrace it wise to salvation.

3. The apostle in a parenthesis suggests, that not only is that which unbelievers brand as folly, the highest wisdom, but that the teachers of this wisdom, though men of no consideration in the world, were nevertheless eminently successful in the publication of their doctrine, ver. 25—31.

25. *For this foolishness of God is wiser than* the wisdom *of men, and this weakness of God is stronger than* the strength *of men*[1].

The gospel doctrine is contemptuously treated as foolishness by the wise men of the world: but if it be foolishness, it is the foolishness of God; and, whatever they may think of it, they may assure themselves that this foolishness is infinitely wiser than all their boasted wisdom, and that it is in truth the most efficacious means of accomplishing the most important purposes. The means of supporting, and diffusing it in the world, are ridiculed as utterly incompetent to the end proposed; they are represented as

[1] Worsley's Translation.

weakness endeavouring to propagate folly: but let these scorners know, that if it be weakness, it is the weakness of God, it is a weakness which far surpasses their strength, and will prove effectual to subvert all the absurd superstitions of the vulgar, and all the refined, but equally unfounded, theories of the wise. Ch. I. Ver. 25.

For ye see your calling[2], *brethren, that not many wise men after the flesh, not many powerful, not many nobles* are employed. 26.

Observe who they are, that are chosen and commissioned for the gospel ministry, and you will soon be convinced, that little can be expected from their genius, talents, learning, or influence; for the teachers of Christianity are neither the wise, the powerful, nor the nobles of the earth.

But God has chosen the foolish things of the 27.

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[2] *Your calling.*] την κλησιν ὑμων. The expression is ambiguous, and may either signify the *persons who are called*, that is, believers in general, which is the sense in which it is usually understood, and which, though true, is not to the apostle's purpose; or, it may express ministers of the gospel, those who are employed in *calling others*, and in inviting men to accept the terms, and the blessings of the gospel. This is undoubtedly the apostle's meaning. His design is to show, that the teachers of the gospel, however despicable in the estimation of the world, and however destitute of secular advantages, were through divine assistance far more successful than the proudest teachers of the proudest systems of heathen philosophy. "*Tota disputatio ostendit eum de apostolis et evangelii doctoribus loqui.*" Castalio. Dr. Macknight justly remarks, "though it were true, that not many wise men, &c. were called, it did not suit the apostle's argument to mention it here; whereas, if the discourse were understood of the preachers of the gospel, who were employed to convert the world, all is clear and pertinent." *Not many wise*, &c. "are either called by, or made use of to propagate the gospel." Whitby.

Ch. I. *world, that he may put to shame the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world, that*
Ver. 28. *he may put to shame the mighty; and God has chosen the ignoble things of the world, and things of no account, even things that are not*[1], *that he*
29. *may abolish things that are, that none may boast in the presence of God.*

God has employed in the Christian ministry, men of no education, and who know nothing of the fashionable systems of philosophy, to put to shame those who value themselves upon their wisdom and learning, by making these ignorant men, whom they despise, the instruments of producing a change in the principles and morals of mankind, which no philosophy could effect. He has commissioned men, who have no civil or ecclesiastical influence, to produce an effect, to which all the powers of the earth were unequal. He has appointed men of the lowest rank of life, persons whom the great and wise think beneath their notice. Yea, he has even employed heathen, persons, who by the vainglorious Jews are regarded as the reptiles of a day, as mere nonentities, to humble the pride of the haughty, and the self-conceited Jew; and even to abolish the Jewish dispensation itself, and entirely to annihilate that proud distinction upon which these miserable bigots, who fancied that they engrossed to themselves the whole

[1] *Things that are not*:] *i. e.* Gentiles, vid. Locke, Taylor, Whitby. Perhaps, the apostle only means to describe the sovereign contempt in which the first preachers of the gospel were held by the learned, and the wise men of the world, both Jews and Gentiles.

of the divine favour, found their lofty pretensions. And the design of governing wisdom in this extraordinary dispensation is, that every one may be humbled in the divine presence, and may see, acknowledge, and adore the wisdom and the goodness of God. That the people who are honoured as the instruments of divine providence, in instructing and reforming the world, may have no pretence to ascribe the mighty effect to their own power, and that they who are converted and saved by their instructions, whatever gratitude they may think due to their teachers, may look beyond the instrument to Him whose mercy formed the design of their salvation, and whose wisdom and goodness carried it into effect, by means in themselves so feeble and inadequate. Ch. I. Ver. 29.

But of him are ye both justified, and sanctified, and redeemed[2] *in Christ Jesus, who from God hath been made wisdom to us; so that, as it is written, Let him who boasteth, boast in the Lord.* 30. 31.

You, O Corinthians, are yourselves illustrations

[2] *Justified*, &c.] In the Greek, "justification, and sanctification, and redemption." The construction is altered to make the apostle's meaning more intelligible. Mr. Wakefield's translation is, "But of him are ye both righteousness and holiness, and deliverance in Christ Jesus, who is become to us wisdom from God." Few of the critics, besides Mr. Wakefield, seem to have attended to the construction of the apostle's language. He does not say that Christ is made by God to us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, a phraseology, from which some have deduced mysterious and inexplicable doctrines; but that ye, in Christ, that is believing in the Christian doctrine, (which doctrine is the true philosophy which we have been taught by God,) are thereby justified, sanctified, and redeemed. This is all from God, εξ αυτου, who sent and qualified the messengers of the joyful tidings.

Ch. I. Ver. 31. of the argument upon which I am now insisting. You were once idolatrous Gentiles, but by these means and instruments, however feeble, which God himself has ordained and qualified for the work, you, by embracing the doctrine of Christ, which is our true and divine philosophy, are now *justified;* you are no longer sinners and enemies, but reconciled and pardoned. You are also *sanctified;* by your open profession of faith in Christ you are separated from the unbelieving world, and consecrated to God. You are also *redeemed:* you are rescued from the bondage of your heathen state, from your servitude to idolatry, superstition, and vice; and are brought into a state of liberty and peace. And this great change in your condition, character, and circumstances, is the work of God: you have nothing to boast of in yourselves, nor have you any reason to glory in the persons who were the instruments of your conversion and salvation; for they were nothing, and had no power to instruct or to help you, but so far as they were commissioned and assisted by God. To him, therefore, the glory belongs; and to him let the praise be given.

4. The apostle reminds the Corinthians, that when he first preached the gospel amongst them, he cautiously avoided all artificial embellishments of style and manner, and that he taught a plain doctrine in plain language; and supported it, not by subtle reasoning, but solely by an appeal to miracles, ch. ii. 1—5.

And when I came unto you, brethren, declaring the mystery[1] *of God, I came not in the pomp of language, nor of wisdom.* Ch. II. Ver. 1.

When I first preached the gospel to you, I did not affect that parade of eloquence in which some of your philosophers and public teachers excell, nor that refined, abstruse, and subtle reasoning in which others pride themselves. I did not wish to be regarded as one who was introducing a new system of philosophy; much less as one who was ambitious of setting himself up as the head of a sect[2] which was to take its name from him. The doctrine I preached was not my own invention or discovery; it was a doctrine revealed and attested by God; it was the mystery which had been concealed from former ages and generations, but was now made known by the preachers of the gospel.

For I resolved to take no notice[3] *of any thing among you but Jesus Christ, even him that was crucified.* 2.

I was determined to acknowledge no master and no superior but Jesus Christ; that very person who

[1] *Mystery.*] This is the reading of the Alexandrine and Ephrem manuscripts, and is approved by Locke and Pearce. Locke observes, that the gospel dispensation, and particularly the call of the Gentiles, is usually called *mystery* by the apostle Paul. The received text reads "testimony."

[2] *The head of a sect.*] ——— *sectari jussi:*
Si potis est; tanquam Philosophorum disciplinæ ex ipsis
Vocabula, parasiti itidem ut Gnathonici vocentur.
TERENT. *Eunuch.* act. ii. scen. 2.

[3] *To take no notice.*] So Pearce; who refers to ch. xvi. 15, 18; Acts xxiii. 5; 1 Thess. v. 12.

Ch. II. Ver. 2. was crucified as a malefactor, and whose ignominious death is represented by the enemies of the Christian doctrine as the indelible stigma of his profession. I determined to conceal nothing, but to let my hearers know at once, that if they meant to become Christians indeed, and to any valuable purpose, they must instantly renounce their dearest principles, their most cherished prejudices; and must, without hesitation, avow themselves the disciples of the crucified Nazarene, and submit to all the scorn and disgrace that was attached to such a profession. The crucified Jesus was the Master whom alone I professed to serve; and his doctrine I determined to teach without any adventitious ornaments, and, indeed, under great personal disadvantage.

3. *And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling*[1].

I laboured under a bodily infirmity which prevented me from exerting myself with that spirit and vigour which, in other places and upon other occasions, I possessed; and my mind was oppressed with anxiety and fear, lest my labours should be unsuccessful, and lest a people so vain and so fondly attached to artificial eloquence and to curious speculation as the Corinthians, would not listen to a doc-

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[1] *In much trembling.*] It is uncertain whether from bodily disorder or mental anxiety, probably both. Vide 2 Cor. xii. "He refers," says Archbishop Newcome, "to his bodily infirmities, his less graceful speech, and manual labour, 2 Cor. x. 10; also to solicitous diligence in preaching, and fear of giving offence."

trine which presented itself in so humble and so obnoxious a form. CH. II.

And my doctrine and my preaching was not with the persuasion of wisdom[2], *but with the manifestation of a powerful spirit*[3]; *that your faith might not be founded in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* VER. 4. 5.

Neither in my private discourses nor in public addresses did I attempt to win you over to the profession of Christianity by the arts of eloquence or the refinements of reasoning, upon which the philosophers and those who would now withdraw your allegiance from the gospel, set so high a value; I contented myself with stating plain facts in plain and simple language, and with appealing to the miracles which I wrought among you, and to the miraculous powers which I communicated to you, in proof of the doctrine which I taught. And this course I pursued for the express purpose that your faith might not rest on human artifice or human reasoning, but upon the satisfactory and indubitable proofs of a divine interposition.

This is one instance among many, in which the

[2] *Persuasion of wisdom:*] ἐν πειθοῖ σοφίας. This reading is introduced into Griesbach's inner margin as of good authority. The received text reads "in the persuasive words of man's wisdom;" the objections to which are stated by Pearce.

[3] *Manifestation,* &c.] So Pearce. Gr. "with demonstration of the spirit and of power;" which is the rendering of Newcome. *q. d.* The doctrine which I preached was not confirmed by eloquence or reasoning, but by the public and incontrovertible operations and gifts of the holy spirit.

Ch. II. Ver. 5. apostle appeals to his miraculous powers in attestation of the truth of his doctrine; an appeal which, in the circumstances in which it was made, would have argued insanity in the appellant, if the facts had not been incontrovertible. And the existence of these powers is the only satisfactory method of accounting for the rapid progress of a doctrine so unpopular, from a teacher so obnoxious, among a people so vain and supercilious as the Corinthians. And in the circumstances in which the apostle stood, he justly appeals to his miracles, not merely as facts calculated to excite attention, but as proper and sufficient proofs of the truth of his doctrine; for it is impossible that God should have interposed to suspend the laws of nature, in order to support a gross and mischievous imposition upon mankind.

5. Nevertheless, the doctrine which the apostle taught was the only true wisdom: unknown, indeed, to the heathen philosophy or to the Jewish hierarchy, but revealed by the spirit of God, and acknowledged by those who were truly wise, ver. 6—10.

6. *Nevertheless, we speak wisdom among those that are perfect*[1]*; but not the wisdom of this age*[2]*, nor of the rulers of this age, who are vanishing*[3].

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[1] *Those that are perfect.*] "*Perfect* here," says Mr. Locke, "is the same with *spiritual*, ver. 15; one that is so perfectly well apprized of the divine nature and original of the Christian religion, that he sees and acknowledges it to be a pure revelation from God, and not in the least the product of human discovery, parts, or learning; and so deriving it wholly from what

Persons well instructed in the Christian religion plainly see that the doctrine we teach is the truest philosophy, the only doctrine that deserves the name of wisdom. It is not, indeed, that wisdom in which the philosophers of Greece, or the leaders and teachers of the Jews, make their boast. They treat it with scorn: yet it is a doctrine that will be eventually subversive of the pretended wisdom both of the Jew and Gentile; which is indeed even now giving way before it.

Ch. II. Ver. 6.

But we speak the mysterious wisdom of God[4]; 7.

God has taught by his spirit in the sacred scriptures, allows not the least part of it to be ascribed to the skill or abilities of men. Thus *perfect* is opposed to *carnal*, ch. iii. 1, 3; *i. e.* such babes in Christianity, such weak and mistaken Christians, that they thought the gospel was to be managed like human arts and sciences among men of the world, and those were better instructed and more in the right who followed this master or teacher rather than another; whereas in the school of Christ, all is to be built upon the authority of God alone."—"*Perfect*, perfectly instructed, or of full stature in Christ: νηπιος is opposed, ch. iii. 1, xiii. 11, xiv. 20; Heb. v. 13, 14." Newcome.

[2] *This age.*] "Αιων ουτος seems to me to signify commonly, if not constantly in the New Testament, that state which, during the Mosaical constitution, men, whether Jews or Gentiles, were in, as contra-distinguished to the evangelical state or constitution; which is commonly called αιων μελλων, or ερχομενος, 'the world (age) to come.'" Locke.

[3] *Are vanishing.*] "των καταργουμενων. The Jewish rulers, and their very constitution itself, were upon the point of being abolished and swept away." Locke.

[4] *Mysterious wisdom of God.*] Gr. "wisdom of God in a mystery." The mystery is, the calling of the Gentiles into the church. See Newcome. This is the wisdom of God: that divine philosophy which excelled the wisdom of Greece and Rome. This mystery was "concealed in the mysterious and obscure prophecies of the Old Testament." Locke.—Αιωνων, ages. See Locke.

Ch. II. Ver. 7. *that hidden* wisdom *which God pre-ordained before the ages, that we might be glorified*[1].

The doctrine we teach is a divine philosophy. It was long a mystery unknown to Jew or Gentile. It is a scheme of benevolence and wisdom, which the Father of the human race formed and determined in his eternal counsels before the legation of Moses, the call of Abraham, or even the creation of the world; and one branch of that wise and glorious plan was, that we, the apostles of Jesus, should have the honour of promulgating this divine doctrine to the world.

8. A wisdom *which none of the rulers of this age*[2] *knew; for, if they had known* it, *they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*[3].

None of the leaders and instructors of the Jewish nation, none of the scribes and pharisees, the priests and doctors of the law, the wise and subtle

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[1] *That we might be glorified.*] Gr. "to our glory."—"in order to glorify us." Pearce. See Isa. lx. 21, lxi. 3.—"to the glory of us who understand, receive, and preach it." Locke.

[2] *Rulers of this age.*] "He that well considers ver. 28 of the foregoing chapter, and ver. 8 of this, may find reason to think that the apostle here principally designs, the rulers and great men of the Jewish nation." Locke; who remarks, that Paul is here covertly opposing a false apostle who was himself a Jew, 2 Cor. xi. 22, and who valued himself upon that account.

[3] *Lord of glory.*] There is no reason to believe that the apostle refers here to any thing peculiar in the nature of Christ; but as he had just before spoken of the apostles and first teachers of the gospel as honoured by the commission which was given to them to publish the gospel, so he here speaks of Jesus Christ as the Lord of glory, or the glorious Lord who had been preeminently honoured by God as the messenger of the new dispensation, and who had been put to death by the Jewish rulers, through ignorance of his divine commission.

disputants of the schools, ever divined or anticipated this liberal and most benevolent plan of divine wisdom, that the heathen, whom they treated with such contempt and scorn, should be received into the divine favour, and admitted into the family of God. Their prejudiced minds were unequal to the discovery of this glorious truth, though it was foretold by their own prophets. And so far were their understandings from being open to conviction, that they regarded with scorn, they insulted and crucified, that divine teacher whom God had honoured with supernatural distinction, had placed at the head of the new dispensation, and had commissioned as the first publisher of this glorious doctrine: a crime which they never would have perpetrated, if they had entertained right views of his character and of the object of his mission. Ch. II. Ver. 8.

But we speak[4] *as the scripture expresses it* (Isa. lxiv. 4), *the things which eye hath not seen and ear hath not heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man*, namely, *the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* 9.

The great object of our mission is to unfold and exhibit the blessings which God has in store for them who receive the gospel, and who yield a practical re-

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[4] *We speak.*] It is necessary to supply these or some such words, in order to complete the sentence. See Pearce.—*As the scripture expresses it:* Gr. "as it is written." The quotation is from Isa. lxiv. 4. The words in the original are part of the prayer of the Hebrew nation, in a season of great distress: they are evidently quoted by the apostle only in the way of accommodation.

Ch. II. Ver. 9. gard to it; and which, in the emphatical language of the prophet Isaiah, lxiv. 4, exceed all that sense has ever experienced, or that imagination can conceive.

10. *But God has revealed them to us*[1] *by his spirit.* What human reason could never have discovered, nor sense enjoyed, nor imagination conceived, this God has been pleased to reveal to us his apostles, to me, who first preached the gospel at Corinth, by his holy spirit. And it is under that authority, of which I gave ample proof while I resided among you, and which none of the opposers of this doctrine can exhibit, that I expect and require a submissive attention and a steadfast adherence to the doctrine which I teach.

6. God himself, who alone knows all his own thoughts and purposes of mercy to mankind, has vouchsafed to reveal them to the apostles and teachers of the gospel.

—10. *For the spirit searches all things, even the deep*
11. *things of God. For who knoweth the* thoughts[2] *of a man except the spirit of a man, which is within him? so likewise, no one knoweth the* thoughts *of God but the spirit of God.*

The spirit of a man is a man himself, who alone is conscious of what passes within him. It is plain,

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[1] *To us.*] The apostle "speaks in the plural number, to avoid ostentation." Newcome.

[2] *The thoughts.*] So Wakefield. The common version renders the text, "the *things* of God."

therefore, that by the spirit of God the apostle means God himself; who alone knows the depth of his own counsels, all his own thoughts and purposes of wisdom and mercy to mankind, and reveals them to whomsoever he thinks fit. There is no reason, therefore, to suppose that the spirit of God is an intelligent agent, distinct from the Father, whether equal or subordinate, who is acquainted with the Father's counsels: and the use of personal terms will by no means prove it, for nothing is more common in all ages and countries than to apply personal epithets to inanimate or imaginary beings. *q. d.* The spirit which has revealed this doctrine to us is the spirit of God himself; who must be as intimately acquainted with all the gracious and unfathomable purposes of his own wisdom and mercy, as the mind of man is acquainted with its own thoughts. Ch. II. Ver. 11.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world[3], *but that spirit which is from God; that we may understand the things which God has graciously vouchsafed to us*[4]. 12.

The spirit of the world here signifies, the spirit of Judaism. It is a spirit which misinterprets the prophecies; as though it was their great scope and object to foretell the grandeur of the Jewish nation,

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[3] *Spirit of the world.*] "As he puts the princes of the world, ver. 6, 8, for the rulers of the Jews, so he here puts the "spirit of the world" for the notions of the Jews; that worldly spirit with which they interpreted the Old Testament, and the prophecies of the Messiah and his kingdom." Locke.

[4] *Graciously vouchsafed:*] χαρισθεντα. So Pearce. In the common version, "freely given to us."

Ch. II. Ver. 12. and the destruction of their temporal enemies. This was the sense in which the scribes and pharisees, and the teachers of the law, interpreted the Old Testament scriptures; and the Jewish dispensation itself is, in the writings of the apostle, distinguished by the appellation here used, Gal. vi. 14: "By which the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world." But the apostle, after he had been converted to the Christian doctrine, had renounced this worldly spirit; and in lieu of it he had received the spirit of God, divine illuminations with regard to the gospel dispensation, by which he perfectly understood the value and the large extent of that great blessing, which God had so freely given to mankind by Jesus Christ, and which his narrow-minded countrymen were not able to comprehend. *q. d.* The spirit by which we have been instructed is very different from that of the Jewish teachers, who interpret the prophecies in a secular sense: whereas we have learned their true and spiritual meaning, and have been taught to form a much more correct idea of the nature and value of the promised blessings.

7. This doctrine so revealed, the apostles explained in a suitable manner to those who were disposed to receive instruction, ver. 13.

13. *Which things we also speak, not in discourses dictated by human wisdom, but dictated by the spirit*[1]*, explaining spiritual things to spiritual persons*[2].

[1] *Dictated by the spirit.*] The received text reads, "the *holy* spirit;" but Griesbach drops the word ἁγιᾳ, upon the authority

This divine doctrine, communicated by inspiration, we do not adorn with the arts of eloquence or the speculations of philosophy, but we teach them in plain intelligible language, in the way in which we are divinely instructed to communicate the joyful tidings; and we explain these sublime and spiritual truths to those who, having renounced the narrow prejudices of Judaism, and the pernicious superstitions of heathenism, are disposed and qualified to receive the pure and simple religion of Jesus. Ch. II. Ver. 13.

8. The speculative reasoner cannot comprehend the nature and ground of the believer's faith; which rests wholly upon the instructions of those who are immediately commissioned by Christ, ver. 14—16.

And the animal man[3] *receiveth not the things of* 14.

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of the best copies. A few copies read διδαχῃ, "the teaching of the spirit;" which Pearce prefers, as he does not think that the apostle could mean to say that his words were inspired: he thinks this reading confirmed by ver. 4.

[2] *Explaining.*] συγκρινοντες. Bishop Pearce cites several passages in which συγκρινω signifies, to explain. Gen. xi. 8, 16, 22, xli. 12, 13, 15. He also thinks that the connexion requires that πνευματικοις should be understood of men, and not things. In the next verses the apostle assigns a reason why he explains spiritual things to spiritual men, viz. because the animal man (ψυχικος) cannot comprehend them.—"explaining spiritual things in spiritual words." Wakefield. The common translation is, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual:" "that is," says Archbishop Newcome, "comparing one revelation with another. 2 Cor. x. 12. Using our reason, as Peter did, Acts x. 28; and Paul himself, Acts xvi. 9, 10." This is a very good sense, but Bishop Pearce's seems preferable.

[3] *The animal man.*] ψυχικος, as contra-distinguished to πνευματικος, the spiritual man, ver. 14, 15. "The one signifies a man that has no higher principles to build on than those of natural reason; the other, a man who founds his faith and religion

Ch. II. Ver. 14. *the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand* them, *because they are spiritually discerned.*

The man who has no other assistance than the light of nature, and who is guided by his own understanding only, cannot attain to, nor comprehend, those truths which are revealed to such as accept the Christian revelation. To such persons, blinded by narrow and inveterate prejudice, or conceited of their eloquence and their sublime speculations, the doctrine of the gospel appears mere folly and absurdity. In their judgement, nothing can be more ridiculous than to hope for salvation from a condemned and crucified malefactor, or to desire and expect the resurrection of that corruptible mass which perishes in the grave. Nor is it possible that men whose minds are so strongly warped, should be convinced of the truth and excellence of the Christian doctrine, which can only be apprehended by those whose minds are in a right state to receive them; that is, who are convinced of their own ignorance and inability, and desirous of receiving heavenly instruction.

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on divine revelation." Locke. Archbishop Newcome renders the word "the sensual man;" and in his note explains it from Le Clerc, "he that is wholly devoted and enslaved to earthly things, and entirely taken up with the things of this life." But Mr. Locke's interpretation seems to suit the connexion best. The word *spiritual* being used to express one who rests his faith upon miracles: *animal*, which is opposed to it, naturally signifies one who is opposed to miracles, and will only yield his assent to rational arguments.

Whereas the spiritual man discerneth[1] *all things, while he himself is discerned by no one.* Ch. II. Ver. 15.

A man of a humble and teachable disposition, who is willing to lay aside his prejudices, whether Jewish or heathen, and to receive the gospel upon its proper evidence, will understand the doctrine of Christ, will see its reasonableness and truth, and its admirable congruity to the moral state and circumstances of the world, and will admire and adore the wisdom and goodness of God in the manifestation of this glorious doctrine. While others, who remain involved in their ignorance, their prejudices, their bigotry, and their vices, are astonished at the language and conduct of the true believer, and are perfectly at a loss to comprehend the evidence by which he is convinced of the doctrine which he embraces, and the principles by which he is governed. "He remains like a man endued with sight amongst those born blind, who are incapable of apprehending what is clear to him; and, amidst their own darkness, can-

[1] *Discerneth.*] ανακρινει. "the spiritual man discerneth every one." Wakefield.—"Ανακρινω, in its primary signification, is to examine as a judge in a court of justice: hence it comes to signify the next step a judge takes, viz. to form a judgement. This sense will suit all the places where the word is used, in this and the next verse." Bishop Pearce.—"He that lays his foundation in divine revelation can judge what is, and what is not, the doctrine of the gospel; who is, and who is not, a good preacher of the word of God: but others, who go not beyond the discoveries made by the natural faculties, cannot judge of such an one whether he preaches right or not." Locke.

Bishop Pearce inserts this verse in a parenthesis, and connects the 13th with the 15th; viz. "The animal man cannot know that (not *because*) they are to be spiritually judged of—for who knoweth the mind of the Lord," &c.

Ch. II. Ver. 15. not participate of, nor understand, those beautiful ideas and pleasing sensations which light pours in upon him [1]."

16. *For who knoweth the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct him*[2]*? but we have the mind of Christ.*

Who that is not instructed by revelation can understand the mind and will of God, so as to be properly qualified to teach it to others, and to communicate instruction to the spiritual man? that is, to those whose minds are open to receive the truth. None of those who set themselves up in opposition to us, the apostles of Christ, none of those who value themselves upon their skill in Jewish or heathen philosophy, are on that account qualified to instruct men in the truths of the gospel; but we, who are authorized apostles, and who have learned the Christian doctrine by the instruction of the spirit of God, and by supernatural illumination, are assured that we are in possession of the genuine truths of the Christian religion, and that we are duly authorized and qualified to communicate these important truths to all who are prepared to receive them. And being in possession of the true doctrine of Christ, and having given the most satisfactory proofs that we are so, we have a right to challenge the attentive and persevering regard of our hearers.

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[1] See Doddridge *in loc.*

[2] *Instruct him:*] *i. e.* the spiritual man. Locke, Newcome.—"Who knoweth the mind of the Lord, that he should teach it? αυτον, *i. e.* ταυτ." Pearce. The words are a quotation from Isa. xl. 13.

III.

The apostle, returning from his digression concerning the philosophy of the Christian religion, resumes his animadversions upon the party spirit which prevailed at Corinth, and assures the Corinthians, that the true and authorized teachers of the gospel disclaimed all pretensions to establish themselves as the heads of rival parties, and aspired to no other distinction than that of being fellow servants of the same master, and fellow labourers in the same cause, ch. iii. 1—iv. 5. Ch. III.

1. The apostle animadverts upon the party zeal which prevailed at Corinth, as a proof of the imperfection of their character, and of the prevalence of a heathenish and worldly spirit, ch. iii. 1—4.

And I, my brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual persons[3], *but as to carnal ones.* Ver. 1.

When I was with you, I saw so much of an unbecoming spirit, that I could hardly regard you as genuine converts to Christianity, being so deeply involved in Jewish or heathen prejudices, which you

[3] *Spiritual persons,*] willing to take principles on the credit of revelation. *Carnal,* who accept of no assistance but from their own reason. See Locke. The same opposition is here observed as between the animal man ψυχικος, and the spiritual man πνευματικος, in the preceding chapter. Carnal, or babes in Christ, *i. e.* "such as had not their understandings yet fully opened to the true grounds of the Christian religion, but retained a great many childish thoughts about it, as appeared by their divisions, one for the doctrine of his master Paul, another for his master Apollos, which, if they had been spiritual, they could not have done." Locke.

Ch. III. were so little disposed to resign to the authority of divine revelation.

Ver. 2. *I fed you with milk as babes*[1] *in Christ, not with meat, for you were not then able to receive it, neither are ye even yet able*[2].

Seeing you were so much disposed to cavil and dispute, I taught you only the plainest and simplest principles of the Christian doctrine, reserving the rest till, by the practical influence of the first, you were brought to a better temper. I treated you as babes with the simplest food; hoping that you would digest it easily; and that you would grow and thrive under this gentle treatment, and fostering care. But I am disappointed: you are still children, unfit to be nourished with strong and generous food; unable to receive those doctrines which would subdue your prejudices, and elevate you to the full maturity and dignity of the Christian character.

3. *Because you are still carnal; for while there is among you emulation, and contentions, and divi-*

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[1] *Babes.*] Mr. Wakefield, upon the authority of Clemens Alex., and some ancient versions, reads νηπιοις for νηπιοις, and joins it to the beginning of the second verse.

[2] *Neither are ye even yet able.*] Qu. What was that meat which the Corinthians could not digest? that doctrine which they could not receive? Not surely, that Gentiles were to be received into the church without submitting to the yoke of the law: for to this, the Corinthians in general could have no objection, nor did Paul ever conceal it. Was it the vanity and worthlessness of all their boasted systems of philosophy? Or was it the utter insignificance of all external rites and forms; and the perfect spirituality of the Christian religion, which imposes the strongest restraints upon all irregular affections, and requires purity of heart, and integrity of character as the only sacrifice which God will accept?

sions, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk as unconverted *men? for when one saith, I am of Paul;* *and another, I of Apollos; are ye not carnal*[3] *?*

Ch. III. Ver. 4.

I cannot even yet instruct you to valuable purpose, in the principles, and in the pure and humble spirit of the Christian religion; for you have still so much of the spirit of heathenism, that you are unwilling to listen to them. Is not my charge just? I appeal to your own understanding and consciences. When you dispute and quarrel amongst yourselves; when, instead of listening to the instructions and imbibing the spirit of your Christian teachers, you are setting them up as heads of opposite parties, and abusing each other as retainers of different sects; is this, think you, the spirit of Christianity? is not this the spirit of your unconverted state? is it not the same spirit which prevails amongst your heathen neighbours? who value themselves upon being the

[3] *Carnal,*] actuated by a spirit opposite to that of Christianity, a proud, contentious, conceited spirit, arising from ignorance of the proper basis and spirit of Christianity.—κατα ανθρωπον, as men, *i. e.* as other men, as unbelievers, as unconverted heathen. So Sampson, when his hair was cut off, is said to be like a man, *i. e.* another man, Judges xvi. 7. And Christ submitting himself to death became in fashion as a man, *i. e.* as another man; he employed none of his miraculous powers to deliver himself, Phil. ii. 7, 8.

Mr. Locke, from comparing this verse with ch. iv. 6, conjectures that "the division in this church was only into two opposite parties, whereof, the one adhered to St. Paul, the other stood up for their head, a false apostle, who opposed St. Paul. It is true that St. Paul, in his epistles to the Corinthians, generally speaks of these, his opposers, in the plural number; but it is to be remembered, that he speaks so of himself too, which, as it was the less invidious way with regard to himself, so it was the softer way toward his opposers."

Ch. III. Ver. 4. disciples, one of this eminent philosopher, and another of that, holding all other sects and teachers in aversion and contempt.

2. The ministers of the gospel affect to be nothing more than servants of God, and fellow labourers in the same field of usefulness, ver. 5—9.

5. *Who then is Paul, or, who* is *Apollos? they are ministers*[1], *by whose means ye became believers.*

And what then are these men whose names you assume, and under whose banners you desire to rank yourselves? If they are faithful to their trust, they will most readily acknowledge that they are not masters, but servants employed by the same chief upon the same errand, namely, to invite you into the Christian community, and to instruct you in the Christian faith.

6. *And accordingly, as the Lord hath given to each of us*[2], *I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.*

The teachers of Christianity have no reason to boast in their own attainments, nor have their disciples any reason to set them up as heads of parties.

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[1] *They are ministers.*] The received text reads αλλ' η, "*but* ministers," which word is wanting in the best copies, and omitted by Griesbach.

[2] *And accordingly as the Lord hath given to each of us.*] These words, which, in the common copies, are at the end of the fifth verse, are by Bowyer and Wakefield placed at the beginning of the sixth. *q. d.* We are both servants; and as our common master has appointed us, so we labour in our respective stations and offices in the vineyard; one plants, the other waters; but to no purpose without the divine blessing.

Whatever be their qualification or their furniture, it is all given by God. It is he who has instructed them in Christian truth, who has given them those powers of reasoning or of eloquence, which they possess, who has appointed them their respective stations in the church, and who crowns their labours with his blessing. To him all their success is owing, to him all praise is due. I first planted the church at Corinth, Apollos afterwards communicated further instruction, and confirmed and encouraged you in your Christian profession. Each of us derived his commission and talent from God, and he crowned our labours with success, for without his blessing, our exertions would have been in vain. Ch. III. Ver. 6.

So that neither is he who planteth any thing, nor he who watereth; but God who giveth the increase. 7.

No teacher of the gospel, whatever be his ability, his station, his labours, or his success, has any right to arrogate merit to himself, or to set up himself, or to be exalted by others, above the rest of his fellow labourers, equally diligent, equally faithful, and perhaps equally useful with himself in their respective spheres. The wisest, the most active, the most eloquent, the most learned, and the most useful, are nothing without the blessing of God; and the weakest and the most contemptible instruments, even they whom the world regards with indignation and scorn, are all-powerful in his hands. Whether we are employed in the conversion of unbelievers, or in the edification of Christians, all our ability for the

Ch. III. sacred office is derived from God, and all the honour of success must be ascribed to him.

Ver. 8. *Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one*[1]; *and every one shall receive his own reward according to his own labours.*

The faithful preachers of the gospel are all united in one employment, in promoting one and the same grand design. They form one body under the direction of one head; but though united as a body, they are distinguished as individuals, and every one shall receive a reward not proportioned to that success which it was not in his power to command, and which God did not see fit to grant, but to that generous and fervent zeal, that unwearied diligence, and that persevering resolution, with which he employed himself in promoting the great cause of truth and virtue.

9. *For we are fellow-labourers in the service of God*[2], *ye are the field of God*[3].

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[1] *Are one.*] "one thing in design, interest, affection, *idem agunt negotium.*" Grotius. Newcome.

[2] *We are fellow-labourers.*] "This is a sublime idea," says Dr. Priestley, "and should inspire all who labour in the propagation of the gospel with zeal and courage. It is a work which God himself has undertaken, and we are acting under and together with him." This remark is made, admitting the common to be the true translation, *we are workers together with God.* And it is indeed a noble and an encouraging thought. But considering that the design of the apostle is to show that all the ministers of the gospel are upon an equality, as being fellow-servants of the same master, I prefer the translation of Dr. Hammond and Bishop Pearce: "*we are fellow-labourers of God;*" *i. e.* we labour together in the work of God. See 2 Cor. i. 24. "το συν *non referri debet ad Deum, sed ad doctores.*" Rosenmuller.

The most eminent, the most faithful, the best qualified, and the most useful teachers among us are neither your masters, nor their own; we are fellow-servants, joint labourers in the field of God. You are that field which it is our duty to cultivate with our best attention, care and skill; and whether we are employed in breaking up the fallow ground, in sowing the precious seed of evangelical truth, in watching and cherishing the tender plant, or in clearing it from noxious weeds, we are in our respective departments all employed by the same master, and all co-operating in the same design. We desire not to be set at variance with, nor to be considered as acting in opposition to, each other. Least of all would we presume to pursue our own interested and ambitious views, to the neglect of our proper duty, to the defrauding of our common master, and to the injury of the crop, in that portion of the vineyard which is allotted to our management. Ch. III. Ver. 9.

3. The apostle, changing his metaphor, reminds the Corinthians that he had himself laid the foundation of the Christian temple, and warns them to build the superstructure with materials which will stand the test, ver. 9—15.

Ye are *the building of God.* —9.

Having compared himself and his fellow-labourers to servants employed by the same master, and

[3] *The field of God.*] γεωργιον· So Whitby, Bishop Pearce, and Rosenmuller. See Prov. xxiv. 30, xxxi. 16. LXX. "γεωργιον est omne quod ab agricolis excolitur." Grotius.

Ch. III. Ver. 9. working together in the same field, and thence arguing the impropriety of giving one an undue preference over another; he now changes the metaphor, and suggests the same important conclusion, from comparing the ministers of the gospel to labourers employed by the same proprietor in the erection of a sacred edifice: and here he takes occasion to intimate, that under his character of an apostle, and as the first preacher of the gospel at Corinth, he had been employed in the most honourable department, that of laying the foundation; and also to hint, that the doctrines introduced by those, who set themselves up in opposition to him, were of no real value, and were foreign to the nature and design of true Christianity.

10. *According to the favour of God*[1], *given to me as a skilful architect, I laid a foundation, and another buildeth upon it; but let every one take care how*
11. *he buildeth on it. For no man can lay another foundation, instead of that which is laid, which is, Jesus the Christ*[2].

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[1] *Favour of God.*] That is, the apostolic office with which I have been honoured by God. So Rom. i. 5, grace and the apostleship signify the favour of the apostolic office. Eph. iii. 8. To me who am less than the least, &c. is this favour given, *i. e.* the apostleship to the Gentiles. "χαρις τȣ Θεȣ, *beneficium Dei, hoc loco, ut sæpius, munus apostoli videtur significare.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *Jesus the Christ.*] "ὁς ες-ιν, Ιησȣς ὁ Χρις-ος, even this, that Jesus is the Christ." L'Enfant.—"I, like a skilful architect, have laid a sure foundation, which is, Jesus the Messiah, the sole and only foundation of Christianity; beside which, no man can lay another." Locke. See also Wakefield, whose translation I have borrowed. Nothing can be more obvious, than that the apostle's meaning is, that the only fundamental doctrine of the

The favour given to the apostle was the apostolic office, and the miraculous gifts and powers, with which he was endued, and by which he was enabled to preach the gospel with success. Aided by these powers, he had first taught the Christian religion at Corinth. He had laid the foundation of the spiritual temple. And that foundation was, that Jesus was the Messiah. This is the fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion. Jesus is the anointed, the holy, the long predicted, and divinely authorized prophet of God, and whatever he teaches under this character must be received as of the highest authority. This was the doctrine which the apostle first inculcated; and if this was sincerely received, and practically felt, every thing else would naturally follow; the sublime doctrine, and the pure morality of the gospel would gradually take place of the errors and vices of a heathen state. They who succeeded the apostles as teachers of the church, built upon this foundation. They did not pretend to dispute the Messiahship of Jesus, knowing that by so doing they would forfeit the very name of Christians, and would gain no attention from any who professed the Christian faith. The apostle, as the principal architect, and perfectly skilled in his profession, had laid his

Ch. III. Ver. 11.

Christian religion, is, that Jesus is the Messiah foretold by the Jewish prophets; who is himself the chief of all the prophets of God: whoever believes this, is a member of the Christian community, whatever errors may be attached to his belief: whoever denies that Jesus is the Messiah, is an unbeliever; he is not a member of the Christian church. The apostle had laid down the same doctrine somewhat more at large, Rom. x. 6—10.

Ch. III. Ver. 11. foundation with care and judgement. He had, with great prudence, surmounted all the prejudices of the Corinthians against this doctrine, and had led them to acknowledge the crucified Jew as their teacher and their head; and to regard this fact as the indispensable principle and ground-work of Christianity; the profession of which, was the sure and only title to admission into the Christian community. The apostle cautions the labourers who come after him, to beware with what materials they build upon this foundation: that is, let them take heed what doctrines they teach as articles of the Christian faith, and let nothing be attached to Christianity, but what really belongs to it.

12. *Now if any one build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones,* or *wood, grass, straw*[2],
13. *every work will be made manifest: for that day will show it; because,* the day *is to be revealed*[3] *in*

[1] *Gold, silver, wood,* &c.] "Good and bad doctrines are meant." Newcome. So Locke, Pearce, and most of the commentators. "*Sicuti fundamento jacto superstrui potest vel domus regia, vel casa rustica, ita etiam initiis doctrinæ Christianæ recte et vere a me traditis, addi potest copiosior Institutio, vera aut falsa, majoris vel minoris pretii et momenti.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *The day is to be revealed.*] Bishop Pearce contends that "ἡμέρα and not ἔργον is the nominative case to ἀποκαλυπτεται. For it is a true inference, that the day will show what every man's work is, because it will appear with fire, and it is the nature of fire to try all things; but it is no inference to say, that the day will try every man's work, because that work will be revealed in fire." "*Aurum ignibus invictum est; argentum et marmora diu igni resistunt; minus lignum; minime stramen et culmus. Sic etiam quod religionem attinet, vera durant; quæ autem in religione sunt minus certa et utilia, ea facile abjiciuntur quum varii casus incidunt.*" Rosenmuller. It is hardly necessary to observe, that as the building of which the apostle treats is allego-

fire, and the fire shall try every man's work, of what kind it is. Ch. III. Ver. 13.

The doctrines of some teachers are pure and genuine; they are derived from Jesus himself, or from those who were instructed and commissioned by him; they are acknowledged truths of the Christian religion, and productive of the best practical effect; they are a superstructure of costly and solid materials, erected upon a firm and immoveable foundation. But the doctrines of other teachers are false, futile, and useless; they attach notions to Christianity, which have no real connexion with it, which are a disgrace and deformity to it, which appear as a superstructure of wood and stubble upon a foundation of adamant; incongruous, unsightly, and contemptible.

And there is a day coming, when this superstructure shall be tried by a severe test. It is that day, in which the great master of the building is described as about to appear in flaming fire, when he shall take cognizance of the works of those who were employed by him, and distribute their wages. Then every one's work will be tried, and none shall be approved, that cannot stand this decisive test.

If any man's superstructure abide, he will receive a reward. But if any man's work be burned, he will suffer loss; yet, he will himself be saved, though as passing *through fire.* 14. 15.

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rical, the flames by which the materials are to be tried, must be figurative, and not real.—"The day of judgement; which day will be revealed with fire, 2 Pet. iii. 10: or, as it were, with fire; God trying every work and doctrine." Newcome.

Ch. III. Ver. 15. If the materials are sound and compact, and not injured by the fire, the faithful and the skilful workman shall receive just remuneration. He that has taught the genuine doctrine of Christianity, that doctrine which shall be approved in the day of reckoning, shall receive an ample reward for his wise and faithful labours, in whatever way he may have been treated, or with whatever contempt his work may have been regarded by his fellow-labourers.

But if the materials will not stand the test, if they are unsound and perishable, they will be consumed; nor must the negligent or ignorant labourer, who so officiously busied himself in injuring and disgracing the building of his Lord, expect to receive the wages of the skilful workman. Yet, if his failure be owing to a defect in judgement, and not a malignity of intention, he shall not himself be condemned. He shall not be answerable for the mischief which his errors have occasioned; he shall escape from destruction, yea, even with impunity, but not without some appearance of hazard; just as a man, who, when his house is on fire, rushes through the flames to save his life.

The meaning is, that they who teach for Christianity, doctrines which are foreign to its nature, and disgraceful to its character, however highly they may think of themselves, however busily they may be employed, however warmly approved, yet will not, in the day of trial, meet with the approbation they expect, nor will they be entitled to the same reward as

the more skilful, judicious, and successful labourer. Nevertheless, if these errors were owing to ignorance and invincible prejudice, and were propagated without any bad design, the teachers and abettors of them shall be forgiven; and though they may fail of the reward which they fondly expected, they shall not be condemned, like those who have wilfully disfigured and injured their master's work. Let no one, therefore, rashly assume the office of a Christian teacher, without due deliberation, and diligent preparation for the office; nor let any one deem it a matter of little consequence, whether the doctrine he teaches be true or erroneous. There is a day of trial at hand, and great will be the disappointment of many who now think most highly of their own performances, and who look for the most distinguished reward. Ch. III. Ver. 15.

4. The community of believers is a temple consecrated to God, and inhabited by his spirit, which must upon no account be defiled and profaned, ver. 16, 17.

Know ye not[1], *that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?* 16.

[1] *Know ye not.*] It is observable, that this question occurs no less than ten times in this epistle; and as it is not usual in the rest of the apostle's writings, there must no doubt be some reason for the frequency of its repetition here. Now it is to be remembered, that this epistle is written in reply to a letter addressed by the Corinthians to the apostle; and as it is evident that they were a vain people, conceited of their superior wisdom, and valuing themselves upon the supposed superiority of the respective teachers under whose banners they were enlisted, it is not at all improbable, that they discovered something of

Ch. III. Ver. 16

You that profess to know so much, and who value yourselves so highly upon your profound and curious speculations, are you ignorant of, or inattentive to, this important fact, that as a community of believers, you are a temple consecrated to God, and inhabited by his spirit? By the profession of the Christian faith, you devote yourselves to God; by the gift of his spirit he announces his acceptance of your services, his approbation of your doctrine, and his expectation that you will maintain unblemished purity of character.

17. *If any man corrupt*[1] *the temple of God, God*

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this unbecoming vanity in the strain of their letter. Indeed we know that this was actually the case. For it appears from the very words of their letter which are cited by the apostle, ch. viii. 1, that at the same time when they were putting a question to him under the pretence of requesting his judgement, they introduce it with an observation, that it was hardly worth while to trouble him about it, as they had pretty well made up their mind upon the subject. "Now concerning things offered to idols." Thus the apostle introduces the second head of inquiry; and immediately proceeds to cite the words of their letter. "We know that we all have knowledge," an expression upon which the apostle immediately animadverts with considerable severity. See the comment and notes upon that chapter, also those of Bishop Pearce. Now as it is probable that this was not the only specimen of self-conceit in the letter of the Corinthians, and as it is of itself sufficiently indicative of their character, it seems not unlikely that the apostle by his frequent repetition of the question, "Know ye not," means tacitly to reprove their unseemly conceit of their superior knowledge, *q.d.* You that make such pretensions to superior knowledge, do not you know this? or can you be ignorant of that?

[1] *If any man corrupt*, &c.] Mr. Locke conjectures that St. Paul here alludes to the false apostle, who, it is probable, by the strength of his party supporting and retaining the fornicator mentioned ch. v., had defiled the church; which may be the reason why the apostle so often mentions fornication in this

will destroy him; for the temple of God is holy, Ch. III. Ver. 17.
which holy temple *be ye*[2].

If the unskilful labourer build with worthless materials upon the precious foundation, he shall lose all the reward of his work; but if any man intentionally and wickedly endeavours to demolish the foundation itself, and to overthrow this spiritual temple, either by introducing doctrines subversive of true religion, or by perverting Christian liberty to licentious practice, God will visit him with just and proportionable punishment. For the temple of God is a holy temple, and when it ceases to be such, it ceases to be his. Do you therefore, who by the profession of Christianity acknowledge yourselves to be devoted to him, by the purity of your doctrine and the sanctity of your lives, support the credit of that sacred and honourable relation.

5. The apostle repeats his warning to the Corinthians against corrupting the doctrine of Christ with

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epistle, and that in some places with particular emphasis, ch. v. 9, vi. 13—20.—If any man *corrupt*, God will *destroy*. The word in the original is the same (φθειρω), but being used by the apostle in different senses, could not be rendered conveniently by the same word: Archbishop Newcome has attempted it, but I think without success: "If any man corrupt the temple of God, God will corrupt him."

[2] *Be ye.*] This is the translation of Bishop Pearce, who observes that "the word *holy* is to be supplied here as well as *temple*; for the apostle had said before, ver. 16, ye are the temple of God; and if he had here only said, which temple ye are, he would have said the same thing over again. But in my translation he gives them advice; and his advice turns chiefly upon he *holiness* of the temple."

CH. III. the principles of the heathen philosophy, ver. 18—20.

Ver. 18. *Let no man deceive himself: if any among you appear to be wise in this world*[1], *let him become a fool*[2], *that he may be* truly *wise.*

Let no man falsely imagine that mere philosophy is genuine Christianity; nor let him vainly flatter himself that he is an eminent Christian because he may be a subtle disputant. Whatever proficiency he may have made in the philosophy of the Jewish or of the heathen schools, let him know that he must renounce it all before he can be admitted into the school of Christ; and that in order to attain the character of true wisdom, he must submit to be instructed in the first principles of the Christian doctrine, by those men who are treated with scorn by the philosophers of the age.

19. *For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God: for it is written,* "*He entangles the wise in*
20. *their own artifice.*" *And again,* "*The Lord knoweth the reasonings of the wise, that they are* vain[3]."

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[1] *Wise in this world.*] "in the wisdom and learning of this world." Newcome; who observes, that "the factious leaders thought themselves wise: and the question, *Know ye not?* ver. 16, may imply this."

[2] *Become a fool.*] "Let him embrace the true wisdom of the gospel: which the world deems foolishness." Newcome.

[3] *It is written.*] Job v. 13: "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." Ps. xciv. 11: "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity."—It is plain that these texts are cited merely in the way of accommodation. In the first, Eliphaz asserts the supreme wisdom of God, and his infinite superiority to man; in the second, the Psalmist asserts the controul of God's providence over the mischievous devices of wicked oppressors.

Ch. III. Ver. 20.

The wisdom of the Grecian school, upon which the philosophers so much value themselves, is of little worth in the sight of God; because it conduces little either to improve the knowledge or to regulate the practice of its possessors, upon subjects of the greatest moral importance. It fills their minds with pride and vanity, and occupies their time with useless controversy. Agreeably to this is the declaration of Eliphaz, the friend of Job, that God permits those who esteem themselves wise above the rest of their fellow-creatures to perplex and lose themselves in subtle and fruitless discussions. And to the same purport is the observation of the Psalmist, in which he represents the wise providence of the Supreme Being as controuling and confounding the mischievous devices of oppressors; and, in general, as regarding with contempt the schemes and systems of human wisdom.

The propriety of these observations would be more apparent, if, as was probably the case, the apostle's opponent at Corinth were a man who valued himself upon, and was admired by his followers for, his eloquence and philosophical acuteness; who was endeavouring to corrupt the Christian doctrine by the introduction of philosophical principles; and who spoke of the apostle and other faithful and well informed teachers of Christianity with contempt, because of their ignorance of the philosophy of the schools.

6. All boasting in teachers must be excluded;

CH. III. since all are appointed by Christ to minister to their advantage, and Christ himself is the minister of God, ver. 21—23.

VER. 21. *Therefore, let no one glory in men, for all things are yours.*

Let no one value himself upon being the disciple of this or that eminent teacher of the gospel, and exalt him in their esteem above the rest of his fellow-servants; for the best are nothing more than instruments in the hands of God, to promote your improvement in knowledge and virtue.

22. *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas*[1]*; whether the world*[2]*, or life, or death, or things present, or things future; all are yours.*

The most eminent ministers of the gospel, even the apostles themselves, yea, the very chief among them, are not your masters, but your servants: they claim no authority over your persons, nor dominion

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[1] *Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas.*] Christ is here omitted in the enumeration of teachers: probably, therefore, Christ was not introduced by the apostle in the first chapter, as the leader of a party; ch. i. 12.

[2] *The world:*] *i. e.* "every body besides, every person in the world: as we say, All the world knows it. It comprehends angels, as well as men." Bishop Pearce.—"all things which the world affords." Newcome.—"ειτε κοσμος, *reliqui etiam omnes homines, Deo ita dirigente, commodis vestris inservire debent;* κοσμος, *homines in mundo. Apostolus itaque a speciali ad generale progreditur, et felicitatem Christianorum prædicat.*" Rosenmuller. This seems to be the interpretation of all the commentators, and is perhaps the true one; but as the apostle in the context has been speaking so much of the world, in connexion with the philosophers and the wisdom of the schools, it does not seem improbable that he might allude to the teachers of philosophy in particular in this place.

over your faith; they desire nothing but to promote your improvement in wisdom and goodness; and to that end they zealously, in their respective stations, devote their talents and their labours. And not only the teachers of Christianity, but every thing else may, by a prudent use, with the blessing of God, be made subservient to your true interest. The world itself, and all things in it, and particularly the wisdom of the world, the doctrine of the philosophic schools, may teach you the value of Christianity, by discovering the weakness of human reason. Life is yours, if you improve it to useful purposes; and the religion of Jesus teaches you to regard even death itself as gain, both as it releases you from a state of labour and suffering, and as it ultimately introduces you into a new, a happy, and an immortal existence. Things that are present are yours: if used with moderation, they contribute to your good: and things to come, the reward of persevering virtue in a future life, will far transcend all your merits and all your expectations. Ch. III. Ver. 22.

But ye are *Christ's.* 23.

The ministers of the gospel, and all things else, are subservient to your ultimate advantage. They are, in a certain sense, your servants, your property: but do not therefore imagine that you are yourselves under no controul. You are, by your profession, the servants and the property of Christ. He has redeemed you from the bondage of your heathen state; and though you are set at liberty from idolatrous rites, from legal ceremonies, and from human au-

Ch. III. Ver. 23. thority, you are still the servants of Christ. He is your sole master: his doctrine you must acknowledge, his laws you must obey, his yoke you must bear, and his wages you will receive.

—23. *And Christ* is *God's*. As you are his subjects and servants, and acknowledge Jesus as your head, so does he, your Master, acknowledge subjection to God, and profess allegiance to the Great Supreme; from whom he derives existence, from whom he received his high commission, and all the gifts and powers by which it was confirmed; by whose almighty power he was raised from the dead, and invested with the authority which he now exercises over the church; whose servant and subject he avows himself to be, to whose glory all his labours are consecrated, and from whose hand he has received his glorious and transcendent reward.

Ch. IV. 7. The ministers of the gospel, far from being leaders of parties, are nothing more than servants and stewards of Christ, whose chief requisite is faithfulness, ch. iv. 1, 2.

Ver. 1. 2. *Let a man so regard us, as servants of Christ*[1], *and stewards of the mysteries of God. And as to the rest, it is required*[2] *of stewards, that a man should be faithful.*

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[1] *Servants of Christ.*] "As to me, I pretend not to set up a school among you; and as a master, to have my scholars denominated from me." Locke.

[2] *It is required.*] Bishop Pearce, upon the authority of some ancient copies and versions, reads ὧδε λοιπον instead of ὁ δε· "it is *here* required;" *i. e.* among men.

Upon the whole, the true light in which the ministers of the gospel ought to be regarded, is that of fellow servants of the same master, Jesus; all of us upon an equal footing, no one having any pre-eminence above another, all being engaged in the same cause, all employed as stewards of the mysteries of God, dispensing those sacred truths which were heretofore concealed from the mass of mankind; being utterly unknown to the Gentile world, and obscurely revealed even to the Jews themselves. Ch. IV. Ver. 2.

Being thus employed by the same Master, who has furnished us with our respective talents, and assigned to us our several offices, all that is required from us is, the faithful performance of the duties incumbent upon us, the consciousness of which will bear us up under all outward discouragements.

8. The apostle, conscious of integrity, makes light of the calumnies of his adversaries, and appeals to the judgement of God, ver. 3—5.

But to me it is of very small moment to be judged by you, or by any human inquiry[3]; *nor, indeed, do I judge even myself: for* though *I am not conscious to myself of any* fault[4], *yet I am not for that reason justified*[5]; *but he who judgeth me is the Lord.* 3. 4.

[3] *Human inquiry.*] So Pearce and Newcome.—"man's judgement." Wakefield. ανθρωπινης ἡμερας· Jerom marks this phrase, among others, as a specimen of the apostle's Cilician idiom, day for judgement; as in Latin, *diem dicere.* See Grotius.—"αν. ἡμ. *ab humano judicio. Sermone Anglico vocatur* a days-man, *qui delectus est judex inter fratrem et fratrem, forte a* dicendo diem, *in quo judicium feret arbiter.*" Knatchbull. See ch. i. 8, iii. 13, v. 5.

Ch. IV. Ver. 4.

Some of you affect to think very meanly of my abilities and of my services, and pass severe censures upon my character, preferring other teachers to me, who first planted the gospel among you, and confirmed it by miracles; but conscious as I am of faithfulness in the discharge of the duties of my office, I think little of such censures as these, nor do I set any high value upon the opinion that any man or class of men may entertain of me; for they are liable to prejudice and error: nor will my final state be affected by their opinion. Nor yet do I place entire confidence in the judgement I form of my own character; for though I am not conscious of any thing amiss in performing the duties of my office, I do not therefore consider myself as perfectly clear. Prejudice, partiality, self-ignorance, and self-love, may lead me to form too favourable an opinion of myself and of my labours. But there is One who judges of human character with infallible precision, and by his judgement we must all abide: it is GOD who searches the heart. To be finally approved by him is indeed a concern of the highest moment.

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[4] *Any* fault.] "*Elliptice, pro ουδεν κακον μοι συνοιδα, nihil mali mihi conscius sum.*" Rosenmuller. See Pearce.

[5] *Justified.*] "Δεδικαιωμαι. *Sed propterea non ab omni culpa sum liber.*" Rosenmuller.—Bishop Pearce observes, that the word *justified* does not come up to the full meaning of δικαιεσθαι, which signifies *to be without fault.* Job ix. 2; Ps. li. 4, cxliii. 2. He thus expounds the passage: "For though I am conscious of no sin within myself, yet have I not therefore been clear and free from sin. No: I may have sins unrepented of, which I have forgot; I may have faults which self-love hinders me from seeing; but he who discerns and judges with exactness of me is God, and God only."

Therefore, judge nothing before the time, till the Lord come; who will both bring to light that which is concealed in darkness, and will make manifest the designs of the heart: and then every man will receive due *praise*[1] *from God.* Ch. IV. Ver. 5.

The conclusion from all that I have said upon the subject of that party spirit which prevails among you is this: Be not hasty in forming your judgements of characters, and do not exalt one minister of the gospel above another, nor give an undue preference to any, in cases in which you are liable to be deceived. The day is coming when every character shall appear in its true light. Wait patiently for the decision of that awful hour, when the great Master shall appear, to call his servants to account; when the most secret motives shall be brought to light, when the most hidden purposes of the heart shall be unveiled; and when every individual shall receive from God that praise, and that reward, to which he is justly entitled. Then will many, who now think highly of themselves, and are highly esteemed by others, be degraded to the lowest rank; while many, who are obscure and despised, little known, and

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[1] *Every man will receive praise.*] επαινος γενησεται εκαστω. In the public Version, "then shall every man have praise of God." Bishop Pearce, regarding this translation as obviously incorrect, limits the term εκαστω to the apostle himself and Apollos, who will no doubt both receive praise at the great day. But the expression, though very general, necessarily limits itself, and must be understood by every candid reader in the sense to which Archbishop Newcome restricts it: "every man who deserves praise."

Ch. IV. Ver. 5. little esteemed, will be crowned with distinguished honour.

IV.

The apostle explains his figurative language, challenges the regard of the believers at Corinth as their first and chief instructor in the Christian doctrine: he sets before them his own example, and assures them that he will soon make them a visit, and will give them ample proof of his apostolical authority. Ch. iv. ver. 6 *to the end.*

1. The apostle explains the allusion he had made to Apollos and himself, ver. 6, 7.

6. *Now these things, brethren, I have transferred*[1] *to myself and* to *Apollos for your sakes; that ye may learn in us, not to esteem* any one *above what is* here *written*[2], *that none of you may take pride*[3] *in one* teacher *against another.*

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[1] *Transferred.*] "Μετεσχημάτιζω, *proprie, transformo; per metaphoram accommodo, transfero; et de eo usurpatur qui de se dicit, quæ de aliis dicenda erant.*" Schleusner.—"I have applied to myself and Apollos." Wakefield: see his note.—"On this occasion I have named Apollos and myself, as the magnified and opposed heads of distinct factions among you: not that we are so, but out of respect to you, that I might offend nobody by naming them." Locke.—"St. Paul does not name the leaders, from motives of prudence and mildness; and in like manner he does not reflect directly on their craft and secular views, ver. 5, ch. iii. 19." Newcome.

[2] Here *written.*] "which I have written in this epistle: ch. iii. 6, 21, iv. 1." Newcome.

[3] *Take pride.*] "that none may pride himself in any one *teacher* above another." Wakefield: and this seems to be the true and obvious meaning of the apostle, though the construction of the original is a little perplexed.

To avoid giving offence, I have abstained from mentioning names; and have supposed Apollos, my eloquent and honoured friend, to be the person set up in opposition to me. That so I might speak with less reserve, and put the strongest possible case, and that you might see by this instance how unbecoming it would have been to have esteemed either of us beyond what I have now described: to have regarded either of us as heads of parties, as masters of the household, instead of stewards and fellow-servants of the same Lord: and to have valued yourselves as disciples, the one of Apollos, the other of Paul. But how much more unbecoming is such a spirit and conduct as this, when the real opponent and competitor is a person so much inferior in rank, in knowledge, in character, and in every qualification of an evangelist or an apostle! Ch. IV. Ver. 6.

For who has distinguished thee from others, *and what hast thou which thou didst not receive? and if thou didst* only *receive*[4] it, *why dost thou boast, as if thou hadst not received* it? 7.

Let my opponent and rival possess all the talents and all the superiority over me which he and his party flatter themselves that he possesses; still, let me ask the question, why do you thus vainly exult and triumph? who gave you these honourable distinctions? whence did you acquire your boasted talents? from whom did you receive your knowledge, your eloquence, your opulence, and dignity? And if, as

[4] *If thou didst* only.] ει δε και ελαβες. "receive, whether natural faculties, or spiritual gifts." Newcome.

Ch. IV. Ver. 7. you cannot but acknowledge, you receive all from God, to be improved in his service, why do you boast in them? as if they were your own acquisition, and as if you were accountable to no one for the use of them.

2. The apostle reproves the self-sufficiency and vainglory of the Corinthians; and obliquely, that of their false teachers, ver. 8.

8. *Are ye now full*[1]*? are ye now rich? have ye reigned while we have been absent? And I wish, indeed, that you were kings, that we also might reign with you.*

Do you value yourselves upon your opulence, your security, your respectability in the eye of the world? While I have been absent from you, have you increased in prosperity? have you attained authority? It is well; and I heartily wish that you were kings, in the noblest sense of the word; that you were absolute in the government of your affections and passions, prosperous in the state of your minds, opulent in the possession of Christian virtue; and honourable in the sight of almighty God, of your Mas-

[1] *Are ye now full?*] With Pearce and Wakefield I take these clauses interrogatively; and with Pearce, Macknight, and Rosenmuller, I think the false apostle to be the person principally alluded to, though not directly named. It is sufficiently evident that he was a man of opulence and consequence, and that he was disposed to govern with a pretty strong hand. The allusion is obscure, though it was no doubt very intelligible to those to whom the epistle was addressed. This obscurity is unavoidable in epistolary writing, but abundantly counterbalanced by its numerous advantages.

ter Christ, and of all the virtuous and the wise. I then should reign with you: I should share in your triumph, and join in your congratulation. Ch. IV. Ver. 8.

The apostle, though he speaks in the plural number, probably alludes chiefly to his opponent, who seems to have been a man of opulence, power, and consideration, as well as a man of eloquence, and to have valued himself, and to have been esteemed by his party, on this account; while the apostle's poverty and humble condition were held in contempt.

3. He contrasts the fancied prosperity of the Corinthians, and particularly the assumed dignity of the false apostle, with the poverty and sufferings of the true and faithful apostles of Jesus; who approved the genuineness of their commission by the persecutions which they suffered, and by the Christian spirit which they exemplified, ver. 9—13.

For I think[2] *that God hath exhibited us, the apostles, last* upon the theatre[3], *as devoted to death; for we are made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men*[4]. *We are fools for Christ's* 9. 10.

[2] *For I think.*] I have placed the whole of this eloquent paragraph together, that the effect might not be lost by being divided into fragments. In the commentary I have taken up and explained the several clauses separately.

[3] *Last upon the theatre.*] "Alluding," says Archbishop Newcome, "to those last exposed on the theatre to fight with wild beasts, or with each other, and who were devoted to certain destruction."—Locke supposes, that though the apostle uses the plural number, he alludes to himself only, or at least principally. So likewise Bishop Pearce.

[4] *To angels and to men.*] "to heaven and earth." Newcome.

It

Ch. IV. *sake, but ye are wise in Christ: we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honoured, but we are despised.*
Ver. 11. *To this very hour, we suffer both hunger and thirst, and nakedness, and are beaten, and have no certain*
12. *abode; and we labour, working with our own hands.*
13. *Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being railed at*[1], *we entreat. We are made, as it were, the expiatory victims*[2] *of the world, the offscouring of all things until now.*

As the apostle, in the 8th verse, though using the plural number, alluded solely or chiefly to an in-

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It is hardly necessary to observe, that the apostle here is not laying down any doctrine concerning angels, as of divine authority; but that he is merely alluding to a popular notion of the Jews, of angels being a permanent order of celestial spirits, who were the medium of divine communications with mankind: which was a branch of oriental philosophy which the Jews had probably taken up during the captivity, and which was then become familiar.

[1] *Railed at.*] δυσφημεμενοι, instead of βλασφημεμενοι. This Griesbach gives, as a probable reading; and it is supported by the Alexandrine manuscript.

[2] *Expiatory victims—the offscouring:*] περικαθαρματα—περιψημα. "purgations of the world." Macknight.—"offscourings of the world; refuse of all things." Wakefield. "The apostle," says Bishop Pearce, "alludes to the custom among the heathen, of choosing out some unhappy men during a time of public calamity, to be the purgation and expiation for them. They were maintained a year at the public charge, and then led out, adorned with flowers; and all the curses of the country being charged upon their heads, they were whipped seven times, then burned alive, and afterwards their ashes were thrown into the sea, while the people said, 'Περιψημα ἡμων γενεσθ.'" The bishop translates the words, "the expiations of the world, the atonement of all men." See also Suidas; who interprets περιψημα by απολυτρωσις, *a ransom* or *redemption*. So it is rendered in the Syriac, and by Diodati. See also Whitby, Doddridge, and Macknight.—"Περικαθαρμα *proprie idem quod* καθαρμα, *purgamentum; sordes undique verrendo collectus, quæ solent e domo ejici.*

dividual opponent; so here, though speaking in the plural number, he seems to refer to himself only, or at least principally. He uses the plural number from modesty, that he may not seem to overrate his own merit; and by this contrast of his own character with that of the false apostle, he furnishes the Corinthians with a clue to direct their judgement, in deciding between his pretensions and those of his unworthy competitor. Ch. IV. Ver. 13.

God hath exhibited us, the apostles, last upon the theatre, *as devoted to death.* We are brought out upon the stage, like those miserable wretches who, in the Roman theatres, were set forth at the end of the exhibition to be devoured by wild beasts, without any means of defence or any chance of escape. And like them we are devoted to death; and though we may maintain for a short time the desperate struggle, we must eventually fall a prey to our cruel adversaries. And in this hopeless, but glorious combat, we are a spectacle to the universe. Rational beings, from the highest to the lowest orders; all men, good and bad, are spectators of our conflict and of our fortitude; all who are wise and virtuous join in our applause, and even the worst of our enemies and persecutors themselves may learn the truth and value of the principles for which we suffer: 9.

Metaphorice transferrebatur ad hominem pro patriæ expiatione devotum, atque in lustrale sacrificium destinatum." Schleusner.—"Περιψημα, *a* περιψαω, *omne quod est abrasum et detersum, piaculum, hostia piacularis, omne quo ad expiandum utimur.*" Schleusner.

Ch. IV. Ver. 9. while the glorious consideration of the unspeakable advantage which may accrue to our fellow-creatures from the struggle we endure, and the sacrifices that we make, fires our zeal, confirms our resolution, and excites our joy, under the most distressing privations and the acutest sufferings.

10. *We are fools for Christ's sake.* To approve our fidelity to him and his cause, we are willing to be treated as fools by the wise men of the world, for our plain and simple doctrine and address. Such is not your case: *ye are wise in Christ.* You forsooth are Christian philosophers; you seek to blend the simple doctrine of Christianity with the sublime and mysterious tenets of the Pagan schools, and expect to be looked up to as men of science and education.

We are weak, helpless and unprotected, liable to injury and insult; *but ye are strong.* You are men of power and consequence, who can easily keep your enemies at a distance, or can repel their attacks.

Ye are honoured for your eloquence, your opulence, and rank in society; *but we are despised* for our poverty, for our obscurity, for our mean appearance, for our supposed ignorance and barbarism.

11. *To this very hour do we suffer both hunger and thirst, and nakedness.* We are almost destitute of the necessaries, while you abound in all the comforts and elegancies of life. *We are buffeted:* barbarously beaten, sometimes by the mob, sometimes by order of the magistrates, without being allowed a hearing in our defence.

And we have no certain abode. While you live

in a large and opulent city, and some of you in stately and magnificent houses, we, the true apostles of Christ, like our Master, have not where to lay our heads; and wander from place to place like fugitives and vagabonds upon the earth. Ch. IV. Ver. 11.

And we labour, working with our own hands[1]. While the day is employed in teaching the important truths of the gospel, the evening is spent in manual labour to gain a scanty subsistence, that we may not be burdensome to the church, and that none may pretend that we preach the gospel from interested motives. 12.

Being reviled, we bless. When our adversaries load us with unmerited reproaches, we return their curses with blessings, imploring the blessing of God upon them, and endeavouring to communicate the most important blessings to them.

Being persecuted, we endure. If we suffer bonds, imprisonment, or corporeal severities, we bear them with patience; and rejoice that we are accounted worthy to suffer in so honourable a cause. We meditate no revenge.

When railed at, we entreat[2]. We render not railing for railing, but we meekly entreat our enemies and calumniators to forbear their reproaches, and to listen to the important truths which we have to impart, and in which they are so deeply interested. 13.

[1] *Working with our own hands.*] "This," says Archbishop Newcome, "shows that Paul speaks of himself," ver. 10, 11. See 1 Thess. ii. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 8.

[2] *We entreat.*] Or, *we exhort* "to consideration and benevolence; not speaking evil in return." Newcome.

Ch. IV. Ver. 13. *We are made, as it were, the expiatory victims of the world*[1]; *the offscouring of all things until now.* We are in the situation of those miserable wretches, who in times of public calamity are devoted to the infernal Gods; and who, after having been led about the city, loaded with execrations and exposed to severe tortures, are at last put to a tormenting death, as an expiation of the crimes of the community. So we, the true apostles of Christ, are objects of universal hatred and contempt, loaded with ignominy and scorn; and, after enduring the most grievous hardships and cruel sufferings, are dragged to a violent and unpitied death.

If, then, my opponent and competitor is really what he professes himself to be, an apostle of Christ, and superior to myself in all the necessary qualifications of this honourable office, let him make good his claim, by exhibiting a better spirit under similar sufferings. Thus let him approve his fidelity to Christ, and his title to pre-eminence; and let him not imagine that superior wealth, superior eloquence,

[1] *Expiatory victims of the world,* &c.] "As *the vilest of the world:* the original denotes such wretches as were sacrificed to remove a calamity. As *the offscouring of all things.* What was rubbed off, or wiped away and trodden under foot; and metaphorically a vile and abject person, fit to become a καθαρμα. See Bos." Newcome. "These words," says Dr. Whitby, "probably relate to the sacrifices which the heathen used for the *lustration* of a city. 'The Athenians,' says Phavorinus, 'nourished some very base and refuse people, and when any calamity or plague befell them, they sacrificed them for the purgation of the city; and these they called καθαρματα.' Hence Origen says, (*Comm. in Joh.* p. 363,) that our Lord, giving up himself for the propitiation of our sins, was made, much more than his apostles, περικαθαρμα τϑ κοσμϑ, παντων περιψημα."

superior science, or superior rank in life, will entitle him to this honourable distinction; while he shrinks from those services, and those sufferings, by which alone in the present state of things the Christian cause can be effectually promoted, and to which the faithful and approved teachers of Christianity will ever be the most exposed. Ch. IV. Ver. 13.

4. The apostle assures them that his admonitions are dictated, not by angry feelings, but paternal affection, ver. 14, 15.

I do not write these things to shame you; but, 14.
as my beloved children, to admonish[2] *you.*

In giving this detail of the humiliating situation in which the apostles are placed, and of the sufferings to which I in particular am exposed, I do not mean to insinuate any reproach against you, as not being sincere in your profession, because you are not in the same persecuted state; or as not sympathizing with me in my sufferings, or as being backward to assist me under my difficulties: but as my beloved children I earnestly and affectionately admonish you, to be upon your guard against those who, keeping aloof from danger and persecution, would alienate your minds from those teachers who, by their zeal and fortitude and patient suffering, approve themselves the genuine and faithful apostles of Jesus.

[2] *To admonish:*] νουθετων. This is the reading of the Alexandrine and Ephrem manuscripts. It is noted as of good authority by Griesbach: it is approved by Grotius, and adopted by Pearce.

Ch. IV. Ver. 15. *For though ye may have ten thousand instructors*[1] *in Christ, yet* ye have not *many fathers; for I am your father in Christ Jesus, through the gospel.*

I speak with freedom and affection, and I also speak with authority, as a father to his children: for such I am to you. There have been many who, coming after me, have professed to guide and teach you, to enlarge your Christian knowledge, and to enforce Christian discipline; and of these some may be well disposed, and others not; some may be faithful ministers of the gospel, and others deceivers and hypocrites; but whatever they may have been, they cannot possess that claim to your regard which I may justly challenge. They are but your tutors, your guardians, your schoolmasters: I am your father in Christ, and you are my children in the gospel. From Christ I received a commission to preach the gospel to you; he commanded my con-

[1] *Ten thousand instructors.*] "Παιδαγωγους, guides." Newcome; who observes, that "the original word properly denotes an attendant on youth."—"*Pædagogus dicitur is qui puero aut adolescenti adest, ad mores ejus formandos, et hoc loco opponitur patri cui puer post Deum debet vitam. Pædagogi titulo simul inest notio severitatis, in oppositione ad lenitatem qua patres in liberos uti solent.*" Rosenmuller.—*I am your father.* Gr. "I begat you."

Ten thousand, μυριας, an indefinitely large number: *q. d.* ever so many. See Acts xxi. 20, "How many myriads of Jews believe!" The expression of the apostle James is not to be understood literally; but *q. d.* What great numbers! and in the public version is not improperly rendered, "Thou seest how many thousands."—"*Si enim vel sexcentos pædagogos haberetis.*" Rosenmuller; who adds, "μυριας, *multos quamplurimos: nam Græci hac voce utuntur ad notandum numerum majorem: certum pro incerto: ut Latini dicunt* sexcenti *pro multis.*"

tinued residence among you, when I was afraid and about to depart; and he blessed my ministry to your conversion and salvation, Acts xviii. 9, 10. Ch. IV. Ver. 15.

5. He exhorts them to follow his own example, of which Timothy would give them a faithful account, ver. 16, 17.

I beseech you, therefore, be imitators of me[2]. 16.
For this purpose I have sent unto you Timothy, 17.
who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord; who will bring to your remembrance my ways in Christ[3], *as I teach every where in every church.*

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[2] *Imitators of me.*] Mr. Locke observes, that "the apostle presses this again, ch. xi. 1; and it is not likely he would have proposed himself over and over again to be followed by them, had the question and contest among them been only whose name they should have borne, his or their new teacher's. His proposing himself, therefore, thus to be followed, must be understood, in direct opposition to the false apostle; who misled them, and was not suffered to have any credit, or any followers among them."

[3] *My ways in Christ*:] ὁδούς. "my doctrines." Wakefield; who refers to Acts xxii. 4, xxiv. 22.—"He shall inform you how I behave myself every where, in the ministry of the gospel." Locke; who observes in his note, "this he does, to show that what he taught them and pressed them to, was not in a pique against his opposer, but to convince them that all he did at Corinth was the very same, and no other than what he did every where as a faithful steward and minister of the gospel."

It is plain from this passage, that the apostle sent Timothy to Corinth, after he had received the letter from the Corinthians. But if the first epistle to Timothy was written from Macedonia when the apostle had left Ephesus on his way to Corinth, it is certain that Timothy had returned to Ephesus before Paul left it, 1 Tim. i. 2. But it is evident that the apostle was impatient to receive intelligence from Corinth, and that he expected it, not from Timothy, but from Titus, 2 Cor. ii. 13; while he never gives the least hint in his letter to Timothy, that he had derived any

Ch. IV. Ver. 17. As I am your father in the gospel, regard me as your example: as exhibiting a useful pattern for your imitation. Receive my doctrine, imbibe my spirit, submit to my directions, and in your respective situations manifest the same disinterested zeal for the Christian cause. It is now some time since I was with you, and you may possibly have forgotten much, both of my doctrine and my character. You may be ready to suspect, that out of resentment to my opponent, I may be disposed to lay burdens upon you, which are not imposed upon others; but Timothy, who is now in Greece, and who will probably visit you soon, will correct any misconception you may entertain in this respect. He will tell you what is my doctrine, what my practice, and what the regulations I establish in every church. I beseech you therefore to listen to him with attention, and in these respects to imitate your first teacher, and to conform to the model that I exhibit. You will eventually find your account in it, by your improvement in knowledge, and in virtue.

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intelligence from him of the state of things at Corinth. This, together with other circumstances, particularly his making no allusion to the danger to which he had so lately been exposed at Ephesus, which appears, notwithstanding, to have pressed so much upon his mind at the time when he wrote his second epistle to the Corinthians, twelve months afterwards, makes it probable that the Epistle to Timothy was not written at the time usually assigned, but that it was either written from Crete, when the apostle went with Titus to preach the gospel there; or, as Pearson, Whitby, Basnage, Mill, and many other learned men have supposed, on his way to Rome from Ephesus, after a visit which he made to that city at the end of his first imprisonment.

6. He declares his intention of visiting them soon, and warns them not to compel him, by their misconduct, to visit them with the apostolic rod, ver. 18—21. Ch. IV.

Now some[1] *are puffed up, as if I would not come among you.* Ver. 18.

There are some among you, who, knowing that I am at a great distance, that I am full of engagements, and exposed to a variety of persecutions and obstructions, imagine that I shall never visit Corinth again, and who, upon this presumption, place themselves at the head of a party in opposition to me, endeavouring to alienate your affections from me, and to lessen my authority with you.

But I will come to you soon, if the Lord permit, and I will learn, not the speech of those who are puffed up, but their *power*[2]. 19.

Such vainglorious fools shall find themselves egregiously mistaken; for, if my master give me leave, to whose disposal I at all times submit, I will visit you very soon, in the course of a few months. And when I come, I will inquire not into the eloquence of my competitor, upon which he values himself so much, by which he has acquired that ascendancy over you, and the prize of which I am ready to concede to him; but into the power by which he confirms the doctrine, which he presumes to teach in opposition to mine.

[1] *Some.*] "Your factious teachers and their adherents." Newcome.

[2] *Not the speech,*] "however eloquent: *but their power.* By which of us God exhibits his power." Newcome.

Ch. IV. Ver. 20. *For the kingdom of God* is established *not by word, but by power* [1].

The philosophy of the schools is supported by the eloquence of its advocates, and the best orator is presumed to be the profoundest philosopher. But the case is very different with regard to the gospel dispensation; that kingdom, which God has introduced, and which he is determined to establish in the world. The interests of this community are supported, not by the eloquence of its advocates, but by the miraculous powers with which its ministers are endued, and by which they rouse the attention of mankind, and plainly demonstrate their divine authority.

21. *Which do ye choose* [2]*? that I should come to*

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[1] *By power.*] "The power of working miracles, of knowing the heart, and of inflicting vengeance." Newcome.—"The doctrine and prevalency of the gospel, the propagation and support of Christ's kingdom, by the conversion and establishment of believers, does not consist in talking, nor in the fluency of a glib tongue, and a fine discourse; but in the miraculous operations of the holy ghost." Locke.

[2] *Which do ye choose?*] Mr. Locke observes, that "he that shall carefully read 2 Cor. i. 20, ii. 11, will easily perceive that this verse is an introduction to the severe act of discipline which St. Paul was going to exercise among them; and therefore this verse ought not to have been separated from the following chapter." Archbishop Newcome also joins this verse to the succeeding chapter, and remarks, that "after St. Paul's intimation, ver. 18, 19, he says nothing directly of punishing his opponents; but in the case of the incestuous person, he leaves them to collect what authority God had armed him with, if they further contended with him." Without pretending to be very confident on the subject, I have followed the arrangement of the received text, and of the great majority of commentators. "To the false teacher and to his adherents I say," &c. Macknight.

you with a rod[3], *or with love, and* with *the spirit of meekness?* Ch. IV. Ver. 21.

I shall soon visit you, either with the rod of an incensed, or with the affection of a kind and indulgent parent. Take your choice. If you persist in your opposition to my authority and doctrine, prepare to suffer the consequences of your folly. If you follow my advice, if you imitate my example, if you return to your duty, to your original faith and purity, and good order, our approaching interview will be mutually pleasing. My conduct must be governed by yours. But to approve and commend, will afford far more satisfaction, than to censure and punish.

The apostle here evidently alludes to his rash and ill-advised opponent, whom he wishes to reform, rather than to chastise; but the threat which he delivers, is a plain indication of his consciousness of possessing that apostolic power, by which he could occasionally punish his contumelious adversaries; and the claim to which, if he did not actually possess it, would be so far from recovering the lost affection and respect of the Corinthians, that it would only expose him to their indignation and contempt. This is one instance out of many, which will occur to an attentive reader of Paul's epistles, of those

[3] *A rod.*] "He refers to what he had insinuated of his power, ver. 19. See ch. v. 5." Newcome. "Perhaps the apostle had in his eye, the rod which Moses used when he brought the plagues on Egypt." Macknight.—The rod was a common instrument of punishment. See 2 Cor. xi. 25.

Ch. IV. Ver. 21. oblique but forcible arguments of the divine authority, under the consciousness of which the apostles acted, and of the truth of the Christian doctrine, which cannot fail to make a powerful impression upon a serious and reflecting mind [1].

SECTION II.

Ch. V. *The apostle animadverts upon the case of the incestuous offender*, ch. v. *throughout*.

1. The apostle states the case as it had been represented to him, and severely reproves the Corinthians for the indecency of their behaviour upon the disgraceful occasion, ver. 1, 2.

Ver. 1. *It is commonly reported*[2], that there is *lewdness*[3] *among you, and such lewdness as does not* exist [4]

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[1] Vide Doddridge's note.

[2] *It is commonly reported.*] "ὁλως ακουεται. *Omnino auditur. Fama fert.*" Rosenmuller. *q. d.* It is reported every where.

[3] *Lewdness.*] "πορνεια, *non sola scortatio significatur, sed omnis Venus contra fas, jura, bonosque mores.*" Rosenmuller. The word *fornication* is used in the scriptures in a very extensive sense, for every kind of impurity. See Locke and Pearce.

[4] *Does not* exist.] The received text reads ονομαζεται, is not named; but this word is wanting in the best authorities, and is left out of the text by Griesbach. The crime probably was, that the son had married the woman who had repudiated the father. This was an act not absolutely prohibited by the laws, but regarded as very disgraceful. "*Cicero pro Cluentio*, 5, 6. *Nubit genero socrus, nullis auctoribus, funestis ominibus omnium: O mulieris scelus incredibile, et præter hanc unam in omni vita inauditum.*" See Locke and Rosenmuller.—That it was in the power of the woman to divorce the husband, appears from ch. xi.

even among the heathen; that a certain person hath his *father's wife.* Ch. V. Ver. 1.

It is a fact of public notoriety, and reported every where to your disgrace, that a person of considerable note among you has married his step-mother, while his father was living. A species of lewdness, that is held in abhorrence by the heathen themselves.

The fact appears to have been this, that the woman being a heathen, had, as the laws of the country indeed allowed, divorced the father, and married the son, who professed himself a Christian; a case, which, though not absolutely illegal in the heathen courts, was nevertheless regarded as highly disgraceful.

And are ye puffed up? and should ye not rather have mourned[5] *? that he who hath committed this act, might be taken away from among you?* 2.

Now, instead of being ashamed of this transaction, which you ought to have been, have you not boasted of it, as a mark of your Christian liberty, and of your being released, as you have probably been taught by your Pharisaic instructors, from all the ties of nature, by your new birth[6] into the

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10, 11, 13. It also appears from 2 Cor. vii. 12, that the father was living.

[5] *And are ye*, &c.] Griesbach, Pearce, Wakefield, and others, read these clauses interrogatively.

[6] *Released by your new birth.*] Vid. Whitby. The Rabbis taught, that proselytes, when baptized, were released from all natural relations and civil obligations. Maimonides says,

Ch. V. Ver. 2. Christian religion? But ought you not rather to have mourned [1] as though the offending party were dead to the Christian community, and to have expelled him instantly from your society?

2. He solemnly requires, that the church at Corinth should publicly pronounce upon the offender a sentence of excommunication, such as he had already passed upon him in his own mind, ver. 3—5.

3. *For I truly* [2], *absent* indeed [3] *in body, but present in spirit, have already judged, as if I were present, to* deliver over *him who hath committed this*
4. offence [4], *in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, (when ye are assembled, and my spirit with you* [5],)

"*Ducere potest proselytus uxorem fratris sui paterni, vel uxorem patrui, quin et uxorem patris et uxorem filii, etiamsi ducta sit patri, patruo aut fratri, modo ad Judaicam religionem transierint.*" Rosenmuller adds, "*Sed Maimonidi in hac re fidem adhibendam esse Zieglerus negat.*"

[1] *To have mourned.*] "It was the custom of the Jews and Christians to put on mourning, where members were expelled, as though they were dead." Whitby.

[2] *For I truly.*] The apostle's construction is intricate, but his meaning is clear. *q. d.* I am indeed absent from you in person, but in mind I am with you: and as though I were personally present, at a public meeting with you, I have judicially determined, by the authority of Christ, and with the power of Christ, to deliver this offender over to Satan, &c.

[3] *Absent* indeed.] The received text reads ὡς απων, *as* absent; but ὡς is wanting in some of the best copies, and is omitted by Pearce and Wakefield.

[4] *This* offence.] "τον ἀτω τετο κατεργασαμενον, who hath so done this." Newcome. Bishop Pearce drops the word ἀτω, and some copies omit τετο. One or other is certainly superfluous.

[5] *My spirit with you.*] Dr. Benson says, that "some have supposed this apostle to have had a gift peculiar to himself, namely, a power of seeing what was done at a distance, or of knowing

with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver, Ch. V. Ver. 5.
I say, *this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh*[6], *that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

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in some cases what passed in his absence, as clearly and exactly as if he had been present. See 1 Cor. v. 3, 4; Col. ii. 5. Some few, both of the ancients and moderns, have so understood these texts; and therefore I mention this interpretation. But I do it with diffidence, because, the generality are not of this opinion." The Doctor, however, observes, that "Elisha possessed this gift, 2 Kings v. 25, 26. And it will be hard to assign a reason why an apostle might not in some cases have this gift as well as an old Testament prophet." See Benson's Prop. of Christ. Rel. vol. ii. p. 15, 16. No reason indeed can be assigned, why Paul should not, if necessary, be endued with such a gift as well as Elisha: the only difference is, that the history relates, that Elisha upon one occasion possessed it for the punishment of a fraudulent servant; and we have no evidence to prove that Paul ever possessed it, or had occasion for it. The texts which are brought to prove that he actually possessed this power, easily admit of a different interpretation.

[6] *To deliver over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh.*] "Deliver the offender up to Satan; that being put thus into the hands and power of the devil, his body may be afflicted and brought down, that his soul may be saved." Locke.—"Ye should publicly deliver him over to Satan, that by suffering bodily diseases in the flesh, his soul may be saved." Bishop Pearce.—"Deliver such an one to Satan, to be by him, as the terrible executioner of the divine justice, chastised and tormented, in order to the destruction of the flesh, that for this shameful indulgence it may be emaciated and enfeebled, and the offender, alarmed by sufferings of so extraordinary and formidable a nature, may be brought if possible to true repentance." Doddridge.—Dr. Macknight, after illustrating the hypothesis of those who think that nothing more is meant than public excommunication from the Christian community, declares his own judgement to be in favour of the supposition, that the case of this offender was an example of the exertion of this power which the apostles possessed of punishing notorious offenders. And he agrees with Chrysostom, Theophylact, and Œcumenius, who conjectured, that in consequence of being delivered over to Satan, the offender's body was weakened and wasted by some painful dis-

Ch. V. Ver. 5. Though I am absent from you, I am as much interested in your affairs as if I were actually among

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case. He acknowledges, however, that the Latin fathers and Beza thought that no such effect followed the sentence; nothing of that kind being mentioned 2 Cor. ii. 7: so that by the destruction of the flesh they understood the destruction of the offender's pride, lust, and fleshly passions. And surely this is a most rational interpretation, especially as no notice is taken by the apostle of any bodily sufferings inflicted upon the offender, who seems indeed to have been overwhelmed with distress at the disgrace which he had incurred. See 2 Cor. ii. Archbishop Newcome supposes some miraculous punishment to have been inflicted; and refers to Luke xiii. 16; 2 Cor. xii. 7; 1 Tim. i. 20. But he does not intimate that it was through the agency of Satan. And it is observable, that Bishop Pearce gives no opinion upon that subject. Probably the learned prelates considered Satan as nothing more than a figurative expression for the cause of evil, whether natural or moral. It is surprising that Mr. Locke could so readily accede to the opinion, that the devil was employed to torment men with diseases, to induce them to repentance. It cannot, I think, admit of any reasonable doubt, that all which the apostle means, both here and in 1 Tim. i. 20, is excommunication from the church, expelling them from the community of believers, which is called the kingdom of light, the kingdom of God and of Christ, and sending them to the community of heathen and unbelievers, who are described as the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of Satan. For into these two great communities is the whole world divided by the writers of the New Testament. See Col. i. 13; 2 Pet. i. 11; Acts i. 3; Col. iv. 11; 1 Thess. ii. 12; 1 Tim. v. 15.—"By delivering to Satan," says Dr. Priestley, "is to be understood, rejection from the Christian church; the world being supposed to be divided between the subjects of Christ, and those of Satan, as two powers opposite to one another; the one a kingdom of righteousness, and leading to happiness, and the other of vice, leading to destruction."—It has been thought by Whitby and others, that delivering over to Satan was an allusion to the Jewish form of excommunication. But Lightfoot in his *Horæ Hebraicæ*, upon this text, has distinctly proved the contrary. "The excommunicate," says Beza, "is delivered to the power of Satan, in that he is cast out of the house of God. What it is to be delivered to Satan, the Lord himself declareth, when he saveth, Let him be unto thee as a heathen and publican,

you; and as in that case I should summon the Christian society together to expel this unworthy member; so I now direct, that when you meet for Christian worship, armed with the power with which Christ has invested you, to preserve the order and purity of the society, and with my entire concurrence, that you proceed to send back this great offender to his heathen associates, and to renounce all Christian fellowship with him, that he may be brought to a due sense of the heinousness of his crime, and that by timely penitence, and correction of his vicious affections, he may be saved at last. Ch. V. Ver. 5.

Some suppose, that the apostle, when he speaks of being *present in spirit*, alludes to a miraculous power which he is thought occasionally to have possessed, of knowing what was passing in the church when he was absent. But this supposition is needless upon the present occasion. It does not appear that the apostle knew any thing of what had happened at Corinth, but from their letter, from general rumour, or, from the information of persons connected with the society. *Assembling in the name of Christ* seems to signify, assembling together for Christian worship, and particularly for the

Matt. xviii. 17, that is to say, to be disfranchised and put out of the right and liberty of the city of Christ, which is the church, without which, Satan is lord and master. The end of excommunication, is not to cast away the excommunicate, that he should utterly perish, but that he may be saved, to wit, that by this means his flesh may be tamed, that he may learn to live to the spirit." Beza's N. T. with notes translated by Tomson, and published in black letter, by C. Barker, 1583.

Ch. V. Ver. 5. celebration of the Lord's supper. *With the power of the Lord Jesus*, means that power which Christ had given them, for exercising a proper discipline over the society, and rejecting unworthy members. *Delivering them to Satan*, is, dismissing them from the Christian community, of which Jesus was the head, and turning them over to the heathen and unevangelized world, of which Satan is represented as the chief. *For the destruction of the flesh* signifies, the correction of vicious habits and affections. Some have thought, that this might be effected by the miraculous infliction of bodily distempers; but there seems no occasion for this supposition. The disgrace might be, and in the present case actually was sufficient, without any supernatural malady. The notion that Satan is a fallen angel, whose office it is to chastise those who are excommunicated from the Christian church, and so to bring them back to their duty, is so puerile, and so heathenish, that it would have been needless to have mentioned it, had it not been adopted by some grave writers, to whose authority much deference is paid. In the present advanced state of Christian knowledge, it is high time to lay aside these unscriptural and fabulous interpretations.

3. The profession of Christianity must be as clear from vice as the passover is pure from leaven, ver. 6—8.

6. *Your boasting* is *not right*[1].

[1] *Your boasting*, &c.] It is thought that the leader of the op-

It does you little credit, to make your boast of leaders who countenance such disgraceful practices. Ch. V. Ver. 6.

Know ye not[2] *that a little leaven, leaveneth the whole mass?*

You, who know so much, are you not sensible, that if you once tolerate such criminal and disgraceful practices among you, you will soon be as corrupt as your heathen neighbours?

Clear out, therefore, the old leaven, that ye may be a new mass, inasmuch as ye are unleavened bread[3]. 7.

Purify yourselves from all the vicious habits and practices of your heathen state, with as much anxiety as the Jews remove all leaven from their houses at the passover feast; let not an atom remain to disgrace your society; and be as clear from all vice, as the passover bread is from leaven.

For Christ, our passover, hath been slain[4],

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position, being a man of influence, by whose patronage they thought themselves honoured, supported this offender in his crime. See Locke and Pearce. Archbishop Newcome observes, "there is great mildness in his manner of expressing himself." Locke remarks, that "if their leader had not been guilty of this miscarriage, it had been out of St. Paul's way here to have reproved them for glorying in him. But St. Paul is a close writer, and uses not to mention things when they are impertinent to his subject."

[2] *Know ye not.*] "With all your pretensions to knowledge." Newcome, who observes that "this question is put ch. iii. 16, and in several other places of this epistle." See the note on ch. iii. 16.

[3] *Unleavened* bread.] "In the same metaphor, whereby Christ, in the next clause, is called the *passover* or *paschal lamb*, the Corinthians may here be called, the *unleavened bread*." Bishop Pearce.

[4] *Slain.*] The words ὑπερ ἡμων, for us, are wanting in the

Ch. V. Ver. 8. *therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of wickedness, and fraudulent mischief*[1], *but with the unleavened* bread *of sincerity and truth.*

The Christian institute may be compared to the passover feast. Christ was the victim, by whose death it was introduced, and by whose blood the covenant was ratified. Our Christian profession is the celebration of the paschal festival[2]; and as the Jews at that season with great care cleared all the leaven out of their houses, so let us clear out of our hearts the leaven of heathenism, the vices of our unconverted and idolatrous state, whether they be lewdness, malignity, or fraud; and let us ever conduct ourselves by the purest principles of truth and integrity, without any mixture of falsehood and deceit.

4. The apostle explains and limits a direction which he had already given, with respect to the cha-

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Alexandrine, Ephrem, Clermont, and other MSS. "From the allusion which the apostle makes to the passover, it has been thought not improbable, that the letter was written about the time of that festival, ch. xvi. 8." Macknight.

[1] *Wickedness*, &c.] "κακιας και πονηριας. Theophylact says, he is κακος, evil, who doth evil things; but he is πονηρος, who doth them with profound subtlety, and deceitful counsel." Whitby.

[2] *Paschal festival.*] The apostle does not pay much regard to consistency in his metaphors. In the preceding verse, believers were themselves the unleavened bread. In this, Christ is the paschal lamb. Christianity is a feast upon a victim, and believers are to celebrate the feast with pure unleavened bread.

racter of the persons with whom they should associate in Christian fellowship, ver. 9—11. Ch. V.

I wrote to you in the former *epistle*[3], *that ye should abstain from the society of lewd persons*[4]. Ver. 9.

Not indeed that ye should withdraw entirely from the lewd persons of this world, nor from the covetous[5], *nor from the rapacious, nor from idolaters, otherwise ye would be obliged to go out of the world.* 10.

But I now[6] *write to you, to abstain from the company of any one, who* is *called a brother*[7], 11.

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[3] *The former epistle.*] perhaps sent by Timothy. So Calvin, Beza, Grotius, Le Clerc, L'Enfant, Lightfoot, Pearce, Doddridge, Harwood, and Wakefield. "This same epistle:" so all the ancients; and Jeremiah Jones, Canon, V. 1. p. 167. "I had written in this epistle, but from better information I have altered it." Whitby. It must indeed be allowed, that if the apostle had written a former letter to a body of Christians so celebrated as the church at Corinth, it is surprising that not a single hint of it should be found in any ancient writer.—"I write unto you in this epistle." *q. d.* I here write to you. Newcome. See his note.

[4] *Lewd persons.*] So Dr. Doddridge, who well remarks, "that it is very plain that the apostle intended that the word should be taken in that extent."—Of this world, *i. e.* "heathen fornicators." Bishop Pearce.

[5] *Covetous.*] πλεονεκταις, "unnaturally lewd persons." Bishop Pearce, who refers to Mr. Locke's note upon Ephes. iv. 19. —*rapacious,* ἁρπαξιν, perhaps some species of lewdness practised among idolaters. Vid. Harwood's note on Philip. ii. 5, and the quotation from Plutarch.

[6] *Now.*] "νυνι. But on the contrary I wrote." Bishop Pearce; who observes, "that νυνι does not always signify *now*, but may be rendered *at vero*, on the contrary. See 1 Cor. vii. 14, xiii. 13, xiv. 6."

[7] *Called a brother.*] Bishop Pearce, with some of the ancient versions, and many of the fathers, understands η as a verb, and not a disjunctive particle: viz. I wrote to you, to abstain from the company of one who is a brother, if he be reported to be a fornicator, &c. Beza and Castalio understand the text in the same manner.

Ch. V. Ver. 11. *if he be a lewd person, or covetous, or idolater, or reviler, or drunken, or rapacious; with such an one not* even *to eat*[1].

It is uncertain whether the apostle here alludes to what he had written in another epistle which is now lost, or to some advice which he had set down in this letter, and which, upon consideration, he erased, or to a general hint of the impropriety of Christians associating with dissolute persons and idolaters, which he had before dropped, and which he here resumes, comments upon and explains.

He had forbid their associating with men of lewd and dissolute characters. But such was the state of the heathen world at that time, and so intimately were impure and lascivious rites blended with the ceremonies of idolatrous worship, that the Christians at Corinth could not follow this advice in its strictest sense, without secluding themselves wholly from the world, and withdrawing from all the intercourses of civil and social life. In this paragraph he explains his meaning, and limits the rule. *q. d.* In the general intercourse of society, you will occasionally be constrained to mix with persons of dissolute and profligate characters; but let not such be your cho-

[1] *Not* even *to eat.*] "You should not sit down any where at table with him." Bishop Pearce.—"The Corinthians were not to use a common table with such, much less the Lord's table." Archbishop Newcome.—"*Si quis Christianus, hujusmodi flagitiis sit infamis, adeo non oportet cum eo commercium habere ut, ne mensam quidem communem esse velim.*" Erasmus *apud* Newcome.—"*In excommunicationis locum, ubi aut presbyterium non est, aut ecclesia est lacerata, succedit privata familiaris commercii fuga.*" Grotius *apud* Newcome.

sen companions. And if any one who professes the Christian religion, and is a member of the Christian community, should be notoriously guilty of the vices of a heathen and idolatrous state, let him immediately be dismissed from the society, let him, as a heathen, be treated with the civil respect which may be his due, but acknowledge him not as a Christian brother, and admit him not to a participation of your sacred rites, nor even into the familiar intercourse of private society. Ch. V. Ver. 11.

5. As the jurisdiction of the Christian society did not extend beyond the pale of the church, the guilty heathen must be left to the judgement of God, but the offending Christian must be expelled, ver. 12, 13.

What right have I to judge[2] *those who are with-* 12.

[2] *What right,* &c.] και τους εξω. Pearce omits και on good authorities. He is also inclined on the authority of the Syriac and Coptic (Griesbach mentions only the Ethiopic) Versions to reject εχι. The best MSS. read εξαρατε in the imperative. Pearce translates the passage thus: "For what have I to do to judge those who are without? do ye judge those who are within, (and those who are without, God will judge,) and take away from among yourselves the wicked person." Archbishop Newcome, in his inner margin, gives this translation: How doth it concern me to judge those that are without? No: *but* judge ye those that are within, (and those that are without, God will judge,) and put away, &c. Mr. Wakefield's translation is similar to that of Newcome. He says, that "he adopts a construction which seems most suitable to the passage." "ουχι, *fortius negat in locis sequentibus,* Luc. i. 60, xii. 51, xiii. 3, 5, xvi. 30; Rom. iii. 27." Hesychius. "ουχι· ουδαμως ου δητα." Schleusner. The construction adopted by Newcome, which is also the reading of Theophylact and Wakefield, appears to me the most eligible. It is generally understood, that the apostle is apologizing for not taking notice of the woman, who was probably a heathen, though he animadverts with so much severity upon the conduct of the man. See Whitby, Doddridge, Macknight.

Ch. V. Ver. 13. *out? None at all. Do ye judge those who are within: but those that are without, God will judge. Remove, therefore*[1], *from among yourselves that wicked person.*

I say nothing concerning the adultress, because she is a heathen, and therefore not accountable to me as an apostle, nor amenable to the tribunal of the church. But your jurisdiction unquestionably extends to those who are members of your society. Leave, therefore, the offending woman to the judgement of God, and expel from your community her guilty paramour.

SECTION III.

Ch. VI. *The apostle rebukes the litigious spirit of the Corinthian converts; forbids them to carry their controversies into heathen courts of judicature, and earnestly recommends that they should settle their disputes by arbitration among themselves*[2]. Ch. vi. 1—11.

1. Appealing to their sense of dignity as the fu-

[1] *Therefore.*] καὶ is wanting in many copies, but, if retained, says Archbishop Newcome, it is equivalent to οὖν, therefore.

[2] Mr. Locke thinks that the case of the incestuous person is continued through the whole of the sixth chapter; and this supposition is countenanced by the apostle's recurring to the subject of fornication in the latter part of the chapter, and arguing against it upon Christian principles only. Mr. Locke suspects that the opposite party, to stop the church censure, pretended, that this was a matter to be judged by the civil magistrate, and had brought it before a heathen judge.

ture judges of the world, the apostle expostulates with the Corinthians upon the inconsistency and disgrace of carrying their controversies into heathen courts, ver. 1, 2. Ch. VI.

Does any of you, having a matter of complaint *against another, presume*[3] *to implead him before the unjust*[4], *rather than before the saints*[5]? *What*[6]! *know ye not*[7] *that the saints shall judge the* Ver. 1. 2.

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[3] *Presume.*] τολμα. Bishop Pearce renders it *does:* he says that in this connexion it signifies *sustinere*, and he can think of no equivalent word.—"dareth any." Newcome; who observes that it expresses strong animadversion.

[4] *Unjust.*] "αδικων, those who are in an unjustified state, without reference to character." Pearce, Locke, Doddridge.—"Heathen magistrates; called unbelievers, ver. 6." Newcome.

[5] *Saints.*] "αγιοι, believers, by profession holy and separate from the world; opposed to αδικοι, without reference to moral character." Locke.

[6] *What!*] "η ουκ." Griesbach prefixes ἤ upon the authority of the Alexandrine, Ephrem, and other copies.—"*Num ignoratis.*" Rosenmuller.

[7] *Know ye not.*] Mr. Locke observes, that "this question is repeated six times in this one chapter, which may seem to carry with it a just reproach to the Corinthians, who had got a new and better instructor than himself, in whom they so much gloried, and may not unfitly be thought to set on his irony, ch. iv. 10, where he tells them they are wise." This remark of Mr. Locke appears to me very judicious; and it favours the supposition, that the doctrines which he introduces with the preface, "*Know ye not,*" are not, at least universally, to be understood as doctrines which the apostle had himself taught them, but what they had learned from their new teacher of whom they were so proud. He had, probably, taught them some fantastic opinion concerning their own qualification and authority to judge men, and even angels: with this the apostle taunts them without meaning to concede the doctrine, and argues with them upon their professed principles. *q. d.* You who are so very wise, and who conceit yourselves to be possessed as Christians of the authority of kings, do you forget that you are qualified to judge both men and angels, and shall such wise and great men as you

Ch. VI. Ver. 2. *world*[1]*? and if the world is to be judged by you, are you unworthy of judging the most inconsiderable matters*[2]*?*

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send your petty causes to be tried in heathen courts? The argument is similar to that which our Lord uses in the case of the slothful servant, in the parable of the talents, Luke xix. 22: Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant; *thou knewest* that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow.

[1] *The saints shall judge the world?*] τον κοσμον κρινουσι. This passage is so very obscure, that the reader will excuse me if I set before him the various interpretations which have been given of it by learned men in their own words.

Erasmus. "Judicatur, *est præsentis temporis*, κρινεται, *non* κρινεῖται, *ut palam intelligas eum loqui de vita Christianorum.—Nihil autem vetat quo minus hic locus ad utrumque tempus pertineat: si quidem et nunc* judicatur, *h. e. condemnatur mundus impius ex innocenti vita piorum; et olim condemnabitur, cum piorum et impiorum opera omnia proferentur in apertum.*"

Castalio. "*Nam apostolos secum judices sessuros docuit Christus.*"

Grotius. "*Ipsi primum a Christo judicati, erunt deinde Christi adsessores judicantis alios; quod de apostolis dicitur* Matt. xix. 28, Luc. xxii. 30."

Crellius. "*Judicabunt mundum in illo glorioso Domini nostri Jesu Christi adventu, quia Christo judici aderunt, et illi veluti assidebunt, ejus decretum et sententiam approbabunt, et Domini quodammodo autoritate sententiam in hujus mundi homines dicent.*"

Slichtingius. "*Damnabunt assensu et facto suo, quod ipsi crediderint in Christum, mundus credere noluerit, eosque etiam hoc nomine persecutus sit. Nam sancti cum judice Christo in summa gloria erunt, et unum cum ipso reputabuntur.*"

Przipcovius. "*Propagato evangelio ita ut maximam mundi partem occupaverit, videmus publicorum judiciorum potestatem ad fideles et Christianos delatam.*"

Dr. Whitby. "We often read that even the best of saints shall stand before the judgement seat of Christ, that they shall be assessors with Christ then we read not: the words of Christ, Matt. xix. 28, in whatsoever sense taken, do not prove it; they being spoken of the twelve apostles only. These words must therefore admit one of these two senses, viz. that there shall be Christian magistrates who shall be governors, and so judges of the world, Isa. xlix. 23, Dan. vii. 18; or, that they shall judge

The Corinthians appear to have been a litigious, quarrelsome people, and their new profession of

Ch. VI. Ver. 2.

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and condemn the world by the faith preached for a testimony to them, as Noah did, Heb. xi. 7, and by the spirit given to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement, John xvi. 8, xii. 31."

Mr. Locke takes not the slightest notice of the difficulty: only in his exposition of the third verse, he interprets, "Know ye not that we Christians have power over evil spirits?"

Bishop Pearce. "Know ye not that saints shall come with Christ at the last day to judge the world?—Know ye not that we shall at that day judge and try fallen angels?"

Doddridge. "That they shall be assessors with Christ in that solemn judgement, when he shall condemn all the ungodly."

Macknight. "The inspired teachers among you judge the world by the laws of the gospel, which they promulgate.—He adds, that Bengelius says, that the apostle had in his eye, the state of the world under Constantine, when the Christians got possession of civil power.—Dr. Macknight further observes, with respect to the idea that many entertain of the saints being Christ's assessors, when he judges the world, "I observe, that it is repugnant to all the accounts given of the general judgement. Besides, for what purpose are the saints to be Christ's assessors?—To found a doctrine of this magnitude merely on two obscure passages of scripture, which can easily admit of a different and better interpretation, seems not a little rash."

Archbishop Newcome. "The saints will attend Christ when he appears to judge the world. 1 Thess. iii. 13; Dan. vii. 22; Rev. xx. 4."

Dr. Priestley. "It is taken for granted by the apostle, that whereas, in the prophecy of Daniel, it is said, that the people of the saints of the Most High shall possess the kingdom, that they shall act the part of judges. Our Saviour also said, that when he should enter on his kingdom, his twelve apostles should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. This, however, is figurative language; as is the representation of Christ sitting and judging all nations; and placing some on his right hand, and others on his left. What it is, that is really to be understood by this, we cannot at present know. It will no doubt be sufficiently verified, though perhaps in a manner of which we cannot at this time have any proper conception."

Rosenmuller, from Noesseltus, *q. d.* "*Christiani profanos judicare possunt.* Vid. ch. ii. 15, 16. *Est argumentum a majori*

Ch. VI. Ver. 2. Christianity had not altogether corrected the vices and follies of their heathen state. It was a great disgrace to them as Christians, to have any disputes at all, and still more that they should carry their controversies to the tribunals of the heathen magistrates, and expose themselves and their profession

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ad minus. Quod si agnoscere potestis errores profanorum in rebus ad religionem pertinentibus, quidni igitur terrenas etiam causas judicetis quæ et levioris sunt momenti, et facilius ad æquitatis leges definiendæ. Ver. 3, angelos, *i. e. homines qui pro prudentissimis ab aliis haberi solent.*"

It is obvious to observe, from this induction of authorities, that five hypotheses are here advanced to explain in what sense saints are said to judge the world, 1. "By teaching the necessity of virtuous practice." Whitby, Macknight. 2. "By exhibiting virtuous examples." Erasmus. 3. "Being judges of errors in religion, they are, *a fortiori*, competent to judge in civil controversies." Rosenmuller. Noesseltus. 4. "When Christianity prevails, Christians will become magistrates." Przipcovius, Whitby, Bengel. 5. "When Christ appears to judgement, saints will be assessors with him, after having been acquitted themselves." Castalio, Erasmus, Grotius, Crellius, Slichtingius, Pearce, Doddridge, Newcome, Priestley.

A far more important and more probable sense than any one of these, in my opinion, is that given in the exposition, that saints, *i. e.* believers, judge the world, because they bear their solemn and unanimous testimony, that the world will be judged. But even this sense, true and important as it is, will not bear out the apostle's conclusion, that they are, therefore, fit to be arbitrators in temporal concerns. I feel myself compelled, therefore, to have recourse to the hypothesis in the preceding note, that the false apostle had taught them some fanciful notion concerning their capacity and authority to judge men and angels, with which the apostle taunts them in the questions which he here puts to them.

[2] *Inconsiderable matters.*] αναξιοι εστε κριτηριων ελαχιστων. "These mean tribunals become you not." Wakefield; who remarks in his notes, that "the Arabic and Æthiopic translators alone perceived the true meaning of the original in this passage." "Nonne causas etiam minores judicare possitis? ανα-ξιοι, *sunt* inidonei. Κριτηρια, *autem sunt* causæ *de quibus contenditur*, ver. 4. Ελαχιστα, *res et causæ parvæ.*" Rosenmuller.

to the scorn of unbelievers. The apostle in this section animadverts with great severity upon this litigious spirit, and urges them by all means to make up their differences among themselves, and not to expose their folly before the heathen. Ch. VI. Ver. 2.

The apostle's design is excellent, but some of his arguments are problematical; and it is not easy, without knowing more of the circumstances of the case, either to understand his meaning, or to see the validity of his conclusions.

He begins the subject with a warm expostulation. Is any of you so inconsiderate, so regardless of the credit of his Christian profession, and of the reputation and prosperity of the church, as to implead a fellow-Christian at a heathen tribunal, in preference to referring the dispute to the arbitration of the church? The apostle's expression literally translated is, to implead him before the unjust, an epithet familiarly applied by the Jews to the heathen as expressive, not of a moral character, but an external state. Not having been admitted into covenant with God, the heathen are represented as sinners and enemies, and in an unjustified, unpardoned state.

Know you not that the saints shall judge the world? The Corinthians were a vain, conceited people. They had written a letter to the apostle, in which they seem to have used the expression, "*we know this*," or "*that*," oftener than became them. And the apostle appears to have intended to rebuke their conceit, by retorting the phrase upon them,

Ch. VI. Ver. 2. which he often does in the course of this epistle. *q. d.* You that are so very knowing, know you not this? &c. "Know you not that the saints shall judge the world?" that is, as some understand it, that the civil power will in due time come into the hands of Christians, or, according to others, that the saints shall be assessors with Christ in judging the world; or, which appears indeed to me to be a more probable sense, Know ye not that the great design of the Christian faith being to impress the solemn truth, that God will hereafter judge the world in righteousness, and reward every man according to his works, every professor of this holy doctrine may be considered as bearing his testimony to this solemn truth, and in that sense may be regarded as an assessor with God and Christ in the future judgement of the world, as the prophets of God are said to perform what they are only commissioned to predict? Rev. xi. 6.

Saints are here said to *judge the world;* and in other passages of the scriptures, it is said to be the office of Christ to judge the world, and the judgement of the saints is usually understood in a figurative sense, but that of Christ literally. The scriptures, however, do not make this distinction. It may not unjustly be alleged, that both phrases are literal, or both figurative. And hence it may be concluded, that no argument can be drawn from the office of Christ as judge of the world, whatever that phrase may mean, to prove that he possesses a nature superior to that of a human being; because,

the same office is attributed to the saints, and, for any thing that appears, in the same sense. And it is possible that nothing more may be meant by the assertion that Christ shall judge the world, than that Christ was authorized to declare in the most solemn and explicit manner, the unchangeable purpose of God to deal with his reasonable creatures in exact correspondence with their moral characters. The event will explain the prophecy. For that awful issue may we stand prepared! Ch. VI. Ver. 2.

The apostle argues, If *the world is to be judged by you, are you unworthy of judging the most inconsiderable matters?*

Now in every light in which I can regard this argument, it appears to me irrelevant and inconclusive. Suppose that the Christian community, three centuries after this epistle was written, were to become possessed of the imperial and judicial power; how does this prove, that the Christians at Corinth were at that time competent to settle civil differences between the members of their society? or, suppose that the apostle means, that saints are to be assessors with Christ in the final judgement, whatever that office may be, they will no doubt in due time be properly qualified for it. But would this circumstance prove, that private Christians are now competent to arbitrate in civil disputes?

If the apostle is understood to say, that Christians by the sanctity of their lives condemn the wickedness of the world, or finally, if he means that the saints judge the world by bearing their solemn uni-

Ch. VI. Ver. 2. form testimony to a future final judgement of mankind, still it does not follow, that they are now qualified to judge in civil causes. Nor can I believe that the apostle intended to argue in a manner so obviously inconclusive. The most probable supposition therefore seems to be, that he argues with the Corinthians upon certain absurd fantastical opinions, which they had borrowed from their false teachers, and which led them to entertain very extravagant notions of their own dignity and wisdom.

If this solution be not satisfactory, and I do not advance it with confidence, we must leave the argument where we find it; and I freely own, that I neither fully understand the premises, nor see the force of the conclusion; though I am perfectly satisfied of the justice and wisdom of the apostle's advice, independent of the argument by which it is enforced.

2. The apostle presses his conclusion still more strongly from the consideration that Christians are to be judges of angels, ver. 3—5.

3. *Know ye not that we shall judge angels*[1]? *How*

[1] *Judge angels.*] The judgement of angels is attended with the same difficulties, and from expositors receives a similar solution to the case of the saints judging the world; viz. that saints will be assessors with Christ in the judgement passed upon evil angels. "Even the fallen angels themselves," says Dr. Doddridge, "notwithstanding all their malignity and pride, shall be brought to that tribunal, at which you, having gloriously passed your own trial, shall be seated with Christ, your victorious Lord, when by his righteous sentence he shall send these rebellious spirits to that flaming prison which divine justice has prepared for them." The pious author thinks, "there is a peculiar dignity and propriety, that when the devils shall be condemned,

much more[2] *the affairs of this life? If then ye have controversies relating to the affairs of this life, do ye set those to judge them, who are of no esteem in the church*[3]*? I speak thus to your shame*[4]. Ch. VI. Ver. 4. 5.

Have you not been taught by your philosophical instructors, that we who profess faith in Christ, not

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the saints being raised to the seats of glory which these wicked spirits have forfeited and lost, should assist in that sentence which shall display the victory of Christ over them, in these his servants, once their captives, and will no doubt render the sentence itself yet more intolerable."

All this takes a great deal for granted, which it would not be easy to prove; and the learned expositor does not give himself the trouble to show in what way this interpretation becomes relevant to the apostle's argument. I can regard it in no other light than as a sarcastic appeal to some wild opinion of their authority over bad men and evil angels, which they had learned from the false apostle, and to which the apostle Paul by no means intends to attach any credit, though an address to their own principles might operate to their own conviction.

[2] *How much more.*] So Bishop Pearce, Newcome, and Wakefield. ποσω μαλλον. This is the reading of some good manuscripts. The received text is μητι γε, *are ye not worthy to judge?* See Griesbach, Doddridge. Note, verses 3, 4, 5, 6, are wanting in the Alexandrine MS. See Griesbach. Μητι γε, How much more. ποσω γε μαλλον· Hesychius, Phavorinus, Photius. Vid. Whitby.

[3] *Of no esteem.*] "εξουθενημενους, *judices non authenticos, i. e.* referees chosen by the parties, not judges authorized by law." Locke.—"Set such as are despised by the heathen, *i. e.* set Christians to judge in the church." Bishop Pearce.—"Constitute even those judges, who are of the least estimation in the church of Christ, rather than heathens." Newcome, L'Enfant, and Wetstein.—"Heathen magistrates." Whitby; who reads the words with an interrogation; and observes, "the apostle does not here command them to do this, but sharply doth rebuke them for it, saying, I speak this to your shame." Rosenmuller gives the same sense and construction. Griesbach reads the clause interrogatively.

[4] *I speak thus to your shame.*] προς εντροπην υμιν λεγω ὑτως. I adopt this punctuation from Bishop Pearce.

Ch. VI. Ver. 5. only have dominion over the world, but that we even exercise authority over evil angels themselves of every kind and degree, and that when we require them to quit the bodies of those whom they possess, they are compelled to submit[1]? What then? shall not we, who thus judge and punish evil angels when they do amiss, be allowed to sit in judgement upon our erring or culpable brethren in the trivial matters of the present life?

Do you, who estimate your own authority so highly, notwithstanding your good opinion of yourselves, when you have causes depending, and those of the most trivial description, appeal for judgement to the heathen magistrates, to those very persons of whom you generally speak in the most contemptuous language? Are these, after all, to be the arbiters of differences between such high personages as yourselves? How disgraceful! Be consistent at least even in your errors, and do not expose yourselves to universal scorn.

3. The apostle demands whether there be not an individual among them, competent to decide a controversy, ver. 5, 6.

—5. *Is there not among you an intelligent person*[2],

[1] *Compelled to submit.*] "Judge angels, evil angels say all the Greek scholiasts; and this the Christians gloriously did by expelling them from their seats and their dominions, and forcing them to confess before their votaries, that they were only devils. John xii. 31, xvi. 11." Whitby.

[2] *An intelligent person.*] σοφος, a wise man. "If St. Paul uses this word in the sense of the synagogue, it signifies one ordained, or a Rabbi, and so capacitated to be a judge, for such

not even one, who is able to decide between one brother and another[3]*? but brother impleads brother, and that before unbelievers?* Ch. VI. Ver. 6.

Do you value yourselves so much upon your wisdom, and is there not one man among you of approved sagacity and integrity, who may be an arbitrator in your disputes, but you are still under a necessity of carrying all your differences to be settled in the heathen courts?

4. If they had no umpire among themselves, it were better to put up with injuries, than to seek for redress from heathen tribunals, ver. 7.

Now, therefore, it is altogether a fault[4] *in you, that ye bring actions one against another. Why do ye not rather endure wrong? why do ye not rather submit to be defrauded*[5]*?* 7.

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were called wise men. If in the sense of the Greek schools, then it signifies a man of learning, study, and parts: if it be taken in the latter sense, it may seem to be with some reflection on their pretending to wisdom." Locke. It is observed by most of the expositors upon this section, that the Jews were allowed by the Romans to decide their own controversies among themselves; and that the Christians generally passing for a sect of Jews, might avail themselves of the same privilege. But probably a majority of the Corinthian church were converts from heathenism; and the apostle seems only to allude to the settlement of differences by arbitration.

[3] *One brother* and another.] ανα μεσον τυ αδελφου. The sense requires the addition of και τυ αδελφυ, which appears to have been the reading of the Syriac. See Grotius and Bishop Pearce.

[4] *Altogether a fault.*] "*Jam hoc omnino vobis vertendum est vitio.*" Rosenmuller.—"Now, therefore, it is certainly a defect among you: *i. e.* a less degree of excellence. *Minus aliquid summo.* Grotius." Newcome.—"Certainly, however, there is some defect among you, that ye go to law with each other *at all.*" Wakefield.

[5] *Submit to be defrauded.*] Bishop Pearce translates, "Why

Ch. VI. Ver. 7. It is a disgrace to your profession, that you should implead each other at all in the heathen courts. Why do you not endure injury, and put up with imposition, rather than expose Christianity to contempt by your disgraceful litigations?

5. Instead of bearing injury, the apostle charges them with being themselves guilty of injustice, and solemnly reminds them, that vice, however tolerated in the heathen world, will infallibly exclude those who allow themselves in the practice of it from all the privileges and all the hopes of the gospel, ver. 8—10.

8. *But ye do wrong, and defraud, and that even your brethren.*

So far from bearing patiently the injuries of others, you are yourselves the aggressors; you injure and defraud your brethren.

9. *Do ye not know, then, that the unjust shall have no inheritance in the kingdom of God?*

Do you know so much, and are you so vain of your understanding, and yet are you not duly apprized of this important truth, that injustice will certainly exclude those who practise it from the blessings promised to the righteous; and that men who defraud

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are ye not rather the persons injured? Why are ye not rather the persons defrauded?" *q. d.* Why are ye not the defendants rather than the plaintiffs? St. Paul only forbids them to do injuries to others, he does not command them to bear all injuries from others. But perhaps the apostle means that, under the existing circumstances, it would be better to endure almost any wrong, than to carry a cause into the heathen courts.

and injure their neighbours, however lofty their profession may be, will never be acknowledged by God as the genuine subjects of that kingdom of righteousness, and truth, and peace, which he has established in the world, nor as the legitimate heirs of the privileges of the gospel? Ch. VI. Ver. 9.

Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor lewd persons, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor rapacious persons, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 10.

All the vices in this dreadful catalogue are tolerated in the heathen world, and the notorious practice of them does not exclude men from society; they are by many hardly regarded as criminal. But, my brethren, do not imagine that Christianity will tolerate these odious offences. Do not deceive yourselves. The religion of Jesus peremptorily forbids them all. Lewdness and injustice in every form, and in every degree, exclude the guilty culprit from that community of which Christ is the head, and from all title to a participation in its privileges and blessings, either here or hereafter.

6. This had been the character of some of the Corinthian Christians; but the apostle expresses his confidence, that by embracing the principles and spirit of Christianity, they were now thoroughly reformed, ver. 11.

And such were some of you. But ye are washed[1], 11.

[1] *Ye are washed,* &c.] "Your past sins are washed away and

Ch. VI. Ver. 11. *but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.*

Some of you have been gross idolaters, not only chargeable with the most extravagant absurdities with regard to the object of worship, but guilty of those enormous crimes to which the idolatry of the heathen naturally leads, and which it often authorizes, and even requires. But I trust that you are now of a different spirit. You have assumed the name of Christ; you have been baptized into his religion, and have been admitted into the holy community of his disciples; you have been reconciled to God, you have received the gifts of the spirit, and you are now, I trust, washed from the pollution of your crimes; and, by the powerful influence of the principles of Christianity, your hearts are renewed, your lives are reformed, and you now reflect with horror upon those excesses and enormities, to which you formerly abandoned yourselves without hesitation or remorse.

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forgiven you, upon your receiving of the gospel by baptism; ye are sanctified, *i. e.* ye are members of Christ's church, which consists of saints, and have made some advances in the reformation of your lives, by the doctrine of Christ, confirmed to you by the extraordinary operations of the Holy Ghost." Locke. "*Baptismo suscepto purificati, et sanctorum justorumque cœtui aggregati.*" Griesbach *apud* Rosenmuller, who observes, that according to this the words express no moral change, but merely the separation of believers by baptism from unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, their admission into the church of Christ, and their participation of all its privileges and blessings, the consideration of which is the most ingenuous and the most powerful motive to the practice of virtue. To which I would add, that the apostle plainly indicates, that by the energy of these principles the believers at Corinth had in the main, and generally speaking, been purified from the vices of their heathen state.

SECTION IV.

The apostle strongly remonstrates against fornication, and every kind of impurity; which, however tolerated by the law, or authorized by the idolatry of heathenism, was utterly inconsistent with the doctrine, the discipline, and spirit of Christianity. Ch. vi. 12 *to the end.* Ch. VI.

1. The apostle urges, that the gratifications of sense, however innocent in themselves, are not to be carried to excess; and reminds the Corinthians, that the gross appetites will cease with the present state, ver. 12, 13[1].

[1] Mr. Locke thinks that the apostle continues to treat of the case of the fornicator, or incestuous person, through the whole of the sixth chapter. He supposes that the incestuous person had appealed to the heathen court of justice, and had vindicated himself by the plea that fornication, and even that species of which he had been guilty, was no offence in the eye of the law. The apostle argues with them upon this principle; and shows that, however innocent lewdness in its various and odious modes might be regarded by the idolatrous heathen, it is a great offence under the Christian dispensation. And he argues this doctrine from a variety of considerations, which are all peculiar to Christianity, viz. "that our bodies are made for the Lord, ver. 13.—That our bodies are members of Christ, ver. 15.—That our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, ver. 19.—That we are not our own, but bought with a price, ver. 20. All which arguments concern Christians only, and there is not in all this discourse against fornication, one word to declare it to be unlawful by the law of nature to mankind in general. That was altogether needless, where the apostle was teaching Christians what they were to do within their own society by the law of Christ, which was to be their rule."

Ch. VI. Ver. 12. *"All things are lawful for me*[1]*."—But all things are not expedient. "All things are lawful for me."—But I will not be brought under the power of* 13. *any thing. "Food for the stomach, and the stomach for food."—But God will destroy both it and them.*

Some of you are disposed to plead for the innocence of fornication. You say it is not condemned by the law of the country. You assume the principle, "all things are lawful which the law does not forbid." But for a moment granting your principle, that fornication is forbidden by no law, positive or natural, allow me to advance another maxim in reply: All things are not expedient. If fornication were allowed to be, legally speaking, ever so innocent, there may be very good reasons for abstaining from it. You repeat your maxim, "All things are lawful." I will meet it with another equally important maxim: "I will not be brought under the power of any thing." I will not yield to inclinations be they ever so innocent, so as to be brought into bondage by them, and to be unable to practise self-denial when duty requires it. And what passion so soon gains an uncontroulable dominion over the mind, as unchaste desire?

[1] *All things are lawful.*] Bishop Pearce, Rosenmuller, Macknight and others, consider these proverbial phrases as objections suggested by the Corinthians, to which the apostle makes replies. But I have met with no expositor, not even Mr. Locke, who appears to me to enter fully into the apostle's reasoning. I have, agreeably to Bishop Pearce's supposition, pointed these clauses as objections and replies: which gives spirit to the text, and the hypothesis is plausible.

But you ply me with another maxim: "Meat is for the stomach, and the stomach for meat;" and so you argue that the sexes are made for each other. Softly, my enlightened brother; the cases are not parallel. It is true that the stomach is made for food, and food for the stomach; and all kinds of wholesome food may be indiscriminately used, provided they are used with temperance. For when life is finished, there is an end both of the stomach, and of the meat which is digested by it. But this is not the case with the two sexes. They will not perish in the grave: and though it is an undeniable truth that they are made to contribute to each other's happiness, this end is to be attained by chaste and lawful wedlock, not by promiscuous concubinage. Ch. VI. Ver. 13.

2. The body is consecrated to Christ, and is intended for immortality; and therefore ought not to be applied to a dishonourable use, ver. 13, 14.

Now the body[2] is *not* made *for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And as God has raised up the Lord, so will he also raise up us*[3] *by the same power*[4]. —13. 14.

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[2] *The body:*] *i. e.* the living person: all mankind of both sexes; especially the body of believers, to whom, as Mr. Locke observes, the apostle's argument is restricted. They are made for Christ, and Christ for them. They are to form one body of which Christ is the head, they are the members; and this body is not to be destroyed like the stomach and its food, but is to be raised to life by the power of God: so that the analogy does not hold.

[3] *Us.*] ἡμας. Vid. Griesbach. ὑμας, *you*, is the reading of the received text.

[4] *By the same power.*] δια της δυναμεως αὐτε. Mr. Locke

Ch. VI. Ver. 14. Whatever might be said in defence of the promiscuous intercourse of the sexes, if men and women were as perishable as the stomach and its food, that argument cannot now be employed. Human beings are not made to live in a state of illicit intercourse, but to be united to Christ; and Christ is appointed to be united to them: so that Christ and his church form one mystical person of which he is the head; the church, the body; and individuals, are members. See Rom. xii. 4, 5.

Now, so far is it from being true that the human being will perish like the stomach and its food, nothing can be more certain, than that mankind will be raised to life. For Christ, the head, is raised already; and the same Almighty power which brought the head to life, will in due time raise the members also, and will unite the living body to the living head.

3. Fornication is absolutely inconsistent with their spiritual union to Christ, as members of his mystical body, ver. 15—17.

15. *Know ye not that your bodies are the members*

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would render the phrase "*to his power*; to the partaking in the nature of his glorious body, and the power he is vested with in it." This he thinks is the only way in which the observation can be made relevant to the argument. *q. d.* If the body is to be raised with this honour and dignity, how disgraceful to prostitute it to a harlot! But I conceive that the interpretation in the commentary comes nearer to the sense of the original, and fully explains the relevancy of the observation in the usual construction of the words. Observe, how explicitly the resurrection of Christ is attributed by the apostle to the power of God, and not to any power inherent in himself.

of Christ? Shall I then take these, and bestow Ch. IV.
them upon a harlot[4]*? By no means. Know ye* Ver. 16.
not[5]*, that he who is united to a harlot, is one body with her, for these two, saith* the scripture[6]*, shall be one flesh? But he that is united to the Lord,* 17.
is one spirit with him.

My knowing friends, know ye not this fact, that all believers are members and vital portions of Christ's mystical body? Is it reasonable, is it decent, that I, whatever the common law or the common practice of heathenism may authorize,—is it, I say, tolerable, that I, a vital part of the body of Christ, should make myself one with an impure harlot? Know you not, my intelligent friends, have you not read in the books of Moses (Gen. ii. 24) that a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and that they shall be one flesh: so that he who commits fornication may be regarded as forming one person with his guilty paramour? And can you possibly be ignorant, my

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[4] *Shall I take these,* &c.] More literally rendered, Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of a harlot? *q. d.* The man and woman make one person. Christ and believers also make one spiritual person. If a believer commits fornication, he tears himself off from the person of Christ, and becomes a part of another person, made up of himself and a harlot. In the 16th and 17th verses, the apostle shows in what sense these unions are to be understood; and upon what authority he builds his allegory.

[5] *Know ye not.*] By the repetition of these words, the apostle appears to taunt them with pretences to knowledge which were not well founded; but to what particulars he alludes, we have no means of ascertaining.

[6] *Saith* the scripture.] "φησιν. *Dicit quis, id est dictum est.* See 2 Cor. vi. 2, x. 10; Eph. v. 14; Heb. viii. 5." Newcome.

Ch. VI. Ver. 17. enlightened brethren, that he who joins himself to the community of believers, becomes thereby spiritually one with Christ; a vital part of his mystical body? And knowing all this, can you plead the laws and customs of heathenism in defence of impurity? Or can you endure the thought of debasing and degrading yourselves from an union with Christ to an union with a lewd and filthy prostitute?

4. They who commit fornication injure themselves, profane the temple of God, insult his holy spirit, and destroy his property, ver. 18—20.

18. *Flee from fornication. Every* other *offence*[1] *which a man committeth is without his body, but he who committeth fornication sinneth against himself.*

Other vices may be injurious to others, yet they are not immediately injurious to the offender himself; but this is peculiarly and directly hurtful to his

[1] *Every* other *offence.*] "παν ἁμαρτημα, most sins which a man committeth." Newcome; who in his note says, "Sins in general (so πας, ver. 12; John ii. 10; Phil. ii. 29,) leave their defilement on the mind, but the fornicator humbles and debases his body." So Locke and Pearce, and most of the other expositors: but I do not see how this consideration could be urged as a peculiar aggravation of guilt, or dissuasive from impurity. The apostle's argument appears to me to be this: Most vices are injurious to others, but fornication or lewdness is injurious to a man's own person. So Rosenmuller: "*Pleraque peccata magis aliis, quam ei qui peccat nocent: sed scortator in suum corpus injurius est, sibi ipsi nocet.*" Raphelius shows, from Xen. *Mem.*, that Socrates argues that intemperate men hurt themselves far more than others: whereas other sinners secure some profit to themselves, though they are injurious to others. See Doddridge.

own person, by entailing debility, disease, and infamy. Ch. VI.

What then? Know ye not, that your bodies[2] *are the temple of the holy spirit, which ye have received from God?* Ver. 19.

You that know so much, and who entertain such high notions of your own dignity, do ye not know that by taking upon yourselves the Christian profession you have entered into covenant with God; that you are consecrated to him; that you are his living temple; and that the holy spirit which you have received is a symbol of his presence with you, like the cloud of glory which rested upon the mercy seat? But the solemn rites of this temple are not to be conducted like the lewd orgies of heathen worship: for the Deity to whom you are consecrated is a God of spotless rectitude, who will resent every instance of impurity as an insult upon his character and a profanation of his sanctuary.

And ye are not your own, but ye are bought with a price[3]. *Therefore glorify God with your body*[4]. 20.

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[2] *Your bodies.*] Τα σωματα is the reading of the Alexandrine and of other manuscripts and versions. The plural number best suits the connexion. Not each believer, but all collectively, form the temple of God. The received text reads, "your body." See Bishop Pearce.

[3] *Bought with a price.*] "ηγορασθητε, *redempti, liberati estis, nempe a superstitione, ignorantia, vitiositate et omni peccatorum miseria. Hoc magnum pretium quo Deus nos redemit est filius ejus dilectissimus Jesus Christus.* Rom. viii. 32. *Eum nempe misit in mundum eo consilio ut humani generis salutem procuraret.*" Rosenmuller.—"All Christians may be said to belong to God, because he has purchased them with the life of his son. But this

Ch. VI. Ver. 20.

The last consideration which I shall offer, to convince you of the folly and guilt of those odious vices which are tolerated by heathen laws and authorized by heathen customs, is this: You are in fact no longer your own masters. You have no right to live without controul, and to lay the reins on the neck of your passions. You are by profession the bond-servants of another, who is your rightful Lord; who has paid a great price to redeem you from your former servitude to idolatry and vice; who has sent

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can only be said in a figurative and by no means in a literal sense; for then there must have been some person of whom he bought them, and who could this be? It was at first imagined, that God redeemed us from the devil, by abandoning to him the life of his son: and strange as this idea now appears, it prevailed for many centuries, and it was not till long afterwards that any person imagined that it was Christ, and not God, that was the purchaser; having given his life to the justice of God in order to redeem us from death. This total change in the system of atonement was not completed till after the Reformation; when Luther, in order to combat with more advantage the popish doctrine of human merit, advanced the merits of Christ in opposition to it. Then, and not before, it was conceived that God could not forgive sin till an adequate satisfaction had been made to his offended justice: and as sin was considered to be an infinite evil, as committed against an infinite being, it was necessary that the person who made satisfaction should himself be infinite, or God. But you find nothing like this in the scriptures: there God is uniformly represented as forgiving sin freely on the repentance and reformation of the sinner; and therefore we are required to forgive, as we hope to be forgiven. And so far are we from being bought from God by the death of Christ, that whenever this figure of speech is used, God, and not Christ, is said to be the purchaser." Dr. Priestley.

[4] *With your body.*] That is, with your whole person. See Rom. xii. 1. The received text adds, "and with your spirit, which are God's:" but these words are wanting in the best manuscripts, and are omitted by Griesbach in his critical edition, and by Bishop Pearce and Archbishop Newcome in their improved versions.

his Son to instruct you in truth and duty, to exemplify the obedience which he requires, to die for you, and to rise again; and who has imparted to you the gifts of his spirit. This Master is God himself; whose service is freedom, whose yoke is easy, and in keeping whose commandments there is great reward. But he has no pleasure in wickedness and impurity. Acknowledge him as your Master: consecrate yourselves wholly to his service. Let it be your primary concern to love him with all the heart; to obey and honour him, and to devote all you have and are to his glory. This is your indispensable duty, and it will be your truest interest: for you are his by every tie which can bind a servant to his master, a child to his father, or a creature to his God. Ch. VI. Ver. 20.

PART THE SECOND.

THE APOSTLE REPLIES IN DETAIL TO THE QUESTIONS PROPOSED BY THE CORINTHIANS IN THEIR LETTER TO HIM; AND INTERMIXES MUCH IMPORTANT INSTRUCTION AND ADVICE, BOTH WITH RESPECT TO DOCTRINE, DISCIPLINE, AND PRACTICE. Ch. vii.—xv.

SECTION I.

Ch. VII. *The apostle replies to various questions proposed by the Corinthians, concerning the expediency of marriage, and the lawfulness of forming, or of continuing, the conjugal connexion with unbelievers; and he offers a variety of suitable advice to persons in every condition of life, under the existing circumstances of the Corinthian church.* Ch. vii. *throughout.*

1. The apostle, asserting the general expediency of marriage, offers advice to married persons, ver. 1—7.

The Corinthians, notwithstanding their partiality to the false apostle, still retained so much regard for St. Paul, that they wrote a letter to him at Ephesus, to ask his advice upon some important points, concerning which they were in doubt. And

the first question seems to have been, whether it was proper to marry at all, and whether a state of celibacy was not more honourable than matrimony: which was the doctrine of some of the philosophic schools. The apostle, while he admits that, in the present precarious state of the church, marriage might be inexpedient, nevertheless decidedly declares in favour of its lawfulness and general expediency; and gives not the least pretence for the supposition, that under the Christian dispensation celibacy was to be regarded as meritorious: that it was by no means incumbent upon married persons to separate from each other; though in times of persecution it might sometimes be expedient, either to remain unmarried, or to agree to a temporary separation, with a view to moral improvement; or, as in his own case, to promote the diffusion of the gospel. Ch. VII.

Now, concerning the things about which ye have written to me, "it is *better for a man not to take a wife*[1]." Ver. 1.

Having finished the admonitions which I thought it my duty to give concerning the schismatical spi-

[1] *It is better,* &c.] This has very much the appearance of a maxim quoted by the apostle from the letter of the Corinthians to him, like that in chap. vi. 12. Some of the Corinthians probably, like some of the sects of philosophers, disapproved of marriage altogether. The apostle, whose opinion it appears to have been, that in the present precarious circumstances of the times it would be advisable for unmarried persons to remain single, does not directly contradict the principle advanced; but he shows how dangerous it would be to morals if it were generally acted upon. "*Frequens erat apud philosophos quæstio,* 'An sapienti ducenda

CH. VII. Ver. 1. rit and other gross irregularities which have been introduced among you, I now proceed to answer those questions which you have proposed in your letter; and to give you my faithful and best advice upon every subject. And first with respect to the subject of marriage, and the duties of married and of single persons. And I observe, that some of you at least assume a principle to which, in its unqualified state, I can by no means accede. You presume, that the Christian religion, like some of the austere sects of heathen philosophy, approves of celibacy: you say, "it is better for a man not to marry."

2. *Nevertheless,* to avoid *fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.*

Though it may be expedient in some circumstances to decline marriage, yet upon the whole I have no hesitation in laying it down as a general rule, that virtue and happiness are best promoted in both sexes by entering into, and living harmoniously in, the married state.

3. *Let the husband render to the wife her due*[1], *and*

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uxor?' *Qui omnia ad se referebant abstinendum a nuptiis censebant. Est in eam sententiam Antiphanis philosophi locus apud Stobæum, et dicta Lycurgi, Thaletis, Socratis, et aliorum.*" Grotius. "It was an old philosophical question," says Whitby, "whether a man should marry; in which many held the negative, as Bion and Antisthenes. See Laert. *in Bion.* p. 108; *in Antisthen.* p. 138. Menander says, 'ʙ γαμεις εανγε νουν εχεις.' Pythagoras considered marriage as an impediment to philosophy; and Porphyry says, that a philosopher must not marry: 'τα αφροδισια μιαινει.'" *De Abst.* l. iv. § 20.

in like manner the wife also to the husband. The wife hath not power over her own person, but the husband[2]*; and in like manner the husband also hath not power over his own person, but the wife.* Ch. VII. Ver. 4.

Deprive not each other, except as it were *by mutual consent for a season, that ye may have leisure for prayer*[3] *and may come together again*[4]*; that Satan tempt you not*[5] *because of your incontinence.* 5.

That you may not expose yourselves to temptation to apostatize from the faith, and to return to

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[1] *Her due.*] οφειλην, "the debt *of marriage*." Newcome. This is the reading of Griesbach from the best copies, and is adopted by Bishop Pearce and Archbishop Newcome. The received text reads, "οφειλομενην ευνοιαν, due benevolence."

[2] *The wife hath not power.*] "not the wife *only* hath the power, but the husband *also*." Bishop Pearce; who refers to his note on ch. i. 17, where he notices it "as a Hebrew idiom to express a preference of one thing above another, by an affirmation of that which is preferred, and a negation of that which is contrary to it." Whitby and Macknight remark, that the apostle's doctrine in this verse strongly proves the unlawfulness of polygamy.

[3] *Have leisure for prayer.*] The received text reads, "τη νηστεια, for fasting;" which Griesbach omits, upon the authority of the Alexandrine, Ephrem, and other manuscripts and versions. Bishop Pearce says, "against which word I have no other objection than that it is left out by these manuscripts and versions."

[4] *May come together.*] Read ητε, not συνερχεσθε, which is the received text. Acts ii. 1, 44. See Griesbach, Pearce, and Newcome.

[5] *That Satan tempt you not.*] Satan is the god of the unbelieving world, which is his kingdom; in opposition to the community of believers, which is the kingdom of God and Christ. The apostle's meaning therefore is, lest their idolatrous neighbours or their own evil passions should seduce them back to heathenism, under the pretence that Christianity was a discipline too austere in its nature; and which imposed restraints that were unreasonable and intolerable.

Ch. VII. Ver. 5. heathenism, under the erroneous impression that Christianity lays you under too severe a restraint.

6. *But I say this by way of permission, not by way of commandment.*

If you choose thus to separate yourselves for a season, you may do it; but observe, I do not recommend it, much less do I impose it upon you as a Christian duty.

7. *But*[1] *I wish all persons to be as I would be myself*[2]*: but every man has his proper gift from God, one according to this manner, and another according to that.*

I wish that others could exercise the same command over themselves as I would, and do. But all are not gifted with the same self-controul; and I do not mean to set myself up in this case as an example that every one is bound to follow.

2. The apostle advises widowers and widows to follow his example, and to remain unmarried, ver. 8, 9.

8. *Now I say to widowers*[3] *and to widows, that it is commendable for them if they continue as I also*

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[1] *But.*] This is the reading of many copies of good authority. The received text reads γαρ. See Griesbach.

[2] *As I would be myself:*] ὡς και εμαυτον. "I would that all men were even as I *would have* myself *continue*." Bishop Pearce; who insists that the construction requires θελω ειναι to be understood after εμαυτον. He adds, that he "supplies the word *continue;* because all allow that St. Paul was an unmarried man." This assumption of the learned prelate is not, however, universally true.

[3] *To widowers:*] τοις αγαμοις. Literally, "to the unmar-

do[4]. *But if they possess not this self-command, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to be miserable*[5]. Ch. VII. Ver. 9.

In my judgement it would be a prudent and laudable thing, considering the circumstances of the times, if those who, having been married, have had the misfortune to lose their partners, would decline marrying again, and would live as I do without encumbering themselves with the cares of a family. But if any possess not dominion over their affections, (and it is painful to those who have lived happily in the married state to lead a single solitary life,) let them by all means marry again: it is a step perfectly consistent with Christian purity, and it is much better to marry than to pine away in a life of solitude and desolation.

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ried;" but here, says Bishop Pearce, the word signifies, not one who was never married, but one who is without a wife. In this sense it is properly joined with ἡ χηρα, a widow.

[4] *As I also do.*] Hence it is generally concluded that the apostle Paul was a widower when he wrote this epistle. There are, however, some who argue from Philip. iv. 3, that he had a wife living, whom he had left under the care of his friends at Philippi while he was engaged in his missionary and apostolic labours. It is objected to this, that συζυγε γνησιε are of the masculine gender: but it is alleged, that in the Attic construction they may be taken as feminines; and that as the person addressed is desired to succour the females, it makes it more probable that this person was a female. Clemens Alexandrinus, in a passage cited by Eusebius, appeals to this text as a proof that Paul had a wife living. See Erasmus, Castalio, Clarius, and Zegerus *in loc.*

[5] *Be miserable.*] Πυρεσθαι, burn. "be made uneasy." Pearce; who observes, that "this word in a metaphorical sense signifies, to be troubled, vexed, or made uneasy, 2 Cor. xi. 29. '*Uro hominem*,' I vex him. Terence."

CH. VII. 3. The apostle, appealing to the authority of Christ, peremptorily prohibits in married persons separation and divorce, ver. 10, 11.

VER. 10. *But the married I charge*, yet *not I* only, *but the*
Lord[1], *Let not the wife separate herself from* her
11. *husband; but if she separate herself, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband; and let not the husband put away his wife.*

To married persons I have one direction to give: indeed, it is no judgement of my own, it is the express command of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, which he solemnly uttered in the course of his personal ministry, Matt. v. 32, xix. 9; Mark x. 11, 12: Let no separation take place between married persons; let there be no divorce but in case of adultery. It may indeed happen, that the overbearing tyranny and cruelty of the husband may make it necessary for the wife to withdraw from his house and from his society. But let her not imagine herself at liberty in this case to marry again while her husband is living. On the contrary, let her endeavour if possible to be reconciled to her husband,

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[1] *But the Lord.*] "It is not only I who command, but the Lord." Bishop Pearce; who remarks in his note, "These words seem to allude to what our Saviour himself had delivered when upon earth, as it is recorded in Saint Mark x. 11, 12: where you will find the same rule given to married people by Christ as is given here."—"*But the Lord*, who condemned divorce, except in case of adultery." Matt. v. 32, xix. 9. Archbishop Newcome. This interpretation makes the apostle's language easy to be understood, without supposing, as some have done, that he claims inspiration while he addresses married people, but not when he gives advice to widowers and widows.

and to return to his house again, if she can live in peace. Ch. VII. Ver. 11.

4. The apostle, in the case of a believer being connected in marriage with a heathen, forbids the believer to put away the unbeliever; but if the unbeliever voluntarily withdraws, the believing party is at liberty to marry again, ver. 12—16.

But to others I speak[2], *and not the Lord.* 12.

The cases which follow did not occur to our Lord's notice during his personal ministry; no express decision of his, therefore, is left upon record. But you will do well to attend to my advice, as I am acting under his commission in dispensing the gospel.

If any brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she consenteth to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And if any woman hath an unbelieving husband, and he consenteth to dwell with her, let not her put him away[3]. 13.

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[2] *I speak.*] "*I speak*, by the spirit of God: not Christ, who has left us no precept upon this subject." Newcome. But upon what ground does the learned prelate here attribute inspiration to the apostle, who does not himself claim it? On the contrary, he supports his advice by sound argument, ver. 16, of which there would have been no need had he written by inspiration; nor does he appeal to it in the preceding case, which he enforces by the authority of Christ. Why should we hesitate to rest the validity of the apostle's advice upon the same ground where he himself has placed it, and which is well able to support it—the ground of its own merit?

[3] *Let not her put him away.*] "That Jewish and Roman women were allowed to divorce their husbands, see Doddridge on Mark x. 12." Newcome. See Lardner's Works, vol. i. p. 392, Kippis's edition; Joseph. *Antiq.* lib. xx. c. 6, § 3; Vit. § 75; Juvenal. *Sat.* 6, v. 222—230.

Ch. VII. Ver. 13. Let no one persuade you that the profession of Christianity dissolves the bands of civil society. But if an unbelieving husband, or wife, is contented to live with a believing partner, let not the believer dissolve the marriage tie; but on the contrary, by meekness, kindness, and a sedulous discharge of every duty, let them show how excellent a thing the spirit of the gospel is, and how much the heart is improved by the religion of Jesus.

14. *For the unbelieving husband is sanctified*[1] *by the wife*[2], *and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: otherwise, your children would be unclean, but now they are holy*[3].

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[1] *Is sanctified.*] "The sanctity of the believing party is in some measure imputed to the unbeliever, at least so far as to affect their children, because they two are one flesh." Bishop Pearce.—"*is sanctified,* comes under the denomination of holy in the sight of God, so far that the offspring is entitled to Christian privileges." Newcome.

[2] *By the wife.*] Bishop Pearce adopts the reading of many valuable manuscripts, τῃ πιστῃ, "the believing wife;" which he thinks preferable, as it preserves the antithesis. And for the same reason, upon similar authority, he prefers ἀδελφῳ to ανδρι in the next clause: "the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the *believing* brother."

[3] *Otherwise, your children,* &c.] "immundi: *quia educarentur in cultum idolorum Deo displicentem.* Mundi, *Deo grati: quia Deus ad educationem liberûm opitulatur parti meliori.*" Grotius. —"Else they were heathen children, not to be owned as a holy seed; and therefore not to be admitted into covenant with God as belonging to his holy people. See Isa. xxxv. 8, lii. 1; Acts x. 28. The argument for infant baptism runs thus: If the holy seed among the Jews was therefore to be circumcised and be made federally holy by receiving the sign of the covenant, because they were born in sanctity, then by like reason the holy seed of Christians ought to be admitted to baptism, and receive the sign of the Christian covenant, the laver of regeneration; and so be entered into the society of the Christian church. The

If one of the parties is a believer in Christ, it is the same with regard to their children as if both were believers. The children are born in a holy state; they are to be regarded as members of the visible church, and have a right to be initiated into the Christian community. Ch. VII. Ver. 14.

But if the unbeliever depart, let such depart; *a brother or a sister is not enslaved in such* cases: *however, God hath called us to peace.* 15.

If the unbelieving party absolutely refuses to live

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substance of this argument is in Tertullian *de Anima*, cap. 39." Whitby.—The words *sanctified, holy, unclean*, says Mr. Locke, " are used here in the Jewish sense. The Jews called all that were Jews holy, and all others they called unclean. Thus, '*proles genita extra sanctitatem*' was the child of heathen parents: '*genita intra sanctitatem*' was the child of parents after they were proselytes. This way of speaking St. Paul transfers from the Jewish into the Christian church, calling all that are of the Christian church *saints*, or *holy*; by which reason all that were out of it were *unclean*."—" *Unclean*, as the Jews say, and out of covenant with God; but by being born of one Christian parent they are holy, and qualified for baptism." Bishop Pearce.—" *Unclean*, unfit to be dedicated to God by baptism. That this is an ancient interpretation, see Wall's Notes." Archbishop Newcome.—" *Holy*, being of holy parents, they are accounted as already baptized in their parents' baptism." Emlyn's Works, vol. i. p. 404.

" On the maturest and most impartial consideration of this text," says Dr. Doddridge, " I must judge it to refer to infant baptism. Nothing can be more apparent than that the word *holy* signifies persons who might be admitted to partake of the distinguishing rites of God's people. See Exod. xix. 6; Deut. vii. 6, xiv. 2, xxvi. 19, xxxiii. 3; Ezra ix. 2: compared with Isa. xxxv. 8, lii. 1; Acts x. 28. And as to the interpretation which so many of our brethren the Baptists have contended for, that *holy* signifies *legitimate*, and *unclean*, *illegitimate*, not to urge that this seems an unscriptural sense of the word, nothing can be more evident than that the argument will by no means bear it; for it would be arguing *idem per idem*."

Ch. VII. Ver. 15. with the believer, and obstinately deserts the believing partner, it is the unbeliever who dissolves the conjugal connexion: it would be most unreasonable in this case to consider the believer as bound, while the unbeliever is at liberty. The marriage tie is loosed, and the parties are released. All that the gospel requires is, that the believing party should not be the first to begin the separation; but that every means of conciliation should be used to preserve family concord.

16. *For how knowest thou*[1], *O wife, whether* or no[2] *thou shalt save* thy *husband? Or how knowest thou, O husband, whether or no thou shalt save* thy *wife?*

It is far from impossible that a prudent, kind, conciliatory conduct on the part of the believer may produce a happy effect upon the mind of the unbeliever; and lead them first to think well of, and ultimately to embrace, the Christian faith: and this surely must be a powerful motive to the believer to continue to associate in the kindest manner and as

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[1] *How knowest thou,* &c.] Mr. Wakefield for the sake of perspicuity transposes the fifteenth and sixteenth verses.

[2] *Whether* or no.] For *ει μη, if not,* at the beginning of the succeeding verse in the received text, some copies, but of no great note, read *η μη, or no;* and some of the ancient writers join these words to the preceding verse: *q. d.* How knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife or no? I have, though with some hesitation, adopted this reading. See Bishop Pearce; who adds the words *or no* in Italics, but in his notes declares his preference of the received text. It may be proper to observe here, that as the apostle appeals to reason in favour of the advice he gives, he seems to wave any claim to inspiration.

long as possible with the unbelieving partner, and upon no consideration to be the first to dissolve the connexion. Ch. VII. Ver. 16.

5. The apostle advises the converted Jew to adhere to the law; but the converted Gentile to retain his liberty, ver. 17—19.

As God hath assigned[3] *to every one, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And thus I appoint in all the churches.* 17.

The doctrine of Christ does not breathe a sectarian spirit, it is simply a rule of life; and its hopes and fears have respect to another state of existence. It adapts itself to the various circumstances and conditions of mankind, whether Jew or Gentile. In things indifferent, therefore, in rites and ceremonies, let each follow his own discretion with respect to his own innocent customs previously to his conversion to the gospel. This is a universal rule, which I require to be observed, not only in the church at Corinth, but in all the churches of the Gentiles, by virtue of that apostolical authority with which I am invested by Christ.

Is any one called, being circumcised, let him not 18.

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[3] *As God hath assigned.*] If agreeably to the received text, and the generality of expositors, the words εἰ μὴ are prefixed, it is *q. d. If not*, if the believer cannot save the unbeliever, still it must be remembered that Christianity makes no difference in civil relations. For εἰ μὴ, see Rom. xiv. 14; Gal. i. 7. See Newcome.—In this passage, though expressed in general terms, it is clear that the apostle alludes particularly to the distinction of Jew and Gentile.

Ch. VII. Ver. 19. *become uncircumcised*[1]. *Is any one called in uncircumcision, let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but keeping the commandments of God is* every thing[2].

Let not the believing Jew imagine that there is any merit in abandoning the rites of the law. On the contrary, it better becomes him to adhere to the ritual in which he has been educated, provided that he does not impose it upon others. And let not the believing Gentile be induced to imagine that the observation of the Mosaic ritual is obligatory upon him, either as being essential to salvation, or even as a meritorious act. In truth, neither the observation nor the neglect of ceremonial institutions is of the least account in the sight of God. All that he requires is cheerful, uniform obedience to his moral law; and a heart right in his sight.

It appears from this advice, that the apostle made no objection to a converted Jew's adhering as strictly as he pleased to the law of Moses. He continued to comply with that ritual himself; and it was right to do so, at least while the temple service continued. But he utterly condemns the imposition of this yoke upon the converted heathen; and greatly disapproves of the Gentile Christians voluntarily subjecting them-

[1] *Become uncircumcised:*] μη επισπασθω. An allusion is here made to the attempts of some apostates to obliterate the mark of circumcision. See Doddridge.

[2] *Is* every thing.] So Newcome and Wakefield; and it is evidently the apostle's meaning.

selves to the burdens of the law: as if a compliance with ritual precepts could be any recommendation to God, or in the least degree necessary to the perfection of the Christian character. When regarded in this light, he pronounces the observance of the Jewish ritual to be of no use, and totally destitute of all moral value; and that if it be relied upon as a ground of justification, it is even a virtual renunciation of the gospel of Christ. This is the tenor of his argument in the epistle to the Galatians; and he uniformly teaches, that Christianity requires nothing as essential but the love of God and our neighbour. Ch. VII. Ver. 19.

6. The apostle reminds freemen and slaves, that the profession of Christianity makes no change in their civil relations or in their social duties, ver. 20—24.

Let every one continue in the condition in which he was called. Wast thou called being *a slave?* 20.
Regard it not: but if thou canst obtain thy freedom, prefer it[3]. 21.

Be it remembered, that the profession of Chris-

[3] *Prefer it.*] μαλλον χρησαι, *use it rather.* Mr. Wakefield translates it, "Yea even thou canst be free, continue as thou art:" but this seems to be strange counsel, and quite inconsistent with the advice in ver. 23. The construction in the original seems defective. Most expositors supply ελευθερια after χρησαι, "if thou canst be free, rather use, *or* prefer, *liberty.*" But the Arabic and some others supply δουλεια, *servitude.* The Syriac, as translated by Schaaf, is, "*Elige tibi potius quam ut servias.*" See Bishop Pearce. Mr. Wakefield supposes that "the apostle intends generally to discourage a restless disquietude to alter a condition which is not peculiarly grievous:" but would Mr. W. have admitted that slavery is such a condition?

Ch. VII. Ver. 21.

tianity makes no change whatever in men's civil circumstances or social duties. Let every one, therefore, continue to occupy his proper station, and to perform the duties of it with increased activity, till providence offers a beneficial change. Let not the converted slave imagine that Christianity releases him from his state of bondage. No: he is a slave still; and the duties of a slave, however burdensome, he must faithfully perform, and to the hardships of his condition he must cheerfully submit. But let him not be discouraged: though a slave, he is entitled to all the privileges of the gospel. Yet, if an opportunity of becoming free should present itself, let him avail himself of it; for a state of freedom is more honourable and happy. It affords less obstruction to Christian duty, and better opportunities of usefulness.

From the necessity which the apostle appears to have been under of repeating his injunctions to the believers at Corinth to continue in the stations which they occupied at the time of their conversion to Christianity, it seems not improbable that the false apostle had taught that all natural and civil relations were dissolved by the new birth, by their conversion to the faith of Christ; and in particular, that slaves were entitled to immediate emancipation. This foolish and dangerous doctrine the apostle warmly opposes; and strongly urges the Christian slave to adhere to his master, and faithfully to perform the duties of his station.

For he that is called by the Lord, being *a slave,* Ch. VII. Ver. 22.
is the Lord's freedman; and in like manner he who is called, being *free, is the slave of Christ.*

The profession of Christianity does not, indeed, entitle you to civil liberty; but in the truest and noblest sense it sets you free. The Christian slave is the freedman of Christ; redeemed by him from idolatry and sin, and death; rescued from slavery to the worst of tyrants; endued with moral liberty, and made free of the community of which Jesus is the head.

And on the other hand, the man who is legally free, and who perhaps boasts of hundreds of slaves under his controul, when he becomes a Christian, binds himself to be a slave: a slave to Christ. He has no longer any will of his own; but he is bound to live to him who died for him and rose again. And, far from regarding this state of servitude as a burden and disgrace, he boasts in it as his pride and glory.

Ye have been bought with a price[1]*: become not* 23.
the slaves of men.

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[1] *Ye have been bought with a price.*] "Had you bought your freedom? become not slaves to men." Wakefield; who says that "the translation here given is pertinent to the connexion, which the former is not." Whitby and Knatchbull understand the words in the same sense. But surely there was very little occasion to advise slaves who had purchased their liberty, not to part with it, and to become slaves again. Whereas nothing could be more natural, or more suitable to the connexion, than after having declared one party to be the freedmen, and the other the slaves of Christ, that the apostle should remind them, that having been purchased by him, it ill became them to yield themselves up as slaves to other masters.—"Ye were bought

Ch. VII. Ver. 23. You have been redeemed from moral slavery, from your bondage to ignorance, idolatry, vice, and misery, at a great price: by the mission of Christ; by all that he has taught, and done, and suffered; by his resurrection and ascension; by the gifts of his spirit, and the labours of his apostles: in the noblest sense you are free. Be lovers of liberty in every form. If you are slaves, and can obtain your freedom, avail yourselves of the opportunity. If you are free, do not by indiscretion, and much less by immorality, expose yourselves to the danger of losing your liberty.

24. *Brethren, let every one abide with God, in the condition in which he was called.*

My Christian friends, my parting advice to you, whether Jew or Gentile, whether slaves or freemen, is this: In your respective stations, in the civil rank in which Christianity found you, abide with God; look up to God as the arbiter of your destiny; be satisfied with your lot, as his wise appointment; fulfill the duties of your condition as under his inspection, and as accountable at his tribunal. Apply to him under all your difficulties; and study above all things to approve yourselves to him, and to secure his favour.

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with a price, even that of Christ's blood: therefore do not make yourselves out of choice slaves to men, ye being already in the more honourable service of Christ." Pearce, and with him the generality of expositors. It is not necessary to limit the price of redemption to the death of Christ alone: all the means which have been employed by God, and by Jesus as his messenger and servant, to recover mankind from idolatry and vice, may be regarded figuratively as the ransom, or price, of redemption.

7. The apostle, resuming the question concerning marriage, advises, but does not require, unmarried persons to remain for the present in a single state, ver. 25—28. Ch. VII. Ver. 24.

Now concerning persons who have not been married, I have no commandment of the Lord; but I give my judgement as one who hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. 25.

With respect to the course to be pursued by unmarried persons, Christ has neither decided this case himself, as he has that concerning adultery and divorce, nor has he expressly commissioned me to settle it authoritatively: but I offer my opinion, as a faithful friend, and by the mercy of God your fellow Christian likewise, and I leave you to judge of the propriety and expedience of the advice I propose.

I think, then, that it would be commendable, on account of the exigency [1] *which is approaching, it would be commendable,* I say, *for such persons* [2] *to continue as they are.* 26.

It would be better, in my judgement, considering the difficulties of the times, and on account of the season of persecution which is at hand; it

[1] *The exigency which is approaching.*] It is asked what this exigency was? Some suppose the destruction of Jerusalem; but this was nothing to the Corinthians. The apostle probably foresaw a storm approaching, which might be limited to Corinth and its neighbourhood. It is plain that he had no intention to encourage celibacy in general. Pearce renders the words, "the approaching necessity:" *i. e.* calamity. Luke xxi. 23; 2 Thess. ii. 2.

[2] *For such persons.*] Gr. ανθρωπῳ, for *a man*, or rather *a person*, as the word includes both sexes. "It is commendable for a man or *a woman* so to be." Bishop Pearce.

Ch. VII. Ver. 26. would, I say, be most expedient for such persons to remain as they are, and not to encumber themselves with the cares of a family.

Observe, the apostle is far from advising celibacy as a general practice, but confines his recommendation of it to the Corinthian church in the peculiar crisis of danger which then existed; and he mentions it merely as his own private advice, without any authoritative injunction.

27. *Art thou bound to a wife? seek not to be loosed;*
28. *art thou unmarried*[1]*? seek not a wife. But if thou marry, thou hast not done amiss*[2]*; nor if a virgin marry, has she done amiss: nevertheless, such will have trouble in life*[3]*: but I spare you.*

There is nothing criminal in entering upon the marriage state; but in the season of persecution you will feel many inconveniences from which I wish to save you by the advice I offer. Nevertheless, if you are determined upon marrying, I would not alarm you by expatiating upon the difficulties you will have to encounter: you will meet with them soon enough, and I wish they may prove less grievous than I forebode.

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[1] *Art thou unmarried.*] λελυσαι γυναικος; "art thou loosed from a wife?" But, as Bishop Pearce observes, this does not fully express the apostle's meaning, who is speaking not of one who was a widower, but of one who never was married. The Bishop's translation is "art thou without a wife?"

[2] *Hast not done amiss.*] So Wakefield. ουχ ἡμαρτες, "hast not sinned." The public version and most of the translators, Pearce, Newcome, &c.

[3] *Trouble in life.*] σαρκι, "in the flesh:" that is, in external things.

8. As the season of persecution would soon overtake them, it would be their wisdom to disengage themselves as much as possible from temporal connexions and concerns, ver. 29—31. Ch. VII. Ver. 28.

However, this I say, brethren, (because the time that remaineth is short[4]*,) that they who have wives may be as those who have none; and they that weep,* 29. 30.
as though they wept not; and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not; and they that use the world as 31.
not using it to excess[5]*: for the fashion of this world is passing away.*

After a very short interval the season of trouble will come, and will break up, and go near to overset, all your domestic comfort. And this event I announce to you, not to give you uneasiness, and to fill your minds with painful anticipations, but as a faithful and friendly warning to prepare for the event; and that you may acquire a proper command over your affections. That those of you who are married may bear in mind that this tender tie must

[4] *The time that remaineth is short.*] So Pearce. "συνεσταλμενος, contracted." Doddridge; who observes, after many others, that there is an allusion to the furling of a sail. The words το λοιπον are joined by some to the latter clause of the verse: *q. d.* It remains therefore. See Doddridge and Newcome: Griesbach, Pearce, and Wakefield, connect it with the former clause.

[5] *Using it to excess:*] καταχρωμενοι. So Wakefield: Grotius says it is the same as χρωμενοι, "*nisi quod videtur plenius quiddam significare.*"—"as if they made no great use of it." Bishop Pearce, who objects to the word *abuse*, "for *not to abuse* is equally a duty, whether the time be long or short."—"*Use it* not." Newcome; who thinks the antithesis is best preserved by this sense of the word, which is common in Greek writers. See 1 Cor. ix. 18.

Ch. VII. Ver. 31.

soon be dissolved, and may fortify their minds with the best principles, to prepare them for the painful separation: that those who are now suffering under the visitations of divine providence may not be too much depressed, as though their lot were peculiarly grievous and their sufferings would never end: that those who are prosperous in the world may not be too much elated, but may be mindful of the precarious tenure of earthly good: that those who purchase houses or estates may recollect the uncertainty of the tenure upon which they are held, and may be prepared to resign the possession: and finally, that those who engage in worldly business of any kind may pursue their object with a chastised ardour, as all sublunary things are transitory like a pageant, and evanescent as a dream.

9. The apostle recommends a single life, that believers may be at liberty to devote themselves entirely to Christian duties, ver. 32—35.

32. *Now I wish you to be without distracting care. The unmarried man is solicitous for the things of*
33. *the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married, is solicitous about the things of the*
34. *world, how he may please* his *wife*[1]. *There is a di-*

[1] In this text there are many various readings, but the sense in all is nearly the same. Griesbach adheres to the received text, though he thinks it not improbable that ἡ παρθενος in ver. 34 is an interpolation; *q. d.* "There is a distinction also in *the case of* the woman: the *unmarried woman*," &c. As it now stands, the literal translation is, "There is a distinction between the woman and the virgin:" *i. e.* between the *married woman* and the virgin.

stinction likewise between the married and the unmarried woman: the unmarried woman is solicitous about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but the married woman is solicitous about the things of the world, how she shall please her *husband. Now this I advise, as expedient for you, not that I may cast a snare upon you, but out of regard to what is becoming and for right attendance on the Lord without distraction*[2].

Ch. VII. Ver. 34.

35.

My reason for recommending a single life in present circumstances is, to preserve you from distracting care. The unmarried believer has but one main object in life, and that is, to serve his Master, Christ;

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[2] *For right attendance without distraction:*] ευπαρεδρον απερισπαστως. So Newcome. This is the sense given by Locke, Pearce, and Wakefield. Dr. Doddridge, after Sir Norton Knatchbull, translates απερισπαστως, "without *any* violent constraint:" *q.d.* by which I might seem to drag you into a state of life which should make you continually uneasy.

Though the apostle gives no hint of the kind, and the idea does not appear to have occurred to any expositor, I cannot but think that the advice in this paragraph is intended to be limited chiefly, if not wholly, to those who sustained offices in the church, whether prophets, deacons, almoners, &c.: otherwise surely a Christian is as much in the way of his duty, and serving the Lord in as acceptable a manner, who is prudently looking after and providing for his family, as one who passes all his time in reading, meditation, and prayer. But with regard to the officers of the church, whether male or female, it might in a season of danger and persecution be to them peculiarly inconvenient to encumber themselves with the cares of a family, when their whole time and attention might be required for the discharge of their arduous and perilous duties. The apostle's meaning would be perfectly understood by the Corinthians, though, from the unavoidable obscurity of the epistolary style, it may not be so intelligible to modern readers.

Ch. VII. Ver. 35. and to this his whole time and all his powers are devoted. The married believer has a double object in view. He wishes to serve Christ: but he has also another duty to perform; to provide for his wife and family, that they may live in comfort. Now it is evident, that while he is attending to one of these duties, he cannot be equally attentive to the other.

In the same manner the unmarried woman consecrates her whole self to Christ, and devotes all her time to his service. But the married woman is bound to her husband, must consult his inclination and comfort, and must contribute to provide for her family. She cannot, like the unmarried woman, give herself wholly to Christ.

However, after all, I by no means press a resolution to live unmarried as an indispensable duty. You are at perfect liberty to judge for yourselves: I would by no means persuade you to a course of which you would afterwards repent; only, if you could remain single, you would be at liberty to serve Christ with more undivided attention, and consequently with more consummate propriety and exactness.

10. The apostle advises unmarried persons not to enter at present into the married state; but leaves them at full liberty to exercise their discretion with respect to the propriety of following his counsel, ver. 36—38.

36. *But if any one think it unbecoming to remain*

unmarried[1], *beyond the flower of his age, and that it is his duty so to do*[2], *let him do what he will; he* Ch. VII. Ver. 36.

[1] *Unbecoming to remain unmarried.*] ασχημονειν επι την παρθενον αυτης· literally, *to behave unbecomingly towards his virgin.* Critics are much divided in opinion with respect to the apostle's meaning in this difficult text. I believe that all expositors without exception before Dr. Whitby, and most even at the present day, understand the apostle's advice as relating to the disposal of a young virgin in marriage by her parent or guardian. The following is Archbishop Newcome's translation of the passage, upon this supposition:

"But if any man think that he behaveth unbecomingly towards his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and it ought so to be, let him do what he pleaseth, he sinneth not: let such virgins marry. But he who standeth firm in his own heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and determineth thus in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well. So that he who giveth her in marriage doeth well: but he who giveth her not in marriage doeth better."

Hence, as Dr. Whitby observes, "the usual inference is, that children are to be disposed of in marriage by their parents: which may be very true, but cannot be proved by this text, which has a very different meaning, and which contains the apostle's advice to a young person deliberating with himself whether he should marry or not." This interpretation seems first to have occurred to Dr. Whitby, and afterwards to Mr. Locke; and has been adopted by Dr. Harwood and Mr. Wakefield. Dr. Doddridge ingenuously acknowledges that he once preferred it, but afterwards gave it up. The following is Mr. Wakefield's translation, and one cannot but regret that this learned critic has not supported his version by notes.

"But if any one apprehend a dishonour from his virginity continued beyond the time, it ought so to be, let him do what he pleaseth: he doeth not amiss, let such marry. But he who continueth steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and is determined in his heart to keep his virginity, doeth well. So then, even he who giveth *it* in marriage doeth well, but he who giveth it not in marriage doeth better."

Mr. Locke assigns the following reasons for the interpretation which he gives to these verses:

"Παρθενον," says he, "seems here used for the virgin state, and not the person of the virgin. Whether there be examples

Ch. VII. Ver. 37. *doth not act amiss, let him marry*[3]. *Nevertheless, he who is steadfast in his resolution*[4], *being under no necessity, and hath power concerning his own will, and hath determined this in his own heart to* 38. *remain unmarried*[5], *acteth commendably. So that even he who marrieth*[6] *doth well, but he who marrieth not doth better.*

However, notwithstanding all that I have advanced in favour of celibacy, if a case should occur in which a man advancing to the middle age of life

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of the like use of it, I know not; and therefore propose it as my conjecture, 1. Because the resolution of mind here spoken of must be in the person to be married. 2. The necessity of marriage can only be judged of by the persons themselves. 3. 'Hath power περι τε ιδια θεληματος' should be translated *hath a power concerning his own will; i. e.* concerning what he willeth, is at his own disposal. 4. If 'keep his virgin' had signified keeping his children from marrying, it would have been more natural to have used τεκνα, which signifies both sexes, than παρθενος, which only belongs to the female."

To which I think may be added, that according to this interpretation the whole passage is clear and intelligible; but upon the common hypothesis it is, to say the least, very obscure.

[3] *It is his duty.*] ὁτως οφειλει· "that it is his incumbent duty to form the conjugal union." Harwood.—"if he finds it necessary to marry." Locke.

[3] *Let him marry.*] Many good copies read γαμειτω in the singular. See Griesbach.

[4] *In his resolution.*] εν τῃ καρδιᾳ· "in his heart."—"whosoever is settled in a firm resolution of mind." Locke.

[5] *To remain unmarried.*] τηρειν την ἑαυτε παρθενον· "to keep his own virgin:" *i. e.* "to keep his virginity." Locke, Wakefield.

[6] *Who marrieth:*] γαμιζων. This is the reading of the Alexandrine and other manuscripts, and marked by Griesbach as of equal authority with the text; which is εκγαμιζων, "giveth in marriage." And Griesbach himself adopts γαμιζων in the second clause, which is a presumption that it is the true reading in the first. "It is necessary," says Mr. Locke, "to follow the copies which read γαμιζων, *marrying*, for εκγαμιζων, *giving in marriage*." So Whitby.

should think it disgraceful to remain unmarried, and should regard it as a duty to change his condition, let him do as he pleases, he is guilty of no offence to God or man: let him marry. Nevertheless, if he has a neighbour of a different persuasion, one who feels himself under no obligation to marry; who possesses a greater degree of self-controul, who is under no external restraint, and who firmly resolves to remain for the present in a single state, I cannot but highly commend his prudent and virtuous resolution. So that upon the whole, both parties act right, according to their respective views of the case. He that marries, because he is so inclined and thinks it to be his duty, deserves commendation: but he who for the present defers marriage, acts more prudently in present circumstances, and therefore deserves greater praise. Ch. VII. Ver. 38.

11. The apostle concludes by admitting the lawfulness of a widow marrying a second husband; but giving his judgement against the expedience of a second marriage, under existing circumstances, ver. 39, 40.

The wife is bound as long as her husband liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she pleaseth, only in the Lord. 39.

But in my judgement she is happier if she continue as she is, and I also think that I have the spirit of God[7]. 40.

[7] *I think I have the spirit of God.*] δοκω—εχειν. "I also seem to have the spirit of God." Newcome; who remarks in

Ch. VII. Ver. 40.

To recur again to the case of the widow. By the law of Christ a woman is bound to her husband as long as he liveth: and as I have stated at large, in treating of the odious offence which has disgraced your society, she can upon no account, excepting adultery, divorce her husband and marry another. But after her husband is dead, she is at full liberty to marry another; only she must marry a believer, and not a heathen: for connecting herself with an unbeliever would be inconvenient, and dangerous in the extreme. And indeed, in my own judgement, it would for the present be very imprudent to marry at all; and she would be much happier and more respectable if she were to continue in her widowhood. And without pretending to any express revelation upon the subject, and leaving the question, after all, to your own determination; yet, upon the whole, I think, that the advice which I have so plainly and faithfully given you, though to some it may not be altogether palatable, is nevertheless

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his note, that "this is a very usual way in Greek writers of expressing what really is so. See ch. xi. 16; Gal. ii. 6, 9; Heb. iv. 1, xii. 11; and Bishop Pearce *in loc.* and on ch. xi. 16." But though it is very true, as all expositors observe, that δοκεω is often an expletive, and does not imply doubt, yet it is not denied that it does sometimes express hesitation, and here I think clearly so. But it is not a doubt concerning his inspiration: the apostle means only to express a belief, an opinion, a hope, but not amounting to absolute confidence, that the advice he had given was agreeable to the will of God. Had he been conscious of his own inspiration, he would not have left an option to his readers whether to follow his advice or not. The spirit of God is God himself, see ch. iii. 11; and the apostle believed that the advice he had offered was such as God would approve.

agreeable to the will of God, and pointed out by the dispensations of his providence. Ch. VII. Ver. 40.

I cannot but observe, how very erroneous the conclusion is that many draw from the distinction which the apostle makes in this chapter between what he advises and what the Lord directs; viz. that, wherever he does not expressly deny his inspiration, he is to be regarded as inspired: whereas in truth, the contrary conclusion would be most agreeable to reason; viz. that, wherever he does not expressly assert his inspiration, he is not to be regarded as inspired. For inspiration is a miracle, which is never to be admitted but upon the clearest evidence. And the apostle no where claims unlimited inspiration. In the present case he evidently means to distinguish between the doctrine which our Lord had laid down during his public ministry concerning adultery and divorce, and that which he himself here advances, by way of faithful and friendly advice, adapted to the peculiar exigency of the circumstances of the Corinthian church; and to this advice he claims no further regard than what was due to his experience, his faithfulness, and his tender concern for their welfare: and though he thinks the counsel which he offers is acceptable to God, and indicated by the course of providence, he does not enforce it by apostolic authority, nor pretend to any particular revelation upon the question.

SECTION II.

Ch. VIII. *The apostle discusses at large the question which had been proposed to him concerning the lawfulness of eating the flesh of animals which had been offered in sacrifice to idols.* Ch. viii. 1—xi. 1.

Upon this question the Corinthians appear to have been divided in opinion[1]: the converts from Judaism seem to have maintained, that to partici-

[1] *Divided in opinion.*] Bishop Pearce supposes, "that the Corinthian believers, while heathen, had been accustomed to partake of feasts in an idol's temple upon meat which had a little before been offered in sacrifice to an idol: that perhaps the poor Christians had lived chiefly by this means, and that the rich ones were willing not to lose the pleasure of feasting and mirth. It does not appear from these chapters that any body among them *thought it unlawful*; but that some ate the meat as common meat, and without thinking there was any real divinity in the idol; while others, not yet sound Christians, still retained some sense of a kind of divinity in the idol, and ate the meat as religiously offered up to the idol. St. Paul, therefore, being to answer this question of theirs about idol meats, answers No." But if the Corinthians had no difference of opinion with regard to the lawfulness of eating meat offered to idols, why did they write to the apostle at all about it? In fact, there appears to have existed a very serious diversity of opinion upon the subject in the Corinthian church: for, ch. x. 28, the apostle supposes, that in a case in which the eating of such meat is by himself declared to be lawful, that is, at the table of a heathen friend, a scrupulous guest might be present who would object to it as unlawful: under which circumstances the apostle advises the sounder and stronger Christian, for charity's sake, to abstain from eating it. So that it is very plain that there were certain persons, in the Corinthian church, who felt very strong objections against eating meat which had been offered to idols in any circumstances whatever: and these were probably converts from the Jewish religion.

pate in an idol sacrifice, or to eat the flesh of ani- CH. VIII.
mals which had been offered at the altar of a heathen deity, were universally unlawful, and prohibited by the Christian law, whenever or wherever such flesh was offered to them. On the other hand, the converts from heathenism, professing to be convinced of the absolute nullity of heathen idols, thought it lawful to eat any kind of food, in any place, and at any time; and did not scruple to participate of the flesh of a victim, even in the temple of the idol to which it had been offered. The apostle steers a middle course, and makes a proper distinction between the circumstances in which it was lawful, and those in which it was unlawful, to eat the flesh of a victim which had been offered in sacrifice to an idol.

The question admits of three cases. 1. Whether it be lawful to feast upon a victim in the temple of the idol itself. 2. Whether it be allowed to purchase the flesh of such a sacrifice in the public market, and to eat it at home. 3. Whether it were permitted to a Christian to partake of it at the table of a heathen friend, by whom he might happen to be invited.

The first and the most important case the apostle discusses very much at large, ch. viii. 1—x. 22. The other two he dispatches in a few words: the second, ch. x. 23—26; and the last, ver. 27—xi. 1.

The apostle treats upon the first question, viz. Whether it be lawful to eat of an idol sacrifice in the idol's temple, under three general heads. 1. He

CH. VIII. argues, that if the practice could be proved innocent in persons well instructed in the Christian doctrine, it would nevertheless be inexpedient, as having a tendency to ensnare the consciences of less informed and weaker Christians, ch. viii. *throughout*. 2. That this practice is inconsistent with that spirit of self-denial which the gospel requires: and he here appeals to his own example, in sacrificing his own convenience and gratification to general utility, ch. ix. 3. That, whatever they might think, the participation of idol sacrifices in an idol's temple was an act of virtual idolatry; and as such was absolutely unlawful, and highly criminal, ch. x. 1—22.

CASE I.

Whether it were consistent with the principles and the spirit of the Christian doctrine, to feast upon the flesh of a victim in the temple of the idol to which that victim had been offered, ch. viii.—x. 22.

The inexpedience and unlawfulness of this practice the apostle argues from various considerations.

ARGUMENT I.

The eating of idol sacrifices in an idol's temple, even if it could be proved innocent in itself, was *inexpedient* and *uncharitable;* as it had a tendency to *ensnare the consciences of weaker Christians*, ch. viii. *throughout*.

This Chapter consists of extracts from the letter

of the Corinthians[1] to the apostle, with the apostle's remarks upon them, and objections to them. This is evident from the change of persons in the 1st, the 4th, and the 8th verses, which are quotations from the Corinthian epistle; and likewise from the express contradiction which the apostle makes to some of their assertions: compare ver. 1 and 7. And indeed this distinction is so obvious, it renders the sense so clear, and is so essential to any intelligible and consistent construction of the passage, that it is surprising that any attentive reader should ever have entertained a doubt about it, after it had been once suggested. Ch. VIII.

1. The apostle, having introduced the subject, quotes a passage from the Corinthian letter, in which they express their entire satisfaction in the knowledge they possess of the general principles of Christianity, ver. 1.

Now as to the things offered to idols, you say "*We are satisfied*[2] *that we all have knowledge.*" Ver. 1.

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[1] *Extracts,* &c.] Vide Saurin's Disc., vol. ii. p. 476—81; and Pearce's Commentary, *in loc.*

[2] *We are satisfied.*] "These words," says Bishop Pearce, "and likewise those in ver. 4, 5, 6, 8, seem plainly enough to be the words of the Corinthians in their epistle to St. Paul; to which he answers in this and the two following chapters. In this view of them, this chapter will appear much more intelligible than it is in our English version."

This distinction between the language of the Corinthians and that of the apostle is so obvious, it is so clearly pointed out by the change of person, and so essential to the consistency of the apostle's declarations, it also makes the whole discourse so very plain and intelligible, that it is wonderful that it should have

Ch. VIII. Ver. 1. You have written to ask my sentiments concerning the lawfulness of eating the flesh of victims which have been offered in sacrifice; and you begin with telling me that you are well satisfied with your own knowledge, and that you are all so well instructed that not one of you is ignorant of the Christian doctrine concerning the Almighty Maker of the universe, and the infinite difference between the true God and senseless idols.

2. The apostle interrupts the sentence with animadverting upon their vanity and self-conceit; and

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been so long overlooked; and still more surprising, that after it had been once suggested, it should fail to be universally adopted. Not only did it not occur to the earlier commentators, Erasmus, Grotius, Beza, Crellius, &c., but it does not appear to have been known to Locke or Whitby; and though it is so clearly illustrated by Bishop Pearce, it seems to have been neglected by all contemporary and subsequent translators and expositors, such as Doddridge, Harwood, Newcome, Wakefield, and Macknight. Rosenmuller adopts it, but as the suggestion of another German commentator: his words are—"*Assentior Noesselto*, Opusc. fasc. ii. p. 150, *qui hæc verba non Pauli esse arbitratur, sed Corinthiorum, quorum sententiam recitet, atque tum contradicat. Paulus enim, qui infra, com. 7, scribit* ουκ εν πασιν ἡ γνωσις, *aperte sibi contradixisset, si hoc loco affirmasset,* ὁτι παντες γνωσιν εχομεν."

We are satisfied, οιδαμεν "we know that we all have knowledge." Taking these as the words of the Corinthians, which undoubtedly they are, it shows in what a spirit of vanity and self-conceit their epistle was written. This accounts for the apostle's appearing to taunt them occasionally with their pretensions to knowledge. Perhaps they might have made some peculiarly improper boast of their knowledge, in the case of the incestuous person, and on the subject of appeals to heathen courts of judicature; which might provoke the repeated sarcasms of the apostle in the sixth chapter.

represents the true knowledge of God as consisting in suitable regards towards him, ver. 1—3. Ch. VIII.

Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifies. But if any one be conceited of his knowledge[1], *he knoweth not yet*[2] *as he ought to know. But if any man love God, by him* God *is known*[3]. Ver. —1. 2. 3.

If you have the knowledge you pretend to, it is very well: but let me remind you, that though true knowledge never fails to produce humility, superficial knowledge generates self-conceit; and self-conceit is an unfavourable symptom where great pretensions are made to superior wisdom. Indeed, the only and true valuable knowledge of God consists in love to him, in just apprehensions of his excellencies, in admiration of his greatness and goodness, gratitude for his mercies, and that devotion of spirit towards him which is productive of cheerful

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[1] *Conceited of his knowledge.*] δοκει ειδεναι τι "pretendeth to know any thing." Pearce.—"have the credit of knowing any thing." Wakefield.

[2] *He knoweth not yet.*] The received text reads "he knoweth nothing, &c.:" but the Alexandrine manuscript reads απω for ωδεπω and both that and many other ancient copies drop ωδεν. See Pearce and Griesbach.

[3] *By him God is known:*] ὑτος εγνωσται ὑπ' αυτ. "The apostle's design," says Bishop Pearce, "is to prove who it is that has knowledge, not who it is that is known; and accordingly ὑτος should be relative with the nearest substantive, which is here Θεον." See also Doddridge *in loc.* The common translation is, "the same is known of him," *i. e.* of God; who regards him with complacency. "God will acknowledge him here and hereafter." Newcome. Locke gives the verb a hiphil sense, *q. d.* he is made to know by him: that is, he is taught by God, and refers to Gal. iv. 9. Wakefield, upon the authority of the Æthiopic, reads ουτως for ὑτος, and renders the words, "But if any one love God, he knoweth *this matter* truly."

Ch. VIII. Ver. 3.

and uniform obedience. Thus to love God is to know him in the truest sense, and to the best and most important purpose.

3. The apostle proceeds with the quotation which he had begun, in which the Corinthians state their firm and unanimous conviction of the nullity of the heathen gods, and their fixed belief in the unity of God, and in the authority of Christ as their only Master, ver. 4—6.

4. "*As to the eating, therefore, of things sacrificed to idols, we know*[1] *that an idol* hath *no existence in the world*[2], *and that* there is *no God but one*[3].

5. *For though there be* some *which are called Gods, whether in heaven or on earth*[4], *as there are many*

6. *gods and many lords*[5]; *yet to us* there is but *one*

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[1] *We know.*] This change of persons plainly indicates that the apostle is again making a quotation from the letter of the Corinthians.

[2] *An idol* hath *no existence.*] "an idol in the world is nothing." Pearce.—"a worldly idol is nothing." Wakefield.—Pearce reads οὐδεν εστιν ειδωλον, and appeals to MSS. from Wetstein; but no various reading occurs in Griesbach.

[3] *No God but one.*] The received text reads, "there is no other God;" but the word ἑτερος is wanting in the Alexandrine and many other copies, and though retained by Griesbach is dropped by Pearce.

[4] *In heaven or on earth.*] "*In heaven,* as the *Dii majores* of the heathen world. See J. Mede's works fol. p. 242, 627.—*On earth.* As nymphs, fauns, and other inferior deified powers, supposed to be messengers and mediators between the celestial gods and mankind." Newcome.

[5] *Many gods and many lords.*] "In the estimation of the heathen." Newcome: which no doubt is the true interpretation; and not that which the learned prelate proposes as the better sense, viz. angels in heaven, and kings or magistrates on earth,

God, even the Father, of whom are *all things, a* *nd* Ch. VIII. Ver. 6.
we for him; and one Lord, even Jesus Chr *ist,*
through whom are *all things, and we thro* *ugh*
him."

You go on to say, We are all convinced th: at a heathen idol is a mere nullity, and that there is c only one God. Upon this head we need no instructi on; for though in the heathen world there are many su- perior and inferior, celestial and terrestrial G ods and Lords, some of whom are supposed to be ori- ginally divine, and others of earthly extraction, v ho, for their virtues or their exploits, have been adva iced to the rank of heroes and demi-gods; neverthel ess, we, who have embraced the Christian faith, l ave learned a different doctrine. To us there is but one God, even the father of the whole human r ace, the creator of all things, whose creatures, wl ose servants, and whose children we are, and to wh om alone all worship and homage is due; and one master, even Jesus Christ, by whom all the glori ous discoveries of the gospel were revealed to the hu man race, and through whom we have been introdu ced into the family of God, and are made heirs of im- mortality.

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who in the Old Testament are sometimes called Elohim or G ds; which would have been nothing to the apostle's purpose, and of which, possibly, the Corinthians had never heard.—Mr. L cke explains the text, "To us Christians there is but one sover ign, God the Father, of whom are all things, and to whom, as su- preme, we are to direct all our services; and but one L rd- Agent Jesus Christ, by whom are all things that come fr om the Father to us, and through whom alone we find access to him."

Ch. VIII. Ver. 6.

Let us observe here the simplicity of this truly primitive and apostolic symbol[1] of Christian faith. How clear, how important, how comprehensive the principles which are here avowed, and how widely different from those mysterious symbols and formularies which were devised in after ages by synods, and councils of fallible, passionate, and ambitious men; the formation of which was an insult upon the human understanding, and the compulsory imposition of which has proved the bitter source of the most disgraceful animosities, and bloody persecutions!

4. The apostle, in reply, denies that all the believers at Corinth were so well instructed in the Christian doctrine as their letter pretends, and affirms that there were some ill-informed members of the Corinthian church, who still entertained a superstitious regard for the heathen gods, ver. 7.

7. *Nevertheless*[2], *all* of you *have not this know-*

[1] *Apostolic symbol.*] "There cannot be (says Dr. Priestley, who understands the text as the language of the apostle,) a more decisive evidence of any thing than that which this passage affords, that in the opinion of the apostle Paul no being was to be considered as God, but the Father only; and that Christ was by no means entitled to that appellation. If Christ had been justly entitled to the appellation of God, and had been a proper object of worship, he could never have said, that there is but one God, the Father; especially as, immediately after, he mentions Christ not as God, but only as Lord, or master. This would necessarily have led his reader into a mistake, if Christ had really been God."

[2] *Nevertheless.*] "αλλα is here put for αλλ' ὁμως, nevertheless. See ch. ix. 12; Phil. ii. 7; Rom. v. 14." Pearce; who very

ledge; for some being accustomed[3] *to the idol to this day, eat* it *as a thing sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience being weak*[4] *is polluted.* Ch. VIII. Ver. 7.

But allow me to remark, the principles you profess are indeed just, and excellent, and it were much to be wished that all who embraced the Christian faith, possessed these correct and truly Christian views of the unity and character of the supreme being, and of the divine authority of Jesus, their sole master, as well as of the absolute nullity of all the heathen gods. But when you say, that all of you possess this knowledge, you mis-state the fact: for some who have been early habituated to idol worship, though much enlightened by Christian truth, cannot at once change the current of their moral feelings; and if they eat of an idol sacrifice in an idol temple, they will regard it as an act of

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justly observes, that "unless the words, ver. 1, 'We know that we all have knowledge,' are supposed to be the words of the Corinthians, what St. Paul here says will be scarcely consistent with what he says there, and in ver. 4."

[3] *Being accustomed to the idol.*] συνηθειᾳ is the reading of the Alexandrine and some other manuscripts, and of the Coptic and Ethiopic Versions; it is adopted by Pearce and Wakefield. The received text reads συνειδησει, "*with consciousness*;" which though Griesbach retains, he nevertheless marks the other reading as of nearly equal authority.

[4] *Being weak.*] "being unenlightened and scrupulous, is defiled by guilt; they eating contrary to conviction, and to avoid the contempt of those Christians who were better informed." Newcome.—Bishop Pearce gives a different sense. "By the weak, the apostle always means those who thought an idol had some divinity in it, and therefore ate idol meats with a religious reverence." The bishop supposes they had no scruples upon the subject; but that by this act they joined idolatry with Christianity.

CH. VIII. VER. 7. worship; and in them it is indisputably an act of idolatry, whether the act be innocent or not in those who are more enlightened.

5. The Corinthians further state it as their persuasion, that under the Christian dispensation food is an article of perfect indifference, and that they are at liberty to eat any kind of wholesome meat at any time and in any place, ver. 8.

8. '*But meat will not bring us into judgement before God*[1], *for neither if we forbear to eat, are we the better; nor if we eat, are we the worse.*'

Christianity, you say, is a sublime and spiritual doctrine. It lays no stress upon ceremonial distinctions and matters of indifference; but solely upon duties of moral obligation. In the day of final account, no inquiry will be made, what was the kind or the quality of the food which we ate, nor when, or where, or in what circumstances we partook of these animal refreshments. We are therefore con-

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[1] *Bring us into judgement.*] Pearce and Wakefield, with the Alexandrine MS. read παραστησει, and μη is placed before the first φαγωμεν, and omitted before the last: viz. Ουτε γαρ εαν μη φαγωμεν περισσευομεν, ουτε εαν φαγωμεν υστερουμεθα. The received text reads παριστησι, *recommendeth:* and in the first clause εαν φαγωμεν, "*if we eat, are we the better.*" "But none of the Corinthians could possibly suppose that they would be the better for eating, or the worse for not eating. All that they imagined was, that there was no harm in eating, and no merit in abstaining." Bishop Pearce. The bishop also observes, from Ulpian, "that παριστασαι is a law term, used in the sense of bringing a man before a tribunal." The change of persons again indicates that this passage is a quotation from the letter of the Corinthians; and with this the citations end.

vinced, that there is no merit in forbearing to eat any kind of meat in any place; nor, any sin in eating it. To partake therefore of an idol sacrifice, even in an idol temple, is, upon the principles of our spiritual institute, a circumstance of absolute indifference, and perfectly innocent. Ch. VIII. Ver. 8.

6. The apostle, for argument's sake, allowing the principle, cautions them against making such a use of their liberty as would ensnare their weaker brethren, ver. 9—11.

But see that this liberty of yours be not a stumbling block to the weak. 9.

Granting your principle to its utmost extent, I nevertheless solemnly warn you, that you use not this your liberty, whatever it be, however extensive you may deem it, in such a manner as to ensnare others not so well informed as yourselves, and tempt them to do what would in them be a serious offence.

For if any one see thee, who hast knowledge, sitting at meat[2] *in an idol's temple, will not the con-* 10.

[2] *Sitting* at meat.] κατακειμενον, *lying down:* the ancients took their food in a recumbent posture. "The gentiles, says Josephus, offer hecatombs to their gods, and use their temples for their banqueting house. Cont. Apion. l. ii. So we read Jud. x. 27, Amos ii. 27, and in profane authors very frequently. When, therefore, says the apostle, the weak Jews who abhorred idols, or the gentiles newly converted from the worship of them, shall see thee doing the same thing which heathens do in honour of their idols, and that in places appropriated to their worship, will they not be tempted by the example of such a strong and knowing Christian to conclude, that either idolatry is by Christians accounted no sin, or, that the idol deserves some honour; and so comply with them, from their erroneous principles, in eating things offered to idols?" Whitby.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 11. *science of him who is weak, be encouraged to eat things sacrificed to idols? And will not the weak brother, for whom Christ died, perish*[1] *through thy knowledge?*

Suppose it to be, as you state, an innocent thing for you who are convinced of the perfect nullity of the idol, to feast in an idol's temple upon an idol's sacrifice, will not the weaker believer, who has not

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[1] *For whom Christ died, perish.*] "From this," says Dr. Whitby, "and from Rom. xiv. 15, it is strongly argued, that Christ intentionally died for those who may for ever perish. For here the apostle dissuades the Corinthians from scandalizing their weak brethren, by an argument taken from the eternal ruin they may bring upon them by this scandal. Whereas, if it be, as some assert, that all things, even the sins of the elect, shall work together for their good, and that they can never perish; if the apostle knew and taught this doctrine to them, why does he go about to fright them from this scandal which he before had told them was impossible?"

In this way Dr. Whitby argues against the Calvinistic doctrines of election, and particular redemption. And yet it would not have been easy for the learned Theologian to prove, that any of those whom God from his foreknowledge has chosen to salvation, will eventually fall away. But I believe that the apostle had no such doctrines as general or particular redemption, election, or perseverance in his view, when he wrote this or any other epistle. The true meaning appears to me to be this. All who believe in Christ, and who are members of the Christian community, are said to be redeemed, and sometimes, to be redeemed by the blood of Christ. Because his death was the last public act of his ministry: it sealed his mission; it ratified that new covenant by which Jews and Gentiles believing in Christ formed one holy community. For all the members of this community, while they continue such, Christ is said to have died, because they participate in the benefits of that covenant of which his death was the seal. When by an act of idolatry they violate and cast themselves out of covenant, they are in danger of perishing by relapsing into the errors and vices of their heathen state. All this is perfectly plain and intelligible, and the apostle probably meant no more.

overcome his religious reverence for the idol, be induced by your example to eat of the idol sacrifice likewise, which in him will be an act of idolatry, that will separate him from the Christian community, and reduce him to his heathen state? And will he not hereby forfeit the privileges of that covenant, which was ratified with the blood of Christ, and of which he enjoys the benefit while he abstains from idolatry? And will not thy weak brother, in consequence of this improper use of thy liberty, be brought into danger of returning to the superstitions and vices of his heathen state, and thus of being finally lost? Can this, think you, be a matter of indifference? Can that conduct be innocent, which leads to consequences so pernicious? Ch. VIII. Ver. 11.

7. Such behaviour as this is inconsistent with the principles and spirit of the gospel, and a gross violation of the law of Christ, ver. 12.

Now when ye thus sin against your brethren, and wound their weak consciences, ye sin against Christ[2]. 12.

Whatever you may think concerning the indifference of meats, or whatever may be the fact with regard to the intrinsic lawfulness or unlawfulness of partaking of an idol's sacrifice in an idol temple, one thing is most certain, that when you thus by

[2] *Ye sin against Christ.*] You sin against Christ's mystical body, the church, by the injury you do to its weaker members. Or, you offend Christ himself, who takes the injury done to the least of his brethren as done to his own person. See Matt. xxv. 45; Acts ix. 4.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 12. your conduct lay a snare for weaker Christians, entangle their consciences, and draw them into idolatry and perdition, you are guilty of a palpable violation of the first principles of the law of Christ, which requires you to love your neighbour as yourself.

8. The apostle finally declares, that for his own part he would sooner give up the use of all animal food entirely, than be thus guilty of laying a snare in the way of weaker Christians, ver. 13.

13. *Therefore, if meat lay a snare in the way of my brother, I would never eat flesh as long as I live*[1], *rather than lay a snare in my brother's way.*

If actions the most innocent, if gratifications the most lawful, are the accidental means of ensnaring others to their destruction, I would rather forbear those actions, and for ever deny myself those gratifications, than lay a snare in the way of others, by tempting them to do what in their circumstances would be criminal, though perfectly innocent in my own. For the Christian doctrine teaches us the generous maxim, that we are not to live to our-

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[1] *As long as I live.*] εις τον αιωνα, for ever, as long as I live. See John xiv. 16, and Simpson on the language of Scripture. "during the whole course of my life." Newcome. "I will never, as long as I live, eat any such," *i. e.* meat offered to idols. Pearce. "I will eat no flesh while the world standeth" is the singular phraseology of the public version. It is natural to remark here, to how short a period the word αιων is limited; and how little reason there is to understand it as uniformly expressing eternal duration, when in the present connexion it can mean no longer than the life of an individual.

selves, but to others, especially to Christ; and that the governing principle of our conduct should be the general good. Ch. VIII. Ver. 13.

ARGUMENT II.

THE APOSTLE having introduced the mention of himself, proceeds to the *Second Head of his Argument*[2], and from his own example of self-denial for the general good, from his declining to insist upon those privileges to which he had an equitable claim, and from his voluntary subjection of himself to the caprice and humours of others, in order to promote Ch. IX.

[2] *The second head of argument.*] This passage is a remarkable illustration of that judicious observation of Mr. Locke, that "they who accuse St. Paul as a loose writer, prove themselves to be loose readers." A superficial reader would naturally conclude, that the apostle having entered upon a discourse concerning the lawfulness of eating meat which had been offered to idols, suddenly digresses to expatiate upon his own and his colleagues' right to a maintenance which they had declined; after which, he abruptly introduces the case of the idolatry of the Israelites in the wilderness; and then suddenly and without any apology returns to the case of eating idol sacrifices, from which he had so unnecessarily digressed; thus attributing to the apostle the character of a rambling writer, and a man of obscure and ill-sorted ideas. Whereas, in fact, and in a manner sufficiently obvious to an attentive reader, while he introduces obliquely a complete justification of himself from the charge insinuated by his opponents that he was a selfish interested man, he at the same time keeps his main argument constantly in view, which was to urge them, from his own example, to sacrifice not only their own inclinations, but even their acknowledged rights, to the advancement of the gospel, and to warn them, after the example of the Israelites, to guard against idolatrous practices which would be offensive to God, and dangerous to themselves. And in the conclusion of the tenth chapter he brings the argument home.

Ch. IX. the success of the gospel, he strongly insinuates the propriety of declining the participation of idol sacrifices in an idol temple, even though it could be proved that such conduct were in itself innocent. This argument extends through the whole of the Ninth Chapter.

1. The apostle declares that being a free man, an apostle, and more especially *their* apostle, he with his colleagues and family had an equal right with other free men and other apostles, to be maintained by those to whose instruction he gave up his time, ver. 1—6.

Ver. 1. *Am I not a free man*[1]*?*

And therefore have not I a right to employ my time and talents for my own advantage, and to expect emolument proportionate to my labour and exertions, which, if a slave, I could not pretend to?

Am I not an apostle? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord[2]*?*

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[1] *Am I not a free man?*] This clause is placed first in order in the Alexandrine and many other manuscripts: and in the Syriac, Coptic, Vulgate, and Æthiopic Versions. Griesbach adopts it in his second edition. *q. d.* "Am I not a free man? and therefore ought I not to expect a reward of my labour? Slaves indeed have no title to wages, but free men have. And this sense of the word," continues Bishop Pearce, "seems to me more natural and apposite to this place than the common interpretation, viz. Am I not free to do what I please? In my sense, it relates to St. Paul's natural, and not to his Christian liberty: and in the order of the verse, as mentioned above, there is a beautiful gradation from his right as a man, to his right as an apostle, as an apostle favoured with a sight of Christ after his ascension, and lastly, as an apostle who was *their* apostle."

Has not the Lord Jesus himself appeared to me? Ch. IX. Ver. 1.
Has he not invested me with the apostolic office? has he not given me a commission to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, and to bear witness to his resurrection?

Are not ye my workmanship in the Lord?

Have I not been the instrument of your conversion to the Christian faith?

If I be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I 2.
am to you; for ye, in the Lord, are the seal of my apostleship[3].

Whatever pretence others may make to doubt of my call, or of my qualifications for the apostolic office, you can have none: you have heard my doctrine; you have been witnesses to my spiritual gifts and supernatural powers; you have been converted by my ministry; you have received the holy spirit by the imposition of my hands; your profession of Christianity is an ample testimonial to the genuineness of my commission. I am your apostle at least, if not the apostle of any other church.

My defence to those who examine[4] *me is this.* 3.

If any one please to assume the office of a judge, and to demand what my rights and claims as a free

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[2] *Seen Jesus Christ our Lord.*] "And therefore can bear witness to his resurrection, Acts i. 22." Archbishop Newcome.

[3] *The seal of my apostleship.*] "Your conversion proves my apostleship, as a seal authenticates a writing." Newcome.

[4] *Who examine.*] "ανακρινειν est forense vocabulum, quod de industria usurpavit apostolus, ut obiter arrogantiam eorum notaret, qui ipsius vocationem in dubium vocabant, quasi judices sederent de hac causa cognituri." Rosenmuller.—"who set up an inquisition upon me." Locke.

Ch. IX. man, an apostle, and as your apostle, are, this is my reply.

Ver. 4. *Have we not a right to a maintenance*[1]?

Have not we, who devote our time to public instruction, a right to be supported by those for whose advantage we labour? If our time and industry were employed in secular affairs, we might maintain ourselves and our families in comfort, perhaps in affluence; have we not then a right to a competence, when that time and that industry are devoted to your improvement?

5. *Have we not a right to lead about* with us *a believing wife*[2], *as the other apostles, and the brethren of the Lord*[3], *and as Cephas* do?

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[1] *A right to a maintenance?*] εξεσιαν φαγειν και πινειν; "a power to eat and to drink?"—"Have I not a right to meat and drink where I preach?" Locke.—"I render εξεσια, a *right*, not a *power*. My translation takes off all ambiguity in this and the following verses. See ch. viii. 9; Rom. ix. 21; Matt. vii. 29, viii. 9. Εξεσια signifies power in general; sometimes a natural power, sometimes an usurped power; and sometimes a power given by human or divine laws, and then it is best rendered *right*." Bishop Pearce.—"*Inter Judæos res erat satis usitata, ut Doctores victum acciperent a cunctis qui suppeditare et possent, et vellent. Paulus vero ista venia usus non est, sed potius manuum labore victum sibi quæsivit, ut absesset ab omni specie alienorum consiliorum.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *A believing wife.*] αδελφην γυναικα, a sister, a wife. "A Christian woman," says Mr. Locke, "to provide our conveniences and be serviceable to us." He remarks, that "in those parts, there were not, as among us, inns, where travellers might have their conveniences; and strangers could not be accommodated with necessaries, unless they had somebody with them to take that care and to provide for them. They who would make it their business to preach, and neglect this, must needs suffer great hardships." But surely this would hardly be consistent with decorum, unless the woman were a wife or some near relation.—"Our Bible," says Bishop Pearce, "renders this *to*

Are not we entitled to the same privileges as the other apostles? and have not we an equal right with the apostle Peter, or with James, or Jude, the near relations of Jesus, to take our wives or sisters with us, in our apostolic circuits, and to be maintained with them at the public charge?

Ch. IX. Ver. 5.

We cannot from this expression certainly infer,

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lead about a sister, a wife; but I choose rather to render it a *Christian wife*. It is well known that St. Paul means always, by αδελφος or αδελφη, a *brother* or *sister* in the Christian religion. See ch. i. 1; Rom. xvi. 1. St. Paul means to say, Have I not a right to marry a wife and to carry her along with me in my travels, to be maintained at the charge of those churches which I found and establish by my preaching? It does not, therefore, appear from hence that the apostle was married; he only insists upon having a right to marry, and to have his wife maintained at the expense of his converts, provided she was a Christian wife."—Still, however, it has been thought by some, that the apostle would hardly have made the supposition in the text, if he had not had a wife to lead about with him. They regard this text, therefore, in connexion with Philipp. iv. 3, as affording a presumption that the apostle Paul was a married man, and that his wife was living.—"*A Christian wife*." Archbishop Newcome, so likewise Bishop Pearce: and Mr. Locke "a Christian woman." It cannot be unobserved how cautiously the apostle avoids using the word *Christian*. It never once occurs in all his writings; and yet it is impossible that he should not have known that it was a title given to the disciples at Antioch. Acts xi. 26. A plain proof that this name was not, as some have thought, given by divine appointment: for then it would have been in universal use. The epithet *Christian* was probably first applied by their adversaries as a term of reproach; though it was eagerly adopted, in a very early age, as a title of honour. This however does not appear to have happened while Paul was living. It may therefore be questioned, whether it is quite correct to introduce into a *translation* of his epistles, a word which the apostle himself cautiously and purposely avoids?

[3] *The brethren of the Lord.*] The general tradition is, that our Lord had no brethren, and Mary no other child; but this may be doubted.

Ch. IX. Ver. 5. that the apostle had a wife living, though it seems not very improbable that he might have one; and that while the other apostles took their wives with them, to bear them company in the duties of their mission, the apostle Paul, though he here strongly asserts his equal right to be maintained, with his family, at the public charge, thought it upon the whole expedient to leave his wife at Philippi, while he encountered the labours and dangers attached to his office in foreign countries; that he might not be drawn off from public duties by family cares. It is obvious to remark here, how diametrically opposite the Popish doctrine of the celibacy of the clergy is, both to the sentiments and to the practice of the apostles of Christ.

6. *Or is it only I and Barnabas, who have no right to abstain from working?*

You admit that the apostles at Jerusalem, when they take a missionary circuit, have a right to be maintained at the public charge, together with their families; and why are not I and Barnabas entitled to the same privileges? why are we to be excepted from the general rule, and to be obliged to work for our living, when other teachers, who may not have equal claims, are supported without the necessity of pursuing any secular employment?

2. The common sense and the general practice of mankind warrant the claim of maintenance from those who are benefited by public instruction, ver. 7.

7. *Who* ever *serveth in an army at his own ex-*

pense? who planteth a vineyard, and doth not eat of the fruit of it? who tendeth a flock, and doth not feed upon the milk of the flock? Ch. IX. Ver. 7.

How then can it be expected, that he who takes a leading part in the Christian warfare, and occupies the most laborious and hazardous station, should serve without maintenance, at least, at the public charge? how can it be expected, that he who plants the vineyard of God, who breaks up the fallow ground, and watches, and prunes, and rears the tender plants, and guards them from storms and blights, should be left without a moderate reward for his labours? or, How can it in reason be desired, that they who tend the sheep and feed the lambs of Christ, who lead them into the rich and fertile pastures of the gospel, and who guard them with vigilant care from the attacks of fierce and ravenous beasts which are ready to worry and devour, should devote their whole time and attention to the safety and welfare of the flock, without receiving that suitable compensation for their labours, which their flocks are well able to yield?

Observe here, that the apostle does not require that the ministers of the gospel should be maintained in splendour; he only pleads for a decent support proportioned to the circumstances of the church to which their labours are devoted, and to which, upon every principle of reason and justice, they are undoubtedly entitled.

CH. IX. 3. The law of Moses establishes this principle of equitable remuneration, ver. 8—10.

VER. 8. *Say I these things upon human* authority only[1]?
9. *and doth not the law too say the same? For it is written in the law of Moses,* (Deut. xxv. 4,) *Thou shalt not muzzle the ox while he is treading out*
10. *the corn*[2]. *Doth God care for oxen? Or doth he say* this *chiefly*[3] *for our sakes?* Yes; *for it was written for our sakes*[4]; *that he who ploweth ought to plow in hope, and he who thresheth* ought to thresh *in hope of partaking*[5].

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[1] *Upon human* authority only?] κατα ανθρωπον, "according to man." "Say I this *on the authority* of man?" Wakefield. "Do I say these things and argue thus according to man, and upon human authority only?" Bishop Pearce.

[2] *Treading out the corn.*] This was the custom in Judea and other nations of the East. See Rosenmuller *in loc.* Bochart, Hierozoic, p. i. l. 2. § 32.

[3] *Chiefly for our sakes.*] παντως, *omnino*, altogether: but it cannot be supposed that the apostle means to say that God has no care for the animal creation. This, therefore, is an illustration of that Jewish idiom, by which preference is expressed by a negation of that which is less preferable. So "labour not for the meat which perisheth," John vi. 27. See Doddridge: and Pearce's note on 1 Cor. i. 17.

[4] Yes; *for it was written for our sakes.*] "I have added *yes*," says Bishop Pearce, "(as Diodati adds *certè*,) at the end of the question, by way of answer to it, and to make γαρ have a proper sense here. This way of asking a question, and dropping the answer, and yet of going on as if the question was answered, is not unusual with St. Paul. See 2 Cor. x. 20, xii. 31; Rom. viii. 37."

[5] *In hope of partaking.*] This reading is of very good authority. See Griesbach, Pearce, and L'Enfant. The received text reads, "that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope." Griesbach reads, "he who thresheth ought to partake of his hope." Schulzius renders the passage, "It was altogether for our sake that it was written, that the ox which plows

The divine directions in the Mosaic law are agreeable to, and confirm the principles of common equity. The law requires that the ox, while he is treading out the corn, should not be muzzled, but be permitted to eat what he pleased. The immediate object of this law is, to teach the exercise of humanity towards the brute creation. But God, who by this beneficent law manifested his kind attention to inferior animals, had in view a still more important object. By this law he meant to inculcate the important duty of justice between man and man, and to teach that the labourer has a right to be maintained sufficiently from the profits of his labour. And by parity of reason, that the ministers of the gospel, who are labouring for the instruction and edification of others, have a right to expect a decent support from those who receive the advantage of their instructions. Ch. IX. Ver. 10.

4. He argues the reasonableness of a moderate maintenance, from the superior value of the blessings communicated by the teachers of the gospel, ver. 11.

If we have sown[6] *among you spiritual things,* is it *a great matter that we should reap your carnal things?* 11.

should plow in hope, and that the ox which treadeth out the corn should enjoy expected food." Of this interpretation Rosenmuller is disposed to approve.

[6] *If we have sown.*] "My first argument for my right of being maintained is, that labour ought to be rewarded. Another argument is, &c." Bishop Pearce.

Ch. IX. Ver. 11. If we have introduced the gospel among you with all its privileges, promises and blessings, and have recovered you from a state of idolatry, of ignorance, of sin and death, to wisdom, virtue, and piety, and to the glorious hope of immortality, can you grudge us that share in your temporal possessions, that is necessary for our convenient support? Is there any comparison in the value of the blessings thus exchanged? can there be any doubt on which side the advantage lies?

5. The apostle and his fellow labourers had a better right to a maintenance than some, who were actually supported by the Corinthians, though, for good reasons, they had waved their claim while they resided at Corinth, ver. 12.

12. *If others*[1] *share in this right*[2] *over you*, ought *not we rather? Yet, we have not made use of this right; but we endure*[3] *all things, that we may not occasion any hindrance to the gospel of Christ.*

There are those among you who claim to be maintained, and who exercise authority over you,

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[1] *Others.*] "He glances at his opponents. Hence they must have been teachers agreeably to ch. iv. 15." Newcome. See 2 Cor. xi. 20.

[2] *Share in this right.*] Mr. Locke would read ἐσιας, substance, instead of right; but Bishop Pearce justly observes, that as there is no authority for the change, so the text does not need any alteration.

[3] *But we endure.*] Bishop Pearce thinks that ἀμα, *simul, imo*, in English, *withal, yea*, should be read in this place instead of αλλα, *but*; *q. d.* we have not used this right, *yea*, we endure all things, &c. See Rom. iii. 12. The same error, as he thinks, occurs Rom. vi. 5, and certainly Isa. xliii. 17. LXX.

who, to say the least, have no better right to it than ourselves, nor yet an equal one; but while we resided with you, we waved our claim of a maintenance, just and equitable as it was; and, to prevent all cavil, as though we acted from sinister motives and secular views, we were at the trouble and inconvenience of working at our secular employments, in order to provide support for ourselves, that calumny might have no pretence to injure our characters, and obstruct the progress of the gospel. Ch. IX. Ver. 12.

6. It is the appointment of Christ that Christian teachers shall be supported by those among whom they labour, as the Jewish priests and Levites were maintained by the revenues of the temple and the altar, ver. 13, 14.

Know ye not, that those who perform the services of the temple[4] *are maintained from the temple*[5]*?* and that *those who attend at the altar*[6] *are partakers with the altar? So also the Lord hath* 13. 14.

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[4] *Who perform the services of the temple.*] So Wakefield. "οἱ τα ἱερα ἐργαζομενοι, who minister about holy things." Pearce, Newcome.—"Another argument arises from the custom prevailing among the Jews." Pearce; who considers this as the third head of argument in favour of the right of ministers to a maintenance.

[5] *Maintained from the temple?*] εκ τῳ ἱερῳ εσθιουσιν; "eat of the things of the temple?" Pearce. "eat of that which is holy?" Newcome.

[6] *Who attend at the altar.*] προσεδρευοντες. "In the original, who sit at the altar; a phrase which denotes continual and persevering service. In the first clause of the verse, the service of the Levites is supposed to be alluded to, but in this clause the service of the priests." Macknight.

Ch. IX. Ver. 14. *appointed to those who preach the gospel, that they should live by the gospel.*

As Jewish priests and Levites who are continually employed in the temple services, and who devote their time and their labours to it, are, by the law of Moses, maintained by the gifts, the sacrifices, and the established revenues of the temple; so it is the will of Christ, that the teachers of his religion should receive a decent support from those who are instructed by them.

Upon this statement of the apostle's claims, and his prudent forbearance in the exercise of his rights, we may make the following remarks: 1. That as it is the will of Christ, that the teachers of the gospel should be maintained at the charge of those by whom they are instructed, there is nothing criminal or dishonourable in their acceptance of such a maintenance, as a compensation for the time and pains which they devote to the service of others. 2. That it is the duty of those who are instructed in the Christian religion, to make an equitable remuneration to their teachers in proportion to their ability. 3. The apostle does not give the least hint, that the ministers of religion should be supported in affluence and grandeur; least of all, that provision should be made for their maintenance by the civil magistrate, independent of the society with which they are connected. The question concerning the public support of the Christian religion is by the first teachers of that religion left wholly at

large. Indeed it is reasonable to believe that the idea of it never entered into their thoughts. 4. The apostle prescribes nothing like tithes, nor any other fixed proportion of the hearers' income, as a contribution due to the teacher. He only establishes the fact, that reason and justice, in accordance with both the Jewish and Christian revelations, require that public teachers should have an equitable provision for their support. Lastly, From the apostle's example, it appears that Christian teachers should not pertinaciously insist upon their right of maintenance, but should be willing to wave the claim, however just, and to support themselves and their families by some useful and honourable secular employment, if the pretexts of calumny may be obviated, or the success of their mission promoted, by this disinterested conduct. Ch. IX. Ver. 14.

7. The right which the apostle had thus indisputably established, he had declined to exercise at Corinth, and he was determined still to wave it, ver. 15.

But I have availed myself of none of these rights, *nor have I written thus, that it should be so done unto me; for it were better for me to die, than that any one should deprive me of this boast.* 15.

When I resided among you, I did not insist upon being maintained by you, nor do I in writing this mean to claim a pecuniary compensation for my labours among you. It is my glory that I have preached the gospel to you, without putting you to

Ch. IX. Ver. 15. any expense, by which I have obviated the cavils of the enemies of the gospel, and have deprived your false teachers of their expected triumph; and I would sooner die with hunger, than I would now accept a maintenance from you; or deprive myself of the satisfaction I derive from my conduct in these circumstances.

8. In one view, this self-denial was more meritorious than preaching the gospel itself; for to the latter he was obliged by an authority that he could not resist, whereas the former was his own voluntary act, ver. 16—18.

16. *For though I preach the gospel, I have no ground for glorying; for a necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe unto me if I preach not the gospel.*
17. *If, indeed, I should do this spontaneously, I am entitled to a reward; but if, without my consent, a dispensation is intrusted to me, what is my reward*
18. *then*[1] *? That while I preach the gospel, I should make it*[2] *unexpensive, by not using to the utmost*[3] *my right through the gospel.*

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[1] *What is my reward then ?*] "Join this clause to the 17th verse." Knatchbull, Wakefield.

[2] *Make it unexpensive.*] The received text reads, "the gospel of Christ," &c.; but these words are wanting in some of the best copies and MSS. Bishop Pearce includes ver. 19—22 in a parenthesis; and makes the 23d verse the answer to the question in ver. 18.

[3] *Not using to the utmost.*] So Wakefield. καταχρησασθαι. the same word occurs ch. vii. 31, where it signifies, not using worldly things to the utmost extent of what is lawful.—"so as not to use my right in the gospel." Newcome.

The apostle here supposes a difference between the merit of an action performed by the authority of a superior, and that which spontaneously flows from a good and generous disposition. Ch. IX. Ver. 18.

If preaching the gospel had been his own spontaneous act, it would have been highly meritorious; but it was not so. He had been indeed a bitter enemy to the Christian doctrine, and a persecutor of its teachers and professors. And the commission, with which he was now honoured, had been conferred not by any solicitation of his own, but by the authority of one who had a right to command him, and who would severely punish any act of disobedience. All the merit, therefore, which in this instance he claimed, was that of submitting to a power which it would be vain and impossible to resist.

Under these circumstances, what room was there for merit? He had only one way left of spontaneous service. It was, by preaching the gospel, free of expense to his hearers, and by not insisting upon that right to a maintenance which he possessed by the principles of commutative justice, and under the authority of Christ. This was a voluntary act, for which he might humbly expect a proportionate reward. What this reward was, he mentions ver. 23; it was, that those among whom he preached might be disposed to embrace the Christian faith.

This then may be considered as the import of the apostle's language:

This is my boast, which I am so unwilling to re-

Ch. IX. Ver. 18.

sign. It is, indeed, but little of which I can boast at all. I am, it is true, intrusted with a very honourable and important commission; it is that of preaching the gospel to the heathen world. And to the execution of this commission, my life, my powers, and my utmost exertions are wholly devoted. But what of this? I have no merit in these labours, nor any real ground of boasting. And why? Because I act under an overpowering necessity. He that furnished me with this commission, has a right to enforce it. And he will enforce it. So that if I attempt to withdraw from the service, I shall soon discover that I have made an evil choice. If indeed I perform the arduous duties of my apostolic ministry willingly and cheerfully, my gracious master will not suffer my faithful services, whatever they may be, to go unrewarded. But if, independently of my own choice, an office of this kind is committed to me, which I am not at liberty and have no power to decline, in what way can I gain the merit of a free and voluntary service? In this way, and in this alone. I may render the gospel unexpensive; I may decline to insist upon my acknowledged rights; I may wave the privileges of a maintenance; I may exhibit an example of disinterested zeal by working for my support, while I am publishing the gospel of salvation. This is something more than my commission requires; and for this I may take credit, at least with those to whose benefit my labours have been dedicated.

9. With a view to conciliate the attention of his hearers, the apostle professes to comply as far as he innocently might with their weaknesses and prejudices, ver. 19—23. Ch. IX. Ver. 19.

Moreover, being free from all men, *I made myself the slave of all, that I might gain all*[1]. 19.

Though free-born and independent, possessed of property, and a Roman citizen, there is no labour or drudgery to which I do not voluntarily submit, that I may accomplish the purposes of my mission, and, if possible, convert all who hear me.

Accordingly, to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to those who were under the law, as under the law, (not being myself under the law[2]*,) that I might gain those under the law.* 20.

To please my countrymen, and to conciliate their attention to the doctrine of Christ; whenever I was cast into their society, I complied with all their innocent prejudices and customs. And wherever I mixed with those who were strict observers of the law of Moses, though I well knew that the gospel had set me and all true believers in Christ at liberty from the yoke of the law, yet I complied with the whole ceremonial as punctually as the strictest of my Hebrew brethren, in order to show that there

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[1] *That I might gain all.*] τους πλειονας, *the more.* Bishop Pearce has no doubt, that the apostle here uses this expression to signify *all*, as οι πολλοι, *the many*, is often used.

[2] *Not being myself under the law.*] Griesbach inserts this clause upon the authority of the Alexandrine, Ephrem, and all the principal MSS. and Versions.

Ch. IX. Ver. 20. was nothing in the profession of Christianity inconsistent with the requisitions of the Mosaic institute; and in fact, that the gospel was nothing more than the fulfilling of the law. And this I did to win over those who, having from infancy been educated in attachment to the law, could never be induced to desert it.

21. *To those who are without* the *law, as without* the *law, not being without the law of God, but under the law of Christ*[1], *that I might gain those who are without* the *law.*

In the society of heathen I relaxed from the rigour of the Jewish law, without, however, abating an iota of that regard to the moral law, which is imperatively enjoined by the supreme lawgiver upon all his reasonable creatures, and which is indispensably required by the gospel of Christ. And I was as strenuous in maintaining the liberty of the Gentile converts from the yoke of the Mosaic institute, as if I had myself been a Gentile, that they might not, by the terrors and the harsh and burdensome requisitions of the law, be deterred from embracing the faith of the gospel.

22. *To the weak, I became as weak, that I might gain the weak; to all* men *I became all things*[2], *that I might save all*[3].

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[1] *Law of God—law of Christ.*] Bishop Pearce approves of Θεϐ, and Χριϛϐ, on the authority of many ancient copies and versions. See Griesbach. The received text reads Θεῳ, Χριϛῳ, "not without law to God, but under law to Christ."

[2] *To all men I became all things.*] "It is my custom to be-

While I asserted the liberty of others, I did not upon all occasions insist upon my own; but when I was in company with those less instructed Christians, who were not sufficiently established in Christian principles, or, who were strangers to Christian liberty, I abstained from those actions, however innocent in themselves, which might wound their feelings, or ensnare their consciences. And, in short, there was no sacrifice which I was not willing to make, of my own private judgement, feelings, or convenience, that I might win my hearers, and, if possible, all those without exception with whom I conversed, to the knowledge and profession of the

Ch. IX. Ver. 22.

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come all things lawful." Newcome; who adds, "The precept, ch. viii. 9, is illustrated by St. Paul's example, ver. 19, 21, 22, of this chapter." "This (says Dr. Priestley) must not be interpreted with too much rigour. For otherwise we shall make the apostle a most inconsistent and hypocritical character, one who had recourse to the most unworthy artifices to gain a good end. He was so far from complying improperly with those who would have imposed the yoke of the law upon Gentile converts on whom it was not obligatory, that he incurred the hatred of his nation, and offended many of his Christian brethren, by his strenuous contending for the liberty of the gospel with respect to them. His meaning, therefore, can only be, that he was willing to oblige all persons as far as he innocently could. It is possible, that he might mean, that in preaching the gospel, he availed himself of principles peculiar to the Jews with Jews, and of principles allowed by Gentiles with Gentiles."

[3] *That I might save all.*] ἵνα πάντας σώσω. This reading rests upon the authority of the Cambridge and three other MSS. with the Syriac, Vulgate, and many other versions. See Griesbach. The received text reads ἵνα πάντως τινας σώσω, "that I may by all means save some." "Reading πάντας, *all*," says Bishop Pearce, "seems more agreeable to St. Paul's meaning here; it exactly agrees with ch. x. 33, and makes his design more extensive and noble."

CH. IX. gospel, and engage them to accept its inestimable blessings.

VER. 23. *Now this I do for the sake of the gospel, that others may be partakers of it with me*[1].

I through mercy am a partaker of the blessings of Christianity, I discern its truth, I feel its power, I rest upon its promises, I triumph in its consolations and hopes, and I wish that others may see and feel and act as I do; and it is for this reason that I spare no pains, and object to no self-denial, that I may, if possible, be the means of bringing all with whom I converse, and to whom I have an opportunity of communicating instruction, into the same holy and happy state.

10. In these instances, he resembled the candi-

[1] *That others may be partakers with me.*] ἵνα συγκοινωνος αυτε γενωμαι, *that I may be a joint partaker of it, i. e.* that I, who am a partaker, may induce others to become fellow-partakers with me; a mode of expression not uncommon with the apostle. Vid. Gal. iii. 22; Rom. viii. 29. The apostle does not mean that he practised all this self-denial, and this compliance with the prejudices and humours of others, that he might himself be a partaker of the gospel as well as others; for that he was already; but that he might induce others to participate with him. He became all things to all men, that so he might save all. Few, if any, of the commentators seem to have entered into the spirit of the apostle's language in this passage. Even Mr. Locke himself seems to have missed the apostle's meaning, which he explains, *q. d.* "This I do for the gospel's sake, that I myself may share in the benefits of the gospel," which is almost the reverse of the apostle's real meaning. Dr. Doddridge, with his usual good taste, seems to have given the true sense and spirit of the text. *q. d.* "And this I do for the sake of the gospel, to promote its success to the utmost of my ability, that I also may be a sharer in the generous pleasure arising from the communication of it."

dates in the Grecian games, who practised the same self-denial for a fading garland, to which he submitted for an incorruptible crown, ver. 24—27. Ch. IX.

Know ye not that of those who run in a race, all indeed run, but one receiveth the prize? So run as to obtain[2]. Ver. 24.

You live in a city, where you have an opportunity of seeing the public games; and have you not observed the eagerness of the several candidates to obtain the prize? their activity, their resolution, and their self-denial, in preparing themselves for the contest? Let their example stimulate your zeal, and rouse your energies in a far nobler course, and for an infinitely more valuable object. And have you not remarked that in these games, there are many who enter the lists, and who run the race, while it is only one who can win the prize? the fortunate candidate, who first reaches the goal? The rest, the great majority, however meritorious their preparation, however strenuous their exertion, must retire from the field disappointed, if not disgraced. Learn from hence to vie with each other in moral excellence, and the virtues of the Christian character, as though one candidate only were to gain the prize. Recollect, however, for your encouragement, that none shall labour in vain. For such is the pri-

[2] *So run as to obtain.*] The Isthmian games were held in the neighbourhood of Corinth. In these, only one candidate could gain the prize. Bishop Pearce observes, from Mill, that Cyprian adds *omnes* at the end of the sentence. *q. d.* So run that ye may *all* obtain, which, though unsupported by any manuscript, expresses the true meaning of the apostle.

Ch. IX. Ver. 24. vilege of the Christian race, that every diligent and persevering candidate shall obtain a proportionate reward; but let it be your ambition to gain the highest prize.

25. *But every one who entereth the lists is temperate in all things*[1]; *they, indeed, that they may obtain a fading crown*[2], *but we, one that will not fade away.*

The candidates in the Grecian games deny themselves all those indulgencies and gratifications which are inconsistent with that muscular vigour and agility upon which their success depends; and they endure innumerable hardships with the greatest fortitude and cheerfulness, for the sake of momentary applause and of a garland of fading leaves. Our

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[1] *Temperate in all things.*] So Horace, Art. Poet. l. 412.

Qui studet optatam cursu contingere metam,
Multa tulit fecitque puer, sudavit et alsit;
Abstinuit venere et vino.

"Those who taught the gymnastic art (says Dr. Macknight) prescribed to their disciples the kind of meat that was proper, the quantity they were to eat, and the hours at which they were to eat. They prescribed to them, likewise, the hours of exercise and rest. This whole course, which lasted for many years, was called Ασκησις, exercise. Hence the ancient monks, who imitated and even outstripped the *athletæ* in their rules of temperance and in the laboriousness of their exercises, were called Ασκηται, ascetics." See also Ælian. Var. Hist. xi. 3.

[2] *A fading crown.*] φθαρτον στεφανον, "*coronam mox perituram, nempe ex oleastro, aut picea, aut lauro.*" Rosenmuller.—"It is well known, (says Dr. Doddridge,) that the crown in the Olympic games, sacred to Jupiter, was of wild-olive; in the Pythian, sacred to Apollo, of laurel; in the Isthmian, or Corinthian, solemnized in honour of Palæmon, of pine-tree; and in the Nemean, of smallage or parsley. Now most of these were evergreens, yet they would grow dry, and break to pieces." See Elsner's Observ. vol. ii. p. 103.

contest is equally arduous, and requires, at least, equal exertions of fortitude and self-denial; but the prize at which we aim is unspeakably more valuable. To our view is held up a crown of glory that fadeth not away, a reward which merits our highest ambition, which will amply compensate the most arduous struggle, and richly repay the most costly and painful sacrifices. Ch. IX. Ver. 25.

I therefore so run, not as uncertainly[3]. *I so* 26.
fight, not as one who striketh the air[4]. *But I* 27.
bruise my body[5], *and bring* it *into subjection; lest,*

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[3] *Not as uncertainly.*] ουκ αδηλως· " with respect to the event: but with a certain expectation of the Christian prize. See Plutarch in Wetstein." Archbishop Newcome.—" not as to an uncertain goal." Bishop Pearce; who appeals to the Syriac and the Vulgate.—" as one not doubtful of the prize." Wakefield.—" *obscurè, incertè. Ex Stadiodromis non nisi unus reportare poterat victoriam, ergo semper dubia erat spes. Sed æternam illam gloriam et felicitatem omnes possunt consequi, et certissimè sperare, qui rectè virtuti student.*" Rosenmuller.—" not to leave it to uncertainty." Locke. Dr. Doddridge gives the word another sense: " I run not as one who is to pass undistinguished." Dr. Priestley renders it, " *not obscurely*, but as one who wishes to distinguish himself, and appear among the foremost in the race."

[4] *Who striketh the air.*] " In order to attain the greater agility and dexterity, it was usual for those who intended to box in the games to exercise their arms with the gauntlet on, when they had no antagonist near them: this was called σκιομαχια." Doddridge.—" Bos shows that the boxer was said to strike the air when he wasted his blow." Newcome. Bos *Exercit.* p. 138.

[5] *I bruise my body.*] υπωπιαζω " *sugillare, ut sub oculis existant vibices et maculæ luridæ.* Per synecdochen, generatim, *aliquem vel vulnerare, vel lividum reddere*, notat." Schleusner. " *Bruise* as the boxer does his antagonist. Bos has shown, that though the Greek word properly signifies, striking under the eye, it deviates into the signification of striking the face and the body." Newcome.

Ch. IX. Ver. 27. *after having served as a herald*[1] *to others, I myself should be disapproved*[2].

What I recommend to you, I practise myself. Regarding the prize as inestimable and certain, I exert myself in proportion to its worth, and to the difficulty of attaining it. And the struggle in which I engage is not an exercise for amusement; it is a serious warfare. The adversaries with which I combat are, the love of ease and pleasure, and other temptations incident to the present state. Against these I maintain a constant warfare; and with repeated strokes I beat them down, and chain them fast, that they may not obstruct my Christian and

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[1] *Served as a herald*:] κηρυξας. The apostle retains the agonistic terms: "At the opening of the games, a herald publickly proclaimed the names of the combatants. When the combatants appeared, they were examined whether they were free men and Grecians, and of an unspotted character; then the herald, commanding silence, laid his hand on the head of the combatant, and led him in that manner along the stadium, demanding with a loud voice of all the assembly, Is there any one who can accuse this man of any crime?" Macknight, from West's Pindar.

[2] *Be disapproved.*] Αδοκιμος "signifies one who is disproved by the judge of the games." Doddridge. "This is a happy turn," says Dr. Priestley, "to represent the enemy he was to contend with to be himself, his own body, his sensual appetites: a lesson peculiarly proper for the Corinthians. This does not imply that the apostle had any serious apprehension of being rejected at last, as one who had not done his duty; but it certainly implies, that without consistency of character and perseverance, he or any person will be rejected at last, how promising soever may be his profession or his conduct for a time: and if it was necessary in his case, much more might the Corinthians infer it was so in theirs."

Perhaps the apostle uses a prosopopœia, as in Rom. vii.; and though he speaks in the first person, it is as representing Christians in general, with a particular allusion to the Corinthians, who were notorious for voluptuousness.

apostolic career; lest, after having served as a herald, and proclaimed the lists to others, I should myself, when called to the trial, be finally disapproved, and lose the prize. Ch. IX. Ver. 27.

These observations bring the apostle to the close of the second argument, in which he endeavours to dissuade the Corinthians from eating things offered to idols in the idol's temple, by exhibiting an example in his own person of relinquishing advantages to which he had an undoubted right, from a benevolent desire to conciliate attention, and to recommend the doctrine of the gospel; and, for the same generous purpose, of submitting voluntarily and cheerfully to a degree of self-denial, mortification, and acquiescence in the caprices and prejudices of others, which no person living had a right to require or expect. He now proceeds to his last and most decisive argument, which settles the question at once.

ARGUMENT III.

THE APOSTLE cautions the Corinthians against partaking of an idol sacrifice in an idol's temple; which he denounces as a direct, criminal, and dangerous act of idolatry. Ch. X.

I.

The apostle warns the Corinthians by the example of the Israelites, God's ancient professing people, to guard against apostasy into idolatry, after

Ch. X. having been instructed in true religion, ch. x. ver. 1—12.

1. The ancestors of the Jewish nation, notwithstanding all their privileges, their public profession of true religion, and the miracles which God had wrought for their deliverance from Egypt, relapsed into idolatry, and were condemned to die in the wilderness, ver. 1—5.

Ver. 1. *Moreover*[1], *brethren, I would not have you ignorant, that all*[2] *our fathers were under the cloud*[3], *and all passed through the sea.*

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[1] *Moreover.*] The received text reads δε, *but:* Griesbach adopts γαρ, *for;* which Bishop Pearce and Archbishop Newcome prefer, as connecting this with the preceding context. *q. d.* Lest I be disapproved; *for* the case of the Israelites shows that men may be highly privileged, and yet finally rejected. This agrees with Mr. Locke's conjecture, that the Corinthians had told the apostle that the inducements they were under to go to their neighbours' feasts upon their sacrifices were irresistible; and therefore they thought they might go without any offence or danger, since they were the people of God, purged from sin by baptism, and fortified against it by partaking of the Lord's supper. To this the apostle replies, that, notwithstanding this, they, like the Jews of old, might sin, and draw upon themselves destruction; and that eating thus of things offered to idols, was partaking in idolatrous worship.—*I would not have you ignorant.* "I wish you to observe." Wakefield.

[2] *All our fathers.*] Mr. Locke observes, that the word *all* occurs five times in these four verses. And, supposing that the Corinthians presumed too much upon *all* of them being baptized and partaking of the Lord's supper, as if it were enough to keep them right in the sight of God, he reminds them, that though *all* the Israelites were baptized and ate of the same spiritual food, and drank of the same spiritual drink, yet *the greater part* of them perished in their idolatry.

[3] *Under the cloud.*] "which miraculously covered and guided them." Newcome. Bishop Patrick observes, that there were

I am now about to state a case which may perhaps alarm you, and put you upon your guard against making free with things dubious or unlawful; and especially with idolatrous rites and practices, in dependence upon your Christian profession and your covenant state, as though that would protect you, either from moral impurity or from the divine displeasure. The whole nation of the Israelites, when they left Egypt, were in a state similar to yours: great miracles were wrought, to convince them of the divine authority of their lawgiver. All of them were protected from the assaults of their enemies, defended from the fervor of the burning sun, and guided in their marches by the miraculous cloud, Exod. xiii. 21; and all of them by miracle passed safely through the midst of the Red Sea, Exod. xiv. 21, 22. Ch. X. Ver. 1.

And were all baptized into Moses[4], *in the cloud and in the sea.* 2.

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three several uses of the cloud: 1. To guide them in their journeys; and this it did as a pillar going before them. 2. To preserve them from the heat of the sun in the wilderness; and then it was spread out as a covering, Ps. cv. 39. 3. To defend them from their enemies, that they might not assault them, Exod. xiv. 20.

[4] *Baptized into Moses:*] εις τον Μωσην· "not *unto*, as our version has it; but *into* Moses, *i. e.* into that covenant which Moses delivered to them from God. So, to be baptized εις Χριστον, is to be baptized into the profession of Christ's laws and doctrine. Rom. vi. 3; Gal. iii. 27." Pearce.—"As the phrase 'being baptized into Moses' does not imply that Moses was a God, so, being baptized into Christ, or in the name of Christ, does not imply that he is a God. It is a mode of taking upon us the profession of that religion of which he is the founder." Priestley.

Ch. X. Ver. 2. As though immersed in the baptismal stream, they were enveloped by the cloud, and encompassed by the sea; and were convinced of the divine legation of their illustrious leader. These signal miracles may therefore be regarded as public symbols of their submission to the authority of Moses, as the rite of baptism is the symbol of your subjection to the authority of Christ.

3, 4. *And they all ate the same spiritual food*[1], *and all drank of the same spiritual drink. For they drank of the spiritual rock which followed* them[2], *but that rock was Christ*[3].

εβαπτισαντο, *baptized themselves:* voluntarily submitted to the rite. Perhaps when thousands were baptized in a day, they baptized themselves; they were not baptized by others. Indeed no instance occurs in the Old Testament, of one person being plunged under water by another.

[1] *Spiritual food.*] Manna: called, bread from heaven, Neh. ix. 15. "πνευματικος, in distinction from φυσικος, *supernatural.* Comp. Rom. vii. 14." Pearce; who translates it by the word *heavenly*, as he does not think that the word *spiritual* sufficiently implies that there was a miracle in the case. See Exod. xvi. 14, 15, xvii. 6.

[2] *The rock which followed* them.] "Here is a metonymy of the rock for the *water* of the rock. See ch. x. 18; Heb. xiii. 10; 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14. We may therefore fairly apply the epithets πνευματικης and ακολουθουσης to the *water*, understood in the phrase. They can be in no proper sense applied to the *rock*; but the water issuing from that rock was the effect of a miracle, and some of the water might be *carried* by the Israelites along with them, to supply them in some part of the rest of their journey." Bishop Pearce; who shows that the word ακολουθεω is sometimes used in this sense. After all, this appears to be a very uncommon and a very harsh sense of the word; and the more natural interpretation is, that the stream which gushed from the rock continued for a considerable time to accompany the march of the Israelites. Water was twice brought out of the rock by miracle: once at Rephidim, from Mount Horeb, in the first year

They were all fed in a supernatural way with manna, which is said to have come down from heaven; and they were all miraculously supplied with water from the rock which was struck with the rod of Moses, the stream flowing from which accompanied them in their progress through the wilderness. And this rock was a type of Christ, who is that spring of living water from which flow those vital truths, and those abundant consolations, which are the support and refreshment of his true disciples in their passage through this probationary world, John iv. 14. Ch. X. Ver. 4.

Yet, with the greater part of them, God was not pleased[4], *for they were destroyed in the wilderness.* 5.

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of their march, Exod. xvii.; the second time at Kadesh, in the fortieth year. Dr. Wall observes, that the Israelites for the first thirty-seven years might have travelled in the direction of this brook, which, watering the country, might produce herbage for the cattle; but after that, turning eastward from Ezion-geber, a port upon the Red Sea, Numb. xxxiii. 36, they were again distressed for water, with which they were again supplied by miracle at Meribah Kadesh. See Macknight and Wall's Critical Notes, vol. i. p. 106.

[3] *That rock was Christ.*] *i. e.* a type of Christ; who represents his doctrine as living water, John iv. 10. See also John vii. 37, the source of life, health, refreshment, and vigour. The apostle probably means nothing more than that the rock might be compared to Christ, whose doctrine was a source of life and comfort to believers, as the rock had been to the Israelites, by the refreshing streams which issued from it; and so to remind the Corinthians that he intended to apply his observations to their case: probably nothing mystical was intended. Dr. Whitby cites many passages, where a similar phraseology occurs: viz. Gen. xl. 12, the three branches are three days; xliii. 26, the seven kine, the seven ears of corn, are seven years; Dan. vii. 17, the four beasts are four kings. See also Ezek. v. 5; Dan. ii. 38; Matt. xiii. 38, 39; Luke viii. 11.

[4] *The greater part:*] εν τοις πλειοσιν. Comp. ch. ix. 19. It

Ch. X. Ver 5. Though all the Israelites had been supported and protected by miracles the most splendid and illustrious, though all had been distinguished with important privileges, though all had been instructed in truths of the highest importance, though all had made a solemn profession of their allegiance to God, and their submission to the authority of his servant Moses, though all had entered into covenant with Jehovah, and participated in the external symbols of this honourable relation, yet as to the greater part of them, these privileges and professions were of no avail; for by their immorality, idolatry, unbelief, and disobedience, they provoked God to destroy them in the wilderness. And so universal was their apostasy and rebellion, that out of the whole number who left Egypt, and who were at that time upwards of twenty years of age, only two, Joshua and Caleb, were permitted to enter the promised land.

2. Their example is an awful warning to the followers of Christ, not to venture upon lewd and idolatrous practices, under a presumption that the external symbols of a Christian profession will screen them from the divine displeasure, ver. 6—10.

6. *Now these things happened*[1] by way of *example*

here signifies all but two, Caleb and Joshua; who were the only survivors of the generation who were grown up to maturity when they left Egypt. See Bishop Pearce.

[1] *These things happened.*] " ταυτα, *referendum est ad pœnas, quibus Deus affecit veteres illos Israelitas. Quod Deus illos tam severe punivit, id factum est ut nos exemplis istis sapiamus.*" Rosenmuller. " τυπος *h. l. denotat exemplar, ut* 1 Thess. i. 7; 1 Tim. iv. 12; Tit. ii. 7." Id. " It is to be observed," says Mr.

to us, that we should not desire evil things, as they also desired. Ch. X. Ver. 6.

Our circumstances as professors of the religion of Christ are similar to those of the Israelites when departing from Egypt. We have seen great miracles wrought to convince us of the divine authority of the Christian religion. We have renounced the state of bondage and idolatry; we have received and acknowledged Jesus as our Master; we have been baptized into his name; we have eaten and drunk at his table; we have been enlightened by his doctrine, and consoled by his promises. Let us take heed that our fate also be not similar to that of our predecessors; nor let us vainly imagine that privileges and professions will protect us from the divine displeasure, if we yield to irregular desires and pursue criminal gratifications.

Neither be ye idolaters, as some of them were: *as it is written* (Ex. xxxii. 6), *The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play*[2]. 7.

Locke, "that all these instances mentioned by the apostle, of destruction which came upon the Israelites who were in covenant with God, were occasioned by their luxurious appetites about meat and drink, by fornication and by idolatry: sins which the Corinthians were inclined to, and which he here warns them against."

[2] *To play*:] παιζειν. Many expositors suppose that the apostle means, to commit fornication, which was the usual concomitant of idolatrous worship; and with these critics Bishop Pearce agrees. But Dr. Whitby observes, that though the Israelites are charged with idolatry, they are never accused of fornication in the affair of the golden calf: also, that the apostle makes a distinct charge of this offence in the following verse. To which may be added, that the Israelites professed to worship Jehovah under the symbol of the golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 5; and

Ch. X. Ver. 7. They celebrated a religious festival in honour of the golden calf, which they worshiped as the symbol of the God who had brought them out of Egypt, though image-worship had but lately been distinctly and solemnly prohibited by the voice of God; and they expressed their impious sentiments by feasting upon the sacrifice, and dancing in honour of their idol, calling it a feast to Jehovah; and probably thinking that there was no more harm in it than you apprehend in frequenting an idol's temple. But in this they were greatly mistaken; for God was highly displeased with them, and punished them severely for it.

8. *Nor let us commit fornication*[1], *as some of them committed fornication; and there fell in one day twenty-three thousand*[2].

You have been used to regard fornication as a matter of indifference: but be not deceived: the Christian law, like that of the Jewish legislator, strictly forbids the illicit commerce of the sexes;

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it is not at all probable that they would presume to introduce lascivious orgies into a festival which they pretended to hold in honour of the Supreme Being.

[1] *Commit fornication.*] This was a vice to which the Corinthians were so notoriously addicted, that κορινθιαζειν was proverbially used as equivalent to *scortari*. "Strabo says, that in one temple of Venus at Corinth there were no less than a thousand priestesses, who made prostitution a part of their devotion to the goddess." Lib. ii. cap. 17. See Doddridge.

[2] *Twenty-three thousand.*] In the Pentateuch, Numb. xxv. 1—9, the number is twenty-four thousand. If it be not a slip of the apostle's memory, it is usually explained, that twenty-three thousand died by the plague under the immediate hand of God, and one thousand by the sword. One manuscript and the Syriac version read *twenty-four*.

and those who are guilty of it shall be severely punished, as the Jews were when seduced by the Midianites to worship Baal-peor, an idol whose rites were of the most lascivious nature; and twenty-four thousand fell a sacrifice to their crimes. Ch. X. Ver. 8.

Neither let us tempt the Lord[3], *as some of them also tempted him; and were destroyed by serpents.* Numb. xxi. 5, 6. 9.

The Israelites were dissatisfied with being conducted by a circuitous route through the wilderness, and with living upon manna; and they spake against God, and against Moses, in consequence of which they were bitten by venomous serpents, and many of them perished in the wilderness. Let us not imitate their example, of murmuring either at the difficulties we meet with, or the self-denial which it is necessary to practise in our Christian course, lest we also share their fate.

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[3] *Tempt the Lord.*] Κυριον is the reading of the Vatican and Ephrem manuscripts, and of some ancient versions; Θεον, *God*, is the reading of the Alexandrine: vide Griesbach. If Χριστον, *Christ*, which is the reading of the received text, be retained, it signifies *the anointed prophet*; and applies both to Moses and to Christ: *vide* Grotius and Crellius *in loc.* Bishop Pearce conjectures that Κυριον might be the original word, and being by some thought to mean Christ, was changed into Χριστον and by others, who thought it meant God, was changed into Θεον. The learned prelate, however, prefers Θεον. Archbishop Newcome reads Κυριον, *Lord*; though Griesbach, whom he commonly professes to follow, does not admit that reading into his text, though he marks it as of high authority. Epiphanius accuses Marcion of introducing the word Χριστον into the text.—*Tempt*, "πειραζειν i.e. πειραν λαμβανειν τινος, *explorare aliquem, vires ejus tentare, an hoc vel illud facere possit.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. X. Ver. 10. *Neither murmur ye*[1], *as some of them murmured; and were destroyed by the destroyer.* Numb. xiv. 29.

By pestilence or sword, or other instruments of death; which, being the means of fulfilling the divine purpose of punishing the rebellion of the Israelites, may justly be represented as destroying angels, acting under a commission from God.

3. The history of the crimes and punishments of the Israelites in the wilderness was written for the admonition and instruction of succeeding ages, and especially of those who live under the dispensation of the Messiah, ver. 11, 12.

11. *Now all these things happened to them* as *examples* to us[2], *and they were written for the admonition of us, upon whom the last age is come*[3].

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[1] *Murmur.* "γογγυζειν, obmurmurare, ingrati animi et indignationis est indicium, Num. xiv. 2, 3, 4, xvi. 1. ολοθρευτης, Hebr. xi. 28; Exod. xii. 23; *denotare videtur pestem, sub persona angeli, mortem subito populo inferentis, repræsentatam.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *As examples.*] Τυπικως, *by way of example,* is the reading of the Alexandrine, Vatican, Ephrem, and several other manuscripts, and of many versions and fathers. "These sins and punishments of the Jews in the wilderness did not happen for examples to them, but to those who came after them." Bishop Pearce.

[3] *The last age is come.*] τα τελη των αιωνων, *the ends of the ages:* not, as translated in our bible, "the ends of the world." "The Jews counted three ages of the world: the first was before the law given to Moses; the second was under the law; and the third was under the Messiah: so that the age of which St. Paul here speaks was the last age, or the end of the former ages. How long this age was to continue, St. Paul undertakes not to teach. Comp. Heb. i. 2, ix. 26." Bishop Pearce.

One great design of just punishment is, to admonish others in similar circumstances, that they do not fall into the crimes of those unhappy culprits, lest they should also share in their doom. And the crime and consequent punishment of the Israelites is recorded for the admonition of us, who live under a nobler dispensation, the last that God will communicate to mankind; but whose distinguished privileges will be no security against the divine displeasure, and will rather aggravate our condemnation, if, notwithstanding all our knowledge and our profession, we relapse into idolatry and vice. Ch. X. Ver. 11.

Let him, therefore, who thinketh that he standeth[4], *take heed lest he fall.* 12.

Let not the most intelligent and best established believers imagine that they are perfectly secure, or that they can with safety expose themselves without necessity to strong temptation, or venture with impunity upon forbidden ground: the virtue of the most approved Christian may give way in circumstances of unusual trial, and the skill and vigour that has been most frequently victorious may fail in the struggle with a new and untried adversary. The truest wisdom, therefore, consists in vigilance and caution, and the only safety in fleeing from temptation.

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[4] *Who thinketh that he standeth.*] ὁ δοκων ἑσταναι· or, "*who seemeth to stand. q. d.* wherefore, being taught by these examples, let him, &c." Newcome.—"*Let him who standeth.* See ch. iii. 18. *q. d.* He who trusts that he shall persevere, should take heed lest he fall into sin." Bishop Pearce.

II.

Ch. X. The apostle concludes this branch of his subject, by seriously urging the Corinthians not to yield to the temptation of eating the flesh of a victim in the temple of the idol; for that, whatever might be the nature of the idol, such a practice was undoubtedly an act of idolatry, and highly offensive to God, ver. 13—22.

1. The apostle asserts that their temptations to idolatry hitherto had not been very considerable; nor would they ever be insuperable. He warns the Corinthians, therefore, carefully to abstain from it, ver. 13, 14.

Ver. 13. *No temptation has yet assailed you but what is common to man*[1]. *And God may be relied on*[2], *that he will not suffer you to be tempted beyond your ability; but with the temptation will also make a way out of it*[3], *that* ye *may be able to bear*

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[1] *Common to man*:] ανθρωπινος. "The sense is rather what is *human*; *i. e.* little, short, or moderate, as Chrysostom explains it. See 2 Sam. vii. 14; Hos. xi. 4; Xenoph. *Cyrop.* lib. iii. p. 189, ed. Hutch." Pearce.—"*Human*, such as human nature may surmount." Newcome.—"Hitherto the temptations you have met with have been light and ordinary." Locke.—"Proportionable to human strength, as well as frequent to human creatures." Doddridge.

[2] *God may be relied on.*] So Wakefield. Πιστος δε ὁ Θεος· "*God is faithful*, may be relied on as a faithful friend." Pearce.

[3] *A way out of it*:] την εκβασιν. "This word signifies an *end*, or a *passage out*, as the Syriac and Dr. Hammond render it here. I prefer either of these versions to that in our bible, *a way to escape*. The sense of the whole verse seems to be this: God will not suffer you to be tried by too strong a temptation; but if he does permit a temptation to try you, yet he will put an

it. *Wherefore, my beloved* brethren, *flee from idolatry*. Ch. X. Ver. 14.

You cannot, in extenuation of an idolatrous act, plead that you have ever been under an irresistible temptation to it. The inducement, probably, has been nothing more than the pressing invitations of your friends, or a foolish banter upon what they may call your precise and unsocial spirit; but these are temptations which require no peculiar degree of fortitude and strength of mind to overcome. I do not deny that you may be exposed to more serious trials. Those who now call themselves your friends may become your enemies and persecutors, because you will not join in their idolatrous revels, and go with them into the same excess of riot. But be not discouraged: God is your friend and protector. If you are true to him and true to yourselves, you will assuredly find that he will be faithful to his promises, and will not desert you in the hour of trial. In the course of his providence, he will either prevent the occurrence of temptations which would overpower your virtue; or, however new, or dangerous, or formidable the temptation may be, he will either enable you to resist, or will instruct you how to evade its force, so that you may escape without injury to your virtue and your peace: and therefore, my beloved brethren, whatever temptation you

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end to it: so that it will be small in degree and short in duration, so that ye may be the better enabled to bear it." Pearce. —"But with the trial will also give you power to bear its effects." Wakefield.

Ch. X. Ver. 14. may be under to idolatrous excess, I conjure you as a friend, and I warn you as an apostle, to keep at the remotest distance from it.

2. He appeals to their understanding, whether the joint participation of bread and wine at the Lord's table be not a joint participation of Christian worship, ver. 15—17.

15. *I address* you *as men of understanding*[1]*: do ye yourselves judge of what I* am about to *say*[2].

You value yourselves upon your superior wisdom: as men of understanding I now appeal to you. Attend to the argument which I am about to propose, and you will be convinced that you cannot feast upon an idol's sacrifice in an idol's temple, without being guilty of an act of idolatry.

16. *The cup of blessing* over *which we give thanks*[3]*, is it not the participation of the blood of Christ*[4]*?*

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[1] *I address you as men of understanding*:] ὡς φρονιμοις λεγω. So Pearce.—"You are satisfied that you want not knowledge; and therefore, as to knowing men, I appeal to you. See ch. viii. 1." Locke.

[2] *Judge of what I* am about to *say*:] ὁ φημι. "of what I *am going to say*, in opposition to this your practice of thus eating flesh offered to idols." Pearce.—"I make you judges of what I am going to say in the case." Locke.—"*Judge ye what I say.* All Christian teachers should thus address men:"—this is the excellent comment of that truly venerable prelate, Archbishop Newcome.

[3] *The cup of blessing* over *which we give thanks*:] το ποτηριον της ευλογιας ὁ ευλογουμεν. "The cup of blessing," says Mr. Locke, "was a name given by the Jews to a cup of wine which they solemnly drank in the passover with thanksgiving." It seems to be a strange and unwarranted supposition of Bishop Pearce, that the apostle does not in this passage allude to the Eucharist.

Is not the wine which we receive at the Lord's table, over which we give thanks to God for the gift of his son, for the blessings and promises of the gospel, and for our profession of it; and by which we commemorate the blood of that holy victim by which the new covenant was ratified, and do, as it were, herein feast upon the precious sacrifice; is it not a virtual participation of the blood of Christ, and a symbol of our intimate union with Ch. X. Ver. 16.

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[a] *Participation of the blood of Christ?*] κοινωνια τȣ αἱματος; "The cup of blessing," says Archbishop Newcome, "on which we implore God's blessing, is it not a common partaking of that wine which represents the blood of Christ?" But this does not appear to me to be the whole of the apostle's meaning. The idea in his mind was that of Christ's mystical body, of which Christ was the head, and individual believers were the members; and the participation of the eucharistical cup was receiving (*i.e.* symbolically receiving) blood from the head into the several limbs; and partaking of the loaf was (the symbol of) being vital parts of the same body: so that partaking of the Lord's supper was a symbol that all believers were vital parts, were flesh and blood of Christ's mystical body. The consequence was, that they could no more become worshipers of an idol, than a vital part of one body could at the same time become a vital part of another. He uses a similar argument, ch. vi. 15—17. With this idea in view, the apostle's argument is perfectly intelligible. Mr. Locke seems to have had a glimpse of the apostle's meaning: "They who drink of the cup of blessing, do they not thereby partake of the benefits purchased by Christ's blood, which they here symbolically drink?" But this is not exactly the apostle's idea: believers do not drink the blood, but they partake of it as the members do of the blood which flows from the head. Mr. Locke is more happy in his exposition of the latter clause, viz. "They who eat of the bread broken there, do they not partake in the sacrifice of the body of Christ, and *profess to be members of him?*" Upon the whole, the sense is, *q. d.* Is not the wine the blood of Christ? is not the bread the body of Christ? Is not, then, the participation of both an indication that those who so participate are vital parts of that body of which Christ is the Head?

Ch. X. Ver. 16. him and with each other as vital parts of his mystical body?

17. *The bread which we break, is it not the participation of the body of Christ? Because the loaf is one, we all are one body*[1]*: for we are all partakers of that one loaf.*

The participation of the eucharistical loaf is an act of Christian social worship, by which we commemorate the death of our Master, by which we symbolize our union with him our common head, as joint members of his mystical body, with which, by this peculiar act of Christian worship, we become as it were so thoroughly incorporated, that it is as impossible for us to be at the same time worshipers of idols, as for the same flesh and the same blood to belong to two human bodies. And the one unleavened loaf which we use upon these occasions, and of which we all partake, is an emblem of that intimate indivisible union which subsists among the professors of the Christian religion, with each other, and with Jesus their common Master; which union

[1] *Because the loaf is one.*] This is the rendering of Erasmus, Zegerus, Castalio, Grotius, Diodati, Bengelius, Bishop Pearce, Wakefield, Dr. Bell, and Dr. Townson. Archbishop Newcome gives it in his notes, but does not adopt it in the text. "From the unity of the bread in the eucharist," says Bishop Pearce, "he shows that all Christians have a communion one with another. That οἱ πολλοὶ is here rightly translated *all*, appears from the use of πάντες as a word equivalent to it in the last part of the verse; and also from Rom. v. 15, 18, viii. 32."—"By eating of that bread we, though many in number, are all united, and make but one body; as many grains of corn are united in one loaf." Locke. "In partaking of the one loaf," says Dr. Priestley, "we acknowledge ourselves to be one body with Christ."

would be as completely destroyed by an idolatrous act, as the integrity of the loaf would be destroyed by breaking off a fragment: and it is as impossible that a man should be at the same time an idolater and a Christian, as that the same fragment should be at once a constituent part of two different loaves. Ch. X. Ver. 17.

In the apostolic age, one loaf of unleavened bread was divided and distributed among all the members of the assembly who celebrated the Lord's supper; and the apostle here argues from that circumstance in particular, as being a symbol of Christian union in Christian worship. But this circumstance in the celebration of the ordinance has, in process of time, undergone a change; and it is no object with Christians now, either that the bread should be unleavened, or that the loaf should be one. It is justly argued, that to circumstances so trivial the Christian religion can attach no importance, and the end of the institution is sufficiently answered by eating and drinking in commemoration of Christ.

The scope of the apostle's argument is this: That as eating and drinking at the Lord's table was an act of Christian worship, a symbol by which they professed their allegiance to Christ, so eating and drinking at the table of an idol was an act of idolatrous worship, and a symbol of their subjection to a heathen god; and that these two characters are utterly inconsistent with each other.

3. Partaking of the Jewish sacrifices is also an

CH. X. acknowledged participation of Jewish worship, ver. 18.

VER. 18. *Consider the natural-born Israelites*[1]. *Are not they who eat of the sacrifices communicants with the altar*[2]*?*

You know, that with respect to the peace-offerings which are presented in the temple at Jerusalem, part is consumed on the altar, part is allotted to the priest, and the rest is returned to the person who brings the sacrifice: to feast upon this sacrifice is regarded as a direct acknowledgement of the supreme divinity of Jehovah, and as an act of re-

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[1] *Natural-born Israelites:*] τον Ισραηλ κατα σαρκα, *Israel according to the flesh. i. e.* native Israelites who live under the law of Moses, "in opposition," says Archbishop Newcome, "to the true Israel, the church of Christ."—"Consider the carnal *ordinances* of Israel." Wakefield.

[2] *Communicants with the altar:*] κοινωνοι τω θυσιαστηριω, *communicants of the altar.* The apostle's idea seems to be this, and it appears to me not to have been sufficiently adverted to, if at all, by expositors: All who join in the peculiar rites of any worship are considered as forming one community, one mystical body. Christians who partake of the eucharistic bread and wine, thereby profess themselves, and become, members of the body of Christ: they are portions of his flesh and blood. They who participate in Jewish sacrifices become κοινωνοι, *communicants of the altar; i. e.* of the Jewish religion. They are portions of the body of the Jewish church. And so, ver. 20, they who eat of idol sacrifices in an idol's temple are κοινωνοι, *communicants of demons:* they are portions of that body of which the demon whom they worship is the head: they are members of the community of idol worshipers. And the apostle's argument is, as was observed before, that they can no longer be considered as belonging to the community of which Christ is the head, than the same limb can be a vital part of two different bodies, or, than the same individual can be at the same time a member, and participate in the privileges, of two hostile communities.

ligious worship; and the person offering the victim thereby identifies himself with the body of Jewish worshipers. And so, by parity of reason, you plainly see, that to eat of idol sacrifices in an idol's temple, must be considered as a public and avowed act of idol worship, and identifying of yourselves with heathen idolaters. Ch. X. Ver. 18.

4. Whatever their conviction might be as to the nullity of the heathen gods, to partake of idol sacrifices in an idol's temple was an act of idolatrous worship, inconsistent with their Christian profession, and highly offensive to God, ver. 19—22.

What, then, do I say? that an idol is any thing in itself? *or, that an idol sacrifice is any thing?* 19.

You tell me in your letter, that an idol is nothing in the world, and that meat commendeth us not to God: nor do I deny the truth of these general principles. I am as well satisfied as you, of the nullity of the heathen gods, and of the perfect moral indifference of all kinds of wholesome food, considered in the abstract: nevertheless an action, in its own nature indifferent, may contract a moral complexion from the circumstances in which it is performed. And so it is in the present case.

But this I say, *that the things which the heathen sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons*[3], *and not to God;* 20.

[3] *Demons:*] δαιμονιοις, *ghosts of heroes.* See Farmer *on Miracles,* ch. iii. sect. 2. "St. Paul," says Mr. Farmer, "was a person of extensive learning, and well acquainted with the theology of the Gentiles, which represented human spirits as becoming demons after death. He knew that these demons

Ch. X. Ver. 21. *and I would not that ye should be communicants with demons*[1]. *Ye cannot drink of the cup of the Lord, and of the cup of demons. Ye cannot partake of the table*[2] *of the Lord, and of the table of*

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were the very persons to whom the Gentiles offered their sacrifices. At the same time he was conversant in those writings of the inspired prophets which taught, that the heathen gods were men and women deceased. Now, if he knew them to belong to the human species, would he deny that they had been men, and affirm that they were angels? Besides, this apostle was writing to Gentiles, who knew, that according to their theology human spirits became demons after death; and who would naturally understand him as referring to Jupiter, Venus, and other men and women whom they had once worshiped under this character. Would not St. Paul, then, use the word *demon* in the same sense in which he knew it would be understood by those Gentiles to whom he was writing?" The learned and accurate writer has taken very great and successful pains to prove, that though the word *demon* is sometimes used by philosophers to express a class of intermediate beings who never had been men, nevertheless in its most popular and usual sense it signified human spirits, who, being presumed to enjoy a separate existence, after death, had been deified, and had become the objects of popular worship. See his elaborate treatise on the *Prevalence of the Worship of Human Spirits.*

"By δαιμονια here," says Bishop Pearce, "are not meant *devils*, but *demons*, or the *ghosts* of deceased men. Mr. Mede, in his Disc. on 1 Tim. iv. 1, has fully proved that this must be the sense of the word there, and in Acts xvii. 18."—"They sacrifice to demons: such spirits as those to whom they address their devotions must be wicked spirits, if they exist at all, and devils may well be supposed to use their utmost efforts to support such worship." Dr. Doddridge. But it is plain that the apostle has no reference to the devil in this text; and as to more devils than one, the scripture is totally silent.

[1] *Communicants with demons*:] κοινωνους των δαιμονιων, *sharers of demons. q. d.* I would not that you should be portions, vital parts, of demons; members of that body of which a demon is the head, *i. e.* idolaters: as Christians are κοινωνοι τ̃ σωματος τ̃ Χριστ̃, are members and vital parts of the mystical body of which Christ is the head.

[2] *Partake of the table*:] μετεχειν. You cannot partake of the eucharistical bread. Why not? Because, ver. 16, the bread

demons too. *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy*[3]? *Are we stronger than he?* Ch. X. Ver. 22.

The objects of popular worship among the hea-

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which we break is κοινωνια, a communion of the body of Christ. Partaking, therefore, of this bread, is a symbol of our being parts of that mystical body of which Christ is the head: that is, members of the Christian community. By parity of reason, they who partake of the table of a demon are κοινωνοι, members of that body of which a demon is the head, that is, idolaters; and you cannot be both Christians and idolaters. The apostle distinguishes, in this argument, between μετοχοι and κοινωνοι. Μετοχοι are *receivers of*, κοινωνοι are parts *united to*. The *receivers of* the eucharistical bread are *united to*, and vital portions of, the mystical body of Christ. *You cannot*, ου δυνασθε. Bishop Pearce renders the words, "You must not;" but the apostle plainly means to represent it to be as great an impossibility to be a Christian and an idolater, as for the same limb to be a vital part of two living bodies.

[3] *Provoke the Lord to jealousy.*] "Dare you, then, being espoused to Christ, provoke the Lord to jealousy; which is spiritual whoredom?" Locke. The apostle still adheres to the image which he has hitherto kept in view: Christians are one person with Christ, as those connected in the conjugal relation are said to be one person. But if a Christian becomes an idolater, he separates himself from the person of Christ; as one who commits adultery breaks the marriage union, and justly becomes the object of jealousy and indignation. Mr. Locke in his paraphrase well sums up the apostle's argument in this section: "You cannot be Christians and idolaters too: nor, if you should endeavour to join these inconsistent rites, will it avail you any thing; for your partaking in the sacraments of the Christian church will no more exempt you from the anger of God, and punishment due to your idolatry, than the eating of the spiritual food, and drinking of the spiritual rock, kept the baptized Israelites, who offended God by their idolatry and other sins, from being destroyed in the wilderness." When the apostle speaks of provoking the Lord to jealousy, he probably refers to Christ, of whom he is speaking in the context, and who seems through the apostolic age to have exercised a personal and sensible authority over the church: though we have no evidence to prove that this personal intercourse is still continued. See Matt. xxviii. 20, and the note in the Improved Version.

Ch. X. Ver. 22. then were demons: that is, deified men, and not devils, as our translators very improperly render it. Those imaginary beings which the Jewish mythology called devils had no place in the mythology of Greece and Rome. Nor were they ever among those polished nations the objects of popular worship, nor does the apostle ever assert it; though by a strange mistranslation he appears to do so to the English reader. This point is so completely settled among men of learning and inquiry, that it admits of no dispute.

And the tenor of the apostle's argument is this: You cannot be both Christians and idolaters; you cannot feast at the table of the living God and at that of demons, or departed men; you cannot be worshipers of God, and at the same time worshipers of dead men: for it is notorious that the sacrifices which the heathen offer, they offer to the dead. How is it possible that you, who are identified with Christ and are members of his mystical body, can identify yourselves with the corrupt mass of heathen idolaters, and be at the same time Christian worshipers of the true and living God, and idolatrous worshipers of senseless images and dead men? Nothing can be more inconsistent or more intolerable. And being thus united to Christ, and, as it were, espoused to him, will you dare to violate your solemn vows, will you presume to provoke him to jealousy, by admitting a rival in your hearts, and by practising idolatrous worship? Are you sufficiently apprized of your danger? do you not see the infa-

tuation of your conduct? will he not resent and punish your infidelity and apostasy? are you prepared to meet him? can you endure his indignation, or withstand his power? Beware, then, how you provoke his anger by returning to those idolatrous and criminal practices from which it was the great design of the gospel to rescue and purify its professors. Ch. X. Ver. 22.

CASE II.

THE APOSTLE, treating of the lawfulness of eating meat which had been offered to an idol, and having insisted very much at large upon the *First* and the most important case, namely, that of feasting upon an idol sacrifice in an idol's temple, now proceeds briefly to discuss the other two. *The Second Question* was, concerning the lawfulness of eating flesh which had been part of an idol sacrifice, and which had afterwards been exposed to sale, and purchased in the public market.

In these circumstances he decides peremptorily, that the flesh of the victim may be eaten without question and without scruple, ver. 23—26.

23. *"All things are lawful*[1]." *Yet all things are not expedient. "All things are lawful." Yet all things do not edify.*

[1] *All things.*] The words παντα εξεστιν, *all things are lawful*, are probably extracted from the letter of the Corinthians. See chap. viii. Vide Bowyer. Μοι is omitted. Griesbach. To avoid tautology, *expedient* may be understood as what may be beneficial to the agent himself: *edification* has respect to others. Rosenmuller.

Ch. X. Ver. 23 In the letter which I have received from you, you assume it as a self-evident principle, that "All things are lawful." You tell me that you are perfectly satisfied, that under the Christian dispensation there is no distinction of food. This proposition is true, indeed, in the abstract; but the rule may admit of some exceptions. Cases may occur, in which an adherence to it may be inexpedient. "Jewish distinctions," you say, "are abolished." They are so: but circumstances may arise, in which the improvement of others may be consulted by waving the exercise of your Christian liberty, and in which you may do injury to others, and ensnare the consciences of weaker Christians, or obstruct the progress of Christianity among unbelievers, by pertinaciously insisting upon your own right.

24. *Let no one seek his own* good, *but* every one *that of another* [1].

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[1] *That of another*:] "another's wealth." This is the rendering of the public version; but, as Bishop Pearce truly observes, the word *wealth* at the time when our translation was made signified *good*, as in *commonwealth*, but it has now got another signification. The Bishop's translation is, "Let no man seek his own things *only*, but every man another's *also*;" and Archbishop Newcome adopts the same construction. Pearce refers to his note on ch. i. 17. But the introduction of the restrictive words *only* and *also* injures the spirit of the maxim which the apostle introduces in opposition to the loose and selfish principle of the Corinthians, "All things are lawful:" a maxim which he disapproves, and which he brands as injurious both to individuals and to society; and recommends to them to substitute in its place the beautiful principle of disinterested benevolence. Bishop Pearce closes the first case with this verse, and adds, "I absolutely forbid, therefore, your eating in the temples meat offered to idols."

You have stated your maxim, permit me to offer mine; which you will do well to receive and to act upon, as a modification of your own: Let benevolence be your ruling principle: forget your own interest in that of your neighbour. Let every selfish affection merge in that of universal good will. This is the great law of your profession; it is the dictate of the highest wisdom; it is the perfect rule of conduct; it is the great secret of producing universal happiness. With this proviso, I now proceed to lay down a rule for the Second Case. Ch. X. Ver. 24.

Whatsoever is sold in the market[2] *eat, asking no questions on account of conscience. For the earth* is *the Lord's, and all that is in it*[3]. 25. 26.

Christian liberty must be limited by expedience; but to impose needless restraints is useless and unwise. To feast upon idol victims in an idol's temple is an overt act of idolatry, and as such it must be sedulously avoided by every one who professes subjection to the law of Christ. But upon other

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[2] *Sold in the market.*] Μακελλον, *shambles, fora carnaria.* Rosenmuller; who adds, "*nihil inquirentes ne conscientia vestra perturbetur.*" He observes, that the seller might either have offered part of the animal at the shrine before he brought the rest to market, or that the priests might sell the part which had been allotted to them; but concerning these circumstances it was needless to inquire. God is the sovereign proprietor of all; and what he has given for the use of mankind cannot be in itself unlawful.

[3] *All that is in it.*] So Newcome. Gr. "and *the fulness thereof.*" Bishop Pearce translates it, "*and all that it is full of;*" adding by way of paraphrase, "all the beasts of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath given them for the use and service of men."

Ch. X. Ver. 26. occasions such food may be innocently used. If, for example, meat is exposed to sale in the public market, you are under no obligation to inquire how it came there. The purchase and use of it, in these circumstances, can with no appearance of reason be interpreted as an act of idolatry. It is the bounty of Providence which supplies us with food; and of that bounty we are at full liberty, in the exercise of a grateful spirit, to partake, without scrupulously examining whether the meat we purchase had or had not been offered in an idol's temple. All wholesome food in such circumstances is lawful; and though tenderness of conscience should be cherished with care, scrupulousness of spirit should by all means be avoided, as founded upon a narrowness of mind, unworthy of the liberal and manly spirit of Christianity.

CASE III.

THE LAST CASE which the apostle proposes, is that of their being invited to the table of a heathen friend, where an idol sacrifice might be supposed to constitute a part of the entertainment. In this case the expedience of partaking of it must depend upon the peculiarity of the circumstances, ver. 27—xi. 1.

1. In general, the apostle advises believers to eat what is set before them without any scruple, ver. 27.

27. *Also, if any unbeliever invite you* [1] to an enter-

[1] *Invite you.*] "ει τις καλει, sc. ad convivium, nam καλειν est ad convivium vocare." Rosenmuller; who observes, that the

tainment, *and ye are disposed to go, eat whatsoever is set before you, asking no questions on account of conscience.* Ch. X. Ver. 27.

Christianity is no enemy to social enjoyment; nor is it at all necessary for you, as believers in the doctrine of Christ, to retire from the world, or to withdraw from the society of your heathen friends, if their characters be good and their manners amiable: innocent and cheerful festivity is perfectly compatible with Christian sanctity. If, then, a heathen friend invite you to an entertainment, and you are disposed to accept of it, go without hesitation; and whatsoever is set before you, partake of it without scruple within the bounds of temperance and moderation, even though you may have reason to suspect that part of the provision may have been first offered at the heathen temple. Your feasting upon it at the table of a friend is very different from partaking of it in the idol's temple, and cannot in reason be construed into an act of idolatry.

2. If, however, any scrupulous guest should be present, and suggest an objection, the apostle advises the more enlightened believer to wave the exercise of his Christian liberty, ver. 28, 29.

But if any one say to you, This meat *hath been offered to an idol, eat* it *not, because of the conscience of him who told* you[2]. *Because of the con-* 28. 29.

apostle is not speaking of idol feasts, but of common and private entertainments.

[2] *Because of the conscience of him who told* you:] διὰ τὸν

Ch. X. Ver. 29. *science, I say, of the other person, and not because of thine own.*

Christianity does not encourage scrupulosity: nevertheless, believers, whose hearts are sincere, though their understandings may not be sufficiently enlightened, may entertain a notion that partaking, upon any occasion, of meat which has been presented at the altar of an idol, is an act of idol worship; and if this uninformed Christian sees that you eat of it without scruple, it may induce him to do that which in him would be an act of idolatry, however innocent in you. And therefore, for his sake, it will be right for you to abstain; that you may not seduce him into a practice which would be contrary to his convictions. Or, if the objector should even be an unbelieving Jew, it might still be expedient to wave your privilege.

3. The apostle states and replies to an objection

μηνυσαντα, και την συνειδησιν· "because of him who told thee, and because of conscience." Newcome.—"I have rendered these words," says Bishop Pearce, "as a hendiadys: *q. d.* δια την συνειδησιν τȣ μηνυσαντος. So in Virgil, *paterâ et auro*." See ch. ii. 4, and the Bishop's note; see also Schulzius in Rosenmuller. After the word συνειδησιν, the received text adds, "for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof:" which are quite irrelevant to the apostle's argument, and are wanting in the most ancient manuscripts and versions. They are left out of the text by Griesbach, Pearce, Newcome, and Wakefield, and were evidently introduced by some careless transcriber from ver. 26, where they are very apposite, and where they follow the word συνειδησιν. Bishop Pearce supposes the objector to be a Jew; but this is needless, it might be either a Jew or a scrupulous Christian. "Any Christian or Jew." Newcome. Certainly not the master of the feast, unless he meant to insult his guest.

which the enlightened believer might be supposed to offer to his advice, ver. 29—xi. 1. Ch. X.

But why is my liberty to be abridged[1] *by another's conscience? If I partake with thankfulness*[2], *why should I be censured on account of that for which I give thanks?* Ver. —29. 30.

I well know that the advice I offer will not be palatable to all; and an objector, more intent upon self-gratification than on self-denial, may say, I see no reason why I am to be deprived of an agreeable and innocent gratification, because of another man's ignorance and superstition. Let him gain better information; let him learn the extent of Christian liberty, and then his scruples will vanish, and will neither incommode himself nor others. The gospel has set me free from ceremonial distinctions, and the meat which it allows me to partake of, I have received with a heart grateful to the God of all for his bounty. I know the nullity of heathen deities, and the vanity of idol worship. Nor can this participation of food at the table of a friend, though a heathen, be justly interpreted as associating myself with him in his idolatrous rites. Who, then, has a right to censure me for that participation of the

[1] *To be abridged*:] κρινεται. "why should my liberty be condemned by another man's conscience?" Newcome, Wakefield. *q. d.* Why am I to be restrained from an act which my conscience approves, merely because another man's conscience condemns it?

[2] *Partake with thankfulness*:] χαριτι. So Wakefield. "with thanksgiving." Newcome; and Pearce, who observes, that this sense of the word, which is common in the apostle's writings, is confirmed by ευχαριστω in the latter part of the verse.

Ch. X. Ver. 30. bounty of providence, which, being consecrated by a grateful heart, is an act of homage to the true and living God?

The apostle replies to this plausible but somewhat captious objection, by offering three considerations:

First, The great concern of the practical believer is not to gratify appetite, but to glorify God, even in the most common actions of life, ver. 31.

31. *Whether, therefore, ye eat, or whether ye drink, or whatsoever* else *ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

Your objection has weight, provided that you were the only party concerned; but remember, that as disciples of Christ, you are neither to consult your own gratification, nor the humours and prejudices of others, but to maintain an habitual regard to the will and to the glory of God. By your profession of the Christian religion, you have devoted yourselves to the service of God; and it is your duty to maintain that habitual powerful sense of God upon the mind, that in every action of life you may have an explicit regard to his authority and submission to his will. And, if you are formed to this truly Christian spirit, you will not for a moment hesitate to deny yourselves any indulgence, if the service of God, the welfare of your fellow-creatures, and the general interest of truth and virtue, which He vouchsafes to regard as his chief glory, may be promoted by it.

Secondly, As disciples of Christ, they must avoid

every thing that would obstruct the progress of the gospel, ver. 32. Ch. X

Put no stumbling block[1] *before the Jews*[2], *or the Greeks, or the church of God.* Ver. 32.

Let me remind you, that one important case under this first and most inviolable of Christian maxims is, that you do not, by the imprudent exercise of Christian liberty, tempt others to transgress. Do not, then, by continuing to eat of the flesh of a victim at the table of a friend, after a caution has been suggested, prejudice the Jew against the Christian faith as favourable to idol worship, or lead the Gentile to conclude that you are not averse to participate in his idolatrous rites. And, above all, place no temptation in the way of weaker and less enlightened believers to relapse into idolatry; and thus to dishonour their profession, to injure their character, and to endanger their final state. If such evil con-

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[1] *Put no stumbling block*:] Απροσκοποι γινεσθε. So Wakefield.—"Give no cause of offending." Newcome.—"Απροσκοπος notat *eum qui aliis incedentibus nullum objicit offendiculum. Hesych. et Suidas* ασκανδαλιστος. Metaphorice is dicitur, *qui non committit aliquid, ut exinde alter in errorem incidat, aut ad peccatum alliciatur.*" Schleusner.

[2] *Before the Jews, or,* &c.] This is a confirmation of Bishop Pearce's conjecture, that the objection might be supposed to proceed from an unbelieving Jew; who might be prejudiced against the Christian religion if he saw that the professors of it partook without any scruple of meat which, though not eaten in the idol's temple, was nevertheless a part of the immolated victim.—"The Jews or the Gentiles, "και Ελλησι, *and the Greeks.*" The Greeks are here substituted for Gentiles in general; and the word is so translated, and perhaps inadvertently, without notice, by Archbishop Newcome. "And και, following a negative, is here to be translated *nor.* See Rom. iv. 19; 1 John iii. 10." Macknight.

Ch. X. Ver. 32. sequences follow from your unguarded use of Christian liberty, and your refusal occasionally to wave your privilege, you sadly deviate from that excellent and perfect rule of conduct which I have just repeated.

Thirdly, Upon the whole, the apostle recommends it to them, in this and in other particulars, to follow his own example of accommodation and self-denial; as it had been his ambition and endeavour to follow that of their common and honoured Master, ver. 33—ch. xi. 1.

33. *And as I, in all things, please all men*[1], *not seeking my own advantage, but the* advantage *of*
Ch. XI. Ver. 1. *all*[2], *that they may be saved,* so *be ye imitators of me*[3], *even as I* am *of Christ.*

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[1] *Please all men.*] Bishop Pearce remarks here, "A way of speaking very common with St. Paul, as with other writers; by expressing the action he means only to express his design. It is certain he did not in fact please all; no, not all the Corinthians: but he endeavoured to please them; and this, therefore, is all the force of αρεσκω." In confirmation of this remark, he refers to Gal. v. 4; Heb. ii. 10; John xv. 15; Rom. ii. 4.—"Αρεσκω, *placere studeo.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *The advantage of all:*] των πολλων, the many; *i. e.* all men. Pearce, Wakefield. See ch. x. 17, and the Bishop's note.

[3] *Be ye imitators of me.*] Locke, Pearce, Griesbach, Newcome, Wakefield, Rosenmuller, &c. all agree in joining this verse to the last of the preceding chapter, as being evidently connected with what he there states concerning his own conduct. Mr. Locke supposes some reflection to be intended upon the false apostle by the limitations which the apostle sets to their imitating his example.—"*Hunc versum perperam Latini a superiore capite absecuerunt, cum quo potius cohæret: ita tamen, ut singulari quodam Pauli artificio, sit simul et superioris disputationis conclusio, et transitio ad ea quæ sequuntur.*" Rosenmuller.

To conclude: I have related at large to you in what particulars I cheerfully submit to considerable privations, and how I endeavour upon all occasions to accommodate myself to the humours and prejudices of my hearers as far as I innocently can, in order to save them from idolatry and vice, and ruin. And to speak the truth, and that I may not appear to claim greater merit than is due, I frankly own, that in this rugged path of self-denial I only follow, and that at humble distance, the glorious footsteps of our revered Master; who denied himself every gratification, and submitted to the most ignominious usage and the most cruel sufferings, that he might accomplish the purposes of his heavenly mission. Be it thus your honourable ambition, my beloved friends, to imitate good examples, wherever you find them; and in the case I have stated be imitators of me, and not of me only, but of Jesus Christ, who is the perfect pattern of human virtue; who has set us an example which, as it is my desire and ambition ever to keep in view, I would also recommend to your habitual and supreme regard, as the only safe and infallible rule of conduct. CH. XI. VER. 1.

SECTION III.

Ch. XI. THE APOSTLE *in this* SECTION *offers advice concerning decorum in the appearance and dress of those persons, whether male or female, who were appointed to officiate in their public assemblies,* ch. xi. 2—16.

The subject is attended with some difficulty. As the apostle so expressly prohibits women from speaking in the church[1] at all (ch. xiv. 34, 35), some

[1] *Prohibits women from speaking in the church*:] viz. 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35, 37; "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. The things that I write to you are the commandments of the Lord." Notwithstanding this strict prohibition, under the authority of Christ himself, the apostle in this chapter supposes that a woman might pray and prophesy; that is, speak to *others* "for edification, exhortation, and comfort," 1 Cor. xiv. 3; and he gives direction for the decent performance of this duty. To reconcile this apparent inconsistency, Grotius, Locke, and most of the commentators, have supposed that women were sometimes inspired, either to foretell future events, or to speak for edification. So, it appears, under the Old Testament, that Miriam and Deborah were inspired; and under the new dispensation, the seven daughters of Philip the evangelist were prophetesses, Acts xxi. 9. Compare Joel ii. 28, Acts ii. 17. These extraordinary cases were of course exceptions to the general rule; and it is to such cases that the apostle's directions in this chapter apply. Dr. Taylor, however, is not satisfied with this interpretation; and thinks the rule laid down in the fourteenth chapter too absolute and imperative, and of too high authority to admit of any restrictions. He conjectures, therefore, that as it was the custom in Greece for the women to live in a state of separation from the men, excepting those of their own family, the women might probably have assemblies of their own, distinct from

have supposed that he alludes in this passage to their speaking by immediate inspiration, which would of course be an excepted case. But it seems most probable that the women occasionally held separate religious assemblies of their own sex, in which it was thought no impropriety for those who prayed or taught, to lay aside the veil while they were officiating; and this is the practice which the apostle here condemns. Ch. XI.

1. He expresses his satisfaction in the general attention which the Corinthians had paid to the rules which he had prescribed for the conduct of their religious assemblies, ver. 2.

Now I commend you, brethren, because ye remember me in all things[2], *and adhere to the rules*[3] *as I delivered them to you.* Ver. 1.

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those of the men, where they might pray with, and prophesy to, that is, instruct and edify each other. These are the assemblies to which the apostle refers in this chapter, and for the orderly conducting of which he lays down rules. And in confirmation of this conjecture he observes, that in this advice there is not one word of praying or prophesying in the *church*: for the apostle did not consider those assemblies of women as proper *churches*. Then, at ver. 17 he begins to correct disorders in their proper assemblies when they came together in the *church*, men and women. And upon this subject he discourses to the end of the fourteenth chapter." See Dr. Taylor's excellent note upon Rom. xvi. 1.

[2] *In all things.*] "They remembered most of his instructions and regulations." Newcome. Considering, however, the gross irregularities upon which the apostle animadverts in this and the succeeding chapters, the expression must be understood with very great limitations.

[3] *Adhere to the rules:*] τας παραδοσεις κατεχετε. Literally, "hold fast the things which have been delivered, as I have de-

Ch. XI. Ver. 2. When I was with you, I prescribed a variety of rules for the decent regulation of your religious assemblies, whether of a public or private nature; and I am pleased to hear that in general you, or at least many of you, have observed them. There are, however, some irregularities which duty obliges me to notice, and particularly those concerning which you have asked my opinion and advice.

2. The apostle assumes the superior authority of the male sex; and argues from this principle, that the man should be uncovered and the woman veiled while they were officiating in their respective religious assemblies, ver. 3—7.

But I wish you to know, that the head of every man is Christ; and that *the head of the woman* is *the man, and* that *the head of Christ* is *God*[1].

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livered them;"—"κατεχω, *diligenter observo.*" Schleusner.—"Keep my traditions as I delivered them to you." Newcome. But the word *tradition*, in its usual acceptation, does not express the apostle's meaning: what the apostle particularly alludes to in this passage is, certain rules which, while he was with them, he had delivered to them for the support of order and decorum in their public meetings, and which they had generally observed. Bishop Pearce's translation is, "and keep those rules which I delivered unto you, in the same manner as I delivered them."—"*Et præcepta quæ ego vobis tradidi retinetis.* παραδοσεως *nomine vocatur omne id quod docetur: hic autem significatur, præceptio de ritibus, et moribus publicis, ad ordinem et decorum in ecclesiis servandum institutis.*" Rosenmuller.

[1] *The head of Christ* is *God.*] Slichtingius well observes from this text, that "as the most high God can have no head above him, therefore Christ is not the most high God." "To explain this mystery, some of the Fathers say, that 'God is here said to be the head of Christ as being the Father of the Son, and so the cause of him. But yet, as the woman is of the same nature

Christ is the Lord and lawgiver of his church, and to his authority every man who professes to be his disciple owes subjection. In like manner, the woman owes subjection to the man; and Christ himself is subject to God, whose servant he is, whose commission he bears, and whose will he performs. Ch. XI. Ver. 3.

The apostle does not profess upon this occasion to speak by inspiration, and his language is formed upon the customs and habits of those nations in which the man was the despot of the family, and the women and children were little better than slaves. It is happy for us that we live in a more enlightened age, and in a country of more liberal and polished manners, in which the claims of the two sexes are more equitably adjusted, and each sustains its proper part in domestic arrangements and civil society. It is obvious, also, to observe, with what unaffected

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with the man who is her head, so is Christ of the same nature with God the Father.' Others say, that 'the Father is here styled the head of Christ, considered as Mediator; in which relation he received his kingdom and dominion from him, and exercises it wholly to his glory.' " Whitby. But surely this is little better than mere jargon, and substituting words for ideas. The moderns do not succeed much better than the ancients in their qualifying clauses. " Christ," says Dr. Doddridge, " in his mediatorial character acts in subordination to the Father, who rules by him, and hath constituted him sovereign of all worlds, visible and invisible." But if Christ was himself the Maker of all worlds, how can he be said to be constituted sovereign by the Father?—Dr. Macknight does not explain the case much more satisfactorily than Dr. Doddridge: " The head of Christ, to whom in saving the world he is subject, is God." But how can one omnipotent Being be subject to another omnipotent Being? Yet these expressions pass, because few readers will stop to reflect upon their absurdity.

Ch. XI. Ver. 3. simplicity the apostle speaks of the subjection of Christ to God as his Lord and Governor, without adding any of those qualifying clauses which many of his commentators find necessary, when they would reconcile the inferiority of Christ with his supreme divinity and full equality with the Father; and which Paul himself would also have found equally necessary, in order to guard his readers against dangerous errors, if he had entertained the same opinion concerning the person of Christ which his commentators have embraced.

4. *Every man, praying or prophesying*[1] *having* his *head covered*[2], *dishonoureth* him who is *his head*[3].

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[1] *Prophesying.*] It cannot be doubted that this word often signifies speaking under a divine impulse; but it is also used for teaching in general, and in that sense it seems to me reasonable to understand it in this passage.

[2] *Having* his *head covered.*] "It appears from Theodoret, that the men of Corinth, according to the custom of the Greeks, both wore long hair, and prayed to God with their heads covered, in the public assemblies: so also, saith Plutarch, did the Romans; so, saith Lightfoot, did the Jews. But the heathen woman paid her devotion to the Gods *resoluta comas*, with her hair loose and hanging down." Whitby. As it is not probable that the apostle would advise the Corinthians to worship God in a manner which would be regarded as indecorous, it seems probable that some Christians, when they spoke or prayed in public, were accustomed to wear a veil, which the apostle here disapproves, as being properly a part of female dress. On the other hand, the women who prayed and taught in their own assemblies, which they were not forbidden to do, threw aside their veils, probably conceiving that it would be more convenient; or perhaps regarding it as a token of religious respect, as the heathen priestesses laid aside their veils when they spoke under the impulse of the oracle. This custom is strongly reprobated by the apostle, and strictly forbidden by him, as utterly in-

If a man wear a veil, or any other covering upon his head when he is conducting public worship, or instructing his fellow-Christians, it is a reflection upon Christ, whose image he bears, and whose commission he executes: for it would be assuming the symbol of subjection, when, in fact, he is invested with authority. Ch. XI. Ver. 4.

But every woman praying or prophesying with her *head unveiled, dishonoureth* him who is *her head*[4]*: for that is one and the same as if she were shaven.* 5.

The woman, by taking off her veil, virtually renounces her subjection to the man; and may with equal propriety alter her dress to that style which the custom of the country has appropriated to the male sex.

For if the woman be not veiled, let her also cut off her hair[5]*; but if it be disgraceful to a woman to cut off her hair, or to shave herself, let her wear a veil.* 6.

If the woman lay aside her veil in public, let her be consistent: let her in other articles assume the appearance and attire of the man. But if it be in-

consistent with public decorum, and with the delicacy of the female sex. See Pearce and Doddridge.

[3] Him who is *his head.*] *i. e.* Christ; which seems to be the most important sense of the words, and the most agreeable to the connexion. See Whitby, Locke, Doddridge, and Rosenmuller. Gr. "dishonoureth his head:" *i. e.* his own head. Pearce, Newcome, &c.

[4] Him who is *her head.*] *i. e.* the man; by encroaching upon his province, by appearing in his dress.

[5] *Cut off her hair*:] κειρασθω. See Wakefield. "let her head even be shorn." Newcome.

Ch. XI. Ver. 6. decorous for the woman to appear in the garb of a man, let her retain that article of dress to which custom has annexed the idea of female modesty and decorum.

7. *For indeed the man ought not to cover* his *head, being the image and glory*[1] *of God: but* the *woman is the glory of* the *man.*

God created man, as it is said, Gen. i. 27, in his own likeness, in intellect, in rectitude, in dignity, and in dominion. It becomes him, therefore, to appear uncovered, which is the usual symbol of the possession of power and the exercise of authority, and an emblem of an independent station. But the woman was made in the pleasing and softened image and likeness of the man: as he derives authority immediately from God, so she derives her authority from him, and governs the family in subordination to him. It becomes her, therefore, to wear the symbol of subjection and allegiance.

3. Having further argued the superiority of the male sex, the apostle suggests a hint, that as believers in Christ, the two sexes are upon an equa-

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[1] *Image and glory.*] "A hendiadys for *glorious image.*" Wakefield.—"The glorious image of God in his dominion over this lower world. Ps. viii. 5, 6." Newcome. Bishop Pearce translates δοξα *likeness; q. d.* he is the image and likeness of God: but in this rendering he is singular. "*Similitudinem et majestatem Dei referens. Est enim vir in supremo gradu collocatus in hoc mundo . . . mulier vero mariti auctoritatem refert. Imperat enim materfamilias suæ familiæ, sed viri nomine.*" Rosenmuller.

lity; and that the authority of the man ought to be exercised with indulgence, ver. 8—12. Ch. XI.

Moreover, the man was not taken[2] *from the woman, but the woman from the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man.* Ver. 8. 9.

The account contained in the Book of Genesis of the formation of the woman, being taken from his side and created for his use, sufficiently indicates the inferiority of the female sex, and the subjection of the woman to the man.

For this reason ought the woman to wear upon her head the token of subjection to *authority*[3], *because of the messengers*[4]. 10.

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[2] *The man was not* taken *from*:] εκ γυναικος. "the man does not belong to the woman." Pearce. But the same expression occurs ver. 12, where it must be rendered in its usual sense, *from the woman*. The apostle's argument in these verses from the Mosaic history, will not bear any great stress to be laid upon it. See Priestley.

[3] The token of subjection to *authority*.] Εξουσια is universally understood as meaning the veil, the emblem of subjection to the authority of man. See Whitby.

[4] *Because of the messengers*:] δια τους αγγελους, *because of the angels*. "What the meaning of these words is," saith Mr. Locke, "I confess I do not understand:" nor indeed is it easy to make any sense of them, if by the word *angels* we are to understand beings of an order superior to mankind who are supposed to be present in religious assemblies. But, if we admit Dr. Taylor's natural and judicious interpretation of this passage, in his note upon Rom. xvi. 1, nothing can be more easy. "The men upon sundry occasions," saith this admirable expositor, "sent *messengers* to these female assemblies; and these messengers, coming in the name of their husbands, brought, in a sense, their authority along with them: on which account the women ought to observe a just decorum, as if their husbands were present. The women ought to have power on their head, because of the *messengers*." Bishop Pearce takes no no-

Ch. XI. Ver. 10. You may perhaps think, that in the private assemblies of the female sex there would be no impropriety in the woman who prays or teaches laying

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tice of this interpretation of Dr. Taylor's; perhaps he might not know of it. He supposes, that St. Paul speaks according to the notion which then prevailed among the Jews, whether a just one or not, that "the holy angels interested themselves in the affairs of men, and particularly were present in their religious assemblies." Eccles. v. 6. Dr. Priestley also supposes that the apostle alludes to the popular opinion of the presence of angels in religious assemblies, out of respect to whom women should have their heads covered: he does not notice Dr. Taylor's solution of the difficulty, and probably did not recollect it. Archbishop Newcome, after noticing the common hypothesis, and that of Beza, who supposes it to allude to the presence of the inspired teachers, and likewise Dr. Taylor's interpretation, gives it as his own opinion, that the words are a gloss, inserted in conformity to Jewish notions. This also was the conjecture of Dr. Owen in Bowyer. In fact, the sense and construction are complete, if this clause should be omitted. See Bishop Pearce. "*propter exploratores.*" Rosenmuller.—"Because of the evil angels," says Dr. Whitby, after Tertullian: "she being tempted by the prince of them to do that which is perpetual cause of shame to her, and which increased her subjection to the man, Gen. iii. 26, ought therefore to use this token of shamefacedness and subjection." Macknight adopts the same interpretation. But what proof is there that Satan, or any other evil angel, had any concern in the fall of man? Moses gives no hint of the intervention of any such malignant being, nor is such an extraordinary doctrine any where revealed. And if this most incredible hypothesis were allowed, what reason would it afford for the woman wearing the veil? Let it not, however, be forgotten, that the learned and venerable writer who advances this absurd hypothesis was the author of the work entitled, "Ὑστεραι φροντιδες, *Last Thoughts*;" in which he gravely and candidly retracts the most material of the errors which pervade his learned Commentaries, namely, that of the proper deity of Jesus Christ: which he solemnly renounces, and assigns the most unanswerable reasons for his retractation of this popular doctrine. Let not blame, then, be imputed to Dr. Whitby, if he did not at once see and revoke the whole system of erroneous doctrine in which he had been educated.

aside her veil for the time that she officiates; but when you reflect that men are appointed as visitors to those assemblies, or occasionally sent as messengers there, you must be aware how inconsistent it is with the established custom of the country, and with the decorum of the female character, that women in these circumstances should be seen without their veils. Let the women, therefore, whenever they pray or teach, even in their own assemblies, take heed that they may never be surprised by persons of the other sex in a sort of dress unbecoming the delicacy of the female character. Ch. XI. Ver. 10.

Nevertheless, neither is the *woman to be separated from* the *man, nor* the *man from* the *woman, in the Lord*[1]. 11.

As professing Christianity, all are upon a level:

[1] *The woman separated,* &c.] In the received text the order of these clauses is different; viz. "Neither is the man to be separated," &c. being the first in order. The order is transposed, upon very good authority, in the text of Griesbach, and it best agrees with that in the succeeding verse. Literally, "Nevertheless, neither is the woman without the man, nor the man without the woman, in the Lord." *In the Lord* appears to me to mean, under the Christian dispensation; which, as Bishop Pearce observes, is the only sense which the words would bear here. This, however, he thinks improper, and prefers the reading of Theodoret, εν κοσμῳ, "in the world:" *q. d.* one cannot exist without the other in the world. Archbishop Newcome says, "This reading is neither necessary, nor well supported." Mr. Locke renders εν Κυριῳ, "the Lord so ordering it." I prefer, however, the interpretation in the paraphrase as the most obvious meaning of the phrase εν Κυριῳ, and most congenial to the apostle's style. Mr. Wakefield's translation is, "But neither are men to be separated from women, nor women from men, in the Lord;" which he explains in his note, "one is not regarded under Christianity to the disparagement of the other, but both have their proper estimation. Gal. iii. 28."

Ch. XI. Ver. 11. as believers in Christ, there is no distinction of sexes; nor any preference of one above another, but in just proportion to the moral value of the character of each. And it is the duty of both sexes to afford mutual assistance to each other in the trials and duties of the Christian profession.

12. *For as the woman* was *from the man, so also the man* is *by the woman: but all things* are *from God.*

According to the Mosaic account, the woman was originally taken from the man; and in the natural course of things the man is born of the woman. The sexes are mutually dependent upon each other, and both are equally and wholly dependent upon God. He is the universal Father of the human race; and all his offspring, whether male or female, are equally dear to him, and equally the objects of his parental providence and care.

4. He appeals to their own sense of propriety whether his observations are not just, and concludes with declaring the general custom of the church as a reply to any one who was disposed to cavil at the regulations he recommends, ver. 13—16.

13. *Judge among yourselves. Is it decent for a wo-*
14. *man to pray to God without a veil? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that if a man suffer his hair*
15. *to grow long, it is a disgrace to him; but that if the woman have long hair, it is an ornament to her, because the hair is given her as a veil?*

You know that the customs of your country do not allow a woman to pray without a veil. I might

even appeal to the law of nature, which usually bestows upon the female a greater proportion of hair than it allows to the male. For a man, therefore, to be curious in dressing and adorning his hair, is disgraceful and effeminate; but for a female to shade her countenance with graceful locks is ornamental and allowable, for a profusion of these is granted to that sex as a natural veil. Ch. XI. Ver. 15.

But if any one is disposed to be contentious[1], I answer, *that we have no such custom, nor* have any of *the churches of God*[2]. 16.

If any one, after all, will persist in recommending it to women to pray and teach in their own assemblies without the decent ornament of a veil, I do not think it worth while to argue the case any longer. It is enough to declare, that whatever may be the custom of the heathen priestesses when they feign, or fancy themselves to be inspired, no such indecorous behaviour is admitted in any of the churches, either of the Hebrew or the Gentile believers, in any

[1] *Is disposed to be contentious*:] δοκει—ειναι, "seemeth to be contentious;" *i. e.* is contentious. Δοκεω does not always express a doubt. See 1 Cor. vii. 40; Gal. iii. 6. 9. "If any one, however, love contention." Wakefield.—"If any one setteth up for a contentious man." Pearce; who in his note observes, that δοκει may be taken as an expletive, and produces examples from Xenophon and Aristophanes.

[2] I answer, *we have no such custom*, &c.] "*I must tell him that* we," &c. Pearce; who understands the word *we* as applicable to the Jewish churches: *q. d.* "I must assure him, that neither the Jewish churches, to which we did originally belong, nor any of the churches of God, have such a custom as this." Archbishop Newcome observes, that "to the contentious he speaks with authority, to others with deference," ver. 13. ch. x. 15.

Ch. XI. Ver. 16. part of the world; and that if this custom should prevail any longer, it will remain as the solitary practice and singular disgrace of the church at Corinth. And so I close what I had to advance upon the subject of female decorum, and proceed to notice some irregularities of a still grosser kind, which are at present tolerated among you.

SECTION IV.

THE APOSTLE animadverts upon those who, by their irregularity and excess, assimilated the Lord's Supper to an idol's feast: he reminds them of the evil consequences of their misbehaviour; relates the origin of the Institution, and subjoins some useful warnings and advices. Ch. xi. 17—34.

1. The apostle reproves the Corinthians for dividing themselves into separate parties when they were assembled to celebrate the Lord's supper, ver. 17—20.

17. *I am about to give you a charge, without any commendation* [1], *because you assemble together, not for the better but for the worse.*

[1] *I am about to give,* &c.] With Pearce, I adopt the reading of the Alexandrine and some other copies, "παραγγελλω ουκ επαινων." Wakefield joins τουτο παραγγελλω with the preceding verse, which he concludes with these words, "and such is my charge to you." Archbishop Newcome observes, that "he had praised them ver. 2; here he censures their practices with his accustomed delicacy."

In many particulars you have adhered closely to the rules which I laid down for the decent and orderly conducting of public worship, and for this I have commended you; but I am now entering upon a topic in which your conduct is so generally and so grossly irregular, that I can speak of it only in the language of unmixed censure: for a religious institution, conducted with such disorder, so far from promoting your moral improvement, can only be attended with disgrace and mischief. Ch. XI. Ver. 17.

For, in the first place[2], *I hear that when you meet together as a church*[3], *there are divisions among you; and I believe it as to a part* of you[4]. 18.

The first of those articles which call for severe rebuke, relates to the gross indecencies which take place at the celebration of the Lord's supper. I have been informed, that when you profess to assemble together to celebrate the Lord's supper, instead of sitting down to a common table, and joining toge-

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[2] *In the first place*:] πρωτον. "First, with respect to the disorders at the Lord's Supper; secondly, with respect to those relating to the abuse of the gift of tongues, ch. xii." Pearce; who observes, that no interpreter had taken notice of this distinction.

[3] *As a church*:] εν εκκλησια, not εν τῃ εκκλησια. See Griesbach. Εκκλησια, *a religious assembly*, not the church or place of worship: see ver. 22. "The congregation met in some convenient place, but not always in one fixed place. Acts i. 15, ii. 1." Newcome.

[4] *Divisions*:] *i. e.* you separate yourselves into different parties (σχισματα, not *schisms*,) to feast together.—*I believe it as to a part* (μερος τι), willing not to suppose that all are equally guilty. Grotius, Pearce.—"I partly believe it." Newcome; who observes, "This is delicate. He is unwilling to believe every circumstance reported to their prejudice."

Ch. XI. Ver. 18. ther in the celebration of the rite, you divide yourselves into different companies, and sit down at different tables. And I fear that the intelligence is but too true with regard to the greater part of you; though I trust there are some among you who are better informed, and who enter their protest against the prevailing irregularities of the church.

19. *For there must indeed be even separations*[1], *that they who are approved among you may be known.*

The irregularities among you are come to such an extreme, that, unless they are very speedily rectified, it will be necessary for those who desire to appear and to approve themselves the faithful disciples of Christ, to separate themselves altogether from a scene of disorder and riot, utterly inconsistent with the decency and purity of Christian worship.

20. *When, therefore, ye* thus *assemble together*[2], *it is not eating the Lord's supper.*

You may call such feasting by whatever name you please, but it has no right to be considered as

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[1] *Separations.*] The received text adds, εν ὑμιν, both here and at the end of the verse; but these words are wanting in some of the best copies. Αἱρεσεις, literally *heresies*, plainly something more than separations at different tables; probably, therefore, separations from communion altogether. The apostle was apprehensive that some would prove so refractory, that the purer part must break off all communion with them. "Indeed, there must be parties among you." Wakefield.—"divisions and factions." Locke. Both Pearce and Newcome translate the word "heresies," and interpret it as of false doctrines: erroneously, as I think, and unsuitably to the connexion.

[2] *Assemble together.*] Pearce assigns reasons for joining επι το αυτο with φαγειν in the latter clause of the verse: *q. d.* it is not to eat the Lord's supper at the same time.

an institution of Christ. It is no celebration of the Lord's supper; for to this rite it is essential that all the professors of the faith of Christ who are present should be joint partakers of the holy feast, which mutual participation is an emblem of their communion with each other, and of their mutual relation to Jesus their common head. Ch. XI. Ver. 20.

2. He further reproves them, that instead of celebrating the Lord's supper as a distinct institution, they confounded it with an ordinary meal, or, an idol's sacrifice, and made it a scene of riot and intemperance, ver. 21, 22.

For every one taketh first *his own supper*[3], *and one hath not sufficient to eat, while another indulges to excess*[4]. 21.

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[3] *Taketh* first *his own supper.*] The indecency here complained of probably consisted in feasting intemperately previously to the celebration of the Lord's supper. "το ιδιον δειπνον προλαμβανει. *Ut hoc recte intelligamus, notandum est, post commune convivium, celebratam esse cœnam dominicam, quemadmodum Christus post epulas paschales, instituit hanc sacram cœnam. Fuit autem moris Athenis Socratis ætate, ut, qui ad cœnam conveniebant, ipsimet singuli aliquid obsonii afferrent quod non semper in commune apponebant, sed plerumque quisque suo vescebatur.* Xen. Mem. 1. 3. *Quem morem indicio est hic ipse apostoli locus, illa etiam tempestate, a Corinthiis, jam Christianis eatenus servatum fuisse, ut celebraturi sanctam cœnam, si non alios etiam cibos, panem certe et vinum in ecclesiam afferrent.*" Rosenmuller. See also Macknight on the text.

[4] *Indulges to excess.*] "is drunken." Wakefield. Μεθυειν is properly *to eat and drink, μετα το θυειν, after a sacrifice;* in which the idolater generally ate and drank to excess: but the word has not necessarily that sense. See John ii. 10. See Pearce and Newcome. Probably, however, the Corinthian epicures indulged to as great excess in a Christian as in an idol's temple; and doing this as often as they celebrated the Lord's

Ch. XI. Ver. 21. You seem to think, that as Christ partook of the passover feast before he instituted the commemorative ordinance of his supper, it is also necessary for you to feast before you celebrate this rite. Accordingly, you bring your provisions upon such occasions to your religious assemblies; and some of you feast to excess, while others are standing by and have nothing to eat.

22. *What*[1]*! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or do ye despise the congregation of God*[2]*, and put out of countenance those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you*[3]*? In this I praise you not.*

Do not decency and common sense teach you, that you should eat your private meals at your own houses? Do you treat a religious assembly with contempt, and degrade a congregation, who are meeting together for the worship of the true God, to a level with a company of idolaters riotously feasting in an idol's temple? Does it not wear the appearance of an ungenerous triumph over your poor brother, who perhaps is pining in want and

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supper, their intemperance had brought on various diseases, see ver. 30. "*Divites ad temulentiam vino implerentur.*" Rosenmuller.

[1] *What! have ye not,* &c.] "μη γαρ. Γαρ is an expletive, and μη γαρ is the same with *numnam* in Latin: it is thus chiefly used in interrogations." Pearce.

[2] *The congregation of God.*] " do ye this to show your contempt of the congregation with whom you are assembled for worship?" Pearce.

[3] *Shall I praise you? In this,* &c.] This is the punctuation of the Vulgate: also of Castalio, Pearce, and Griesbach.

hunger, while you are rioting in profusion? Does it not tend to excite in his breast uneasy emotions of envy and discontent, when he compares the poverty of his condition with the luxury of yours? What can you expect that I should say to such gross irregularities as these? Is it possible to speak in commendation of them? So far from it, I feel it to be my duty in the strongest terms to express my entire disapprobation of your disorderly conduct. Ch. XI. Ver. 22.

3. With a view to assist them in correcting these irregularities, the apostle relates the history of the institution, as he had received it from Christ himself, ver. 23—25.

For I have received from the Lord[4], *that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the night in which he was betrayed, took bread*[5], *and having given thanks he brake* it, *and said,* "*This, which is broken for you*[6], *is my body: do this, as a memorial*[7] *of me.*" *In like manner* he 23. 24. 25.

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[4] *Received from the Lord*:] παρελαβον απο τυ Κυριυ. This phrase does not necessarily express immediate revelation, but it is highly probable that this fact was communicated by Christ to the apostle, with the other articles of the Christian doctrine. Gal. i. 11, 12.

[5] *Took bread.*] Αρτον, *a loaf*; one of the unleavened cakes, which it was easy to break into small pieces. See Wakefield.

[6] *This, which is broken for you.*] So Pearce; who observes, that the body of Christ is no where in the New Testament said to have been broken.

[7] *As a memorial*:] εις αναμνησιν. Not merely an act of remembrance; as a memorial it may be received by children, and even infants, which was the practice of the primitive church. See Pierce *on Infant Communion.*

Ch. XI. Ver. 25. gave[1] *the cup also after he had supped, saying,* "*This cup is the new covenant in my blood: do this, as often as ye shall drink* it[2], *as a memorial of me.*"

This plain recital of the history of the institution, which had been revealed to him by Christ, effectually answered the apostle's purpose, of impressing upon the minds of the Corinthians a proper sense of their criminal profanation of the ordinance, by pointing out its simplicity, its distinction from a common meal, its solemnity and importance, its perpetuity, its design and tendency to promote brotherly love, and to commemorate an event which, though many professing Christians were disposed to disavow it, was indeed the glory of the Christian cause, and the appointed seal and ratification of that new, immutable, and universal dispensation, by which Jew and Gentile were emancipated from the yoke of ceremonies, or the bondage of idolatry, and elevated to the hope of forgiveness, acceptance, and immortal life.

4. The apostle warns the Corinthians of the danger of profaning the Lord's supper by a disorderly and unworthy attendance upon it, ver. 26—34.

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[1] He gave.] "These words are better supplied than 'he took.' Our Lord probably pronounced the words, 'This cup,' &c. at the time that he gave the cup to his disciples." Pearce.

[2] *As often as ye shall drink* it.] These words are wanting in two manuscripts, and in the Ethiopic, and are omitted by Wakefield.

[1.] He observes, that the Lord's supper being a commemoration of the death of Christ, to confound it with a common meal, or a riotous feast upon an idol sacrifice, was a criminal profanation of it, ver. 26, 27. Ch. XI.

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye make a declaration of the Lord's death[3] *till he come*[4]. Ver. 26.

As the design of the passover, to which the apostle here alludes, was to be a standing memorial of the escape of the first-born, and as the narrative of that memorable event was always rehearsed at the time of the feast in order to keep it fresh in the memories of the Israelites, so the celebration of the Lord's supper is a standing public memorial of the death of Christ. It is a formal avowal of it to the world, as an event of which his disciples were not ashamed; but in which they gloried as an event of high importance.

The apostle plainly intimates that this commemorative rite is to be frequently repeated, and to be continued in the church to the end of time. In

[3] *Ye make a declaration.*] καταγγελλετε. An allusion to what was called the Haggidah at the passover. The youngest child asked the father the meaning of the rite: in reply to which, the father rose up and related the history of the destruction of the first-born. See Ainsworth on Exod. xii. 8.

[4] *Till he come:*] *i.e.* To raise the dead, and judge the world; for there is no circumstance which limits the sense to the destruction of Jerusalem; least of all, as the Quakers understand it, to the effusion of the spirit, the principal manifestation of which, on the day of Pentecost at Jerusalem, had happened many years before. "These (says Archbishop Newcome) are important words, as they show the perpetuity of the rite."

Ch. XI. Ver. 26.

this way the visibility and unity of the Christian church are preserved from age to age. They who attend upon this institution do thereby publicly declare, that there is a body of men in the world who agree in acknowledging Jesus as their master, and who glory in their subjection to his authority. And the universality and perpetuity of this ordinance show, that all who join in it in all places, and in all ages, belong to the same body, and have one common head. And this consideration may well reconcile sincere Christians of various parties and denominations to each other, while they recollect the great importance of those points in which they agree, in comparison with those, whether of doctrine or practice, in which they differ [1].

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[1] *In which they differ.*] May it not also be observed, that they who neglect this institution, neglect the only positive rite which was appointed by the great founder of the Christian faith, for publicly distinguishing the professors of his religion from the mass of the unbelieving world: the ordinance of baptism being of a more private nature, and having respect to families rather than to churches. This neglect of the Lord's supper, in proportion as it prevails, deprives Christianity of its visible form, and prevents it from being an object of attention to the world; whereby its progress is obstructed, and Christians lose the great advantage which they might otherwise derive from social intercourse, for mutual encouragement, and for the increase of mutual affection. In the primitive church, it is well known, that all who were baptized were admitted to communion, infants themselves not excepted. See Mr. Peirce's excellent Essay on the Eucharist. But in process of time, as the purity of the Christian faith became corrupted by human traditions, and as the simplicity of Christian institutions was lost amidst the unintelligible mysteries and pompous ceremonies in which they were involved, the multitude were intimidated from attending upon this simple, cheerful, social, rite; and the benefit of it was in a great measure lost; nor will it be perfectly

So that whosoever eateth the bread or drinketh the cup[2] *of the Lord unworthily*[3], *is guilty of* dishonouring[4] *the body and blood of the Lord.* Ch. XI. Ver. 27.

To confound this simple rite with a riotous idol festival, is to affront and profane that holy institution, in which we commemorate the death of Christ, and to pervert that ordinance into an incentive to intemperance and vice, which was intended as a confirmation of faith, and a motive to virtue.

[2.] They who confound the Lord's supper with a riotous idolatrous feast, expose themselves to the punishment due to this criminal indiscretion; ver. 28, 29.

Let a man therefore examine himself[5], *and accordingly let him eat of this bread and drink of this cup.* 28.

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recovered till Christianity is restored to its primitive simplicity; and the practice of this rite becomes, as it originally was, universal among its professors.

[2] *Or drinketh*, &c.] ἢ· hence an argument is drawn that to take the communion in one kind, is the same as to take it in both; and the cup has been refused to the laity. How trifling this argument is, needs no comment to show.

[3] *Unworthily.*] "The Corinthians perverted the ends of the institution by forming separate companies, and by being guilty of excess, or, at least by approaching too near it." Newcome.

[4] Dishonouring.] "will be guilty of an affront to." Pearce. —"of profaning." Newcome; who explains, *q. d.* "will be liable to the punishment due to grossly misusing the sign or symbol of the Lord's body and blood."

[5] *Therefore examine himself, and accordingly.*] δε in this connexion signifies *therefore*; as this sentence is an inference from the preceding. See Pearce. The learned prelate also understands δοκιμαζειν in the sense of διακρινειν, ver. 31. *q. d.* "*Let a man distinguish himself* from a guest at a common meal; let him consider that he is not at his own, but at Christ's table. This, he says, Tillotson has proved at large in his sermon on

Ch. XI. Ver. 28. Let a person, before he partakes of the Lord's supper, consider within himself, whether he understands the account I have given of the institution, whether he discerns the difference between this Christian rite, and a feast in an idol's temple, and let him recollect that he attends not as a guest at an entertainment, but as a communicant at the Lord's table; and having well settled this distinction in his mind, let him so partake of the Lord's supper, and commemorate his death.

29. *For he that eateth and drinketh*[1] *without distinguishing the Lord's body, eateth and drinketh punishment*[2] *to himself.*

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frequent communion." Mr. Locke gives nearly the same sense. The apostle had introduced an account of the rite as instituted by Christ himself, and he requires them to examine themselves by it. "The examination proposed," says this eminent writer, "was no other but an examination of their manner of eating the Lord's supper by Christ's institution, to see how their behaviour comported with the institution, and the end for which it was instituted. Και ὁυτως, *and so*, not, as is commonly understood, let examination precede, and eating follow, but let him examine, and *according to that* let him eat; let him conform the manner of his eating to that;" *i. e.* to the institution of Christ. The examination of what sins they had been guilty of, "such," says Bishop Pearce, "as is usually and commendably made before we receive the Lord's supper," is not referred to by the apostle in this advice.

[1] *Eateth and drinketh.*] The received text adds αναξιως, *unworthily*, which is wanting in the Alexandrine and Ephrem manuscripts, and in the Æthiopic and Sahidic versions. Griesbach retains it in the text, but marks it as very doubtful.

[2] *Punishment.*] κριμα, not *damnation*, as it is rendered in the public version, which Dr. Doddridge "thinks the most unhappy mistake in all our version of the Bible." "Κριμα here signifies temporal punishment, (says Bishop Pearce,) viz. weakness, sickness, and death, as is plain from ver. 30: comp. 31, 32, and κριμα in ver. 34. And to this is opposed καταχρινεσθαι in

That person who, professing to acknowledge Christ as his master, celebrates the memorial of his death with the riot and intemperance of a heathen sacrifice, and thus makes no distinction between a Christian ordinance and an idolatrous rite, dishonours his profession, is guilty of a high offence against the precepts of the Christian law, and exposes himself to the just punishment of his folly and excess. Ch. XI. Ver. 29.

[3.] Many of the Corinthians had actually suffered considerably by their intemperance upon these occasions, which ought to be a warning against indulging these extravagant excesses, ver. 30—32.

For this reason[3] *many among you are infirm and sickly, and several are falling asleep*[4]. 30.

Many of you, by your gross intemperance upon these occasions, have brought upon yourselves painful and alarming diseases, to such a degree that some of you are even in danger of falling sacrifices to your riotous excess.

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ver. 32, which there signifies final condemnation; it is a metonymy of the cause for the effect." It does not appear from Bishop Pearce's expressions, that he considered the sufferings of the Corinthians as supernaturally inflicted.

[3] *For this reason*, &c.] This is generally understood of a miraculous infliction of disease, and even of death. But the apostle does not hint at any thing of the kind. And it is not improbable that their frequent acts of intemperance (the Lord's supper being probably celebrated every time they met for public worship) injured their health, and endangered their lives.

[4] *Are falling asleep.*] κοιμωνται, "not a few *are falling asleep.*" Wakefield: are in imminent danger of death; otherwise, if they were actually dead, the punishment could not be intended for their reformation as the apostle says it was, ver. 32.

Ch. XI. Ver. 31. *But if we would examine ourselves*[1], *we should not be punished.*

If we understood the true nature of this Christian rite, if we properly distinguished it from an idol sacrifice, if we considered ourselves as guests at the Lord's table, and not an idol's feast, and if we did not indulge in intemperance and folly, we should escape those diseases, which are the natural consequence and the just punishment of riotous excess.

32. *But when we are punished by the Lord, we are corrected*[2], *that we may not be condemned with the world.*

The painful and threatening diseases which are the effects of intemperance, are the discipline of divine providence; by which we are warned to forsake

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[1] *Examine ourselves.*] διεκρινομεν, "distinguish ourselves." Pearce: in the same sense as δοκιμαζετε, ver. 28, comp. ver. 29. Many good copies read ει δε instead of ει γαρ at the beginning of the verse. "For if ye yourselves had made a difference, ye would not have been so punished." Wakefield.

[2] *We are corrected.*] παιδευομεθα· "this punishment from the Lord is a lesson to us." Wakefield. Archbishop Newcome observes, that "these judicial inflictions of speedy temporal punishment were peculiar to the apostolic age; they were unerringly proportioned to the guilt incurred, and were designed to preserve and establish the purity of Christian worship and practice, as well as the authority of the apostles;" and he refers to Acts v. 5; 1 Cor. v. 5; 2 Cor. x. 8, xiii. 2; 1 Tim. i. 20; Rev. ii. 22. All this may be very true; but it does not prove that the distempers to which the apostle here alludes were supernatural. The apostle does not assert it. Diseases are often described as visitations from God. Intemperance naturally entails disease; and it is but too probable that many professing Christians at Corinth were very imperfectly recovered from the vices of heathenism. See 2 Cor. xii. 20, 21. There does not appear, therefore, to be any necessity for believing that the diseases suffered by the Corinthians were inflicted by miracle.

those vices, which would expose us to the condemnation into which the unbelieving, idolatrous, and guilty world will justly fall. And it will be our wisdom to improve by the salutary, however severe and painful admonition. Ch. XI. Ver. 32.

[4.] He concludes with exhorting them to make their repasts at their own houses, and to celebrate the Lord's supper with decency and order, ver. 33, 34.

Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat the Lord's supper, *wait one for another, that ye may not come together for* your *punishment*[3]. *But if any one be hungry, let him eat at home; and as to other things, I will regulate* them *when I come.* 33. 34.

Let your assemblies for Christian worship be conducted with gravity and decorum. Let not the Lord's supper be celebrated till the whole congregation be assembled, and let there be no riot and intemperance upon the occasion, that you may not expose yourselves to disease and disgrace. Remember, that a Christian assembly, meeting together for the worship of God, is not a proper place for eating a common meal, and much less for a riotous debauch. Satisfy your hunger in your own houses, and let none of these irregularities and indecencies,

[3] *That ye may not come together for* your *punishment.*] This clause in the received text is placed after the word "home" in the next verse. The transposition here adopted was suggested by Bengel and Bowyer.

Ch. XI. Ver. 34. upon which I have here animadverted, be endured any longer in the church. As to lesser improprieties, which may have inadvertently been admitted among you, and which are not inconsistent with good morals, and the general order of Christian worship; it is needless to swell this epistle with particular directions concerning them, but hoping soon to make you a visit, I will then rectify whatever may still remain amiss.

It would not be right to conclude this portion of the epistle without observing, how little foundation there is in the sharp and just rebuke which the apostle here administers to the Corinthians on account of their intemperance, for any sincere believer in Christianity to take alarm, and to be discouraged from attending at the Lord's table, as though it were an insidious and dangerous rite. The Corinthians confounded this simple salutary institution with an idolatrous festival, and celebrated it with that gross intemperance with which they had been used to feast in the temples of their idols; so that they impaired their health, and endangered their lives, by their frequent excess. The apostle justly and strongly reprobates this conduct, as utterly inconsistent with their Christian character, as a gross profanation of the institution, as an insult upon common decency, and as dangerous even to their health and life. But as no disorders of this kind can possibly take place in the present state of things, the apostle's reproofs and admonitions apply to mo-

dern Christians, no further than as general exhortations to decency, and propriety of behaviour in this as in every other branch of religious and Christian worship. Ch. XI. Ver. 34.

SECTION V.

THE APOSTLE treats of the nature, the origin, and the comparative value of spiritual gifts; he describes benevolence as more excellent than all; he prefers the gift of prophecy to the gift of tongues, the ostentatious display of which he severely rebukes, and concludes with various directions for the decent and edifying exercise of their respective spiritual gifts in their public religious assemblies, ch. xii—xiv. Ch. XII.

I.

The apostle introduces the subject of spiritual gifts with some general remarks upon their nature, origin and use, ch. xii. 1—11.

1. Though they had formerly been idolatrous heathen, yet being now converted to the faith of Christ, they were all in the most important sense endued with the holy spirit, ver. 1—3.

Now concerning spiritual persons[1], *brethren, I would not have you ignorant.* Ver. 1.

[1] *Spiritual persons.*] πνευματικων, either *gifts* or *persons*. Locke understands the latter. Spiritual men are those who are

Ch. XII. Ver. 1. You have written to me to inquire what gifts are most excellent, and what class of spiritual men

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assisted and acted upon by the holy spirit; and Mr. Locke supposes the question proposed by the Corinthians, to have been, whether those who had the gift of tongues ought not to take precedence over the rest, and whether they ought not to speak first, and to be first heard at their meetings. Pearce adopts the same interpretation.

I hesitate not to say that this Section is one of the most important portions of the apostle's writings; and that it contains one of the most irresistible proofs of the truth and divine authority of the Christian religion, by establishing the existence of those spiritual gifts and miraculous powers, to which it appeals and on which it rests. The genuineness of this epistle is undoubted. We are as sure that it was the composition of Paul the apostle, as if we had been present when it was written. It is addressed to a society of believers, which he had himself instructed and formed; but which, since he had left them, had fallen into many gross irregularities; and among whom, a powerful party had been raised against himself, at the head of which was an artful, eloquent, learned, and probably an opulent leader, whose object it was to disparage the apostle, and to bring his person and doctrine into contempt. The main design of the apostle in this epistle, is to correct the errors and to rectify the disorders into which the society had fallen, to recover his own credit and authority among them, and to diminish that of his opponent. With this view he animadverts upon their schismatical spirit, he reprimands their misconduct, he corrects their mistakes, he answers the questions which they proposed, and he solves their doubts. Among other subjects which fall under his notice, is the case of *Spiritual Gifts* and *Miraculous Powers*. The apostle addresses the Corinthians as persons who were familiar with these extraordinary powers, who understood their several distinctions, who severally possessed them, who disputed with each other concerning their relative value and precedence, and who were guilty of great indecorum in the exercise of their respective gifts in their public assemblies. To correct these irregularities, the apostle enters into a brief detail of the nature and use of these extraordinary and supernatural gifts; he asserts, that though all are not equally splendid, yet that all are equally necessary in their place; and that Christian benevolence is worth them all: he then reproves the indecent perversion and misapplication of their gifts in their religious assem-

should take precedence in the church. The very proposal of such a question proves, that there is

Ch. XII. Ver. 1.

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blies, and gives directions how the gift of tongues, and the gift of prophecy, which, though less showy, was more useful, might be most effectually exercised for the edification of the church. All this is well, supposing these gifts to have existed, these controversies to have risen, and these irregularities to have prevailed in the Corinthian church. But if the contrary were true, if there were no holy spirit, no gift of tongues, no spirit of prophecy, no miraculous powers, no mutual jealousy about precedence, no affectation of display, nothing but what existed in the apostle's own imagination, the only alternative is, that the apostle was out of his mind; and his letter, instead of being received with the deference due to his apostolic authority, would have been rejected with contempt as the ravings of a lunatic. But of insanity the apostle was never suspected; with insanity he was never charged except by Festus, while he was making his noble defence before Agrippa, which charge the apostle at the time so gracefully repelled. In the letter to the Corinthians, there is not the slightest trace of insanity. Many facts are stated, many difficult questions are discussed, much advice is given, much reproof is administered, but all in the spirit of candour, of delicacy, of kindness, and the most consummate wisdom. And as such it was received by the Corinthians to whom it was addressed. Of this we have unquestionable information. For the apostle having found it advisable to defer his visit for a year, writes a second letter to the Corinthians to apologize for his delay, and to express the high satisfaction which he felt at the intelligence which he had received from Titus, (whom he had sent to Corinth to make inquiries,) of the respect which they had shown to his first letter, of the effect which it had produced, and the reformation which they had made in consequence of his animadversions and advice.

Hence it follows most evidently and incontestably, that the apostle was IN HIS RIGHT MIND, and, therefore, that these supernatural GIFTS AND POWERS DID EXIST in the Corinthian church, and by parity of reason in other primitive churches; and, therefore, that the Christian religion, being thus attested and supported by miracles, must be a REVELATION FROM GOD.

It seems extraordinary, and at first view very improbable, that *miraculous powers* should be imparted which might be misapplied. But in fact, it is no greater objection to the wisdom of the divine government, than that *natural powers*, which are

Ch. XII. Ver. 1. something amiss in your proceedings, and that you lie under an error upon this subject. And I now write to rectify your judgement and your conduct with regard to your false notions of pre-eminence, and the exercise of your spiritual gifts.

2. *Ye know, that*[1] *when ye were heathen, ye were carried away to dumb idols, even as ye were led.*

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equally the gift of God, should be susceptible of misapplication. And certainly, if these powers had not been permanently resident in the persons to whom they were given, and if they had not been as much under the direction of the will, and therefore as liable to misapplication, as any other natural powers, we should have wanted that species of evidence of the existence of these supernatural powers which we now possess, and which places them upon a higher and stronger ground of certainty, than any other fact recorded in history. So that, in truth, we may fairly boast, that the direct evidence is fully equal to the antecedent improbability, and that it is much more incredible that the testimony should be false, than that the doctrine should be true.

That the apostle is here treating of supernatural gifts and powers communicated to the members of the Corinthian church, and not of mere natural, or naturally acquired qualities, as Eichorn, Paulus, and other anti-supernaturalists maintain, seems to me quite clear from the language which the apostle uses, and essential to the validity of his argument. At the same time, I am willing to allow in the first place that the exercise of the greater part of these gifts was by no means *frequent*, and secondly, that it was never *voluntary* excepting in the case of the gift or interpretation of tongues, or in the choice of time of speaking by the prophets. The "word of wisdom" and the "word of knowledge," whatever is meant by those expressions, were probably permanent gifts. But no one can suppose that the power of working miracles, and healing diseases, was permanent and voluntary. This was a privilege peculiar to him to whom the spirit was given without measure. The apostles themselves did not possess it. It was a power never exercised but under an immediate impulse, and that was very rare.

[1] *Ye know, that when*, &c.] οιδατε ὁτι οτε. This reading is supported by the best authorities, marked as probable, though

In your unconverted state, you were all worshipers of idols; you bowed down to senseless inactive blocks of gold and silver, or of wood and stone, just as you were led by education, custom, or example. This was a truly carnal state, in which your conceptions were generally erroneous, and your practice proportionally corrupt. Ch. XII. Ver. 2.

Wherefore, I announce to you, that no man speaking by the spirit[2] *of God, pronounceth Jesus accursed, and* that *no man can say*[3], *Jesus* is *Lord, but by the holy spirit.* 3.

Be assured that all unconverted persons, whether heathen or Jews, who deny the divine authority of Christ, and who revile his person and character, are totally destitute of the holy spirit, whatever pretensions any of them may make to it; they are in a carnal and unholy state; they are in no sense spiritual persons, because they reject that holy prophet, who confirmed his mission by miraculous powers, and was declared to be the son of God, by the powerful operation of the spirit in raising him from the dead.

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not received into the text by Griesbach, but not adopted by any translator. To complete the construction, ητε must be understood after απαγομενοι, ye were carried away.

[2] *Speaking by the spirit.*] Mr. Locke supposes an allusion to the Jews, who made pretensions to the holy spirit, and particularly to the Jewish false apostle. But it does not appear that he denied Jesus to be the Christ.

[3] *Can say Jesus is Lord.*] "can say publickly, constantly, and sincerely." Newcome.—"All that own our Lord Jesus Christ, and believe in him, can do it upon no other ground but revelation, coming from the spirit of God." Locke.

Ch. XII. Ver. 3. But on the contrary; whoever calls Jesus his Lord, whoever professes faith in him as his teacher, and obedience to him as his master, is truly spiritual; because, this faith is founded upon the operation of the holy spirit, or, in other words, upon the exertion of the divine energy in the miracles which Jesus wrought, in his resurrection from the grave, in the effusion of the holy spirit upon the apostles, and in the communication of miraculous gifts and powers to believers. In this most important sense, you are all spiritual persons, and no one has any precedence over another.

2. All supernatural gifts are derived from the same source, and in this view all who participate of them are of equal rank, ver. 4—6.

4. *Now there are* various *distributions of gifts, but the spirit* is *the same.*

Some have the gift of wisdom, some the gift of knowledge, and some the gift of prophecy; but inspiration is the same, it is the same powerful energy, which communicates one species or degree of illumination, or, of power, to one person, and another to another.

5. *And there are* various *distributions of offices, but the Lord* is *the same.*

In the church of Christ, there are various orders of ministers; some are appointed to be apostles, some evangelists, some prophets, others teachers, and the like; but there is one master only to whom all profess subjection, even Christ, whose servants

they are, from whom they receive their respective commissions, whose work they perform, and to whom alone they are accountable. Ch. XII. Ver. 5.

And there are various *distributions of miraculous operations, but God, who worketh all* in *all, is the same.* 6.

One performs miracles of one kind, while another performs miracles of a different sort: but whatever supernatural powers any may possess and exercise, they derive all from one and the same God; who, by his immediate impulse, incites them to the performance of the miracle, and by his omnipotent energy produces the effect. So that, all being in this respect passive instruments in the hands of God, none has a right to value himself above another.

3. The apostle enumerates in detail the various gifts of the holy spirit, which have been communicated to individuals for the general advantage of the church, ver. 7—11.

But this manifestation of the spirit is given to every one for the benefit of all[1]. 7.

Whatever spiritual gift any Christian may possess, however splendid, or however useful, it was communicated to him, not for his own sake, that he might be the object of wonder and applause, but solely for the benefit of the church, for the promulgation of Christian truth, and the establishment of the Christian cause.

[1] *For the benefit* of all.] "Not for his private advantage or honour, but for the good and advantage of the church." Locke. See Rom. xii. 3—8.

Ch. XII. Ver. 8. *For to one is given by the spirit, the word of wisdom*[1].

For the accomplishment of this important design, to one is communicated by divine inspiration a complete and comprehensive view of the Christian doctrine, which is the sublimest wisdom.

To another, the word of knowledge according to the same spirit.

Extraordinary sagacity to understand, and skill to interpret the scriptures[2].

9. *To another, faith by the same spirit.*

That firm confidence in the truth[3] and import-

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[1] *The word of wisdom.*] In the explanation of these terms, I have chiefly followed Chandler and Benson. But the truth is, that though the existence of these supernatural gifts and powers is unquestionable, and the terms by which they are distinguished were familiar, and no doubt perfectly intelligible, to the Corinthians, the nature of them cannot now be distinctly ascertained. "The doctrine of the gospel (says Mr. Locke) is more than once, in the beginning of this epistle, called the wisdom of God." See upon the subject of Miraculous Gifts and Powers, Lord Barrington's *Miscellanea Sacra*, Essay i. 11. Benson's Propagat. of Christ. vol. i. and Chandler on Joel, p. 133, &c. "Some suppose that this gift, the word of wisdom, was peculiar to the apostles, according to the supposed corresponding enumeration, ver. 28: compare ch. ii. 7, 10; Eph. iii. 10; 2 Pet. iii. 15." Newcome.

[2] *Interpret the scriptures.*] This is the sense in which the word of knowledge is explained by Mr. Locke and Bishop Pearce. Others understand it of an inferior degree of the word of wisdom. "Perhaps (says Archbishop Newcome) the knowledge of those Christian doctrines which were most opposite to Jewish prejudices."

[3] *Confidence in the truth.*] This is the sense which Dr. Doddridge gives the word in his paraphrase, though he explains it otherwise in the notes. To understand this gift, as the generality of interpreters do, of what is called miraculous faith, or supernatural assurance that a miracle was to be wrought, appears to me, to confound it with the two following distributions. But upon a subject so obscure, it is right not to be confident.

ance of the Christian religion, and in the protection of divine providence, that will lead him with undaunted spirit to exert every faculty, to brave all opposition, and to endure all sufferings in the propagation of Christian truth. Ch. XII. Ver. 9.

And to another, gifts of healing by the same spirit. 10.
And to another, the power[4] *of working miracles.*
And to another, prophecy.

Or, the power of predicting occasionally future events, and a capacity of instructing[5] and edifying a Christian assembly by grave and useful discourse and prayer.

And to another, the power of *discerning* the gifts *of the spirit*[6].

Of distinguishing those who were really inspired from those who made false pretences to inspiration.

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[4] *Power*, &c.] ενεργεια is the reading of some good copies, and adopted by Bishop Pearce: ενεργηματα expresses the effect rather than the operative.

[5] *Capacity*, &c.] It is in this latter sense that the apostle chiefly uses the word prophecy in this portion of the epistle. See ch. xiv. 3, 24, 29, 30. "*The power of teaching*, and showing things before unknown." Pearce.

[6] *Discerning* the gifts *of the spirit.*] διακρισεις πνευματων· so Bishop Pearce translates; with whom, in sense, Archbishop Newcome agrees, who explains this gift as "distinguishing such as were divinely inspired from pretenders to inspiration. See Heb. iv. 12."—"The discerning by what spirit men did any extraordinary operation." Locke.—"*Discerning of spirits*, so as authoritatively to determine by what impulse any one speaks, who pretends to inspiration." Doddridge, and so far well. But he adds, what is less probable, though approved by many, "or, to be capable of pronouncing on the sincerity of men's professions, or their fitness for any public work." The power of discerning the heart was never claimed by the apostles; and belongeth only to Him who searcheth the heart and who knoweth the thoughts.

Ch. XII. Ver. 10. *And to another*, different *kinds of languages*. The power of speaking languages which they had never learned.

And to another, the interpretation of languages[1]. A power of translating into the common tongue, a discourse delivered in a foreign language.

11. *But that one and the same spirit worketh* in you[2] *all these* operations *according to his pleasure*[3], *distributing to every man his proper* gifts[4]. All these gifts and powers, distributed as they

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[1] *Interpretation of languages.*] "This was sometimes a distinct gift, that different persons might receive different spiritual endowments; and sometimes it was joined with the gift of tongues; ch. xiv. 5, 13. The end of using unknown tongues was the instruction of foreign converts who were present; and the end of interpreting them was the instruction of natives, who of course formed the mass of the assembly." Newcome. It is possible that the two gifts might subsist together; it is even difficult to conceive how the gift of tongues could exist without that of interpretation; but the texts appealed to by the learned prelate do not prove it, as will appear hereafter.

[2] *Worketh* in you.] Gr. παντα ταυτα ενεργει το—πνευμα, "*all these worketh that one and the same spirit.*" *Omnia autem hæc* dona *largitur unus idemque Spiritus*; i. e. *Deus. Sic vertenda sunt hæc verba.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *According to his pleasure.*] καθως βουλεται. A memorable text with those who maintain the personality of the Spirit; but of no real value in the controversy. *Qui ex verbis istis colligunt Spiritum Sanctum personam esse divinam, haud considerant non ex verbis istis colligendam esse Spiritûs Sancti naturam, sed ex Spiritûs Sancti natura verborum istorum intellectum petendum esse. Quoties per prosopopœiam loquimur, toties voluntatem tribuere possumus iis quæ personæ non sunt.*" Slichtingius. Nothing is more common than the personification of abstract qualities.

[4] *His proper* gifts.] Bishop Pearce; who reads ιδια for ιδια upon the authority of St. Augustin and Jerome; but he doubts whether ιδια be not a marginal gloss which has slipped into the text. "Ιδια *deest in nonnullis, sed ad sensum recte pertinet, valet* seorsim, specialiter." Rosenmuller.

are to different persons in different degrees, are communicated by the supreme being according to his own good pleasure, and sometimes even to those who might seem least worthy of them, and who are disposed to make an improper use of them. But all is ordered with consummate wisdom, and contrived in the best manner to propagate and establish the Christian cause. Ch. XII. Ver. 11.

It is proper to observe, that the nature of the gifts and powers, which the apostle here enumerates, cannot at this distance of time be perfectly ascertained. The terms he uses were familiar to the Corinthians, to whom he writes, and the existence of the miraculous powers to which he alludes, was undisputed.

It may also be remarked, that the apostle in this passage applies personal terms and characters to the holy spirit. So likewise did our Lord, when discoursing upon those miraculous gifts and powers, which his apostles should receive. But we are not to infer from this language of personification, that the holy spirit is an intelligent agent, distinct from God himself. It is the power of God personified. And when the apostle saith, that the holy spirit distributes his gifts as he will, he no more intends to assert the personality of the holy spirit, than our Lord means to assert the personality of the wind, when he says, "The wind bloweth where it willeth." John iii. 8. Or the apostle the personal existence of charity, when he says, "Charity hopeth all

Ch. XII. Ver. 11. things," 1 Cor. xiii. 7. If we would exercise the same sound discretion in interpreting the sacred writers, which we feel to be necessary in forming a judgement of profane authors, we should enter with more facility into their sense and spirit, we should be less liable to fall into those gross misconceptions, which result from a slavish adherence to the literal meaning of words, and should derive unspeakably more satisfaction and improvement from the perusal of their invaluable writings.

II.

The apostle argues that all the gifts of the spirit without exception, the most unostentatious equally with the most splendid, were in their respective places alike essential to the harmony and perfection of the Christian church.

1. He compares the church of Christ, consisting of many members endued with various spiritual gifts and powers, to the human body, made up of various parts and limbs, each having its proper office, and all combining to constitute one complete whole, ver. 12—14.

12. *For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that body* [1], *though many, constitute* but *one body, so also* is *Christ.*

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[1] *Of that body.*] The received text reads, τȣ σωματος τȣ ἑνος, "of that *one* body;" but τȣ ἑνος is omitted in the best and most ancient copies, and is evidently redundant. See Pearce and Griesbach.

The Christian church is a mystical body, which, like the natural body, consists of various parts, of which Christ is the head; and all who profess the Christian doctrine are members of this body, each fixed in its proper place, and to each is assigned its peculiar office. Ch. XII. Ver. 12.

This is a similitude, to which the apostle Paul is particularly partial, and the allusions to it in his writings are so frequent, so familiar, and so peculiar to himself, that they constitute no contemptible internal evidence of the genuineness of his epistles.

For, indeed[2], *through one spirit, we have all been baptized into one body, whether* we be *Jews or Greeks, whether* we be *slaves or free, and we have all been made to drink into one spirit*[3]. 13. 14.

And indeed the body is not one member, but many.

Convinced of the truth of the Christian religion by the display of miraculous operations in the teachers of it, we have by baptism been united to Christ,

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[2] *For, indeed.*] και γαρ. See Macknight, who renders the same words by "*since therefore*," in the succeeding verse, which he understands as the foundation of an inference in the two verses which follow.

[3] *We have been made to drink.*] εις εν πνευμα εποτισθημεν. Bishop Pearce drops the preposition εις, and renders εποτισθημεν, *we have been filled with.* See ch. iii. 2. The word εις is omitted in the Cambridge and some other manuscripts. The apostle's idea seems to be this: Through the operations of the spirit, that is, the supernatural powers of the first teachers of Christianity, we were originally converted to the truth. By the profession of baptism we become members of the visible church, Christ's mystical body; and by the infusion of the holy spirit we are become living members, every one in our respective station, like the living members of the natural body.

Ch. XII. Ver. 14. as parts of his mystical body; and whatever civil or religious distinctions may have previously subsisted between any of us, they are all absorbed in our common profession of the gospel, and in our joint participation of its inestimable blessings. And from Christ as the head of the body, and the source of vital influence, we are all in our respective stations supplied with the holy spirit, whether in his enlightening, purifying, or active energies. Thus the Christian church may fitly be compared to the human body, the various parts of which are supplied with vital energy by their connexion with the head. And like the body, it is made up of many members.

2. Pursuing this favourite allegory, the apostle remarks upon the absurdity of the inferior members, and senses, repining at the place and office assigned them in the general system, and upon the great inconvenience which would accrue, if all occupied the superior stations, ver. 15—20.

15. *If the foot should say, Because I am not the hand, I am no* part of *the body, it does not there-*
16 *fore cease to be* a part *of the body*[1]. *And if the ear should say, Because I am not the eye, I am no part of the body, it does not therefore cease to be* a
17. part *of the body. If the whole body* were *eye,*

[1] *It does not therefore cease,* &c.] Bishop Pearce, Bowyer, and others, observe, that an interrogation is not necessary. Pearce's translation is, "it doth not, therefore, not belong to the body." Mr. Wakefield translates, "it is by no means on this account not of the body."

where would be *the hearing? if the whole* were *hearing, where* would be *the* sense of *smell? But now God has placed the members, every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. But if all the members were one, where* would *the body* be? *Whereas, now,* though *the parts are many, the body is one.* Ch. XII. Ver. 18. 19. 20.

The senses and the limbs are, by the wisdom and power of God, arranged with such perfect symmetry in the human body, as to form one complete and harmonious system, in which nothing is wanting, and nothing redundant.

3. All the parts are equally essential to the beauty and perfection of the whole; and where there is an apparent defect, either of vigour or of beauty, compensation is commonly made by artificial ornament and superior usefulness, ver. 21—26.

The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you. 21.

The eye and the head have no right to quarrel with the hands and the feet, and to assume a character of superiority and independence. For these parts, though inferior and less beautiful, are absolutely necessary to support the upper and the more honourable portions of the system, and particularly to carry into effect the volitions of the intelligent principle.

Nay, those parts of the body which are the most 22.

Ch. XII. *feeble, are nevertheless much more necessary* [1].
Ver. 23. *And as to what we esteem less honourable* parts *of the body, upon these we put more abundant honour, and the least ornamental parts are the most adorned.*
24. *For the ornamental parts need* it *not; but God hath* so *tempered the body, as to impart the most*
25. *honour to that which was most deficient. That there might be no schism in the body, but that the*
26. *members might mutually care for each other. So that if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; and if one be honoured, all the rest share in its joy.*

In this way, beauty and utility are diffused in just proportion through the whole human frame; where one is deficient, the want is generally compensated by a greater abundance of the other, so that the body subsists complete in all its parts and perfections, and the several members constitute one beautiful and harmonious whole; if any part is weak, it is better protected; if any is deficient in beauty, it is graced with external ornament; and upon the balance, no part of the body has any just reason to complain.

4. Similar to this is the state of the Christian church, which is Christ's mystical body; in which different officers are appointed for different pur-

[1] *Much more necessary.*] With Bishop Pearce and others, I join πολλῳ μαλλον to αναγκαια. "are much more necessary to life than the limbs, or eye, or ear, or smelling." Newcome.

poses, all equally necessary, and furnished with their respective gifts and powers suitably to the stations which they are called to occupy, ver. 27—31. Ch. XII. Ver. 26.

Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members of it[2]. 27.

What I have said of the symmetry and order of the natural body, may with strict propriety be applied to the church of Christ, which is his mystical body, and to every individual in the church, as to the several members of this body. All in your respective places are equally essential to the welfare and perfection of the whole.

And God hath placed in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then the gifts of healing, assistants, managers[3], *different kinds of tongues, interpretation of tongues*[4]. 28.

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[2] *And severally members* of it.] μελη εκ μερους. So Wakefield. —"*members in part.*" Pearce; "That is, some of his members. Other Christians being members as well as yourselves." Newcome. Dr. Priestley well observes, that "the whole of this representation furnishes an excellent argument for mutual love and affection. We are all members of the same body, and should therefore feel for each other."

[3] *Assistants, managers.*] αντιλημψεις, κυβερνησεις. In the public version, "*helps, governments.*" Bishop Pearce observes, that he does not understand the expressions, that they occur no where else as descriptive of gifts of the spirit, and he suspects them to have been a marginal gloss, which has slipped into the text. "Helps and governments" are omitted by the apostle in his repetition of the catalogue, ver. 30.

[4] "*Interpretation of tongues.*"] These words, though wanting in the received text and in all MSS., are added in the Syriac and Vulgate Versions; they seem necessary to complete the catalogue, and are admitted into the text by Bishop Pearce. See ver. 30. Griesbach.

Ch. XII. Ver. 28. The Christian community, under the direction of divine providence, is wisely organized and supplied with various officers, who, in their respective stations, are necessary to the symmetry and welfare of the whole.

In the first rank stand the apostles, who derived their commission from Christ himself, and whose office it is to bear witness to his resurrection.

Next in order, though too little esteemed by you, are the prophets, who foretell future events, or, who instruct and edify the church by their inspired discourses.

To them succeed the ordinary teachers, those grave and experienced men, who, in the absence of apostles and prophets, are appointed to conduct religious worship and instruction in Christian societies.

In the next place stand those Christians, who occasionally perform miracles, and likewise those who, in particular cases, are empowered to heal the sick by supernatural means.

After them come assistants and managers, who are employed in superintending the secular affairs of the church, and in providing for the poor. In the last and lowest rank are those gifts, which, though very useful, you are too ready erroneously to regard as of the first importance; the faculty of speaking divers languages, and of interpreting from a foreign language into the native tongue.

By thus placing the gifts which they valued most in the lowest order, the apostle plainly shows his

own judgement of their comparative excellence, and prepares their minds for what he intended further to say upon the subject. Ch. XII. Ver. 28.

Are *all apostles?* are *all prophets?* are *all teachers?* do *all* work *miracles?* *Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak divers languages? do all interpret?* 29. 30.

Does every member of the Christian society possess every gift, and every office? How absurd would such an arrangement be! how inconsistent with decorum! how subversive of utility! Since then there must be a variety of offices, and of gifts corresponding with them, let each be satisfied with his own share, let none be vain of what he possesses, and none murmur that others are honoured with gifts more splendid than his own.

Now ye are contentious[1] *for the greater gifts*[2]; 31.

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[1] *Now ye are contentious.*] "Ye contest one with another, whose particular gift is best." Locke; who remarks, "That this is the apostle's meaning here is plain, in that there was an emulation among them, and a strife for precedency, on account of the several gifts they had, which made them in their assemblies desire to be heard first. This was the fault the apostle was here correcting: and it is not likely he should exhort them all promiscuously to seek the principal and most eminent gifts, at the end of a discourse wherein he had been demonstrating to them, by the example of the human body, that there ought to be diversity of gifts and functions in the church; but, that there ought to be no schism, emulation, or contest among them on account of the exercise of those gifts; that they were all useful in their places; and no member was at all to be the less honoured or valued for the gift he had, though it were not one of the first rank. And in this sense the word ζηλεῦν is taken, ch. xiii. 4. Besides, to what purpose should he exhort them to covet earnestly the best gifts, when the obtaining of this or that gift did not at all lie in their desires or endeavours, the apos-

Ch. XII. Ver. 31. *I will show you, therefore, a far more excellent way.*

I lament to hear, that the church at Corinth, so richly endowed with spiritual gifts, so highly favoured with Christian instructors, so loud in its pretensions to superior knowledge, should debase itself so far as to encourage unbecoming emulation and strife with respect to pre-eminence of spiritual gifts; and that instead of thankfully enjoying and harmoniously exercising these great privileges for the edification of the church and the extension of the gospel, they are engaged in public contests concerning precedence, to the injury of individuals, and the disgrace of the society. But if you will indulge this ambitious spirit, if you will maintain a contest for pre-eminence, I will point out a far more worthy object of your ambition; and a contest far more ho-

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tle having just before told them, ver. 11, that the spirit divides those gifts to every man severally as he will; and those he writ to had their allotment already? He might as reasonably, according to his own doctrine, in this very chapter, bid the foot covet to be the hand, or, the ear to be the eye. St. Paul does not use to cross his own design, nor contradict his own reasoning."

Such are the pertinent and judicious remarks of that great master of reasoning, Mr. Locke, and they are abundantly sufficient to invalidate the conclusion of those who would argue from this text, that the gifts treated of in this chapter, were natural acquisitions and not supernatural endowments. And this explanation of the text is much preferable to that of Bishop Pearce and others, viz. *q. d.* Seek earnestly and pray for the best gifts; which, as Mr. Locke has shown, is quite inconsistent with the apostle's reasoning in the context.

[a] *Greater gifts.*] The received text has χρειττονα *better*, but the Alexandrine and some other MSS. read μειζονα, *greater*; which Bishop Pearce prefers.

nourable and more consistent with your character as disciples of the holy and benevolent Jesus.

III.

The apostle digresses into an eloquent eulogium upon Christian benevolence, which he represents as greatly superior to all spiritual gifts, and as taking the lead of all Christian virtues. Ch. xiii. *throughout.* Ch. XIII.

1. Neither spiritual gifts, nor miraculous powers, nor charitable actions, nor martyrdom itself, are of any value, where true benevolence is wanting, ver. 1—3.

If I speak[1] *in the languages of men and of angels, and have not love, I am* like *sounding brass or the noisy cymbal*[2]. Ver. 1.

The most splendid of these gifts, which you so earnestly covet in its most perfect degree, the power of speaking all languages both in heaven and earth, would be of no use to me, or to any one else, if I were destitute of Christian benevolence. Talking with the greatest fluency in different languages, would be of no more value than the noisy and in-

[1] *If I speak.*] Vide Whitby, who observes, that "what the apostle here enumerates, viz. languages, almsgiving, martyrdom, were objects upon which the Jews set the highest value. One of their Rabbis is said to have understood the language of angels." Let it be observed, that this allusion of the apostle to the mythology of angels, is no proof of the actual existence of any such beings as angels are supposed to be.

[2] *Noisy cymbal.*] Two pieces of hollow brass, struck one against another.

Ch. XIII. sipid clank of two hollow plates of brass grating upon the ear with a harsh and unmeaning sound.

Ver. 2. *And if I possess* the gift of *prophecy* [1] *and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and if I have faith in the highest degree, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.*

To be qualified, by the inspiration of the holy spirit, to be instructors of the church, is a most valuable, though an unostentatious gift. But the possession of this extraordinary power in its utmost extent, a complete discernment of the true meaning of the Old Testament prophecies, of the glorious purpose of God to extend the blessings of the gospel to all mankind, and of the true spirit and design of the Christian revelation, and a capacity of teaching them all in the most impressive manner, with the addition of that miraculous faith which qualifies its possessor to perform works the most extraordinary and stupendous; all these gifts would add nothing to the moral worth or to the happiness of the possessor, if that active benevolence were wanting which would lead him to employ his knowledge and his power for the instruction and benefit of his fellow-creatures.

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[1] *Prophecy:*] *i. e.* teaching by inspiration: compare xiv. 3. Vide Pearce. The gift of prophecy, according to Mr. Locke, is to see in the law and the prophets, all the mysteries contained in them, and to comprehend all the knowledge they teach. Any predictions relating to our Saviour and his doctrine, or to the dispensation of the gospel, which are contained in the Old Testament in types and figures, not understood before the advent of Christ, are called mysteries by the apostle. See Locke *in loc.*

And if I should distribute all I have in alms[2], *and if from a desire of glory*[3] *I should deliver up my own person, but have not love, I am benefited nothing.* Ch. XIII. Ver. 3.

It is motive only which gives character to the action; and the most brilliant actions lose all their value if they are prompted by unworthy motives. So that if I distribute all my property to the poor, to supply them with bread when they are perishing with hunger, and if I even deliver up myself to be imprisoned, and tortured, and slain; yet if vanity, if ostentation, if the love of applause are the moving causes of these actions, without any real philanthropy, without any sympathetic concern for the sufferings of others, or desire to relieve their wants, and without any explicit design to promote knowledge, virtue, and happiness, the action is destitute of all moral worth, and the performance of it will neither meet with approbation, nor be entitled to reward.

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[2] *Distribute in alms.*] "ψωμιζω, to feed by morsels, as a nurse a child." Schleusner. "If I give all my substance to be eaten." Pearce. The bishop suspects τοις πτωχοις, *the poor*, to have been lost out of the original. "Though I give in portions all my substance to nourish others." Wakefield.

[3] *From a desire of glory.*] Καυχησωμαι. This is the reading of the Alexandrine and another manuscript, and of the Coptic and Æthiopic versions: vide Griesbach. This reading is approved by Beza: vide Bowyer. Mr. Wakefield observes, that "burning was a punishment not then in use." Perhaps not; but certainly it was introduced soon afterwards, when Nero illuminated his gardens by burning the Christians in cloths smeared with pitch. The received text reads, *if I give my body to be burned*, καυθησωμαι, which Mr. Wakefield says is no Greek word.

CH. XIII. 2. The apostle enumerates the excellencies of Christian benevolence, ver. 4—7.

VER. 4. *Love is long suffering*[1], *is gentle*[2]; *love envieth*
not[3]; *love is not inconstant*[4], *is not puffed up*;
5. *doth not behave itself with indecorum, seeketh not*
her own interest[5], *is not exasperated*[6], *imputeth*
6. *not evil*[7]; *rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth*
7. *together with truth*[8]; *covereth all things*[9], *believ-*

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[1] *Long suffering.*] μακροθυμει, "with respect to provocations and injuries, without being stirred up to passion and revenge." Newcome.

[2] *Is gentle.*] "of a good, courteous, sweet disposition." Bishop Pearce.

[3] *Envieth not.*] "This love quarrels not," ʙ ζηλοι. Wakefield; who observes in the note, that the cause, ambition, or rivalry, is put for the effect.

[4] *Is not inconstant.*] περπερευεται. Pearce prefers this sense, upon the authority of Marcus Antoninus and Theophylact.—"love is not rash." Wakefield.—"The English translation, *vaunteth not itself*, may be justified by the authority of Hesychius, but then it coincides with what follows." Pearce.

[5] *Own interest.*] "Its own good things only." Pearce.

[6] *Is not exasperated.*] "ʙ παροξυνεται, though angry upon just occasion, never outrageously angry, never in paroxysms of anger." Pearce, Hammond.

[7] *Imputeth not evil.*] ʙ λογιζεται. Doddridge and Wetstein, which may be justified by the sense of the word in Gal. iii. 6.—"it meditateth no mischief." Pearce; which better agrees with the connexion and the sense of the word, ver. 11.—"deviseth not evil." Newcome.

[8] *Rejoiceth not*, &c.] "rejoiceth not over wickedness, but rejoiceth together with righteousness." Bishop Pearce; who observes, that whatever αδικια signifies, αληθεια must signify what is opposite to it, 2 Thess. ii. 12; Luke xvi. 9.—Mr. Wakefield renders it, "nor rejoiceth in falsehood, but rejoiceth in truth."—"rejoiceth not when men debase their own character, and that of religion, by acts of wickedness; but rejoiceth together with those who walk in the truth. Or, rejoiceth with others when truth and righteousness flourish." Newcome.

[9] *Covereth all things.*] So Pearce and Newcome; *i.e.* this

eth all things[10], *hopeth all things*[11], *endureth all things*[12]. Ch. XIII. Ver. 7.

It would have been injustice to the apostle, to have defaced the beauty of this eloquent period by intermixing explanation; and, indeed, his meaning is, in general, sufficiently obvious.

Christian benevolence is long suffering, and does not easily take offence. It is gentle and courteous in its demeanour, not haughty and supercilious. It admits no jealousy or envy against those who possess superior talents, or who are placed in situations of superior acceptance and usefulness. It is not rash and inconstant in its behaviour, sometimes hot, and sometimes cold, but a calm uniform principle of action. It is not elated by any advantages which it

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is the primary signification of στεγω, *q. d.* it concealeth all failings, the faults and infirmities of others. In the public version, "it beareth all things;" but this coincides with the last clause, "it endureth all things." Mr. Wakefield reads στεργει, which seems to have been the reading of the Æthiopic, and supposes χρονον to be understood. He renders the verse, "is contented at all times, full of trust at all times, full of hope at all times, patient at all times."

[10] *Believeth all things.*] "it candidly supposes probity and benevolence in others; believes what tends to alleviate their faults, and assigns the best motives to their actions." Newcome.

[11] *Hopeth all things.*] "as to their improvement in goodness, or the reformation of their vicious lives." Newcome.

[12] *Endureth all things.*] "endures reproaches and wrongs with patience and resignation." Newcome; who very properly adds, "The word παντα, 'all things,' in this verse, must be restrained to reasonable cases," and who thinks with Locke, that "in this description of love, Paul obliquely censures the emulations and contests of the Corinthians, both with respect to their factious leaders and their spiritual endowments." "It hopeth always for the best, and bears all the malice and impertinence of men." Bishop Pearce.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 7. may possess over others. It never violates the rules of decorum, but upon all occasions maintains propriety of behaviour. It is not self-interested, but always active in promoting the good of others. If at any time anger is permitted to rise in the breast, it is never carried to excess, nor suffered to express itself in harsh and intemperate language and unbecoming action. It is not prone to ascribe to others improper motives, which they disavow. It takes no pleasure in seeing or hearing of the bad conduct of others, nor in the mischief which ensues from it; but it delights in the progress of truth and virtue, and sincerely shares in the joy of those who are honoured as the instruments of diffusing these inestimable blessings. It kindly conceals the errors and the faults of others, where public justice does not require that they should be brought to light. Conscious of its own sincerity, it is disposed to place an unsuspicious confidence in that of others. It hopes the best of every one; and endures insults and injuries with meekness and fortitude, and harbours no disposition to revenge.

3. Benevolence is more permanent than miraculous gifts and powers, and will flourish when they have ceased, ver. 8—12.

8. *Love never faileth; whereas, whether* there be *prophetic teachings, they shall come to an end; whether* there be *languages, they shall cease; whether* there be *knowledge, it shall come to an end*[1].

[1] *Knowledge shall come to an end.*] *i.e.* as the apostle ex-

The most splendid and the most useful of those spiritual gifts, in which we are now so apt to pride ourselves, shall cease. The gift of tongues, the gift of prophetic instruction, the gift of understanding the whole plan of the gospel dispensation, and the prophetic scriptures, shall come to an end. But benevolence is a permanent principle, and shall never fail as long as virtuous creatures exist. Ch. XIII. Ver. 8.

For our knowledge is imperfect, and our prophetic teaching is imperfect[2]. *But when perfection cometh*[3], *that which is imperfect shall come to an end.* 9. 10.

In this world, our knowledge of the divine dispensations is limited, both in its extent and in its degree, and our qualifications for teaching must be proportionably contracted. But when we are introduced into that state which the gospel reveals, our knowledge will be perfect, and the power of communicating our ideas to each other will be improved to the highest degree of which our renovated minds will be capable, and in this exalted state imperfection will cease.

While I was a child, I spake like a child, I was 11.

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plains himself, ver. 10, imperfect knowledge shall be superseded by perfect. καταργηθησεται, "come to an end." Pearce.

[2] *Is imperfect.*] Vide Wakefield; Gr. "we know in part, and we prophesy in part." So Newcome and the public version. Bishop Pearce renders it, "we know in part *only*; but this addition takes from the spirit of the sentence without adding to its perspicuity."

[3] *Cometh.*] The received text adds, "*then* that which is in part," &c. But many of the best copies omit the word *then*, which is indeed redundant.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 11. *affected*[1] *like a child, I reasoned like a child: but when I became a man, I put an end to these childish things.*

Here we are in a state of childhood; and that state of knowledge, virtue, usefulness, and happiness, which is promised by the gospel, and for which we are trained up by the discipline of the present life, will be as much superior to the present, as the intellect, the feelings, the employment, and the gratifications of the man, are to those of a child. And as the man of mature age despises and throws aside the manners, the toys, and the habits of the child, so will the renovated and exalted man of the future world disdain and despise the puerile affections and employments of the present preparatory state.

12. *Now we see as through a medium*[2], *indistinctly; but then* we shall see *face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as I am known*[3].

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[1] *I was affected.*] εφρονουν· literally, "I had the mind," *i. e.* "the disposition of a child." Wakefield.

[2] *Through a medium.*] δι' εσοπτρου. I prefer the word *medium* to *glass*, because the apostle probably meant some much less perfect medium, such as horn, or talc, of which windows were made, and by which external objects were discerned with great indistinctness, and confusion: vide the excellent note of Pearce. "*Nos in præsenti videmus, tanquam per lapidem specularem*, h. e. *obscurè*." Schleusner. Dr. Priestley understands it as an allusion to an imperfect mirror, which is indeed the primary sense of εσοπτρον.—"with an obscure representation of objects." Newcome.

[3] *Even as I am known.*] "In the manner that God knows me, and all my thoughts, words, and actions." Pearce. But this surely cannot be the apostle's meaning. He may, perhaps, allude to the notion which the Jews entertained, of the great sagacity and intuitive knowledge of angels. "We shall see one another by direct intuition." Priestley.

In the present state, we view objects through a clouded and imperfect medium, which does not permit us to attain a correct and distinct view of their magnitude, form, colour, or other sensible properties, so that we necessarily form a confused and uncertain conception of them; but hereafter this coarse medium shall be removed, and we shall see objects in their proper form, as clearly and distinctly as we see a friend with whom we are conversing. Thus, at present, our knowledge is imperfect, but hereafter it will be clear, distinct, intuitive, and comprehensive. We shall know each other much more intimately than we do at present, and shall possess far better means of communicating our ideas than we can now conceive. Ch. XIII. Ver. 12.

4. Christian benevolence is a quality superior to all other Christian virtues, ver. 13, xiv. 1.

But now, these three, faith, hope, and love, are permanent[4]*; but the greatest of these is love; follow after* this *love*[5]. 13. Ch. XIV. Ver. 1.

The gift of knowledge, the gift of languages, and the gift of prophetic instruction, are all, as I have just observed, fleeting and evanescent. They will not long remain in the church, and the individuals who now possess them may soon be deprived of them. But there are three virtues of distinguished

[4] *Are permanent.*] "The received text begins with Νυνι, *now*; but this is left out in some MSS. If retained, it signifies *at vero*." Pearce.

[5] *Follow after.*] Mr. Wakefield joins the first clause of the next chapter with the close of this.

Ch. XIV. Ver. 1.

excellence, and of permanent value; which will abide in the church to the end of time, long after spiritual gifts have ceased, and miraculous powers are withdrawn; and which will never be lost to the possessor, but by his own fault. These are, faith, hope, and love; steadfast faith in the truth of divine revelation, delightful hope of the accomplishment of the divine promises, and warm, active, disinterested benevolence. But of these, the last is the chief; it is that which is most honourable to its possessors, most useful to others, and most acceptable to God. Therefore, my Christian friends, whatever differences of opinion may prevail among you with regard to the comparative value of spiritual gifts, upon this subject be of one mind, and let your main and united efforts be directed with unremitting ardour, and persevering zeal, to the attainment of this most useful and most essential virtue. For by this only will it be known that you are the disciples of Jesus, if ye love one another.

IV.

The apostle shows, from a variety of considerations, the great superiority of the gift of prophetic instruction, to that of speaking foreign languages.

1. The apostle exhorts them to prefer the gift of prophetic teaching to all others, ver. 1.

—1. *Moreover, be earnestly desirous*[1] *of spiritual gifts, but especially that ye may prophesy*[2].

[1] *Be earnestly desirous.*] ζηλωτε, "or emulous." Wakefield.

Though I recommend Christian benevolence as the main object of your attention, to the attainment and improvement of which your principal exertions should be habitually directed, I do not mean to disparage those spiritual gifts which God has been pleased to communicate for the promulgation of the Christian religion, and for the establishment of the church in its infant state, and the possession of which is a real honour. Value them highly, and use the proper means of obtaining them[3]; but let it be your Ch. XIV. Ver. 1.

"ambitious of spiritual gifts;" compare xii. 31. Charity is the main object. Pursue charity with eagerness. Spiritual gifts may be innocently, nay, emulously desired, but let emulation be rightly directed; not to the gift of tongues, but of prophecy.—"Ζηλεν," says Locke, "does not signify to *desire*, nor can it be so understood in this place. See ver. 39: the meaning evidently is, that they should not neglect the use of their spiritual gifts. He having by way of reproof told them that they did ζηλεν, emulate spiritual gifts; to avoid offending them, he here takes up the word again, and uses it more than once in a way that approves and advises that they should ζηλεν πνευματικα; whereby, yet, he means no more than that they should not neglect their spiritual gifts; he would have them use them in their assemblies, but yet in such method and order as he directs." Locke.

[2] *Prophesy.*] That is, teaching by inspiration; compare ver. 3, 30; vide also Locke, Pearce, &c. This is universally allowed to be the sense of the word in this place. Pearce and Wakefield translate *teaching*. I prefer *prophesy*, which is more usual, and which expresses, what the apostle certainly included, supernatural instruction, which the word "teach" does not.

[3] *Use the means.*] This seems to be implied by the word ζηλουτε. It seems as if there were some option respecting them, and some means to be used for attaining them. But what, we cannot tell. We know too little, either of the nature of the gifts, of the means of acquiring them, or, of the manner of exercising them. It is sufficient for the establishment of the divine authority of Christianity, that we have ample evidence of their existence. Perhaps, after all, the apostle means only to advise them to be ever prompt to exercise their gifts upon proper occasions, and in a proper manner.

Ch. XIV. Ver. 1. chief concern to obtain the capacity of instructing your fellow Christians in the truths and duties of our holy religion; for this, though one of the least splendid, is nevertheless one of the most useful of all gifts.

2. Prophecy is an instructive gift, but talking in a foreign language is of use to no one, ver. 2—6.

2. *For he who speaketh in a* foreign *language*[1], *speaketh not to men, but to God: for no one understandeth*[2] him, *and he speaketh mysteries to himself* only[3].

A person speaking in a foreign language may understand himself, and may express those truths of the Christian revelation which were formerly unknown, and are therefore called mysteries. And his gratitude for these discoveries may with propriety be addressed to an omniscient God in any language.

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[1] Foreign *language*.] γλωσσῃ, *tongue*. The connexion proves, and all the critics agree, that an unknown tongue is intended.

[2] *Understandeth*.] ακουει. Newcome, who refers to Kypke, *Obs. Sacr.* Mr. Locke observes, "that it was those who had the gift of tongues, who caused the disorder in the church at Corinth, by their forwardness to speak, and striving to be heard first; and this gift is the only one that the apostle restrains and limits."

[3] *To himself* only.] πνευματι. See Wakefield. Some copies read πνευμα, which Pearce prefers; and would render "his mind speaketh mysteries." He observes, that "πνευμα does not here signify the holy spirit, but the spirit that is in man, or his mind." "*In his spirit*: it may be that in his own mind, as he understands himself, he speaks some of the great doctrines of the gospel." Newcome. See ver. 14, 15, where πνευμα and νους are opposed; one signifying a man's understanding himself; the other, his being understood by others.

But to men, who do not understand the language, the discourse, however just and important in itself, can be of no use; and so far as men are concerned, he can only be considered as talking to himself. Ch. XIV. Ver. 2.

Whereas, he who prophesieth, speaketh to others[4], *edification and exhortation and consolation.* 3.

He who is qualified by the spirit to be a Christian teacher, either instructs his fellow Christians in some revealed truth, or exhorts them to the performance of some important duty, or under the troubles of life, and the dangers of their profession, he administers that comfort, which the promises and hopes of Christianity are calculated to afford.

He who speaketh in a foreign language, edifieth himself only; *but he who prophesieth, edifieth the church.* 4.

The best that can be said in favour of speaking in a foreign language is, that the speaker may improve himself, but which, indeed, in the circumstances supposed, is not very probable; whereas, he that teaches by inspiration, instructs, animates, and comforts the whole congregation.

I wish, indeed, that ye all spake in foreign *languages, but rather that ye prophesied; for he who prophesieth is more excellent than he who speaketh in* foreign *tongues, unless there be an interpreter*[5], *that the church may receive edification.* 5.

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[4] *To others.*] Gr. *to men,* "to their edification in faith, to exhortation in duty, and to comfort in distress." Pearce.

[5] *Be an interpreter.*] διερμηνευων η, is the reading of some good MSS. See Griesbach. The apostle could hardly mean, that the man who spoke in unknown language should be his own interpreter. See Pearce.

Ch. XIV. Ver. 5. You are all ambitious of the gift of tongues. I wish you all possessed it; but I much more earnestly wish that you were all qualified, by the gift of the spirit, to communicate instruction to Christian assemblies. For the inspired prophet is far more useful than the person who speaks a foreign language, how excellent soever his doctrine may be, unless there be an interpreter present to explain his meaning to the congregation, that all may be improved by it.

6. *And now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in* foreign *languages, what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you* intelligibly, *either by revelation*[1], *or by knowledge, or by prophecy, or by doctrine.*

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[1] *Either by revelation.*] It is useless to guess, and impossible to ascertain, the distinction between these four different kinds of instruction. To the Corinthians the terms were no doubt familiar. This obscurity is the necessary consequence of epistolary writing, and a presumption in favour of the genuineness of these epistles.

"It is not to be doubted, (says Locke,) but these four distinct terms had each its distinct signification; whether what may be collected from these epistles may sufficiently warrant us to understand them in the following significations, I leave to the judgement of others. 1. ἀποκαλυψις, *revelation*, something revealed by God immediately to the person, vid. ver. 30. 2. γνωσις, *knowledge*, the understanding the mystical and evangelical sense of passages in the Old Testament, relating to our Saviour and the gospel. 3. προφητεια, *prophecy*; an inspired hymn, vid. ver. 26. 4. διδαχη, *doctrine*, any truth of the gospel concerning faith and manners. But whether this or any other precise meaning of these words can be certainly made out now, it is of no great necessity to be over curious; it being enough, for the understanding the sense and argument of the apostle here, to know that these terms stand for some intelligible discourse, tending to the edification of the church, though of what kind each of them was in particular, we know not."

Whatever I may have to communicate can be of no use to you, if I speak in a language which you do not understand. Ch. XIV. Ver. 6.

3. The apostle illustrates his observations by a similitude taken from instruments of music, ver. 7—9.

In like manner inanimate things which give sound, whether pipe or harp, unless they give a distinction of notes, how shall it be known what melody *is piped or harped? Moreover, if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself for battle?* 7. 8.

The use of musical instruments is, to excite the emotions of joy, or grief, or military ardour, or some other mechanical feeling; but in order to this, the performance must not be a confusion of sounds without any meaning, but the different melodies must be adapted to the different feelings and passions they are intended to rouse.

So, likewise, ye who speak *with tongues*[4], *unless ye utter an intelligible sound, how can your speech be understood, for ye will be talking to the wind?* 9.

If you continue talking in a foreign language, you may as well talk to the winds, for no one can understand you.

4. As inhabitants of different countries cannot un-

[4] *Ye* who speak *with tongues.*] This is the turn Mr. Wakefield gives to ὑμεις δια γλωσσης, which, saith he, "seems to have escaped all my predecessors, whether critics, translators, or interpreters." He confirms it by referring to Rom. ii. 27.

Ch. XIV. Ver. 9. derstand each other, till they have acquired a knowledge of each other's language, so the members of Christian societies cannot edify each other, while they continue to speak in unknown languages, ver. 10—13.

10. *There are I know not how many kinds of languages*[1] *in the world, and no* nation *is without a*
11. *language. But, unless I know the force of the language, I shall be to him who speaketh a barbarian, and he who speaketh* will *be a barbarian to me*[2]. *So likewise* will *ye*[3].

If we are strangers to each other's language, we must be barbarians to each other; the most polished language will sound like an unintelligible jargon. We can hold no conversation with each other, and can maintain no social intercourse. If we would be of any use to each other, we must first learn the same language. So likewise it will happen to you, if you persist in the senseless practice of uttering effusions in a foreign language; your mutual intercourse will be unmeaning and unprofitable.

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[1] *I know not how many kinds of languages.*] So Wakefield and Newcome; τοσαυτα, ει τυχοι, γενη φωνων, or, "there is a certain number of languages." Newcome.—"as many kinds of languages *as nations*." Pearce; who, with the Alexandrine and other copies, leaves out αυτων in the next clause, where he supplies εθνος, "no nation is without a language."

[2] *A barbarian to me.*] "*Barbarus hic ego sum, quia non intelligor ulli.*" Ovid. Trist. v. 10.

[3] *So likewise* will *ye.*] "*Quidam hæc connectunt cum præcedentibus, ut sit,* Ita et vos; sic vobis etiam eveniet." Rosenmuller. Bishop Pearce in his paraphrase adopts the same punctuation: "and the very same thing will happen to you; it will be just your case."

Since you are emulous of spiritual gifts[4], *seek that ye may excell to the edification of the church.* Ch. XIV. Ver. 12.

If you will contend for superiority, let the contest be, who shall exercise his spiritual gift so that the congregation of believers when assembled for divine worship may be most effectually edified.

Therefore, let him who speaketh[5] *in a foreign language, so pray, as that* some one *may interpret*[6]. 13.

To speak plainly, let no one pray at all in the Christian assembly in a foreign language, unless some one is present who may interpret the prayer, so that the congregation may join in it, and be edified by it.

5. Whatever be the intrinsic excellence of the offices performed, they can be of no use to an audience who cannot understand the language, ver. 14—17.

For if I pray in a foreign *language, I pray indeed myself*[7], *but my meaning is unprofitable*[8]. 14.

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[4] *Spiritual gifts.*] Gr. πνευματα, spirits, "*abstracto posito pro concreto.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *Speaketh.*] ὁ λαλων, "*who prayeth.* That this is the apostle's meaning, is evident from the following clause." Macknight.

[6] *That* some one *may interpret.*] προσευχεσθω ινα διερμηνευῃ, supply τις. Not pray to God that he may have the gift of interpretation; but let him pray at such times and in such a manner that some one present may interpret his prayer. See Pearce, Wakefield, and Macknight. Hence it appears, that primitive Christians when assembled together united in social prayer; and that one person led the devotions as the organ of the congregation.

[7] *I pray indeed myself.*] το πνευμα μου προσευχεται, "my

Ch. XIV. Ver. 14. I may be very earnest, and may offer an excellent prayer; but if I use an unknown tongue, as my meaning is not understood, my prayer can be of no service to those who hear me.

15. *What then is* to be done[1]? *I will pray with my mind, and I will pray so as to be understood; I will sing with my mind, and I will sing so as to*
16. *be understood*[2]. *Otherwise, if thou givest thanks with* thy *mind* only[3], *how shall the unlearned*

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mind prayeth." Pearce. Compare ver. 2: πνευμα is the same as נפש, a person's self. "Thou wilt not leave my soul, *i. e.* me, in hell." Ps. xvi. 10. "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit, *i. e.* with thee." 2 Tim. iv. 22.

[a] *My meaning is unprofitable.*] ὁ νους μου ακαρπος. Pearce and Locke both observe the great difficulty of this passage, which, indeed, consists wholly in the peculiar sense in which the apostle uses the words πνευμα and νους. "To solve this difficulty," says Bishop Pearce, "I observe, first, that St. Paul himself in ver. 19 explains λαλειν τῳ νοι, by ἱνα αλλους κατηχησω, so that the sense of νους seems to be that understanding which the hearer has of what is said. I observe, secondly, that πνευμα and νους have a sense opposite the one to the other, so that πνευμα must signify a man's own mind; *i. e.* his own understanding of what he himself speaks." Mr. Locke has given the same interpretation, which is no doubt the true one, and which makes the apostle's meaning both intelligible and pertinent.

[1] To be done.] τι ουν εστι; sc. πρακτεον· "*quid igitur est quod faciendum sit?*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *So as to be understood.*] So Bishop Pearce; τῳ νοι, with the understanding.—"I will pray with meaning." Archbishop Newcome; not so intelligible as the version of Pearce. See note [b]. "*Operam dabo ut non solum animo et mente, sed etiam ita ut ab aliis intelligar preces fundam.*" Rosenmuller. Mr. Locke seems to mistake the meaning of the word πνευμα, which he explains, "I will, when moved by the spirit, pray, &c." In a note, he observes, that "as in their public prayers, one prayed and the others held their peace, so it was in their singing, at least in that singing which was of extempore hymns by the impulse of the spirit."

[3] Thy *mind* only.] "If thou bless God to thyself only." Wakefield. The rest of the verse is his translation.

hearer[4] *say, Amen*[5]*, after thy thanksgiving, when he understandeth not what thou art saying? For thou, indeed, givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.* Ch. XIV. Ver. 17.

It is plain, that the apostle means to reprove the absurd and childish abuse which some of the Corinthians made of the gift of tongues, by attempting to conduct public worship in the church in a foreign language, and several of them talking at once. They were no doubt influenced by the most puerile vanity; and it can hardly be supposed that a service so conducted, could be edifying either to the performer himself or to any one else. But the apostle, who was desirous of convincing them of the folly of this practice, and inducing them to lay it aside, uses the most gentle language, and makes the most charitable supposition. *q. d.* Let your discourses, your prayers, your thanksgiving, be ever so excellent, ever so instructive, ever so edifying to yourselves, or ever so acceptable to God; yet in a Christian assembly, if they are clothed in a foreign language, they are ill-timed and ill-judged; for as none but yourselves can understand the language, none but yourselves can be edified thereby, and the time of your fellow-

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[4] *Unlearned* hearer.] ὁ ἀναπληρων τον τοπον τϑ ἰδιωτου, "he who filleth the place of the unlearned." Pearce and Newcome. "The place of the private person." Macknight.

[5] *Say, Amen.*] "The apostle's question implies, that it was the custom in the Christian church from the beginning, for all the people, in imitation of the ancient worship, to signify their assent to the public prayers, by saying Amen at the conclusion of them." See Deut. xxvii. 15; 1 Esdras, ix. 7; Neh. viii. 6. Macknight.

Ch. XIV. Ver. 17. worshipers is lost, while you occupy the interval which ought to be left for the prophets, who are divinely commissioned to speak in the common language those discourses which are calculated to instruct, console, and edify the assembled congregation.

6. The apostle declares, that as to himself, however he might excell in speaking foreign languages, he would much rather utter a few sentences which were intelligible and useful, than deliver the most eloquent harangue in an unknown tongue, ver. 18, 19.

18. *I give thanks to God*[1], *speaking in a greater*
19. *number of languages than any of you. But in the congregation, I would rather speak five sentences*[2] *so as to be understood, that I may instruct others also, than ten thousand sentences in a* foreign *language*[3].

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[1] *I give thanks to God.*] *q. d.* "I conduct the worship of God in a greater variety of languages than any of you." The apostle does not thank God that he is a better linguist than any of the Corinthians. But *giving thanks* is used in the sense in which it occurs in the two preceding verses for Christian worship. See Pearce, Macknight, and Newcome. μᾶ is omitted after Θεῷ in the Alexandrine and other MSS., and the Syriac, Æthiopic, and Coptic versions.

[2] *Sentences.*] λογους. Macknight. μυριους signifies any number indefinitely great, like the Latin *sexcenti.*—*So as to be understood.* For διατι νους μᾶ, Bishop Pearce, with the Alexandrine, Clermont, and many other copies and versions, reads εν νοϊ μᾶ, so as to be understood. Griesbach also approves this reading.

[3] *In a foreign language.*] "Had the most able and zealous protestant divine, (says Dr. Doddridge,) in his reflections upon this passage, endeavoured to expose the absurdity of praying in

Ch. XIV. Ver. 19.

As the apostle of the Gentiles, I have been favoured with the gift of tongues in a very high degree; and in the various places in which I introduce the gospel, I speak in the language of the country in which my mission is exercised; so that there is none of you, who has been accustomed to conduct Christian worship in a greater variety of languages than myself. But upon this gift I lay little stress, any further than as it is the means of promulgating the gospel in foreign countries: but as to the mere reputation of speaking in a foreign language, I profess that I would rather speak five sentences which might be intelligible and useful to those that heard me, than deliver the most laboured and eloquent harangue to an audience that could not comprehend my meaning, or be instructed by my discourse.

7. The apostle intimates, that it was a very childish thing to amuse themselves with talking a language which none of their hearers could understand, ver. 20.

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an unknown tongue as practised in the church of Rome, it is difficult to imagine what he could have written more fully to the purpose than the apostle hath here done; and when it is considered how perversely the Papists retain the usage of such prayers, it will seem no wonder that they should keep the scriptures in an unknown tongue too." The pious writer adds, as a warning to those who are called to *minister in public*, "There is, perhaps, a manner of speaking in an unknown tongue, even when the language of our own country is used, a height of composition, an abstruseness of thought, an obscurity of phrase, which common Christians cannot understand."

Ch. XIV. Ver. 20. *Brethren, be not children in understanding; yet in evil*[1] *be even babes*[2], *but in understanding be perfect men.*

Do not, by a childish use of the gift of tongues, give occasion to reflections upon your understanding. In every thing malicious or immoral, be ignorant and innocent as babes; but let your general conduct be manly and wise, such as may attract the esteem and respect of all who know you.

8. The gift of tongues being intended for the conversion of unbelievers, is not to be used in a Christian assembly, but that of prophecy is intended to edify the church, ver. 21, 22.

21. *It is written in the law*[3] (Isa. xxviii. 11), *Surely with a foreign language*[4] *and with foreign lips*

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[1] *In evil.*] κακια, "not malice, but those evil dispositions which are contrary to the gentleness and innocence of children; particularly envy, anger, strife." Macknight.

[2] *Be even babes.*] So Wakefield; νηπιαζετε, "in evil be infants." Pearce. The apostle rises in his language; and the same word should not be used in both clauses of the sentence.

[3] *In the law.*] "The books of sacred scripture which we now call the Old Testament, are in the writings of the New Testament sometimes called the law, the prophets, and the psalms; as Luke xxiv. 44; sometimes the law and the prophets, as Acts xxiv. 14; and sometimes they are all comprehended under this one name, the *law*, as here; for the passage cited is Isa. xxviii. 11." Locke. See Rom. ii. 12, 25; and Macknight's notes.

[4] *With a foreign language.*] This passage, as cited by the apostle, from Isaiah xxviii. 11, does not agree entirely either with the Hebrew or the LXX. It is translated by Bishop Lowth, "Yea, verily, with a stammering lip, and a strange tongue, he shall speak unto this people."

Mr. Dodson makes some ingenious conjectural emendations of the text, and having adopted the last clause (which he supposes to have been lost from the original) upon the authority

will I speak to this people, nor even then will they hearken to me, saith the Lord. So that foreign languages are for a sign, not so much[5] *to believers as to unbelievers; whereas, prophecy is not so much for unbelievers as for believers.* Ch. XIV. Ver. 22.

God declares by the prophet Isaiah, that he will address his disobedient people by prophets and messengers, who should speak to them in foreign and unknown languages; the consequence of which would be, that not being generally understood, their teaching and admonitions would excite little attention, and their mission would be fruitless. From this prophecy, therefore, if you will receive it as such, you may learn that the gift of tongues is com-

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of the apostle, he translates the passage thus: "Yea, verily, with foreign lips and strange tongues I will speak to this people, and even then they will not hear me, saith Jehovah."

Bishop Lowth conceives that the text is a reply to the taunting language of the unbelieving Israelites in the preceding verses, and that it foretells that they should be carried into captivity by a nation whose language they would not understand, and which, like children, they would be obliged to learn gradually and with difficulty. It is universally, or at least very generally, allowed, that the passage is cited by the apostle by way of accommodation only, and by no means as a direct prophecy. Dr. Macknight indeed says, that "Isaiah evidently foretells the methods which God in future times would use for converting the unbelieving Jews; and among others, that he would speak to them in foreign languages, that is, in the languages of the nations among which they were dispersed. The passage, therefore, is a prediction of the gift of speaking foreign languages, to be bestowed upon the first preachers of the gospel. From the prophecy thus understood, the apostle's conclusion is clear and pertinent." But as the learned expositor assigns no reason for departing so widely from Bishop Lowth's interpretation, his assertion probably will have little weight.

[5] *Not so much.*] Vide Pearce. Gr. "not to the believers," &c. Wakefield, Newcome, &c.

Ch. XIV. Ver. 22. municated for the purpose of addressing unbelievers only, in order to impart the gospel revelation to every one in his own language; whereas, the gift of prophetic teaching is communicated not so much for the conversion of unbelievers as for the improvement of those who are already converted. The prophets, therefore, ought not to be interrupted in the discharge of their office by the confused, unintelligible jargon of those who for very different purposes were endued with the gift of tongues.

It is observable that the word *law* in this place is used as a general term to express the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures; for the quotation is made from Isa. xxviii. 11. And this appears to be one instance among many, in which the apostle argues more from the sound of the words, than from the true meaning of the text. In the original, the prophet in the name of God threatens, that the Jews for their disobedience shall be oppressed by a people whose language they do not understand: but in the citation the apostle accommodates the words to a sense very different from that which the prophet contemplated, and to which they do not properly apply. All that the apostle can rationally be understood to mean is this, *q. d.* The prophet Isaiah somewhere speaks of God himself as addressing his people in a foreign language without effect; from which we may conclude that foreign languages are only to be used to foreigners who understand them, and who may possibly be converted by being thus

addressed in their native tongue. In a congregation of believers, therefore, it is irregular and inexcusable to interrupt a public teacher by an ostentatious display of unintelligible sounds. Ch. XIV. Ver. 22.

9. The apostle further shows the absurdity of discoursing in an unknown tongue, and the importance of prophetic teaching, from the different effect which they would respectively produce upon an unlearned stranger who might happen to visit their assembly, ver. 23—25.

If, therefore, the whole congregation be assembled together, and all be speaking in foreign languages, and if unbelievers who are unlearned[1] *should come in, will they not say that ye are mad?* 23.

If unlearned unbelievers, who know nothing of the subject of discourse, and who are ignorant of every language but their own, should come into the assembly while you are talking in different languages, none understanding and none hearing, will they not suppose that they are in an assembly of lunatics?

But if all prophesy[2]*, and an unbeliever who is unlearned come in, he is convinced*[3] *by all, he is* 24.

[1] *Unbelievers who are unlearned.*] So Pearce. ιδιωται η απιστοι, *unlearned or unbelievers.* The Vatican leaves out η in this verse, and the Æthiopic version both in this and the succeeding verse; and the sense seems to require these omissions. See Bishop Pearce's note.

[2] *If all prophesy.*] "*nempe unus post alterum.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *He is convinced.*] ελεγχεται, "he is convicted." Newcome. —"he is led by all to conviction." "*He is discovered by all:* what manner of man he is. See John iii. 20. The word προφητεια signifying not only foretelling things to come, but teaching by inspiration, and telling hidden things of a man's heart,

Ch. XIV. Ver. 25. *excited to examination*[1] *by all. The thoughts of his heart*[2] *are made manifest; and so, falling upon his face, he will worship God, reporting that God is indeed in you*[3].

If an unbeliever enter your assembly who understands no language but his native tongue, and if the prophets one after another rise, and by the assistance of the holy spirit declare something that comes home to his heart and conscience, something which proves that they have been made acquainted with actions and thoughts which he had concealed most carefully from the world, the unbeliever will be struck with amazement and contrition: he will acknowledge the God of the Christians to be the only true God. And when he departs he will make it known that you have been indeed favoured with divine inspiration, without which it would have been impossible to have described with such exactness his case and character. Let prophecy, therefore, in

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it is properly said, that if all prophesy, unbelievers who entered the assembly would be discovered and judged of by all." Bishop Pearce.

[1] *Excited to examination.*] ανακρινεται, "he is led by all to an examination of himself." Wakefield.—"he is searched out by all." Newcome.—"he is judged of by all." Bishop Pearce; who refers to his note upon ch. ii. 14.

[2] *The thoughts,* &c.] The words και ουτω, *and so,* at the beginning of this verse, are wanting in the best copies, and are dropped by Griesbach, Pearce, and Newcome. They occur in the next clause, which probably occasioned the mistake.

[3] *God is in you.*] ο Θεος—εν υμιν, "God is in you of a truth." Newcome.—"God is among you." Pearce, Wakefield. Archbishop Newcome observes, "Hence we learn, that the prophets, like our Lord, sometimes spoke to the thoughts of their hearers. See Heb. iv. 12."

your public assemblies, always take precedence of the gift of tongues, and be valued by you in proportion to its superior excellence. Ch. XIV. Ver. 25.

V.

The apostle closes this portion of the epistle with directions for the orderly exercise of spiritual gifts. Ch. xiv. 26—40.

1. They must not all talk together in their public assemblies, but each in his proper turn deliver what he hath to say, ver. 26.

How is it then, brethren? when ye meet together hath every one of you[4] *a psalm? hath he a doctrine? hath he a revelation? hath he a* foreign *language? hath he an interpretation? Let all be done to edification.* 26.

When you assemble for public worship, are you eager to exercise your different gifts? has one something to sing, another something to teach, either in the regular course or by immediate impulse? Hath one something to deliver in a foreign language? and is another ready to interpret what is so delivered? and are you all ready to begin at once, without any regard to order, to decorum, to improvement? What unbecoming conduct is this! how remote from Christian humility and Christian

[4] *Hath every one of you.*] Grotius, Pearce, Newcome, and Wakefield, read these clauses interrogatively. Some copies place αποκαλυψιν εχει before γλωσσαν εχει, which Bishop Pearce prefers, as the more natural and more usual order.

Ch XIV. Ver 26. love! how disgraceful to your profession! Whatever your talents or your gifts may be, remember they are imparted for the general good, and let them always be so exercised that others may improve thereby.

2. He gives particular directions to those who were endued with the gift of speaking foreign languages, ver. 27, 28.

27. *Although*[1] *any man speak in a* foreign *language, let him speak only two or at most three* sentences *at a time*[2], *and separately; and let one interpret*[3],

[1] *Although.*] See Locke. *q. d.* Though you speak in a foreign language, it must be to edification.

[2] *Two or three* sentences *at a time*:] κατα δυο η τρεις. This phrase properly expresses two or three at a time, and not in succession. So, ver. 31, it is said, ye may all prophesy καθ' ἑνα, one by one, or one at a time; and when the apostle means to say that they might speak in succession, he uses a different phraseology: ver. 29, "Προφηται δυο η τρεις λαλειτωσαν, *Let two or three prophets speak.*" The question then is, of whom or what is the apostle speaking? Some have understood him, *q. d.* Let those who possess the gift of tongues speak two or three at a time; and, ανα μερος, *separately*, in separate parts of the room: which, though not agreeable to modern customs, and held by us as indecorous, would not be so esteemed by those who were accustomed to the synagogue service, to the public meetings of the Greeks, or to the mode of worship in the heathen temples; nor is it unusual in the Catholic churches abroad even in the present age. It is also plain, from the animadversions of the apostle in this epistle, that the Corinthians when they assembled for public worship, and even for receiving the Lord's supper, divided themselves into separate parties. It is not, therefore, improbable, that the apostle might indulge those who were desirous of displaying their gift of tongues so far as to allow two or three of them to speak at a time to different parties in different parts of the place of meeting, that so the speakers might be gratified, and this, the least edifying part of the service, might be the sooner over, and more time be left for the pro-

But if there be no interpreter, let the speaker *be silent in the congregation, and let him speak inwardly to God*[4]. Ch. XIV. Ver. 28.

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phetic teachers, who were to speak one by one for the benefit of the whole church. But, even in this case the apostle strictly prohibits those who possessed the gift of tongues to speak at all unless an interpreter were present. This indeed appears to me to be far from being an improbable interpretation, though it is hardly alluded to by any expositor, excepting Grotius, who nevertheless discards it at once. It is, however, I think, greatly preferable to the common interpretation, that two or three might speak in succession; a sense which the apostle's phraseology will hardly admit.

Upon the whole, however, I think that Dr. Macknight's interpretation is the most eligible, and have given it in the exposition. The apostle evidently speaks only of one who possesses the gift of tongues, "εἴτε τις λαλει, *if any one speaks;*" and this one individual he exhorts to speak "κατα δυο ἡ τρεις." This, as Dr. M. observes, cannot mean *persons:* he therefore supplies λογους, *sentences,* and he requires it should be done *separately,* to allow time to the interpreter to explain. The apostle also requires that there should be *one* interpreter, εἰς διερμηνευετω· whereas, if two or three were speaking at a time, two or three interpreters would be wanted. "The rule of the synagogue," says Mr. Locke, was "in the *law,* Let one read, and one interpret; in the *prophets,* Let one read, and two interpret: in *Esther,* Ten may read, and ten interpret. It is not improbable that some such disorder had been introduced into the church of Corinth by the judaizing false apostle, which St. Paul would here put an end to."

This passage is an additional example of the unavoidable obscurity of epistolary writing: the Corinthians would at once and perfectly understand the apostle's meaning, which at this distance of time and place can perhaps never be fully cleared up.

[4] *Let one interpret.*] Qu. Why not interpret the discourse himself? Some reply that it would be trifling and improper to interpret his own discourse; as he might at once have used the language which was most intelligible. If, however, the congregation consisted partly of foreigners and partly of natives, it would not be at all improper for the person speaking to translate his discourse as he delivered it. Dr. Doddridge supposes that there might be a number of persons in the assembly who might use a language unknown to the speaker himself. But

Ch. XIV. Ver. 28. If any one in the congregation possess the gift of tongues, and feel himself inclined to use his gift, I forbid him not: only, let him adhere to the rule of exercising his gift for the edification of his brethren. And I will tell him how it may be done. Let him speak two, or at most three, sentences at a time. Then let the interpreter translate what he has said into language which is intelligible to the hearers. After this, the speaker may add two or three sentences more, which the interpreter may again translate: and in this way a whole discourse may be delivered, by which every person present may be instructed and edified. But if no one be present to interpret what the speaker may utter, I require the person who possesses the gift of tongues to keep silence; and not to interrupt the proceedings, and to disturb the devotions of the assembly, by uttering an unmeaning jargon which nobody can understand. But, if he will use the unknown language, let him use it in mental addresses to the Supreme Being, who knows all languages and reads all hearts.

3. He gives directions to the prophetic teachers, ver. 29—33.

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this would not happen often; and the apostle lays down a general rule. It seems as though the person who spoke in a foreign language could not deliver a discourse in his native tongue: this is possible, but not very probable. It may, however, again be remarked, that what is inextricably obscure to the modern reader must have been perfectly clear and intelligible to the Corinthians; and these obscurities form a presumption in favour, rather than otherwise, of the genuineness of the epistle itself.

* *Inwardly to God.*] Gr. "to himself and to God."

But as to *the* prophetic *teachers, let two or three* Ch. XIV. Ver. 29.
of them *speak, and let the others discern*[1].

Let two or three prophets deliver their exhortations at one meeting, and let the rest sit still and judge whether what is delivered be a real revelation or not; for those prophets who are themselves inspired have the gift of discerning whether the pretensions of others to inspiration be true or false.

But if a revelation be made[2] *to another who is* 30.
sitting by, let the first finish his discourse[3]. *For* 31.
ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be admonished[4]. *And the inspiration*[5] *of the prophets is subject to the prophets;* 32.
for God is not the God *of confusion, but of peace.* 33.

If a revelation occurs to a second teacher while the first is speaking, let him not think himself au-

[1] *Discern*:] διακρινετωσαν. Discernment of spirits was one of the spiritual gifts. "Let them discern whether what is spoken be doctrine suggested by the spirit. Ch. xii. 10." Newcome.—"*As to* the teachers," &c. Pearce.

[2] *A revelation be made.*] Bishop Pearce observes, that the word αποκαλυφθη is here used impersonally: see ch. vi. 16. He also remarks, that what is here called *having a revelation*, is, ver. 31, called προφητευειν, and that the end of both is, that all may learn, and all be comforted. He adds, that "here is another proof that *prophecy* signifies, teaching by revelation."

[3] *Finish his discourse.*] Gr. "let the first be silent:" that is, let the other wait till the first has finished. "Let the first have done speaking before the other begins." Pearce.

[4] *Admonished*:] παρακαλωνται. So Wakefield. "comforted," Pearce; "exhorted," Newcome.

[5] *The inspiration*:] πνευματα, *spirits*. Some good copies read πνευμα, which Pearce prefers, and renders, "the spiritual gift of the teachers." The meaning, says he, is, "that the true prophets were not so violently moved and agitated, but that they had it in their power to preserve order and decency; whereas the transports which the false prophets counterfeited were extrava-

Ch. XIV. Ver. 33.

thorized to rise immediately and interrupt the former, but let the first finish what he had to deliver before the second begins to speak.

For I do not permit the prophets to interrupt each other, and so to violate the decorum of public worship. What the inspired teachers have to deliver is for the benefit of the whole church. It is necessary, therefore, that all should hear and all receive instruction, admonition, and consolation, as the case may require; and therefore the members who are invested with the honourable office of inspired teachers must speak one at a time, till each has communicated to the whole congregation the whole message which he has in charge. Nor can it be urged that, like the impostors who pretend to deliver oracles from the heathen gods, you are compelled to speak whether you will or not; for Christian teachers, whatever be the importance of their doctrine, are left to their own discretion to judge concerning the proper time of delivery: for God is the God of order and harmony, not of confusion and discord, and it would be unworthy the character of the Supreme Being to permit his prophets to throw an assembly of worshipers into confusion by the violent distortions, the loud screams, or the

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gant to such a degree, as that they seemed to think their violence would be a mark of their truth."

" ——— *subito non vultus, non color unus,*
Non comptæ mansere comæ: sed pectus anhelum,
Et rabie fera corda tument; majorque videri,
Non mortale sonans: afflata est numine quando
Jam propiore Dei." Virgil. Æn. VI.

frantic gestures, of the pretended missionaries of the heathen gods. Ch. XIV. Ver. 33.

4. The apostle forbids women to speak, or to ask questions in a mixed assembly, ver. 33—35.

As in all the churches[1] *of the saints,* so *let your women be silent in the church: for it is not permitted*[2] *to them to speak, but* they ought *to be in subjection*[3]*, as the law also requires* (Gen. iii. 16). —33, 34.

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[1] *As in all the churches.*] "*Connectenda sunt hæc verba cum commate sequente.*" Rosenmuller. I adopt the punctuation of Pearce and Rosenmuller; and, with Pearce, supply ὥτως before αἱ γυναικες, and read τῃ εκκλησιᾳ instead of ταις εκκλησιαις: viz. *So let your women be silent in the church,* or congregation, there being but one congregation of believers at Corinth.

By the *churches of the saints* Dr. Macknight understands the churches in Judea; but this is unnecessary. The public speaking of the women was probably a peculiarity of the church of Corinth. At any rate, it was strictly prohibited in all the churches under the apostle's direction. Nor is it probable that he would have referred to the discipline of the churches in Judea as the standard of excellence, where Jewish prejudices so much prevailed. Mr. Locke, referring to chap. xi., supposes the prohibition here to extend only to those women who were not inspired. But Dr. Taylor, in his excellent note upon Rom. xvi. 1, seems to have cleared up the difficulty. The women are expressly forbidden by *the commandment of the Lord,* to speak in the church, εκκλησιᾳ, the public congregation; but were allowed, under certain restrictions, to teach and pray in their own private assemblies. To suppose, as some do, that the apostle first gives directions for their decent behaviour while speaking in public, ch. xi., and that in this passage he absolutely forbids their speaking in public at all, is imputing to him the most egregious trifling.

[2] *It is not permitted.*] "The Alexandrine and the Vatican, and many other manuscripts, read επιτρεπεται." Pearce.

[3] *Ought to be,* &c.] The Alexandrine, Vatican, and some other copies, read ὑποτασσεσθωσαν, *subjectæ sint,* "let them be subject." Pearce retains the common reading, and supplies, "*but it is commanded them* to be subject."

Ch. XIV. Ver. 35. *But if they desire to learn any thing, let them ask their own husbands at home, for it is unbecoming for the woman*[1] *to speak in the congregation.*

In all other congregations of believers, it is usual for the women to be silent, and though a different custom prevails at Corinth, it should be laid aside. In their own assemblies, indeed, where none but women are present, they may with propriety pray and teach; and for this purpose I have already given sufficient directions (ch. xi.). But in the public congregation, where men and women are assembled together, silence and submission become the modesty of the female; and the law of God requires this deference to the stronger sex. And if difficulties occur, it is more advisable to propose them to their husbands at home, than to hold a conversation upon them and to provoke discussion at the public meeting.

5. The apostle challenges submission to his authority from all who are themselves truly authorized teachers, ver. 36—38.

36. *What! did the word of God*[2] *proceed from you, or hath it reached you only*[3]?

Is the church at Corinth the metropolitan church, from which the gospel proceeded to other countries?

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[1] *The woman.*] This is the reading of the Alexandrine and Vatican copies.

[2] *Did the word of God.*] Dr. Macknight understands this as an address to the women.

[3] *You only.*] "that you thus differ from all other churches?" Pearce, Newcome.

or is it the only church in the world where the Christian revelation has been taught? Is there any reason why you should deviate from the established customs of other churches, and introduce manners and customs of your own that are inconsistent with true decorum, with Christian simplicity, and with general edification? You will not pretend to it. Then, in all things decent and edifying let your conduct be conformable to the regulations which have been established by the advice and authority of the apostles, and first teachers of the gospel, in other churches. Ch. XIV. Ver. 36.

If any one be a prophet[4], *or endued with spiritual gifts, let him acknowledge that the things I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.* 37.

Let every true prophet, every one who has been favoured with spiritual gifts, every one who even sets himself up as a teacher, submit to these regulations: let him bow to my authority, and acknowledge that I am an apostle of Christ, and am authorized to institute rules for the decent government of the churches that I have planted. For this is a fact, and you know it to be so; for you have been witnesses to the proofs of my apostolic mission among you.

But if any one be ignorant, let him be ignorant[5]. 38.

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[4] *If any one be*:] δοκει προφητης ειναι, *thinketh that he is, or seems to be, a prophet.* "setteth himself up to be a teacher." Pearce.—"have the character of a teacher." Wakefield. The verb δοκεω does not always imply a doubt. See 1 Cor. vii. 40; Gal. ii. 6, 9. "If any one be really a prophet." Macknight.

[5] *Let him be ignorant.*] "But if any man is ignorant, and

Ch. XIV. Ver. 38. If any one pretends that he is not satisfied concerning my apostolic authority, and that he sees no obligation to submit to my decisions, after all the proofs which I have alleged of the commission under which I act, I shall take no further pains to convince him: his ignorance is wilful. Let him and his associates take the consequences of their voluntary error.

The apostle here undoubtedly glances at his opponent the false apostle, though he does not choose expressly to name him.

6. The apostle concludes the discourse with recommending a preference of the gift of prophecy, a moderate use of foreign languages, and a decent edifying manner of conducting public administrations, ver. 39—40.

39. *Wherefore, brethren, be desirous to prophesy*[1], *and hinder not from speaking in* foreign *languages;*
40. *but let all things*[2] *be done decently, and in order.*

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says he does not know whether I speak by divine command, let him be ignorant still; he is wilfully so, and therefore I shall not go about to convince him." Pearce.—"Let him reap the consequence of persisting in this pretended ignorance. Rev. xxii. 11. This authoritative language is addressed to his opponents." Newcome. Some copies read *αγνοειται*, and the Vulgate *ignorabitur*. This reading Mr. Wakefield prefers, and translates, "let him be unknown *as a spiritual person*."

[1] *Desirous to prophesy.*] "Let prophecy have the preference in the exercise of it." Locke; who observes, in his very judicious note, that "*ζηλευ* in this whole discourse of St. Paul, taken to refer to the exercise, and not to the obtaining, of the gifts to which it is joined, will direct us right in understanding St. Paul, and make his meaning very easy and intelligible."

[2] *But let all things*:] *παντα δε.* "This (but) is the reading

And now, my brethren, to conclude this head of discourse, the sum of my advice is this: Let the gift of teaching by inspiration for the benefit of the church be most highly valued, most diligently sought after, and most frequently exercised. For this, though not the most splendid, is unquestionably the most useful of all spiritual gifts. Nor yet would I disparage the gift of speaking foreign languages: this also hath its use; and in a moderate degree upon proper occasions, and under proper restrictions, it may be profitably exercised. But whatever doctrine you teach, and whatever gifts you exercise, remember this rule: Let all your proceedings be regular, orderly, and decorous, and then all will tend to the edification of individuals, and to the peace and credit of the society. Ch. XIV. Ver. 40.

I cannot conclude this section without recalling your attention[3] to the irresistible evidence which this portion of the epistle affords of the truth and divine authority of the Christian religion.

The genuineness of this epistle has never been called in question by any writer, ancient or modern. It was addressed to a society of Christians, who had been converted by the apostle himself, but whose affections had been alienated from him

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of several manuscripts, of all the versions; and the sense requires it." Bishop Pearce.

[3] *Recalling your attention.*] See the note at the beginning of this section; but the argument appears of such peculiar importance, that I hope I shall be excused for exhibiting a brief summary of it at the end of the exposition.

Ch. XIV. Ver. 40.

by the artifice of an eloquent and subtle opponent; by whose influence great irregularities had been introduced into the church. The apostle's design is, to recover their esteem and affection, and to rectify these disorders. In order to this, among other things he corrects their error concerning the proportionate value of different spiritual gifts, and particularly the gift of speaking foreign languages, and that of teaching by inspiration. He severely reprimands the indecent use which the speakers of foreign languages made of their gift; and in a tone of authority he gives directions for the proper use and exercise of each. What conclusion may we draw from hence? Certainly this: that such gifts existed in the church. Suppose the contrary, and you must suppose the writer to have been a lunatic; and this epistle could have produced no effect but that of compassion or derision. But no one who reads and understands this epistle, will presume to charge the author with hallucination of intellect. And from the second epistle, which was written some months afterwards, it plainly appears that the former letter had produced the effect which the apostle desired. Therefore, these spiritual gifts must have existed in all the variety which the apostle states. And consequently, the Christian religion thus attested and sealed, must be of divine origin. No external evidence can be more satisfactory than this; no conclusion can be more obvious: and I think that no impartial person who attentively considers it can resist its force.

SECTION VI.

The apostle, in opposition to the Sadducean doctrine, which had been introduced at Corinth, asserts, in the most peremptory language, the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. He announces it as a primary article of the Christian faith; he declares its inseparable connexion with the resurrection of Christ, and its unspeakable importance. He enlarges upon the solemnity and grandeur of that awful event: he triumphs in the glorious anticipation; and concludes with an earnest exhortation to the practice of universal virtue. Ch. xv. throughout [1]. Ch. XV.

I.

The apostle introduces the important subject, by a summary recapitulation of the evidences of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, ver. 1—11.

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[1] "This chapter," says Dr. Priestley, "is one of the most important parts of the New Testament, and indeed of the scriptures in general, as we learn from it so particular an account of the greatest article of Christian faith, and the foundation of all our hopes, viz. the doctrine of the resurrection. This doctrine the new teachers at Corinth explained away, saying that what the apostle called a resurrection was something that took place in this life: meaning probably that life of righteousness which follows what the apostle sometimes calls the death unto sin, taking advantage of his figurative language. The doctrine of the resurrection appeared so extraordinary to the heathen who had never heard of such a thing before, that it was generally laughed at by them, as by Paul's audience at Athens; and therefore phi-

Ch. XV. 1. He solemnly announces the essential importance of the subject of which he was now about to treat, ver. 1, 2.

Ver. 1. *And now, brethren, I declare to you the gospel*
2. *which I* formerly *preached to you, which ye also received, in which ye have also continued; by which also ye are saved, if ye retain the doctrine as I preached it to you*[1], *otherwise ye have believed in vain*[2].

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losophical persons would naturally give any other meaning rather than the literal one. It is remarkable, however, that these Christians at Corinth who denied the general resurrection, did not deny the resurrection of Christ, for the apostle argues from this fact in proof of a general resurrection. The resurrection of Christ they might consider as a miracle respecting himself personally, and a proof of his own divine mission."

"That any Christian should deny the resurrection would hardly be credited by us now, if it had not been well known that there were great numbers of Christians after the apostolical age, who denied it likewise: they were afterwards called Gnostics. It was a fundamental principle with them, that all evil arose from matter; they therefore thought it an advantage to the soul to be freed from the clog of the body; and many of them thought that Christ himself had no body like ours, but only the appearance of one. This opinion the apostle John strongly reprobates."

It seems probable that the error of the Corinthians was the same with that of Hymenæus and Philetus, condemned by the apostle, 2 Tim. ii. 18, who said the resurrection is passed already: meaning, probably, their conversion to Christianity, which is described as a new creation, a new birth, a resurrection from death to life.

[1] *The doctrine as I preached it*:] τινι λογῳ ευηγγελισαμην. Bowyer says this is not Greek; but Kypke, Wetstein, and Rosenmuller produce authorities for the phrase. Some understand it interrogatively. "τινι λογῳ, *quâ ratione*." Vulgate.—"τινι λογῳ, *subintellecto* επι *ante* τινι, *si tenetis hanc meam doctrinam ita ut eam vobis tradidi*." Rosenmuller.—"if ye keep in memory [with] what doctrine I preached to you." Pearce, Newcome. —"with what design it was preached to you." Alexander.

I now enter upon a very interesting subject: I announce a doctrine which contains in it all that is valuable in Christianity—the glorious doctrine of a resurrection to immortal life; which, when I resided at Corinth, I made the constant subject of my public instructions. It is a doctrine which, whatever change may now have taken place in your views concerning it, you then received with delight; in the faith of which you remained for some time unshaken; the belief of which induced you to renounce the idolatry and vice in which you had been educated; by the reception of which you have been saved from the darkness, the pollution, and the danger of your heathen state; and which, if you retain it in your mind, and persevere in your adherence to it, will continue to produce the same salutary effects. Whereas, if you now renounce this important doctrine, you will in effect renounce Christianity itself. All your past faith and all your valuable privileges will be of no avail, and you will probably soon return to the vices and follies of your heathen state. Ch. XV. Ver. 2.

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[2] *Otherwise ye have believed in vain.*] "εκτος ει μη, *nisi forte temere credidistis.*" Rosenmuller.—"Unless indeed ye have believed in vain." Macknight.—I have adopted *otherwise*, as more intelligible. Mr. Wakefield, upon the authority of the Ethiopic version, of which, however, there is no intimation in Mill, Wetstein, or Griesbach, inserts μη before κατεχετε, which makes every thing in this text clear and satisfactory. His version is as follows: "Now I wish you to consider, brethren, to what purpose I preached these glad tidings which I did preach unto you (which also ye received, and on which ye stand, and by which you must be saved), if ye maintain them not; for then ye have believed in vain."

Ch. XV. 2. The apostle reminds the Corinthians, that he had himself instructed them in the death and the resurrection of Jesus, agreeably to the prophetic scriptures, as the leading facts of the gospel dispensation, ver. 3, 4.

Ver. 3. *For I delivered to you among the first principles*[1] *that which I also received, that Christ died*
4. *for our sins*[2], *according to the scriptures: and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day, according to the scriptures*[3].

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[1] *Among the first principles:*] εν πρωτοις. "*Inter præcipua quæ credere debebatis.*" Grotius.—"Among the chief things." Newcome.—"εν πρωτοις relate to the importance of the things which the apostle delivered, not to the order in which he delivered them." Bishop Pearce.

[2] *Christ died for our sins.*] υπερ των αμαρτιων ημων· q. d. "for us sinners," that is, Gentiles; that we might be admitted into the new covenant ratified in his blood. "*For our sins.* In about thirty passages of the New Testament (says the late learned and judicious Mr. Alexander, in his excellent Exposition of this chapter), Christ is said to die *for us:* in about half-a-dozen more he is said to die *for our sins.* As the first of these representations perfectly expresses the benevolence of the Saviour, and his great friendship to the race of men, so the latter seems intended to exhibit besides, the spotless innocence and integrity of his whole character, who did no evil, neither was guile found in his mouth. The phrase of *suffering for the sins of men,* as it necessarily implies the innocence of the sufferer, so it does not necessarily imply any thing further."—"The great fundamental doctrine of Christianity is, that Christ died in consequence of the sins of others, and not his own." Dr. Priestley. There may be, and is, a great deal of truth in the observations of both these eminent critics and expositors. Still, however, it appears to me probable, that when it is said, Christ died for *sinners,* the more usual meaning is, that he died for the Gentiles, familiarly called *sinners,* see ver. 17, note: that is, to ratify that new covenant under which believing Gentiles are admitted to equal privileges with God's ancient people the Jews.

[3] *According to the scriptures.*] Pearce refers to Mark and

When I taught you the doctrine of Jesus, I began with instructing you in those important facts which, how much soever they may be the object of popular odium, and of philosophic contempt, lie at the foundation of the faith of the gospel, and in which I was originally instructed by Jesus Christ himself, when he appeared to me in the way to Damascus. Being determined to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, my first object was to state plainly and without disguise that obnoxious fact, that the founder of our religion died upon the cross as a malefactor; and by his death ratified the covenant which admits us sinners of the Gentiles into the community of saints, and to all the privileges of the people of God. And I further stated that this event, offensive as it was to Jew and Gentile, was a plain accomplishment of recorded prophecy, Isa. liii. 9, that for the transgression of men he was smitten to death. I also informed you, that he was buried, and continued so long in the grave as to preclude all suspicion of collusion. This also was foretold in the same prophecy. I added, finally, as the glorious sequel to this melancholy scene, that Jesus Christ, our honoured Master, was raised from the dead by the power of his Al- Ch. XV. Ver. 4.

Luke, whose histories were extant when Paul wrote, as the scriptures to which the apostle alludes. Doddridge, Newcome, and others, with more probability refer to the Old Testament prophecies, and particularly to Ps. xvi. 10, compared with John xi. 39, where being dead four days is mentioned as a proof that the corpse had begun to putrify. Some include the words "on the third day," in a parenthesis. See also Isa. liii. 9—12; Psalm ii. 7.

Ch. XV. Ver. 4. mighty Father on the third day; and that this great and ever memorable event was also an accomplishment of those remarkable prophecies which foretell that he should not be suffered to see corruption, Ps. xvi. 10; and which describe him as exalted to universal dominion as a reward of his preceding humiliation.

3. He states the evidence of these important facts, and enlarges particularly on the great mercy shown to himself in appointing him one of the witnesses of the resurrection of Christ, ver. 5—11.

5. *And that he was seen by Cephas*[1], *then by the twelve*[2].

You cannot have forgotten the evidence which I communicated of this interesting fact, namely, that he appeared to Peter first of the apostles, to comfort him under the remorse he so justly and severely felt for the late shameful instance of his base cowardice and falsehood, and to assure him of his forgiveness; and the same evening he appeared to the apostles, when they were assembled together, with the ex-

[1] *Seen by Cephas.*] He was first seen by Mary Magdalene; but Macknight justly remarks, that this is not noticed by the apostle, as no woman was employed to testify his resurrection to the world. See also Rosenmuller *in loc.*

[2] *The twelve.*] The general name of the apostles, though two were absent, and perhaps three. The Clermont and some other copies read ενδεκα, *eleven*, and Beza conjectures δεκα, *ten*. Doddridge observes, that Chrysostom assigns reasons why they should be called the Twelve: a proof that twelve was the reading of his copy. "The greater customary number," says Archbishop Newcome, "is put for a part. So John xx. 24. The appearance referred to is related, Mark xvi. 14; John xx. 19."

ception of Judas who was dead, and of Thomas who was absent. Ch. XV.

After that, he was seen by above five hundred brethren at once[3], *of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep.* Ver. 6.

Soon after his resurrection, our Lord went down into Galilee, which had been the principal scene of his public ministry, and where the greater number of his disciples resided; and there, upon a mountain which he had appointed, he appeared to upwards of five hundred of his disciples at once: and though some of them at first doubted whether a fact so amazing and so desirable could indeed be real, they had sufficient evidence to dispel their doubts, and the greater part of them are now living, to bear their joyful testimony to the resurrection of their Master; while some, indeed, in the faith of this great event, have fallen asleep, in the cheerful hope of awaking again on the glorious morning of the resurrection, by the power and in the image of their risen and exalted Saviour.

Afterwards he was seen by James[4], and *then by all the apostles*[5]. 7.

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[3] *Five hundred brethren.*] Of this fact no express mention is made in the Evangelists. It happened probably in Galilee. The number at Jerusalem was one hundred and twenty, Acts i. 15. It is very possible that there might be more than four times that number in Galilee, which was the principal seat of our Lord's ministry and miracles. "Every body must observe," says Mr. Wakefield, "what an air of sincerity this appeal to living witnesses carries with it." Theological Repository, vol. vi. p. 85.

[4] *Seen by James.*] Tradition saith, James the Just, the brother of our Lord, the author of the epistle; which Macknight

Ch. XV. Ver. 7. I further informed you, that our Lord appeared to James, who has since suffered martyrdom in the cause of Christian truth, perhaps to establish his faith more particularly in the fact of his resurrection, and to suggest those considerations which might prepare and fortify his mind for his approaching trial. After this, he appeared at various times to all the apostles, and afforded them the most substantial and satisfactory proofs of his resurrection from the dead; and particularly at the Mount of Olives, from which in their presence he ascended into heaven.

8. *And, last of all, he was seen even by me, as by the one born out of due time*[1].

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thinks most probable, because, at the time when the apostle wrote, he was alive to bear witness to the fact. Vide Whitby; and Jerome's Catalogue. I have interpreted it of James, the brother of John. The evidence is of little weight on either side, as this appearance is not recorded in the gospels.

[5] *By all the apostles.*] This expression being so different from that used at the end of the fifth verse, has led some to conjecture that James, as well as Thomas, might have been absent at Christ's first appearance to the Twelve; which might be the reason of his appearing separately to James, to put him upon an equality with the rest. See Doddridge *in loc.*

[1] *The one born out of due time:*] τῳ ἐκτρωματι. Alexander observes, that "the word denotes those births which come before their proper time; and which, if they live at all, are generally weak, deformed, and below the usual stature: to which the apostle alludes, when he says, 'I am the least of all the apostles,' &c. It is a term of diminution and contempt which the apostle applies to himself, not because he was converted after the rest, but solely on account of his former conduct as a persecutor of the church."—Dr. Priestley observes, "this was an appearance to an enemy, the man whom his enemies in general would have pitched upon, if they had the choice of the person given them. But it could not be expected that after such an

Finally, I informed you, that after our Lord had disappeared from this world, he condescended to reveal himself last of all even unto me, as to one born out of the due course of nature: to one who at a very late hour, and in a very unexpected manner, was converted to the faith, and called to the apostolic office; who was indeed the last person who had a right to expect so distinguished a favour. Notwithstanding my great demerits, he revealed himself to me, as I was travelling to Damascus with authority to persecute and imprison the professors of his religion; and by the most sensible and commanding evidence he convinced me of his resurrection from the grave, and his exaltation to universal dominion. Ch. XV. Ver. 8.

For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 9.

I cannot recollect the employment in which I was engaged, when Jesus appeared to me, and stopped me on the road, without astonishment and horror. I was a blind, furious, malignant persecutor of that church which God acknowledged as his own, and which he honoured with his peculiar protection. And when I call to mind the crimes of my

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appearance he would remain an enemy. Had he appeared in this manner to all his enemies, and in consequence of it the Jews in general had become Christians, the history would not have been so credible as it is at this day." See Priestley's Notes on Scripture. *The one born out of due time: q. d.* the abortive apostle; the last, the least, the meanest, the most unworthy, yet an apostle.

Ch. XV. Ver. 9. unconverted state, I feel myself utterly undeserving of the apostleship, and unfit to be admitted as an associate with those who are honoured with a commission to publish the gospel, and to bear testimony to the resurrection of Jesus.

10. *But by the favour of God*[1] *I am what I am: and this his favour towards me was not in vain: but I laboured more abundantly than they all*[2]*: yet not I, but the favour of God that was with me*[3].

That I am a Christian, and that I am an apostle, is owing, not to any merit nor to any powers or efforts of my own, but to the great favour and mercy of God, who in so extraordinary a manner converted me to the faith, called me to the apostolic office, and qualified me for it. Yet, unworthy as I am, I must do myself the justice to add, that since my conversion to Christianity, and my appointment to the apostolic mission, I have not been a faithless or an indolent servant; and I may truly say that I have equalled, if not exceeded, the rest of my colleagues in zeal, in labour, in suffering,

[1] *By the favour of God.*] χαριτι Θεου, "by extraordinary favour." Wakefield; who justifies this translation by the genius of the language. But the apostle evidently alludes to the signal interposition of God for his conversion on his way to Damascus; and to his gifts and qualifications as an apostle, in reference to which he often describes his apostolic office as χαρις, *a gift*. Rom. i. 5, xii. 3.

[2] *More abundantly.*] Locke observes, that the apostle "drops in this commendation of himself to keep up his credit in the church of Corinth, where there was a faction labouring to discredit him."

[3] *Yet not I,* &c.] "not so much I as the grace of God, which was with me." Bishop Pearce; who refers to his note on ch. i. 17.

and in success. But God forbid that I should attribute this to my own ability, or take the credit to myself. It was not I, it was God who was with me; it was his favour, and his assistance, which carried me through all, and to Him be the praise. Ch. XV. Ver. 10.

Whether, therefore, I or they were the labourers, *such is our preaching, and such was your belief*[4]. 11.

To return from the digression to which the sense of my unworthiness has carried me, I again repeat, that whoever were your instructors in the Christian faith, the doctrine which they taught and which we all still continue to teach, and the doctrine which you once steadfastly believed, with all its momentous appendages and inferences, even that important doctrine which lies at the foundation of the faith and hope of Christians, was this, That Jesus died and rose again.

II.

THE APOSTLE, in contradiction to the false teacher, who corrupted the doctrine of the Corinthian churches with regard to the important article of the resurrection of the dead, represents the resurrection of Jesus as a direct proof both of the possibility of the fact and of the final resurrection of all mankind, ver. 12—20.

1. The apostle expresses his astonishment that

[4] *Such is our preaching*, &c.] See Wakefield. "*Nos omnes in hoc doctrinæ capite consentimus.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. XV. any professing Christian should deny the possibility of a resurrection of the dead, which would necessarily infer a denial of the resurrection and of the doctrine of Christ, ver. 12—14.

Ver. 12. *Now if Christ be preached, that he hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you, that a resurrection of the dead is impossible*[1]*?*

I have just stated the evidence of the resurrection of Christ. I often stated it to you during my personal residence among you: other preachers of the gospel have declared the same. It has been, and still is, the main article of our preaching, the ground of your conversion to the Christian faith: I myself have been an eye-witness of the fact, that Christ, though crucified, is now living. And we have ap-

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[1] *Is impossible*:] αναστασις νεκρων ουκ εστιν. "ουκ εστιν, impersonaliter, non licet, non datur." Constantine, Schleusner; Sirach xiv. 17; Heb. ix. 5.—"ουκ εστιν' i. e. esse των ἁπλως αδυνατων, quæ sunt ουκ οντα, ουκ ενδεχομενα." Grotius.—"ουκ εστιν' i. e. αδυνατος εστι' i. e. esse plane impossibilem, quæ ne concipi quidem animo possit. *Verisimile est hos Pseudapostolos a Sadducæorum schola prodiisse. Sadducæi enim, teste Josepho* (de B. Jud. l. 2, c. 8, § 14), *hominis animum corpori superstitem esse negarunt: omninoque e corpore diversam mentem non agnoverunt.* Act. xxiii. 8." Rosenmuller.—"*That there is no resurrection of the dead.* That the resurrection of the dead is an impossibility." Newcome. I agree with Mr. Locke that the apostle here alludes to the false teacher, who was probably a Sadducee who treated the doctrine of the resurrection with contempt and scorn, as an impossibility and absurdity: in reply to whom the apostle first argues the possibility of a resurrection from the resurrection of Jesus, ver. 12—15; and then shows that the resurrection of Jesus proves the final universal resurrection of mankind; which he insists upon as a doctrine of supreme importance, upon which depends all hope of future existence and felicity, ver. 16—20.

pealed to the authentic testimony of hundreds more: it is a fact established beyond all contradiction. But if this be the true state of the case, how happens it that some among you, who profess to be wise men and acute philosophers, and who set themselves up as teachers of the gospel, presume to affirm that a resurrection of the dead is an absurdity, an impossibility, out of the reach of divine power, a fact utterly unworthy of credit? How can any man, who professes to believe in Christ, deny the possibility of a resurrection? Ch. XV. Ver. 12.

For if[2] *a resurrection of the dead be impossible, neither hath Christ been raised*[3]. 13.

If the resurrection of a dead man be in itself an absurd and incredible thing: if it be a natural impossibility, the argument must hold good with regard to the resurrection of Christ himself. That is also impossible; and Christ was never raised to life.

But if Christ hath not been raised up, then is *our preaching vain, and your belief also* is *vain*[4]. 14.

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[2] *For if.*] For εἰ δὲ Bishop Pearce reads εἰ γαρ, which better suits the connexion; and which reading, the Bishop says, is supported by some of Mills's manuscripts. But there is no authority for it in Griesbach.

[3] *Neither hath Christ,* &c.] "To say there *can* be no resurrection, and yet to hold that Christ is *actually* risen, is a contradiction." Pyle.

[4] *Vain.*] "then is our preaching vain, because we preach a falsehood; and your faith is vain, because you believe in what did not really happen." Pearce.—"False, certainly, is our preaching, and false also is your faith." Macknight.—"Then is this our preaching vain, and this your faith is also vain." Wakefield, *ap.* Th. Rep.

Ch. XV. Ver. 14. If Christ was not raised from the dead, he was an impostor, our testimony is untrue, his gospel is a fable, and your belief in it is unfounded and unprofitable.

2. If Christ be not raised, the apostles are convicted of charging God with giving countenance to an imposture, ver. 15.

15. *Yea, and we are also detected as false witnesses concerning God, because we have testified,* in the name *of God*[1], *that he raised up Christ, whom he hath not raised up*[2].

If Christ has not been raised from the dead, we his apostles, who constantly affirm the fact, and who aver ourselves to have been eye-witnesses of his resurrection, are gross and infamous falsifiers of facts; and by these false assertions we stigmatize the character of the God of truth, whose missionaries we profess to be, and whom we represent as giving countenance to a pernicious imposture, by raising the first teacher of it from the grave: knowing, at the same time, that what we thus affirm is a palpable

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[1] In the name *of God.*] "and as by commission from him." Alexander; who remarks, that "the words κατα Θεϑ may be rendered *concerning God*, or, *against God*; but that Dr. Whitby's version, *in the name of God*, is not only agreeable to the truth of the case, but furnishes a circumstance which greatly aggravates the guilt of the apostles, upon a supposition that they were found false witnesses; which could hardly escape the attention of the writer."—"εὑρισκεσθαι *pro* ειναι." Rosenmuller.

[2] *Whom he hath not raised up.*] The received text adds, "if the dead rise not." This clause is wanting in the Clermont and other manuscripts, and in the Syriac Version; and, as Bishop Pearce observes, it is in this place superfluous. See Griesbach.

untruth. And in this way we not only prove ourselves guilty of a wicked and impious fraud, in asserting the resurrection of Christ, but we blaspheme the Supreme Being himself, by falsely representing him as an accomplice in the fraudulent transaction. Ch. XV. Ver. 15.

3. To deny the resurrection of the dead is to deny the resurrection of Christ, the truth of his religion, the doctrine of a future life, and all its important and consolatory consequences, ver. 16—19.

Moreover, if the dead are not to be *raised up*[3], *neither hath Christ been raised up.* 16.

Your new instructors have taught you, that the resurrection of the dead is neither possible nor desirable; and consequently that it is vain and useless to expect it. I have already reduced the first of these assertions to an absurdity, by stating that the impossibility of a resurrection infers that Christ has not been raised: a conclusion from which I am persuaded that you would recoil with horror. I now advance a step further: I assert the expedience and absolute necessity of a resurrection of the dead. I contend, that if there is not to be a general resur-

[3] *Moreover*:] γαρ, an additional argument: he had before proved the *possibility*, he now shows the *expedience*, and indispensable *necessity*, of the resurrection of the dead; without which all hope of a future state of existence is vain and nugatory.—"if the dead are not *to be* raised up." So Pearce.—"if the dead rise not." Newcome.—"if the dead be not raised up, neither hath Christ been raised." Wakefield.

Ch. XV. Ver. 16. rection of all mankind, Christ is not raised from the dead: for his resurrection would be of no use, if it were not to substantiate that important and awful fact, and God would not work a miracle so splendid to produce a trivial effect. And though your conceited teachers may represent the resurrection of the dead as an absurd and a useless thing, yet let me assure you that the whole of your future existence depends upon it; for, if there be no resurrection of the dead, there will be no life to come.

17. *And if Christ hath not been raised up, your faith* is *vain: ye are still in your sins* [1].

If the resurrection of Christ is a fable, there is no truth in the gospel; and you, who have embraced his doctrine upon the evidence of his resurrection, are in a situation in no respect better than your heathen neighbours: your belief is of no avail. Instead of being a chosen and a holy people, you are still aliens and enemies, in an unprivileged and

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[1] *Ye are still in your sins.*] "no ransom or atonement is made for them, but ye are liable to God's wrath on their account." Bishop Pearce. This is adding a great deal to the brief declaration of the apostle, which the learned prelate would find it very difficult to prove, if the scripture only were to be his guide. —"You are yet under the condemnation and power of sin, having no hope of being freed from death, since he whom we testified to have been exalted to be the prince and saviour of men, is still holden in the bonds of the grave, and unable to deliver himself or others." Alexander.—"*Ye are still in your sins*, subject to death, which was the punishment of sin, without any hope of a resurrection." Dr. Priestley. *In your sins. q. d.* You are now in a state as disadvantageous as you were before your conversion: you are still heathen, aliens from God, and without the covenant of promise. Sinners and heathen are convertible terms. See Gal. ii. 15; Luke vi. 32—34; vii. 37, 39.

uncovenanted state; and you have no better ground than others, to expect a future life: you might as well be heathen still. Ch. XV. Ver. 17.

Then they also who are fallen asleep in Christ are lost[2]. 18.

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[2] *Are lost*:] απωλοντο. What can be a stronger proof that the apostle knew of no intermediate state, of no conscious immaterial spirit which survived the body, and might enjoy or suffer, while the body was mouldering in the grave? If there be no resurrection, there is no hope. They who died in the expectation of it will be disappointed, and will utterly perish. "By the apostle speaking of the dead as perished," says Dr. Priestley in his excellent note, "on the supposition of there being no resurrection, it is evident that he had no idea of the separate existence of the soul independently of the body: for then death would only have been a dismission of the immortal spirit, which would subsist, and according to the common opinion be more free and more happy without the body than with it." "It follows, likewise, as a necessary consequence, that those who have already resigned their breath in the faith of Jesus, and with the expectation of his second appearance, are totally perished. Nay, the martyrs, who have borne a public testimony to the truth of the gospel and sealed it with their blood, instead of exchanging a temporary being for honour and immortality, have sold their lives for nought. And all who henceforth go down to the grave before the coming of the Lord, whether in the ordinary course of nature, or through the violence of evil men, are sinking in like manner into remediless destruction, if there be no resurrection, nor return from the house of everlasting silence and oblivion." Alexander. "*They who have fallen asleep εν Χριστῳ, for Christ.* Comp. Matt. vi. 7; Rom. iii. 25; Eph. iii. 13, iv. 1; 2 Tim. ii. 9; 2 Pet. i. 1.—*are perished.* They have lost their existence here for a known falsehood, and shall *either* have no existence, or a miserable existence hereafter." Macknight. But the apostle indicates no such alternative as the learned writer expresses: this is rather making scripture than interpreting it. "*They who sleep in Christ have perished*, even all deceased Christians; not excepting the most excellent of them, who have died for their religion. They have lost their *life and being* together, on this supposition, in the cause of one who, if still among the dead, must have been an impostor and false prophet." Doddridge.

Ch. XV. Ver. 18. The necessary consequence from these principles would be, that they who having been converted to the Christian religion, have died in the faith of Christ, who have expired triumphing in the discoveries of the gospel, confiding in its promises, and rejoicing in the glorious expectation of a future existence, yea, even they who have sacrificed their lives in the cause of truth, are all lost and annihilated. It is in vain that the heathen philosophers prate of the gross and sluggish nature of matter, and of the subtle and ethereal essence of the soul; which, as they teach, is capable of subsisting in a conscious state, and of exerting its faculties with increased vigour, when delivered from the incumbrance of the body. The gospel revelation teaches no such thing. The Christian philosophy places all hope of future life in the resurrection of the dead; and if there be no resurrection, Christ is not raised, Christianity is false, and all who have died in the belief of it are totally and for ever lost, without help and without hope.

19. *And since in this life we have no hope but in Christ, we are of all men the most to be pitied*[1].

[1] *And since*, &c.] Pearce begins the verse with καὶ or εἰ δὲ, which he thinks makes the sense easier; and supports by some authorities. He well observes, that μόνον ought to be taken in connexion with Χριστῷ, not with ταύτῃ. It is absurd to say, "if in this life only we have hope in Christ." The construction and sense require, "if in this life we have hoped in Christ only;" which he explains thus: "Upon the supposition that Christ is dead, then those Christians who are in the grave are perished, and those who are now living are more to be pitied than all men, because all their hope is placed in Christ only; and yet he, on

And not only are they lost for ever who expired in the expectation of the promises of the gospel, but we who survive are in a worse situation still. For, since we who profess the doctrine of Christ, and especially those of us who are teachers of his religion, the missionaries and apostles of Jesus: since we, who are exposed daily to reproach, persecution, and sufferings of every kind, for the sake of Christ and his cause, have no hope of remuneration or relief but that which we derive from faith in Christ, and from the promises of the gospel: if these should fail us at last, if it should prove after all that Jesus is an impostor, and his gospel a fable, we are then the most pitiable, the most unfortunate of mankind: because we have sacrificed our health, our peace, our character, our comfort, every thing which makes life worth enjoying, and in return we receive nothing but disappointment, disgrace, and ruin. Ch. XV. Ver. 19.

4. Happily for Christian believers, the reverse of all this is the truth: Christ is raised, and his resurrection is the pledge of the future resurrection of all mankind, ver. 20.

But indeed[2] *Christ hath been raised from among* 20

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whom all their hope is placed, is not in being, but is dead, and unable to help them. It is *q. d.* We are sadly deceived, we have denied ourselves, and been denied by others, have mortified ourselves, and been persecuted by our fellow-creatures, upon the account of our belief and hope in one who is not existing, and therefore can neither succour us here nor reward us hereafter." M. Wakefield adopts a similar translation.

[2] *But indeed:*] νυνι δε. "But now." Newcome.—"But on

Ch. XV. Ver. 20. *the dead*, being *the first fruits*[1] *of them who are asleep*.

Happily these melancholy suppositions have no just foundation. The resurrection of Christ is a fact, established upon evidence which no reasonable man can invalidate or dispute. And his resurrec-

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the contrary." Pearce. *From among the dead.* "From the dead" is not sense, either in Greek or English." Wakefield, *Theol. Rep.*

[1] *Being the first fruits*:] The received text reads εγενετο, *is become*. This word is omitted by Griesbach. *The first fruits.* "See Lev. xxiii. 10. As the offering of the first fruits derived a blessing on the rest, so Christ's resurrection secures the future harvest of the dead." Newcome. The first fruits were the earnest and pledge of the future harvest, and were offered to God in grateful acknowledgement of his providential goodness. Dr. Macknight remarks, that the sheaf of the first fruits was to be waved before the Lord on the morrow after the sabbath with which the passover began; and supposes, that the season of the year when the apostle wrote might suggest the allusion. See chap. v. 7. Dr. Priestley observes, in his excellent note upon this passage, that "it is evident from this, that the resurrection of Christ is not merely to be considered as a miracle in proof of his doctrine, the principal article of which was the resurrection of all the dead, but a specimen, as it were, of the general resurrection: he being the first fruits of a general harvest, the first who, after having been dead, rose again to immortal life. But Christ could not properly be called the first fruits of those who are to rise from the dead, if he was not of the same nature with those of whom the general harvest is to consist. In the law of Moses, the first fruits was only the first ripe corn gathered before the rest: Christ, therefore, must be of the same nature with us, in order to be the first fruits from the dead, and that his resurrection may be a proper encouragement to us to expect the like. Had he been of a nature considerably different from ours, especially much superior to us, as he must have been if he had been the Creator of the world and of man, his rising again would be no proper specimen of a resurrection in which we might hope to partake; for there might be very good reasons why so great a Being as he was could not be holden of death, which would not at all extend to us."

tion is a pledge of the future resurrection of all mankind; for he, being the first of the sons of Adam who was raised from the grave to an immortal life, thereby demonstrated the truth of his doctrine, and exhibited a pattern of what the benevolent father of the human race intends in due time for all his rational offspring. All who sleep in the dust of the earth shall in due time awake. Christ is the first fruits of that glorious harvest, which, in the fulness of time, shall be gathered in without the loss of a single grain. Because he lives, we shall live also. Ch. XV. Ver. 20.

III.

THE APOSTLE announces some very important circumstances, which will attend the resurrection of all mankind; and dwells upon the final restoration of all to virtue and happiness, as the great and glorious completion of the Christian dispensation, ch. xv. 21—28.

1. It is the appointment of God, that as death was introduced by one man, a resurrection from the grave should be introduced by another, ver. 21.

For since through man came *death, through man also* will come *a resurrection of the dead.* 21.

Adam was the father of all mankind; and he, by his fall, was the means of entailing death upon his offspring. Adam was a man like ourselves; and it is the pleasure of God that a resurrection to life should also be introduced by another man, a man like ourselves, one who was as truly and properly a

Ch. XV. Ver. 21. man as Adam himself: even Jesus of Nazareth, who authoritatively taught, and in his own person exemplified, a resurrection to life, honour, and immortality.

We may here remark, that the apostle assumes as the foundation of his analogy, the account of the fall of man as recorded in the book of Genesis, and argues upon it as literally true. Whether literal or figurative, whether history or fable, whether he did or did not admit it in the strict literal sense, it equally well serves the purpose of his argument. The Mosaic history teaches, that the fall of one man introduced death; the gospel teaches, that the death and resurrection of another man introduces life.

Observe, likewise, the pointed manner in which the apostle here asserts the proper humanity of Christ. If Christ was not a man, a mere man, a man in the very same sense as Adam, then the apostle's assertion is untrue. If Jesus be, as many Christians believe, a superior being, the true state of the case would be, That although by man came death, the resurrection from the dead came by one who is greater than man. But the apostle's doctrine is the direct contrary of this: "As by man came death, so by man will also come a resurrection of the dead." It is impossible for language to express in a more explicit manner that Jesus of Nazareth is a man, a human being in all respects constituted like other men.

2. The extent of the benefit by Christ is as universal as the fatal consequences of the Fall, ver. 22. Ch. XV.

Moreover, as in Adam all men *die*[1], *so likewise in Christ shall all* men *be restored to life.* Ver. 22.

All the posterity of Adam, the whole human race without exception, were victims to mortality, in consequence of the fall of their first parent in Paradise; but as all are sufferers through him, so all shall be raised to life by Jesus Christ, and restored to that state of dignity and happiness from which Adam unhappily fell. Thus Christ shall amply repair the ruins of the Fall; and the second Adam shall com-

[1] *As in Adam.*] "The apostle suggests a remarkable analogy between the two dispensations of death and life, with respect to the nature of the persons by whom they were introduced. The fact which this analogy supposes, and upon which it is built, seems to be no other than this, that Christ as to his nature was in no respect different from Adam. For the proof that as by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead, is this: that as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. He was a man in the same sense of the word in which it was applied by St. Paul to Adam. . . . We may reasonably presume that the apostle, in speaking of Adam and Christ with respect to their natures, if he had known of any material distinction between them, would have been no less attentive to the circumstances of opposition than to those of resemblance. That, instead of saying, As by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; he would have said, Although by man came death, the resurrection of the dead came by a person of a nature superior to that of man: and since no opposition of this sort appears, are we not at liberty to believe, nay, are we not obliged to acknowledge, that God has magnified his power by making him who sanctifies, and them who are sanctified, of one nature; by raising up the author of life and salvation from among the descendants of him who brought death into the world" Tyrwhit *ap. Comment. and Essays on SS.* vol. ii. p. 15 *et seq.*

Ch. XV. Ver. 22. pletely efface the dishonour and misery entailed by the first.

In this instance, as in the foregoing, the apostle argues upon the supposition of the Mosaic account of the Fall; and whether that history be real or fictitious, the analogy is the same. Nevertheless, our belief and expectation of a future life are not founded upon the accuracy of the apostle's reasoning, much less upon the truth of the Mosaic history, but upon the authority of the apostle's declaration, and that of his great Master, confirmed by his resurrection from the grave.

And it is also very plain, that the resurrection of which the apostle treats in this celebrated chapter, is the resurrection, not of a chosen few, of a select number, whether greater or less, but that of the whole human race. The apostle's language is so clear and full with respect to the final happiness of those who are thus raised, and that their resurrection to life will be ultimately a blessing, that the generality of Christians have supposed that he is here treating of the resurrection of the virtuous only. But that is not the fact: he evidently speaks of the restoration of the whole human race. All who die by Adam shall be raised by Christ: otherwise the apostle's assertion would be untrue. The case then would have been this, As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall a select number, a small proportion, be made alive. But this is not the apostle's doctrine. His expressions are equally universal in each clause: ALL die in Adam. The same ALL,

without any exception, without any restriction, shall by Christ be restored to life, and ultimately to holiness and everlasting happiness. And to guard against the abuse of this doctrine, he proceeds to declare, that all will not be admitted at the same time to the participation of final happiness; for, Ch. XV. Ver. 22.

3. Though all men will be restored to life, and raised to happiness, all will not be made happy at once, but each will be advanced as he becomes qualified for his reward; till, in the end, the enemies of Christ shall be all subdued, and his authority shall be universally acknowledged and obeyed, ver. 23—26.

But every one in his proper class[1]. 23.

Not all at once: there will be a gradation in the introduction to final blessedness, depending upon the characters of those who are to partake of it.

Christ the first fruits.

He is already raised to life; and his virtues, his

[1] *In his proper class*:] εν τω ιδιω ταγματι, "in his own *band*." Macknight; who observes that ταξις, not ταγμα, signifies *order*. I agree with this learned expositor, and with Dr. Chancy, (*Univ. Salv.* p. 197,) in thinking that three different periods are here referred to by the apostle: 1. The resurrection of Jesus himself; 2. The resurrection of the virtuous at Christ's second appearance; 3. The grand consummation of all things, when the wicked, after having passed through the necessary state of discipline and purification, shall be restored to virtue and to happiness, and all the captives of death shall be rescued from his grasp. This appears to me to be the true key to the interpretation of the passage: of which, however, probably nothing but the event can give the true solution. In this interpretation I agree with Dr. Chancy. Dr. Macknight only conjectures that the wicked will be raised after the righteous.

Ch. XV. Ver. 23. labours, and his sufferings, have received their reward. He is the glorious first fruits, the specimen and the pledge of the final and universal harvest.

Afterwards they who are Christ's at his coming.

The true disciples and community of Jesus, all the upright and virtuous in every age and country, will next be raised to life and happiness; and this joyful event will take place at that long expected period when Jesus shall appear again in his own and in his Father's glory, invested with the high commission to raise the dead and to judge the world; when the dead in Christ shall rise first, and, being acknowledged by him as his friends and followers, shall be transformed into the likeness of his glorious person, and shall enter with him into the joy of their Lord.

24. *Then* cometh *the end*[1], *when he shall deliver up the kingdom to him who is God and Father*[2], *when*

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[1] *Then* cometh *the end.*] ειτα το τελος, the grand consummation of all things; when the purposes of the gospel dispensation shall be accomplished, and the design of the wise and righteous government of God shall be complete.

[2] *To him who is God and Father.*] τω Θεω και πατρι, *to God, even the Father.* This is the common version, which Archbishop Newcome adopts: I follow that of Bishop Pearce. "Qu. What is that kingdom which Christ is then to deliver up to the Father? Ans. That governing power which he now exercises over the world." Pearce.—"The mediatorial kingdom, which he shall publicly and solemnly deliver up to God, even the Father; by whose commission he has held it, and to whose glory he has always administered it." Doddridge.—"Delivering up the kingdom to the Father does not imply any cessation of his own power. He will deliver the kingdom to the Father, not by laying down his mediatorial authority, but by establishing it in its fullest extent, because he will take the government out of the hands of weak and fallible princes, and set up a kingdom of

he shall have abolished all rule and all authority Ch. XV.
and power[3]. *For he must reign*[4], *till* God *shall* Ver. 25.
have put all enemies under his feet, Ps. cx. 1.

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righteousness and glory, which shall endure for ever under the Father as Supreme, and under the Messiah as his vicegerent." Alexander.—" *his mediatorial kingdom.* This kingdom our Lord received in his human nature, as the reward of his humiliation; and was solemnly installed in it after his resurrection, when he ascended into heaven. Further, it is believed from Col. i. 17, Heb. i. 3, that beside the mediatorial kingdom which the Son administered in his human nature, and which he will deliver up to the Father, he possessed the government of the universe from the beginning, in his character as Creator." Macknight. What jargon do some systems make of the plain language of scripture! While the gospel is in progress through the world, the Christian community is figuratively described as the kingdom of Christ. As the gospel spreads, the kingdom of Christ extends itself; and when it is diffused through the world, the kingdom of Christ will be complete, and the gospel dispensation will at the appointed time close. Mr. Wakefield gives a very peculiar translation, founded upon the Æthiopic Version, viz. " Then will the end be, when God the Father delivereth up the kingdom to him." Neither Pearce nor Griesbach takes any notice of this remarkable reading in the Æthiopic Version, nor does it appear that this reading is confirmed by any of the ancient ecclesiastical writers.

[3] *Abolished all rule,* &c.] " all empire, dominion, and authority which now subsists throughout the world, and remove every thing out of the way which opposes itself to his greatness. Christ, by triumphing over the powers of the world, and subduing all things to himself, introduces that state which is called the kingdom of God." Alexander.—" By rule, authority, and power, in this place," says Bishop Pearce, " I understand not human rule and government, as most commentators do, for that is no enemy to Christ, it being God's own institution; but it means sin, the devil, and death, see ver. 25, 26. These exercise power and authority over men, to the prejudice of Christ's government here upon earth, Heb. ii. 14."

In proportion as the principles of the Christian religion prevail, governments will become milder, more equitable, and more favourable to liberty; and in this sense Christ may be said to put down all unjust rule and authority: but that all civil authority is to be overthrown by the prevalence of the Christian

Ch XV. Ver. 25.

At some fixed but unknown period, after the resurrection of the just, the termination of the present system of things will take place, and a new and happy state will be introduced. At that time Jesus having accomplished all the great and benevolent purposes of his delegated power, will resign his authority into the hands of the wise and gracious Parent and Sovereign of all, from whom he received it; and who will no doubt express his high approbation of the conduct of his honoured minister, and will crown his faithful services with their due reward. In other words, at the period in question, all the glorious purposes of the gospel dispensation shall be complete, in the virtue and happiness of the whole human race. For, till this great event takes place, the plan of infinite mercy will be imperfect, and the dominion and conquests of the gospel will be unfinished. The government of Christ, therefore, must continue till He who gave him his

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doctrine, and that Christ is to appear in person to administer universal government, does not appear to me to be clearly proved. I am inclined to understand the words in a sense similar to that of Bishop Pearce and Archbishop Newcome. The powers opposed to Christ are, idolatry and vice and misery, and he shall reign till he has exterminated them all; and when vice is exterminated, death, the first and second death, which are the punishment of sin, will be exterminated likewise.

[4] *He must reign.*] His kingdom, the doctrine and power of his gospel, must advance, till his enemies, sin and misery, are finally exterminated. The expressions seem to imply some personal authority and exertion of Christ himself: which, indeed, is more than probable, as we cannot suppose him to be a mere inactive spectator of passing events; but of what nature this interposition may be, and to what extent it may be carried, it is impossible to know and useless to conjecture.

commission has fully established his authority, and till the triumph of the Redeemer is universal and complete. And that not only in the ultimate subjection of all mankind to the doctrine and spirit of the gospel, and the final overthrow of all tyranny civil and religious, of all usurpation over the rights of conscience, of all idolatry, false doctrine, and immoral practice, and in the universal prevalence of truth and goodness in the world, but in the glorious rescue of the whole human race from the dominion of the grave, and the restoration of every individual of mankind to virtue, to happiness, and to immortality. Ch. XV. Ver. 25.

4. When this is the case, death itself shall be exterminated, ver. 26.

The last enemy shall be utterly abolished, even *death*[1]. 26.

[1] *The last enemy*:] Εσχατος εχθρος καταργειται ὁ θανατος. See Doddridge. The common translation, *The last enemy which shall be destroyed is death*, quite loses the spirit of the passage: for of what consequence is it to know whether death be the first or the last enemy? but to be assured that death itself, the wages of sin, will be ultimately abolished and utterly done away, by the resurrection and ultimate restitution of all mankind to virtue and happiness, is a most important discovery indeed, for which we are wholly indebted to the Christian revelation.—"Καταργεω. 1.) *otiosum reddo.* 2.) *cessare facio.* 3.) *abrogo*, de legibus. 4.) *neco, destruo*, Rom. vi. 6. 5.) *abjicio*, 1 Cor. xiii. 11. 6.) *vinco, vim et potestatem infringo. Admodum raro occurrit hæc vox apud exteros scriptores.*" Schleusner. "It signifies," says Doddridge, "divesting a thing of some power, whether lawful or usurped, which it formerly had, and reducing it to an incapacity for exerting that energy any more: viz. Satan, Heb. ii. 14; Death, 2 Tim. i. 10; temporal princes, 1 Cor. i. 28; the law, Eph. ii. 15."

Ch. XV. Ver. 26. When vice is completely subdued, and all the rational creatures of God, in consequence of the process of discipline through which they have passed, shall have become virtuous and happy, the empire of death will come to a perpetual close. Natural death shall be abolished by the resurrection of all mankind to a new and immortal life; and that death also which is denounced as the punishment of sin, that second death, which is the consummation of human misery and the bitter consequence of human guilt, those unutterable pains which may hereafter be necessary to cleanse the mind from the pollution of unrepented vice, shall likewise be utterly abolished by the restoration of all, even the most vicious and profligate of mankind, to virtue and happiness unchangeable and everlasting. Death, in this most formidable sense, is the last enemy of the government of Christ: but even this enemy shall be totally destroyed, nor shall our victorious Leader resign the reins of empire till this dreaded tyrant, this king of terrors, shall be subdued at his feet, to rise no more.

5. When every thing is thus subdued to Christ, Christ will himself be subject to God, ver. 27, 28.

27. *For* God *hath subjected all things under his feet*[1], Ps. viii. 6.

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[1] *For* God *hath subjected.*] This passage from the 8th Psalm is quoted by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the same sense, and argued upon in a similar manner, Heb. ii. 8. This is a presumption that the Epistle to the Hebrews was dic-

For in this sense, this glorious sense only, can those words of the Psalmist be literally fulfilled, that God has made all things subject to Christ; when, by the utter extinction of death, all that were in bondage to that remorseless tyrant and conqueror shall be set at liberty from their chains, and shall have become the willing and joyful subjects of their great deliverer in the day of his power. And though I will not say that this is the direct meaning of the Psalmist's language, or that this glorious issue of the divine administration was in his immediate purview, it is nevertheless true that no words can more aptly express the interesting event. Ch. XV. Ver. 27.

But when the scripture *saith, All things are subjected* to him, *it is evident that it is with the exception of him who subjected all things to him.* —27.

No person can be so thoughtless as to imagine, that the infinite God, the God and Father of the universe, can ever become subject to his own creature, to the very person whom he has invested with all the authority he possesses. Though, therefore, the terms are universal, common sense leads us to understand them with this restriction.

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tated by Paul, or written by one whose habits of thinking and reasoning had been formed under his instruction. No person who attentively reads the Psalm from which the words are taken, can suppose that it is intended as a prophecy of Christ. In the eighth Psalm, the words undoubtedly express the dominion of man over the inferior creatures, παντα υπεταξας υποκατω των ποδων αυτου. But in Psalm cx. 1, a similar expression is used, which may, for any thing I see to the contrary, be properly applicable to the Messiah: *Sit thou at my right hand,* εως αν θω τους εχθρους σου υποποδιον των ποδων σου, *until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*

Ch. XV. Ver. 27. We see here how peremptorily the apostle rejects the supposition of the equality of Christ to the Father; from whom he received all the authority which he now exercises, and to whom he is ultimately to resign it again. He appears to regard it as a notion which could never for a moment be admitted into the mind of a person of common understanding. How little did the apostle suspect what the doctrine of future generations of professing Christians upon this subject would be! and how, indeed, can it be accounted for, that any persons with the scriptures in their hand should ascribe to Jesus, a human being, the greatest and best, but the humblest and the most unambitious of mankind, a full equality with the almighty Father? The fact, if it were not notorious, would be regarded as incredible and impossible.

28. *And when all things shall be subjected to him, then will the Son*[1] *himself also be made subject to*

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[1] *The Son himself also be made subject.*] The word υἱὸς is omitted in the citation of Irenæus, Tertullian, and others: *q. d.* he shall himself be made subject, &c. Of this difficult passage, which perhaps nothing but the great event can fully explain, I have given what appears to me to be the most probable interpretation. It may possibly mean nothing more than to express in highly figurative language the glorious and happy termination of the gospel dispensation, in the ultimate restoration of all mankind to virtue and to happiness; for, if *the kingdom of Christ* expresses nothing personal, but merely that state of virtue and peace which the gospel introduces wherever it prevails, the resignation of that kingdom may mean nothing more than that, the end being accomplished, the means are no longer necessary, and that the gospel dispensation is closed. But it is also possible that a more literal interpretation may be true, and that, as Christ was personally concerned in the introduction of

Him who subjected all things to him, that God may be all in all[2]. Ch. XV. Ver. 28.

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the gospel dispensation into the world, so he may since his ascension be personally instrumental, in some unknown manner, in promoting the success of the gospel; and may hereafter personally appear, to raise the dead, to judge the world, to reward the righteous, and to give effect to the painful process of penal discipline to which the wicked will be condemned; till, in the end, each in his own order will be restored to virtue and happiness, death itself will be abolished, and the gracious purpose of God will be fulfilled. After which, the official character of the Redeemer will terminate; he will, as it were, retire into the ranks of the blessed, to enjoy the fruits of his labours and sufferings, and God will be all in all: all admiration, gratitude, love, and all other holy affections will be absorbed in God: God will be every thing, and every thing else as nothing. All this *may* be true; but of this we can know nothing certain till the grand consummation arrives.

Dr. Doddridge thinks, that the kingdom to be given up is, the rule of this lower world, which is then to be consumed. Many interpreters agree with Pyle, that "Christ's mediatorial government shall then cease, and that he will resign himself, his church, and all its members, to God the Father; who shall then, either himself be for ever the immediate Governor, Lord and Disposer of all things, or else will continue Christ his Son the glorious and triumphant Lord over the church he has so graciously redeemed." For this last supposition, however, the apostle's language affords no proper warrant. It is a miserable expedient, to which some have recourse who understand the apostle as teaching that the human nature of Christ will then become subject to the divine. See Macknight. "When all the dispensations of God with respect to mankind," says Dr. Priestley, "shall be terminated at the general resurrection, the office of Christ will expire, nothing that we know of remaining for him, as the Messiah, to do. But whether this be so or not, it is evident that, as the kingdom of Christ was given him by God, who put all things under him, so it is always subordinate to him. God therefore is supreme, and Christ only his servant and the instrument in his hands."

[2] *God all in all.*] ὁ Θεος τα παντα εν πασι. "omnipotent and all-governing." Pearce.—"all among all. The disciples of Christ will then have immediate access to the Father, will immediately serve him, and be immediately governed by him."

Ch. XV. Ver. 28.

When Christ is thus become Lord of all, his dominion complete, his enemies vanquished, and his authority universally acknowledged and obeyed, having accomplished all the wise and benevolent purposes for which he was invested with universal rule, he will then most willingly resign the sceptre into the hands of Him from whom he received it, content to take his rank among the most loyal and dutiful of his subjects: ascribing to God all the honour and glory of his success, and exhibiting to his holy and happy followers an example of the most devoted submission to the divine will. In other words, and to drop the metaphor, the gospel dispensation, having completed its grand and benevolent design of recovering all mankind from sin and death to virtue, life, and everlasting happiness, shall terminate; and whatever character Jesus may have sustained, whatever part he may have been commissioned to act, as the Founder of that dispensation and the prince and leader of life, will now cease and determine, and God will be all in all. All his virtuous and happy creatures, redeemed from vice and death and misery, will see and joyfully acknowledge, that all they are, and have, and hope for, the support of their existence, the improve-

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Newcome.—" over all things in all places." Macknight.—" that God may immediately govern and influence all." Locke.

All in all. He will be all-sufficient, at all times, for the happiness of all; and in his presence will be fullness of joy. "Παντα ειναι, alicui, *dicitur is, qui omnia apud eum potest, a quo hic omnia expectat, et in quo omnes suas spes opesque sitas esse existimat.*" Liv. xi. 11; Velleius Paterc. ii. 103. Rosenmuller.

ment of their nature, the stability of their virtue, and the security of their happiness, depend on him: and God and his goodness will be the delightful subject of everlasting admiration, gratitude, and praise. Ch. XV. Ver. 28.

IV.

THE APOSTLE, resuming the subject of the resurrection of the dead, argues the extreme folly of men's exposing themselves to danger and persecution for the profession of Christianity, if, after all, the dead are not to be raised up, ver. 29—34.

1. To profess Christianity in these circumstances would be attended with no advantage, ver. 29.

Otherwise, what advantage will they who are baptized have above the other *dead*[1]*? if the dead* 2.

[1] *Otherwise, what advantage*, &c.] Calmet reckons up twenty-four senses which have been given of this verse: I have adopted Mr. Wakefield's translation of the first clause. The apostle, ver. 21, 22, had asserted the universal resurrection of all mankind; ver. 23, 24, he declares that they are to rise, not all at once, but in their several divisions and classes: first, Christ himself, secondly, virtuous believers, thirdly, the rest of mankind, at the great consummation of all things; ver. 24—28, the apostle treats of the latter description of persons, asserting their ultimate restitution to virtue and happiness, after which the kingdom of Christ shall close, and he shall resign his delegated authority; ver. 29, he returns to the second class, viz. that of virtuous believers, and puts the question, What advantage have they above the rest, if there is to be no resurrection? Baptism was the symbol of the public profession of Christianity; and, to be baptized, in this connexion, means to profess, and perhaps, as Mr. Wakefield understands it, to suffer for the Christian religion.—Mr. Locke acknowledges that he does not understand the phrase, being *baptized for the dead*; but sup-

Ch. XV. Ver. 29. *are not to be raised at all, why are they then baptized?*

poses "it meant something by which they exposed themselves to danger." The ancients understood the expression to signify, professing Christianity with a view to the resurrection of the dead; which makes an excellent sense, and perhaps the true one. The absurd custom of baptizing a living man as a proxy for one dead, practised by the Montanists, and mentioned by Tertullian and other ancient writers, probably did not exist so early. Bishop Pearce understands the phrase, 'baptized with regard to the dead,' as signifying, "such as have been put to death for their belief in Christ;" which coincides nearly with Mr. Wakefield's interpretation. Le Clerc, Ellis, Doddridge, and Newcome, render it, "What shall they do who are baptized in the place of the dead, *q. d.* to supply the place of those who suffer in the cause of Christian truth?" which makes a very excellent sense. Whitby translates it, "'What shall they do, who are baptized in the name of a dead man?' the plural, *νεκρων*, being used for the singular, as in Luke vii. 15, 22." Macknight explains the text, *q. d.* "who are immersed in sufferings for testifying the resurrection of the dead."

Τι *ποιησουσιν, what shall they do? what advantage shall they gain?* Compare Matt. xxv. 18. Bowyer, Markland. *επει* refers to ver. 22, and supersedes *ει ὁλως, κ. τ. λ.* which, therefore, is properly joined to the succeeding clause. Griesbach, Pearce.

Mr. Wakefield rejects the words *ὑπερ των νεκρων* from the last clause of verse 29: which omission is supported by the Coptic and Æthiopic versions. Griesbach gives as the most authentic reading, *ὑπερ αυτων, for them;* which Bishop Pearce approves.

Mr. Alexander's interpretation is, *q. d.* "What shall they do, how miserable is their case, who, if there be no resurrection, may by their profession of Christianity be considered as baptized for the dead; as acting the most foolish part imaginable, as devoting themselves to destruction?" Mr. A. entirely disapproves the supposition that the expression is elliptical, and that *αναστασεως* is to be understood after *ὑπερ, q. d.* What shall they do who are baptized for *a resurrection* of the dead? this he represents as quite arbitrary and unfounded, and inconsistent with all the rules and principles of just criticism.—Pyle's explanation is, "Who would be so weak as to be baptized into the faith of a resurrection, that give themselves up for eternally dead after this life? This," says he, (perhaps too confidently) "is the undoubted sense and design of the phrase; but how the

But to return to the subject from which I digressed: you have been taught as a doctrine of the Christian religion, that virtuous believers, those especially who have suffered for the profession of Christian truth, will be raised from the dead, and restored to life and happiness many years and ages before the rest of mankind; and admitted to the felicity which the goodness of God has destined for them, perhaps, even before others will be allowed to resume their existence. And you have been taught to triumph in the expectation of a part in this first resurrection, as a glorious privilege, and a blessed and consolatory hope. But if it is certain, as some among you seem to maintain, that there is to be no resurrection at all, and that such an event is even impossible, what advantage will they, who by baptism publicly profess the Christian faith, and who are even sufferers in the cause, enjoy over heathen and others, who know not God, and who are without hope? What should induce them to advocate so forlorn and desperate a cause? They might as well have remained in their original state of idolatry and vice. Ch. XV. Ver. 29.

This appears to me to be the most probable meaning of a passage, the true sense of which must, perhaps, always remain doubtful. And this is one instance among many, of the unavoidable

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Greek of it is precisely to be construed, must still be left to the critics."—"*Quid volunt, qui maximis vitæ periculis se exponunt ut moriantur* (*nec unquam in vitam redeant*)?" Rosenmuller, after Zeigler.

Ch. XV. Ver. 29. inconvenience of epistolary writing, in which allusions and hints are often introduced, which to the correspondents themselves are perfectly intelligible, and need no explanation, but which are exceedingly difficult, if not wholly inexplicable, to others who are strangers to their views and circumstances.

2. It would be still greater folly in the teachers of the gospel to expose themselves as distinguished marks for persecution, if there be no resurrection of the dead, ver. 30.

30. *And why do we expose ourselves to danger every hour*[1] *?*

If the gospel be true, and if there be a resurrection of the dead, the teachers of the Christian religion are acting a wise and a laudable part in zealously proclaiming the doctrine of eternal life, and in exposing themselves to daily hazard for the sake of diffusing Christian truth; for they are serving their fellow-creatures in their most essential interest, and their labour shall not be finally in vain, even with regard to themselves. But if there be no resurrection of the dead, it would be the excess of folly to persist in an office of so great hazard and so little use.

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[1] *Danger every hour.*] The following is Mr. Wakefield's translation of ver. 29, 30: "Besides, what advantage above the other dead will they have, who are submitting constantly to baptism? Why, indeed, are they thus baptized, if the dead will certainly live no more? Why should we, too, expose ourselves to the danger of this baptism every hour?" Mr. W. takes *baptism* in the sense of *suffering*, and refers to Mark xx. 22; Luke xii. 50. See also Noesseltus, *apud* Rosenmuller.

3. The apostle protests, that he is himself continually exposed to the most imminent danger; whereas, if no resurrection is to be expected, it would be far better to adopt the Epicurean maxim, and to enjoy the present hour, ver. 31, 32. Ch. XV.

I protest, by our boasting which I have of you[2] *in Christ Jesus our Lord,* that *I die daily.* Ver. 31.

You were converted by me to the Christian faith, and I esteem it my highest honour to have been employed in so important a service. I glory in you, as having by my instrumentality become the disciples of our Master Jesus Christ. And I can assure you, that as certainly as I was the means of your conversion to Christianity, and as surely as I triumph in the reflection of the benefit which you derive from your relation to Christ, so true is it that in the exercise of my ministry I am every day exposed to danger and to death.

If, to speak *after the manner of men*[3], *I have* 32.

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[2] *Our boasting which I have of you.*] νη την ἡμετεραν, *by our boasting.* This reading is supported by the Alexandrine and other copies, and is adopted by Pearce. The received text reads ὑμετεραν, which the public version renders, "I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus." Archbishop Newcome translates, "I protest, by my glorying on your account which I have in Christ Jesus:" and in his note he cites Dr. Wall as rightly explaining ὑμετεραν, *which I have on your account.* Thus Estius, "*qua de vobis glorior, tanquam meis in Christo filiis.*" Some MSS. and versions add, "my brethren."

Mr. Wakefield, upon the authority of the Æthiopic and Coptic versions, substitutes δια for νη, and thus translates the verse, "I die daily on account of the boastful confidence which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord."

[3] *After the manner of men:*] κατα ανθρωπον. "I take the force of these words," says Bishop Pearce, "to refer to the word

Ch. XV. Ver. 32. *been fighting with beasts*[1] *at Ephesus, of what advantage is it to me*[2]*? If the dead are not to be raised up, let us eat and drink*[3]*, for to-morrow we die*[4].

εθηριομαχησα, which being a harsh metaphor, St. Paul softens it with an *if I may so speak, as other men do*, or, *if I may use a common expression*. Scaliger would read κατα ανθρωπων, "fought against men;" which, though not supported by any manuscript, the Bishop thinks defensible, from the frequent substitution of omicron for omega in very ancient copies.

[1] *I have been fighting with beasts.*] "fought and struggled with men as fierce as beasts." Bishop Pearce; who refers to a passage in Ignatius's epistle, where he says, απο Συριας μεχρι Ρωμης θηριομαχω, *i. e.* "I fight with wild beasts: I have been persecuted by a savage mob from Syria to Rome." The epistle was written at Ephesus, where the apostle proposed to remain some time longer, ch. xvi. 8; so that he cannot here refer to the tumult raised by Demetrius and the artists, which compelled him to leave the city, Acts xx. 1. But it is not to be doubted that the apostle met with much opposition from these and other violent men, before it broke out into a public uproar. Bishop Pearce supposes it may relate to what is recorded, Acts xix. 9.

There was an old tradition alluded to by Nicephorus *Hist. Eccl.* l. 2, and Theodoret *in loc.* that the apostle Paul when at Ephesus was exposed to the lions, but that the wild beasts, restrained by miracle, refused to touch him. Upon this authority, Dr. Whitby considers the apostle as referring to what had actually taken place. But it is not probable that they would have ventured to expose the apostle to this ignominious punishment, he being a Roman citizen: still less probable is it that Luke in his history would have omitted so remarkable an occurrence; and least of all, that the apostle, in the detail which he makes of his hardships and sufferings, 2 Cor. xi. 23, should have neglected to mention his fighting with wild beasts.

[2] *Of what advantage?*] With Griesbach and Pearce, and, as the Bishop states, with almost all the old Greek commentators, I put the note of interrogation after οφελος. Mr. Wakefield's translation is, "And though I fought as far as a man could with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage shall I have? If the dead will not be raised, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." —"*Cum bestiis proprie sic dictis eum pugnasse vix credibile est, quod civem aliquem Romanum unquam fecisse non constat.*" Rosenmuller. Alexander, Macknight, and Schleusner, think that the apostle alludes to a real fact.

If, during the whole of my stay at Ephesus, I have encountered the most savage treatment from wicked and interested men, who were ready to devour me like beasts of prey, this conflict, as well as many others, I have endured with resolution and cheerfulness, animated by the hope of a recompense at the resurrection of the just. But, upon the principles that some among you adopt, what have I to expect? It were better for us all, if there be no resurrection, and no future life, (for without a resurrection there can be no life to come,) to renounce the Christian religion, which requires temperance, self-denial, and self-government, and to adopt at once the licentious maxims of the Epicurean phi- Ch. XV.

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[3] *Let us eat and drink.*] "*Depingit Apostolus Epicureos, et ejus generis alios ipsorum verbis.*" Rosenmuller.

"*Heu, heu! nos miseros! quam totus homuncio nil est!*
Sic erimus cuncti, postquam nos auferet Orcus.
Ergo vivamus, dum licet esse bene." Petronius, 34.

—"*Convivæ certè tui dicunt: Bibamus, moriendum est.*" Seneca. Alexander denies that the apostle means to apply an Epicurean maxim: it is a quotation from Isa. xxii. 13, *q. d.* Let me eat my bread in quiet, rather than expose myself to danger in propagating a false religion.

[4] *To-morrow we die.*] "It is evident from this passage," says Dr. Priestley in his note, "that the apostle had no idea of any hope after death but upon the doctrine of a resurrection. In all his writings he never mentions, nor alludes to, any state of consciousness between death and the resurrection; not even when he is comforting Christians on the death of their deceased friends, on which occasion it was in a manner unavoidable, and indeed it never was or could be overlooked by any person who really believed it. Here he says, If the dead rise not, all ends with this life, and therefore we may as well make the most of it. But this inference would be by no means just, if happiness or misery awaited the souls of men after death, though there should be no resurrection of the body."

Ch. XV. Ver. 32.

losophy: As life is short, and we have nothing to expect hereafter, let us make the most of it while we live, and indulge ourselves without restraint in the gratifications of sense and appetite.

Observe here, the great stress which the apostle lays upon the doctrine of a resurrection of the dead. The whole expectation of a future life rests upon this fact. If there be no resurrection, there is no life to come: otherwise the apostle's argument is of no weight. If the dead rise not, saith the apostle, let us indulge as we please, for we shall not be accountable. No; might an objector say, if there be a state of separate existence for the soul, though the body may not rise, yet the spirit will live, and will meet with reward or punishment according to its deserts. It is evident, therefore, that to render the apostle's argument conclusive, the expectation of a future life must rest wholly upon the doctrine of a resurrection of the dead [1].

4. The apostle cautions the Corinthians against being deluded by the principles of a false and libertine philosophy, and infected by the company of those who hold and avow them; and reproves the

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[1] *Resurrection of the dead.*] "Had any person," says Dr. Priestley, "the most incredulous in the world, been asked what proof he would require of a resurrection, he could only say to the preacher of the doctrine, Let me see you raise some person from the dead, and do you die yourself and rise again, and then we will believe you. Now this very thing has been done, and the history of it is as credible as any ancient history whatsoever." Priestley, on ver. 34.

ignorance and immorality of some who ought to know and to behave better, ver. 33, 34. Ch. XV.

Do not deceive yourselves: bad company corrupts good morals[2]. Ver. 33.

Do not suffer yourselves to be imposed upon by this plausible and dangerous maxim, and do not associate with those who would inculcate such pernicious advice. You may think yourselves sufficiently fortified by Christian principles; but the society of bad men is a dangerous snare, and you may be talked or laughed out of the best principles before you are aware, and seduced into error and vice and misery. If you would maintain your virtue, your good principles, your peace of mind, your hope of immortality, you must keep out of the way of bad companions. You must renounce the society of the unprincipled and immoral.

Awake from your intoxication, as ye ought[3], 34.

[2] *Bad company.*] This is supposed to be a quotation from Menander; but Macknight thinks it to have been a common proverb. Dr. Doddridge translates the line poetically:

"Good manners are debauched, by talk profane."

—"*Tangit apostolus improbos aliquos vitæ magistros, aut nimium Corinthiorum cum Græcis quibusdam consuetudinem.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Awake from intoxication.*] "Εκνηφω signifies properly, *sobrius sum post crapulam.*" Pearce; who renders the word, *Awake out of this sottishness—as ye ought to do,* δικαιως. "It cannot," says the Bishop, "signify 'Awake to righteousness!' which is the common translation; but it may signify, *rite, debite, rightly, as ye ought to do.* See Luke xxiii. 41. Castalio and Erasmus render δικαιως, *ut æquum est.*"—"Be sober unto righteousness, and mistake not." Wakefield.—"Awake to right reason, and do not so grossly mistake." Pyle.—"Do not err any longer in a matter of so much consequence to your virtue and peace." Alexander.

Ch. XV. Ver. 34. *and err not: for some of you are ignorant of God*[1]. *To your shame*[2] *I say this.*

Some of you are strangely besotted with the notions you have acquired of the impossibility of the resurrection of the dead, by which principle you totally destroy the credit and the value of the Christian revelation; and whether you mean it or not, you in fact annihilate all reasonable expectation of a future life. From this stupor it is your duty to awake, to come to your senses, to abandon this dangerous delusion, to learn and to obey the truth, as it is in Jesus. For some of you at present are very ignorant. If you deny the doctrine of a resurrection, and the hope of a future life, you know nothing of the character of God, as the moral governor of his creatures, who has solemnly declared, that he will reward all of them according to their works. To your disgrace I mention it; for, as Christians, you ought to know better, and you possess the means of better information. And my reason for thus animadverting upon your inexcusable ignorance is, in part to guard you against the ma-

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[1] *Some are ignorant of God.*] "There are some atheistical people among you: this I say to make you ashamed." Locke; who in his note puts the question, "May not this be said, to make them ashamed of their leader, whom they were so forward to glory in? For it is not unlikely that their questioning and denying the resurrection came from their new apostle, who raised such opposition against St. Paul."

[2] *To your shame*] "προς εντροπην, to put you to shame; and by that to bring you to amendment." Pearce.—"to *shame*, or perhaps more properly your *amendment* and reformation." Wakefield: see ch. vi. 5.

chinations of some who affect to be your leaders and instructors; but chiefly to induce you to use the means which you possess of rectifying your views of the character and government of God, and to prepare for the awful season when he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained. Ch. XV. Ver. 34.

V.

IN REPLY to some hypothetical questions, the apostle shows the necessity of a resurrection to life, and illustrates the splendid superiority of the future exalted condition of man, to the mean and humble state in which he now appears, ver. 35—49.

1. The apostle supposes two objections to be stated against the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, ver. 35.

But some one will say, Why[3] *are the dead to be* 35.

[3] *Why are the dead to be raised?*] πως, "*qua ratione*, Matt. xvi. 11; Mark iv. 40." Schleusner. *q. d.* "How is it? why?" see ver. 12. Wakefield. "How comes it to pass that dead men are raised?" Locke; who in his note observes, that "if we will allow St. Paul to know what he says, it is plain from what he answers, that he understands these words to contain two questions: First, How comes it to pass that dead men are raised to life again? Would it not be better they should live on? Why do they die to live again? Secondly, With what bodies shall they return to life? To both these he distinctly answers, viz. That those who are raised to a heavenly state shall have other bodies; and next, that it is fit that men should die, death being no improper way to the attaining other bodies. This, he shows, there is so plain and common an instance of in the sowing of all seeds, that he thinks it a foolish thing to make a difficulty of it; and then proceeds to declare, that as they shall

Ch. XV. Ver. 35. *raised? and, With what kind of body are they to come?*

It may possibly be asked by some among you who dislike the doctrine [1], What is the use of a resurrection? Why should men die at all? Would it not have been much better to have made them immortal at once? But supposing this question to be decided, and that a resurrection will actually take place, What will be the form and condition of the restored man? Will he be raised to life precisely in the same state, and with the same individual body, with the same external appearance and qualities with which he descended to the tomb? or, Will his person undergo any material change?

2. The apostle, in reply to the first question, briefly refers to the case of vegetables, as indicating, that dissolution is a necessary step in the progress to a higher state of existence.

36. *Thoughtless man! that which thou sowest is not brought to life, unless it die* [2].

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have other, so they shall have better bodies than they had before; viz. spiritual and incorruptible."

The question proposed, therefore, is not, as it is commonly understood, an objection to the possibility, but to the expediency of the resurrection; as supposing a chasm in existence. The apostle replies to it not by assigning the reasons which were demanded, but merely by showing from the analogy of vegetables that it appears to be a general law of existence, that the transition to a superior state of being, must be preceded by a state similar to that of death.

[1] *Who dislike the doctrine.*] Mr. Alexander supposes it not improbable that the apostle may use the very words of their new teacher.

Ch. XV. Ver. 36.

Unthinking caviller! Being driven from your favourite maxim that a resurrection is impossible, you now object to the expedience of the doctrine. You say, What need is there of a resurrection? why do men die at all? why do they pass through the disgraceful process of dissolution? Thus you inconsiderately arraign those measures of the divine government which you do not comprehend. Be content to know that it is the law of nature, that a process similar to that of death should precede the transition to a better state of being. The seed will never become a beautiful and fruitful plant till after it has been cast into the ground, and has been decomposed in the earth. And if this be the law and condition of our passage to a more exalted state, what right have we to complain, or to require of our Maker to give an account of his conduct, which, however incomprehensible by us, we know to be good and wise?

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[a] *Unless it die:*] *i. e.* unless it appear to die. "The comparison," says Dr. Priestley, "is not to be supposed to apply throughout, as if the apostle intended to say, that by a law of nature similar to that of the re-production of seeds from seeds, a dead man should produce a living one: for the cases are remarkably different; there being an apparent living principle or germ in every seed, the expansion of which makes the future plant; so that if the whole seed should ever become putrid, and the parts of which it consists be dispersed, no other plant or seed could be produced from it. But as antecedent to experience we could not have known this, but should rather have imagined that a seed buried in the ground would be absolutely lost; so, notwithstanding appearances to the contrary, a similar event may take place with respect to a man; so that, though he be buried, the time may come when he will appear again."

Ch. XV. Ver. 36. 3. In reply to the second question, he reminds them of the great change which takes place in the seed which is sown, and of its obvious difference from the plant produced, ver. 37, 38.

37. *And* as to *that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which will be, but a bare grain*[1]*; for instance*[2]*, of wheat, or of one of the other* kinds.

38. *And God giveth it a body as he pleased, and to each of these seeds its own body.*

You again hope to create difficulties, and to get rid of the doctrine by subtle questions concerning the identity of the resurrection body. But here, likewise, you betray your ignorance; for the same analogy will show that identity may remain in a very important sense under a great difference in form. When you put a grain of wheat, or any other seed, into the ground, you do not expect the very same grain in the very same form to appear again; but according to the established laws of the vegetable world, and the wise appointment of divine providence, a beautiful plant grows up from the seed which was sown, which, though very different from the grain itself, is nevertheless, so appropriated to it, and derived from it, as to be in a sort identified with it, so that no other grain could have produced the same plant. Not only does wheat produce wheat, and barley, barley; but each single seed produces

[1] *A bare grain.*] γυμνον κοκκον; so Wakefield.—"A bare seed, without either stalk, blade, or ear." Pearce.

[2] *For instance.*] ει τυχοι. So Alexander. Ισχυϊ μεν, ει τυχοι, Μιλων, in strength, for instance, Milo. Hieroc. Fragm. p. 258.

its own numerical plant, and thus, under a change of form, it in a manner retains its proper identity. Ch. XV. Ver. 38.

4. The subject may be further illustrated by the consideration of the specific difference of substance in the bodies of different kinds of animals, ver. 39.

All flesh is *not the same* kind of *flesh; but there is one* kind of *flesh of men, and another of beasts, and another of fishes, and another of birds.* 39.

The substance of all animal bodies is called by the general name of flesh, and the flesh of all animals has a general similarity, and possesses similar properties which distinguish animal from vegetable substance; but with this general resemblance, there is also a specific difference, so that the flesh of the different kinds of animals which inhabit the earth, the air, or the water, are easily distinguished from each other. Hence we may infer that the resurrection body, though of the same general nature, may possess very different properties.

5. The case may be further illustrated by the visible dissimilarity in the beauty and splendour of natural bodies, ver. 40, 41.

There are *also bodies celestial, and bodies terrestrial; but the brightness of the celestial is one, and the* brightness *of the terrestrial is another.* 40.

There are great varieties of natural bodies, each having its peculiar beauty and lustre. Some are on the earth, others are in the heavens, both are resplendent, but each has a splendour peculiar to it-

Ch. XV. Ver. 40. self. Gold is refulgent, and gems are bright, but the brilliancy of gold is very different from that of light, and the sparkling of a diamond bears little affinity to that of the stars.

41. There is *one brightness of the sun, and another brightness of the moon, and another brightness of the stars. Moreover,* one *star excelleth*[1] another *star in brightness.*

There is also a difference of splendour among the heavenly luminaries themselves. The stars are bright, but their lustre is inferior to that of the moon, which rules the night; and the splendour of the moon disappears in comparison with that of the sun, which is appointed the regent of the day. Also, the stars are of different apparent magnitudes, and shine with different degrees of comparative lustre.

6. Changes similar to these will take place in the form and appearance of mankind at the resurrection of the dead, ver. 42.

42. *So* will *the resurrection of the dead also* be[2].

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[1] *For* one *star excelleth,* &c.] Or, "for one heavenly body excelleth another heavenly body in glory." Wakefield, *Theol. Rep.*

[2] *So* will *the resurrection of the dead also* be.] Here the verse should end. Vide Bowyer, Wakefield. "The resurrection of the dead here spoken of," says Mr. Locke, "is not the resurrection of all mankind in common, but only the resurrection of the just. This will be evident to any one who observes, that St. Paul having, ver. 22, declared that all men shall be made alive again, tells the Corinthians, ver. 23, that it shall not be all at once, but at several distances of time. First of all Christ rose; afterwards, next in order to him, the saints should all be raised, which resurrection of the just is that which he treats and gives an account of, to the end of this discourse

Though all language and all similitude must fail to convey a just conception of that happy state to which the race of man will eventually be raised, yet

Ch. XV. Ver. 42.

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and chapter; and so never comes to the resurrection of the wicked, which was to be the third and last in order; so that to the end of the chapter all that he says of the resurrection, is a description only of the resurrection of the just, though he calls it here by the general name of the resurrection of the dead."

And surely then the presumption is, that the apostle means what his language expresses; especially as it would have been so easy for him to have made himself perfectly intelligible, if he had intended to be understood in the restricted sense which Mr. Locke and the generality of readers apprehend. But if we agree with Dr. Chancy and others, that the apostle actually does notice and insist upon three distinct periods of resurrection, and that the third and last, ver. 24—28, treats of the resurrection of the wicked, and of their eventual restoration to virtue and happiness, when death shall be abolished, and the Christian dispensation shall have fully answered its benevolent design, when Christ having subdued all things to himself, shall have resigned the kingdom to the Father, and God shall be all in all; if, I say, we admit of the correctness of this interpretation, we may then fairly conclude that the apostle in the remainder of his discourse keeps in view this glorious and happy period; and that when he speaks of the resurrection of the dead, he means, what his words express, the resurrection of all mankind, and not, as he is commonly understood, that of a very small proportion only. So that the apostle in imagination passes over the state of future discipline, the process of which, though it may last for ages, will be as nothing in comparison with the eternity which succeeds; and dwells with triumph upon that glorious state and order of things, when all that have died in Adam shall be made alive in Christ, and the whole race of mankind, each in his own order, shall have been introduced into a state of unmixed and everlasting rectitude and felicity: not indeed into a state of perfect and universal equality, but differing from each other in dignity and felicity, in proportion to their different attainments in virtue and holiness, as one star differeth from another star in glory. I submit to the serious, intelligent, and candid reader, whether this interpretation does not best agree with the apostle's language, and make the writer most consistent with himself.

Ch. XV. Ver. 42.

the analogies which I have suggested may in some degree assist the imagination.

As grain cast into the earth produces its appropriate plant, so the man of the resurrection, after passing through the purifying process of the grave, will appear in a much fairer and nobler form than in the present state; and yet by the wise providence of God his identity will be so preserved, that he will be in a true and proper sense the same person that was deposited in the tomb.

This similitude seems to imply, that a vivifying principle[1] will still remain; some stamina, which retaining the dormant principle of life, and percipiency, shall preserve a strict identity of person in every change of state. But perhaps this supposition may strain the apostle's meaning further than he intended.

The sentient principle after the resurrection will, as it now does, reside in a corporeal form; but the body will differ from the gross matter of which our present bodies are composed, as widely, and more so than the different kinds of animal substances now differ from each other.

The human race will all be raised to glory in their respective order and felicity, but not all to

[1] *A vivifying principle.*] "*Sicuti tritici in agro sati germen servatur integrum ac vivificum: ita etiam facile servari potest aliqua corporis nostri particula essentialis quæ novarum partium accessione, in renovatum corpus crescat, eidemque animo juncta hominem partim eundem, partim novum efficiat.*" Rosenmuller, in ver. 38.

equal degrees of happiness. As the lustre of celestial objects differs from, and is superior to, the most brilliant of terrestrial substances, as the sun and moon transcend in brightness the stars, which in a clear and serene night adorn the firmament of heaven, and as the stars themselves differ from each other in magnitude and brilliancy, such likewise shall be the state of man after the resurrection. All shall be glorious, and all shall be happy; but all shall not be equally resplendent, nor shall all be admitted at once to equal degrees of honour and felicity. Rewards shall be distributed in exact proportion to the real value of the moral character; and while all that are truly wise shall shine with the brightness of the firmament, they who have been most active in doing good, and in promoting the interest of truth and virtue, of freedom and happiness, shall be distinguished with the superior brilliancy of stars for ever and ever, Dan. xii. 3. Ch. XV. Ver. 42.

7. The apostle describes the difference between man in his present state, and that which shall take place after the resurrection, ver. 43, 44.

It *is sown*[2] *in corruption, it is raised in incor-* 43.

[2] It *is sown.*] Gr. σπειρεται. "Literally, *the sowing is*, Of whom, or what? Ans. Of mankind." Wakefield. Bishop Pearce substitutes σωματα as the nominative case. *q. d.* "So also is the resurrection of the dead bodies. They are sown in corruption." Archbishop Newcome renders it, "*the body* is sown in corruption," meaning the dead body. So also Pyle, Doddridge, Macknight, and Harwood. But Mr. Locke well observes, that "The time the man is in this world, affixed to this earth, is his being sown, and not when being dead he is put into the grave,

Ch. XV. Ver 43

ruption[1]*; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory*[2].

Observe here, that the comparison is not between the dead body, as it is consigned to the grave, and the resurrection body, but between man in his present state of animal existence, which is represented as the seed time of his being, and the same man at the resurrection, when he shall be raised up in beauty and perfection fit to be gathered into the granary of God.

Man in the present state is born liable to death and dissolution; he shall rise hereafter to an incorruptible and immortal state of existence. He exists at present in a state of humiliation, exposed to vicissitudes of the most afflicting kind, from youth and beauty, health and vigour, to age and deformity, disease and death: but in that into which he will be hereafter introduced, all will be glorious and

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as is evident from St. Paul's own words. For dead things are not sown. Seeds are sown, being alive, and die not till after they are sown. Besides, he that will attentively consider what follows, will find reason from St. Paul's arguing to understand him so." I think with Newcome, that σωμα is understood; and with Locke, that σπειρεται expresses the state of the living body in this world, not of the dead body when deposited in the grave.

[1] *Sown in corruption, raised in incorruption.*] "That which is sown in this world and comes to die, is a poor, weak, contemptible, corruptible thing; when it is raised again, it shall be powerful, glorious, and incorruptible." Locke. "*Seritur, i. e. sepelitur corpus corruptioni obnoxium, resurget ab omni corruptione alienum. εν φθορα, i. e. φθαρτον hebraico more, εν αφθαρσια, seu αφθαρτον.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *Sown in dishonour, raised in glory.*] *ατιμον, vile, parvi pretii. "Sic vocatur corpus, quia interire potest. εν δοξη, corpus excellens, et magni pretii, quod corpus interire nequit.*" Rosenmuller.

happy: and there will be no change but from good to better, and from glory to glory. Ch. XV. Ver. 43.

It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power[3].

Man in this infancy of his being is frail and feeble like a child, unable to help himself, and dependent upon every thing and every being around him; to renewed existence he shall rise in immortal vigour, with all the energies of body and mind in their highest perfection, and probably with additional faculties which shall open new scenes of perception, action, and enjoyment, of which he had previously no idea.

It is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body[4]*; if there be an animal body*[5]*, there is also a spiritual body.* 44.

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[3] *Sown in weakness, raised in power.*] εν ασθενειᾳ· "*corpus* infirmum, *i. e. variis morbis et periculis obnoxium.* εν δυναμει *corpus* validum, *robustum, longe majoribus facultatibus præditum.* Grotius addit, *cum sensibus multis, quos nunc non intelligimus.*" Rosenmuller. It is observable, that all the critics in their *exposition* interpret the apostle's language in the sense of Mr. Locke, as expressing the state of the body or the human being as living in this world, though most of them *render* σπειρεται as describing the state of the body when it is put into the grave, after it is dead.

[4] *Sown an animal body, raised a spiritual body.*] σωμα ψυχικον, "translated in the Bible a *natural body*, should, I think, be translated an *animal body*. St. Paul means to show, that as we have animal bodies now, which, unless supported with a constant supply of food and air, will fail and perish, and at last, do what we can, will dissolve and come to an end, so, at the resurrection we shall have from Christ the second Adam, *spiritual bodies*, which shall have an essential, natural, and inseparable life in them, which shall continue and subsist perpetually, of itself, without the help of meat, or drink, or air, or any such foreign support, without decay, or any tendency to dissolution. See Luke xx. 35." Locke. "*Est notione spiritûs illud com-*

Ch. XV. Ver. 44.

In the present state, man is subject to animal wants and desires, and he needs animal refreshments and support; but in that glorious state of existence into which he will hereafter be introduced, he will no longer be subject to animal infirmities. The gross sensual affections having answered the purposes for which they were designed, shall be extinguished. All the feelings shall be spiritual and refined, and the constitution of the renovated man will no longer need those animal supports which are now essential to animal existence. For as certainly as the body, which is now the medium of communication with the external world, is of a gross texture, and susceptible of low and animal gratifications, so surely shall the renovated body be exempt from all the grossness of animal senses, wants, and gratifications, and be perfectly adapted to the pure and refined perceptions, occupations, and enjoyments of a new and intellectual state of existence.

8. Mankind in their renovated and exalted state

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prehensum, eum causam vivendi, agendi, movendi, habere in se; non suspensam aliunde. Sic ergo ψυχικον est, quod aliunde habet, cur vivat, moveaturque; πνευματικον, quod in se habet vim vivendi." Rosenmuller.

[5] *If there be an animal body.*] ει εστι σωμα. This is the reading of the Alexandrine and many other MSS., and of the Coptic, Æthiopic, and Vulgate Versions. It is marked as not improbable by Griesbach, and is adopted by Pearce. "We can have no other idea," says Mr. Alexander, "of a spiritual body, than that it is of a more noble and durable constitution than the bodies we have at present. Hence we conclude, that spirit and spiritual do not always denote strictly immaterial substance."

shall resemble the second Adam, as completely as, in the present state of humiliation and degradation, they have borne the image of the first, ver. 45—49. Ch. XV. Ver. 44.

And thus saith the scripture, The first man, Adam, became a living animal[1], *the last Adam*[2] is *a life-giving spirit.* 45.

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[1] *Became a living animal.*] Εγενετο εις ψυχην ζωσαν, was made for a living animal. "In animam viventem. *Jam puto lector agnoscis, elocutionis idioma, toties admonitus, sic dictum* factus est in animam viventem, *pro eo quod erat,* factus est anima vivens." Erasmus.—*Man became a living soul.* "I have followed our English translation, though it does not give the exact sense of the Greek words, because our language has hardly any words that can do it. Perhaps it might be rendered a *living being.* By soul, we are apt to understand that part of us that is distinct from the body; but this is not the sense here, for ψυχη ζωσα is opposed to πνευμα ζωοποιουν, a spirit that giveth life: ψυχη ζωσα is frequently applied by the LXX. to beasts. Gen. i. 20, 21, 24. In ver. 44, σωμα ψυχικον is not a body that has a soul, but an animal body, or a body that has merely life in it." Bishop Pearce. Dr. Priestley in his note remarks, that "it is evident, that the apostle here speaks of the life of which Adam became possessed in consequence of God's breathing into him, what Moses calls, the breath of life, as nothing more than what we call animal life, such as brutes are possessed of, who are likewise said to have living souls, that is, it was such a life as should have an end. It is evident, therefore, that he had no view to any immaterial principle infused into man, for then brutes must be possessed of an immaterial principle too. But Christ, who is here called the last Adam, being originally as much a man as the first Adam, became after his resurrection a being no more liable to corruption or death. This the apostle, not knowing how else to characterize it, calls, in opposition to the present animal body, a spirit endued with a principle of immortal life, and moreover, as the words literally imply, having a power of imparting it to others."

[2] *The last Adam.*] ὁ εσχατος Αδαμ. "Of the second, *the spiritual body,* we have an example in the great restorer of the human race, who is become a quickening spirit, not only raised to this most perfect life in his own person, but invested with the power and office of conferring it upon others." Alexander.

"The last Adam" is almost universally understood by divines

Ch. XV. Ver. 45. The writings of Moses support the doctrine which I have laid down. The account given in the Old Testament of the formation of Adam, Gen. ii. 7, after the Lord had breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, adds, that "he became a living animal," an animal of a superior kind indeed to the brute creation, but possessed of animal powers and feelings, and subject to animal wants and infirmities. But Christ, who since his resurrection is become the second Adam, the new head and representative of the human race, is now advanced to a more exalted state, from which all animal imperfections and wants are excluded. His substance is refined and incorporeal, and the mode of his existence is spiritual and intellectual; and not only does he himself possess and enjoy this high rank in the scale of existence, but in due time he will be commissioned to

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to mean Jesus Christ, who is regarded as the great federal Head of mankind in restoring them to life, as Adam was in introducing death by the fall. But Rosenmuller mentions some commentators, Harduinus, Jehnius, Krausius and others, who deny that Jesus is ever called Adam in the writings of Paul, and who refer to Rom. v. 15, 17, 21, where an antithesis is kept up between the benefits derived to mankind through Christ, and the loss sustained by Adam's fall, but in which Christ is not spoken of as the second Adam. By this phrase, therefore, these writers understand either Adam himself after his resurrection, who will then be a model for all his posterity; or rather, in the abstract, man himself, after he has been restored to life; the risen and glorified human being. Viz. The second Adam is a quickening spirit, "*ideo appellari dicunt, quoniam spiritum censemus causam vivendi, agendi, movendi, in se habere, nec aliunde petere,*" because a spirit is supposed to have a principle of life and motion in itself, independent of any thing external.

raise all mankind to a state of dignity and glory si- Ch. XV.
milar to his own.

However, that which is spiritual was *not first*[1], Ver. 46.
but that which is animal, and afterward came *that which is spiritual.*

Adam in the order of time was many years antecedent to Christ; so likewise the inferior imperfect animal and mortal state precedes the state of life, glory, and immortality.

The first man was *from the ground, earthy*; *the* 47.
second man will be *from heaven, heavenly*[2].

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[1] *Not first.*] "As therefore the first man, Adam, was made before Christ was sent to be our Saviour, so must we, in order of time, be clothed with our animal and mortal bodies derived from the one, before we can be invested with our spiritual and immortal ones from the other." Pyle. πνευματικον, *sc.* σωμα. "*Deus nempe in omnibus operibus suis hunc ordinem tenet, ut præmittat imperfectiora, sequi jubeat perfectiora. Quare quum Deus homini duplicem tribuere vellet naturam, mortalem alteram, alteram immortalem, non erat consentaneum, præstantiorem hanc indolem ei primum tribuere, eumque facere ruentem quasi in pejus, atque deterius.*" Rosenmuller. *q. d.* It being the will of God to give to mankind two states of existence, one *spiritual, i. e.* intellectual and refined, the other *animal, i. e.* gross and sensual, it was his pleasure that the inferior should be antecedent to the superior, and that his works should improve and not deteriorate.—"What becomes," says Mr. Alexander, "of that assertion that Adam was created immortal? and how will it be made to consist with the apostle's decision in this place? It will not be sufficient to allege that he was created immortal, but that he lost this privilege by his offence; for the apostle is evidently speaking of his formation, and refers to his being taken out of the ground, for which reason he calls him earthy. Adam then had an animal body before the fall, a body composed of flesh and blood, and of consequence mortal and corruptible."

But perhaps this is straining the apostle's language too far; he alludes to the history of the fall, to illustrate the doctrine of the resurrection, and probably knew no more of the constitution of men before the fall, than any of his readers.

Ch. XV. Ver. 47. We are told that the Lord God made Adam of the dust of the ground, (Gen. ii. 7,) an emblem of his frail, mortal, suffering state; but the second Adam will in due time appear from heaven, from that state of bliss and glory, wherever it be, in which he now resides, and in a form of dignity and majesty becoming his present glorified and exalted state.

48. *As* was *the earthy, such* are *they also that are earthy; and, as* is *the heavenly, such also will be the heavenly.*

Men in the present state are like their original ancestor, formed of the dust of the earth, animals of a superior kind, subject to all the wants, the infirmities, and inconveniences of an animal state, and liable to death. But they who will hereafter be raised by Christ, and who will be acknowledged as his disciples and subjects, will be advanced to a

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[e] *The second man* will be *from heaven, heavenly.*] The received text reads ὁ Κυριος ἐξ ὐρανϑ. But the Vatican, Ephrem, Clermont, and other manuscripts, the Coptic, Æthiopic, Vulgate, the old Italic, and other Versions, and many of the old ecclesiastical writers, leave out the word Κυριος, which, it is said by Tertullian, was introduced by Marcion; and which is probably a marginal gloss. See Griesbach: upon these authorities Bishop Pearce and Mr. Wakefield omit the word *Lord* in their translations. And upon the authority of two Uncial manuscripts, and of the Æthiopic and Vulgate Versions, and from the analogy of the construction, they add ὐρανιος at the end of the verse. The Vulgate reads, "*Secundus homo, de cœlo, cœlestis.*" The bishop's version is, "The first man was of the earth, created out of dust; the second man is of heaven, being heavenly."—"Primus homo, *Adamus, qualis erat in his terris vivens,* erat *terrenus, caducus:* secundus autem homo, *idem ille, Adamus, in alterâ vitâ est vel erit, cœlestis, excellentior.*" Rosenmuller.

state of dignity and glory, similar to that in which he now is, free from all the inconveniences of the earthly and animal state, and delivered from the dominion of sorrow, pain, and death. Ch. XV. Ver. 48.

And as we have borne[1] *the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly* man. 49.

We, who are the descendants of the first Adam, who was formed from the dust of the ground, in the present state, in this humble commencement of existence, bear the image of our original ancestor; we are subject to animal wants and infirmities, to frailty, suffering and death; but in due time we shall all be advanced to a state of consummate felicity and glory, similar to that of our present exalted head and representative, Jesus Christ. And of this happy change in our condition, we are as certain as that we are now in a frail and mortal state. For it was the great purpose of our Lord's mission, to teach this glorious and important truth: and his own resurrection and exaltation to immortal life and happiness are a pledge, and an earnest of that dignity and bliss, which will be the final portion of his true and faithful disciples.

[1] *And as we have borne*, &c.] "*Qui de solo Adamo, primo homine, sermonem esse putant, illi hæc duo commata ita explicant. Qualis, ille primus conditus homo, terreus et caducus, tales etiam caduci; qualis e materia cælesti reparatus, tales etiam e materia cælesti reparati. Et quemadmodum retulimus imaginem illius terrei, ita quoque, cælestis hujus referemus imaginem, i. e. sicut similes eramus mortali, ita quoque similes erimus immortali.*" Rosenmuller. As we resemble our first ancestor in his first and feeble state of animal existence, we shall also resemble him in that renovated and glorious form in which he will be invested in a future and more exalted state of being.

VI.

Ch. XV. Ver. 49. THE APOSTLE, having announced the necessity of a great and radical change in the present constitution of human nature, in order to prepare and qualify it for a future, glorious, and immortal existence, concludes his discourse with a burst of thanksgiving and triumph, and with an earnest exhortation to the expectants of this all-important change, to live in a manner becoming their exalted hopes, ch. xv. ver. 50—58.

1. The apostle declares that human nature, in its present frail condition, is utterly incapable of immortal life and happiness, ver. 50.

50. *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood shall not inherit*[1] *the kingdom of God, neither shall corruption*[2] *inherit incorruption.*

In the present frail and mortal state, we resemble our frail and mortal ancestor. But it is impossible

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[1] *Shall not inherit.*] ου κληρονομησουσιν· this is the reading of some good manuscripts, and of the Coptic and other versions; and it is confirmed by the reading of κληρονομησει in many of the best copies in the latter clause. See Griesbach. These readings are adopted by Bishop Pearce. The received text reads "flesh and blood *cannot* (ου δυνανται) inherit the kingdom of God, neither *doth* corruption *inherit* (κληρονομει) incorruption." "*A kingdom of God: i.e.* in Hebrew phraseology, a divine and heavenly state of things." Wakefield, *Theol. Rep.*

[2] *Corruption inherit incorruption.*] "Nor will this corruption inherit the incorruption *thereof*." Wakefield. "ἡ φθορα, *abstractum pro concreto. Sensus est: quod natura sua hoc habeat, ut interire possit, idem non habere hoc posse, ut interire nequeat.*" Rosenmuller.

under these circumstances to gain admission into that state, which is the final portion of the righteous; and which may in a peculiar and appropriate sense be called the kingdom of God, being that state of glory and felicity, which he has promised as the reward of persevering virtue, and where God himself will be all in all. The frail animal system which lives and acts in the present state would find nothing there, either to gratify its desires, or to support its existence; and that which is corruptible and perishable, can have no participation with that which is incorruptible and indissoluble. Ch. XV. Ver. 50.

2. The apostle declares, as a doctrine of immediate revelation, that a sudden and glorious change shall take place in the persons of the virtuous, who shall be alive at the time when Christ shall appear to raise the dead, ver. 51—54.

Behold, I declare to you a mystery[3]. 51.

I am now about to announce something that has been hitherto unknown, something that was communicated to me by immediate revelation, something that will surprise and astonish you, and to which I demand your serious and devout attention.

We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be

[3] *A mystery.*] "A doctrine of Christianity hitherto unknown. *Rem arcanam, et adhuc occultam, ideoque dignissimam quam attentè audiatis.*" Beza. "What God purposed to do, but his purpose was not till then declared. Dr. Wall." Newcome. "The word mystery only means something new, which was not understood before it was discovered, and by no means a thing that could not be comprehended when it was revealed." Priestley.

Ch. XV. Ver 52.

changed[1]. *In a moment*[2], *in the glance of an eye, at the last trumpet (for the trumpet will sound*[3],) *both the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

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[1] *We shall not all sleep,* &c.] Many copies read, "We shall all sleep, but we shall not all be changed;" which Griesbach notices as a reading of considerable authority, but it is not easy to understand the meaning. "*We shall all be changed.* By *we*, he means the whole body of Christians who shall be alive at that day. So Deut. xxvi. 6, *we* is used for the Jewish people in all ages." Newcome. Ἡμεις, *nempe quos vivos illic Deus deprehenderit, inter quos Paulus putavit fieri posse ut et ipse esset, et alii multi qui cum ipso vivebant.* 1 Thess. iv. 15. *Id eo evenit, quia de die ultimo, quando is futurus esset, nihil Christus suis revelaverat, ut semper expectaretur.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *In a moment,* &c. *both,* &c.] This punctuation and translation I adopt from Bishop Pearce.—"in the glance of an eye." Wakefield.

[3] *The trumpet will sound.*] σαλπισει γαρ, "for a trumpet shall be sounded." Bishop Pearce, who refers to his notes on ch. vi. 16, and xiv. 30, for examples of similar construction. Archbishop Newcome refers to Xen. Anab. p. 16, Ed. 4, Hutchinson, και επει εσαλπιγξε, as a parallel instance. Mr. Evanson supposes that the apostle Paul here alludes to the seventh trumpet in the Apocalypse, and explains it thus: "The seventh predicted war shall assuredly take place; at which period those faithful followers of Christ who are dead, will be raised as foretold by John, with bodies incorruptible; and they who are alive, will be so changed as to fit them to live for ever with the Lord. 1 Thess. iv. 17." This the learned writer calls "a testimony to the antiquity and authenticity of the Apocalypse, infinitely stronger than can be produced in favour of any other book of the received canon." Every body, perhaps, will not be quite so well satisfied with the conclusiveness of his argument as the learned and pious writer himself undoubtedly was. But it is not absolutely necessary, as he seems to insinuate, for those who do not agree in his explanation of the trumpet, to maintain that trumpets "are used in heaven," or that "the dead will be raised to the sound of any musical instrument." The expression may probably allude to some solemn and public prelude which will excite the general attention of mankind to the stupendous event which is approaching; though, of what nature that awful warn-

Though it is quite impossible that this mortal frame should sustain the glories of an immortal state, yet it will not be necessary for all to pass through the pains of death. From this calamity, the righteous who are living when the season of the universal resurrection arrives, shall be happily exempt. When the awful signal shall be given, for it will be given, to awaken those who are asleep, and to summon to life all the generations of mankind, a wonderful change shall instantaneously take place in the persons of the virtuous who shall then be living. The same omnipotent energy which reanimates the dead, will in a moment transform their frail and perishable systems into spiritual, immortal, incorruptible bodies; and being thus made fit to join the innumerable host of the righteous who will be raised to life, they will with them be pronounced blessed, and will enter upon their glorious and everlasting reward. Ch. XV. Ver. 52.

It is observable, that the apostle here speaks in the first person, and it seems doubtful, whether he might not himself hope to see this wonderful event, and to participate in this glorious immunity. It is certain from the second epistle to the Thessalonians, 2 Thess. ii. 1, that he did not, when that epistle was

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ing will be, must baffle all conjecture. "*Describitur solennis adventus Christi, imaginibus vel signis, e regis humani, regnum armata manu occupantis, triumphante ingressu, repetitis.*" Rosenmuller. Evanson's *Reflections on the State of Religion*, &c, p. 39, 40.

Ch. XV. Ver. 52. written, expect the immediate appearance of Christ. But it does not follow that he and the other apostles might not conceive that it would happen before the end of the age. Some expressions which the apostle uses, both in this epistle and in that to the Thessalonians, seem to favour this supposition; and if such were the fact, it appears that the revelations made to the apostles were similar to those made to the ancient prophets, who, being ignorant of the purport of their own prophecies concerning a suffering Messiah, searched diligently to discover their meaning. The fact, that those who shall be living, when Christ shall appear to raise the dead, will, by a sudden and glorious transformation, be exempted from death, was revealed to the apostles. But the particular time and season when this grand consummation would take place, it pleased God, as in other instances, to reserve in his own power.

53. *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal* must *put on immortality*[1].

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[1] *Must put on immortality.*] "It is plain," says Dr. Priestley, "that in the idea of the apostle, it is virtually the same body that rises, though with some different properties. And as in every seed there is a part that does not perish in the ground, but appears again in the future plant, so some have supposed that in the human body there may be a similar germ or stamen that never perishes, but becomes the principle or foundation of a new life. This, however, is a speculation with which, as Christians, we have no concern. It is enough for us to be informed by the Great Being who made us, that whether our future bodies contain any of the particles of which they now consist, or not, we shall be so far the same, that we shall have a perfect recollection of our present consciousness, and a perfect recollection of our present friends and acquaintance."

It is quite necessary that this dissoluble corruptible system should put on the robe of incorruptibility, and that this frail mortal body should be arrayed in the garments of immortality, in order to strengthen and qualify it for the nature, the occupations, and the blessedness of a new and happier state of being, by the glories of which it would otherwise be oppressed and overwhelmed. Ch. XV. Ver. 53.

And when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then will that scripture be fulfilled, Death is swallowed up for ever[2]. 54.

When the faithful and happy servants of God, redeemed from sin, suffering, and death, shall have exchanged the garments of mortality and corruption for robes of life and immortality, and when they shall thus be fully introduced into that state of glory and blessedness, which the goodness of their heavenly father has prepared for them, then shall that illustrious prophecy receive its full accomplishment, Death is subdued and swallowed up, completely, and for ever. The tyrant is vanquished, and cast into the unfathomable abyss, never to appear

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[2] *For ever.*] εις νικος, quoted from Isa. xxv. 8. "It is in this sense only, that the phrase is used in the LXX. 2 Sam. ii. 26, Shall the sword devour, εις νικος, for ever? See also Job xxxvi. 7; Jer. iii. 5; Lam. iii. 20; Amos i. 11, viii. 7." Whitby.—Pearce and Macknight adopt the same translation for the same reason. The apostle in this instance quotes Isa. xxv. 8, not from the version of the LXX. but from Theodotion. "The prophet there declares in a figurative manner that God would never more utterly disperse or destroy his people, but that they would continue in their own land to the end of time." Dr. Priestley.

Ch. XV. Ver. 54. again to ravage and lay waste the beautiful creation of God. All that remains will be righteousness, and truth, and happiness, unalloyed and everlasting; so that the time may possibly come when it shall even be forgotten that so great a calamity as death ever existed; the very remembrance of it shall be absorbed and lost.

3. The apostle, after this representation of the case, bursts into an exclamation of joy, gratitude, and triumph, ver. 55—57.

55. *O death! where is thy sting*[1]*? O grave!*
56. *where is thy victory? The sting of death indeed*
57. *is sin, and the power of sin is the law*[2]*. But*

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[1] *O death! where is thy sting?*] This is supposed to be an allusion to Hos. xiii. 14, thus translated from the Hebrew by Archbishop Newcome. "Yet, I will redeem them from the grave, I will deliver them from death. O death! where is thine overthrow? O grave! where is thy victory?" "St. Paul," he observes, "naturally applies to the resurrection, what the prophet says of future national happiness." The LXX. reads, "Where is thy punishment, O death? Where is thy sting, O grave?" So that, as Dr. Doddridge observes, it is by no means certain that the apostle intended any quotation at all. That learned expositor also remarks, that "the original has a kind of poetical turn, which seems in some measure to suit the sublimity of the sentiment; for the first of the clauses is an Ionic, and the second a Trochaic verse." Mr. Alexander thinks, that the three verses contain an anthem or song of victory. But I can by no means accede to his supposition, that it is intended to be put into the mouths of those who shall finally escape from death. To me it rather appears to be a burst of admiration, joy, and gratitude, to which the apostle is naturally led by the contemplation of the glorious and happy termination of all the dispensations of God to mankind, in the total and everlasting abolition of sin and death, of vice and misery, and of all evil, natural and moral.

thanks be *to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Ch. XV. Ver. 57.

O death, king of terrors, irresistible conqueror of the human race, where is now thy dreaded weapon? where is thy power to excite dismay? O grave, insatiable devourer of mankind, where are now thy helpless captives? what is become of thy boasted prey? Sin, which entailed destruction and misery, and which distilled venom into the sting of death, is slain; and the righteous and avenging law of God, which passed the irrevocable sentence, and which transferred to sin its deadly power, is superseded by unbounded mercy. Grace reigns triumphant. Captivity is led captive. Death and the grave are compelled to restore their victims, and are themselves cast headlong into the gulf of perdition. They are swallowed up in victory, and, for ever. Thanks, everlasting thanks, be to God, who giveth us the victory, and who, by the mission, the doctrine, the death, and above all by the resurrection, of Jesus, hath abolished death, and opened the gates of life and immortality.

4. The apostle concludes the discourse with an

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[a] *The power of sin is the law.*] "The apostle," says Mr. Alexander, "here represents all who come under the power of death, as dying in consequence of a judicial process. The Law is seated upon the bench, and passes sentence upon them as transgressors. Hence, it is the strength and authority of sin, or the judge who gives death his legal warrant to destroy. Sin in this figurative representation holds the place of a sting or dart in the hand of death, with which he, as the attendant or servant of the judge, executes the sentence that is passed upon us."

Ch. XV. Ver. 57. earnest exhortation to his brethren in the faith of the gospel, to act up to these glorious and animating expectations, ver. 58.

58. *Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, immoveable, always excelling*[1] *in the work of the Lord, knowing that this your labour in the Lord*[2] *will not be vain.*

To conclude; as one who is an associate with you in this glorious hope, as one of the same family of which Jesus is the head, and as one who is tenderly concerned for your true interest, I earnestly exhort you, be steady to your Christian principles, let nothing move you from your faith in Christ, nor induce you to corrupt his religion by the mixture of heathen fable and philosophy; and especially, let nothing shake your faith in the momentous doctrine concerning the resurrection of the dead, upon which all hope depends. Be active in the duties of life, be ever diligent, ever abounding, ever aiming at the highest excellence; act upon Christian principles, and with Christian views. Be not sparing in your exertions; you are not called to labour without hope of reward; you cannot eventually be losers by the utmost activity in doing good. You serve a righte-

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[1] *Excelling.*] περισσευοντες· "for the use of the word in this sense, see ch. viii. 8, and the examples referred to there." Bishop Pearce.

[2] *Labour in the Lord.*] "εν Κυριῳ, the same as δια Κυριου, through the Lord, because, by his resurrection he hath obtained a resurrection for us. See ch. i. 4; 2 Tim. i. 13." Pearce.—"Ὁ κοπος, εν Κυριω, *labor secundum dominum, secundum Christi præceptum; virtutis Christianæ indefessum studium.*" Rosenmuller.—"This your labour." Wakefield, *Theol. Rep.*

ous and a kind master: who knows all that you do, and all that you desire to do in his service; and who will hereafter compensate your faithful exertions beyond all your expectations, and your thoughts. Persevere therefore to the end; and be assured that your Christian labours shall not finally be in vain. Ch. XV. Ver. 58.

CONCLUSION.

The apostle concludes his epistle with some directions concerning a collection for the Hebrew Christians, with a brief account of his own views and designs, with some miscellaneous hints of information and advice, and with the apostolical benediction. Ch. xvi. *throughout.* Ch. XVI.

I.

The apostle offers his advice upon the subject of the collection for the Hebrew Christians, requests that they would treat Timothy with kindness, and expresses his own intention of speedily making them a visit, and his unavailing recommendation to Apollos to visit them also, ver. 1—12.

1. He offers his advice with respect to a collection, which was to be made for the relief of the believers in Judea, ver. 1—4.

Now concerning the collection[3] *for the saints*[4], Ver. 1.

[3] *The collection.*] τῆς λογιας· this word occurs in the New

Ch. XVI. Ver. 1. *as I have given directions to the churches in Galatia, so also do ye.*

I am very desirous of softening the prejudices of the believing Hebrews against the Gentile converts; and in order to this, I have recommended it to the Gentile churches, many of the members of which are in opulent circumstances, to make a contribution for the relief of the believers in Judea, most of whom are persons of inferior rank, and in indigent circumstances, and whose little property, which they possess in common, is exposed to the depredations of their oppressors. I have already given my advice to the churches of Galatia, as to the manner in which I desire the collection should be made, and I will now repeat the same directions to you.

2. *Upon the first day of each week*[1], *let every one of you lay* something *by, treasuring up*[2] *according*

Testament only in this and the next verse; and in the unusual sense of a collection or contribution: Vitringa understands it in the sense of computation, but Bishop Pearce thinks that the common rendering may be justified.

[a] *Saints.*] That is, the Hebrew Christians, who were generally poor, and often persecuted; many of the Gentile Christians were rich, and the apostle was always desirous of promoting contributions for the relief of the Jewish Christians, in order to soften their prejudices against the Gentiles. Dr. Macknight supposes he gave the directions to the churches in Galatia when he made the journey, Acts xvi. 6, and received the contributions when he passed through the churches of Galatia and Phrygia in order, xviii. 23.

[1] *Upon the first day,* &c.] κατα μιαν σαββατων. The word σαββατων here signifies a week. See Luke xviii. 12. Pearce, Wakefield, and others join this clause with the preceding verse, *q. d.* Do ye also follow, on the first day of the week, my orders to the churches in Galatia.

[2] *Treasuring up.*] θησαυριζων. But the apostle advises that

as he prospereth[3], *that no collections may be made when I come.* Ch. XVI. Ver. 2.

On the Lord's day, having first settled your accounts, and ascertained the profits of the preceding week, deduct from them whatever portion your own liberal spirit may suggest, more or less, in proportion to your gains; and bringing the amount with

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what is intended for the poor, should be laid up *at home*, παρ' ἑαυτῷ, that there might be no collection when he came.

Mr. Locke's exposition is, "Let every one of you, according as he thrives in his calling, lay aside some part of his gain by itself, which the first day of the week let him put into the common treasury of the church." Bishop Pearce for θησαυριζων would read θησαυρισων, and translate thus, "Let every one of you lay up at home, that *he may bring into the treasury what he hath been blessed with, i. e.* that at some other time, he does not say when, they were to carry what they had thus laid by them weekly, into the common treasury of the church, that it might be there ready against his coming." Archbishop Newcome's note is, "*By him, with himself*, or, *at home*; first treasuring up in his own house, in proportion as he prosperously possesseth, and afterward delivering the whole to such deacons as may be appointed before I come." He adds, "it might be required that this appropriation might be statedly made on the Lord's day, because the mind was disposed to benevolence by the worship of God."

[3] *According as he prospereth.*] Bishop Pearce's words are, "I suppose St. Paul to mean that upon every Sunday they were to reckon up the gains of the last week, and lay by them at home a proportion towards this charity." Mr. Evanson cites this text as a signal proof, that the Lord's day was not observed sabbatically by the apostle Paul. He speaks of it as "a very rational provision for regulating and preparing every person's quota of the charitable collection, which the persecuted state of the Jewish converts made necessary, but which is so far from insinuating any peculiar sanctity ascribed by the apostles to that day of the week, that it implies in it a direction to every disciple of those times to settle his accounts on that day for the preceding week, that he might proportion his contribution to the state of his circumstances; a business quite incompatible with the idea of a sabbath day." *Theological Repository*, vol. 5. p. 346.

Ch. XVI. Ver. 2. you to public worship, put it into the common treasury of the church, that when I come, the money may be ready, and no time may be lost in making the collection.

Two things are here observable; First, that the first day of the week was a day of religious worship, a day when Christians usually assembled together for the purpose, no doubt, of commemorating the death, and celebrating the resurrection, of their great Master, and for confirming themselves and each other in their Christian faith and practice. Secondly, that this day was also a day of secular business, in which the apostle recommends it to the Corinthians to settle their accounts and strike the balance of their profits, that they may be able to judge what they can with convenience and propriety contribute to the relief of the poor. True religion and honourable industry can never be inconsistent with each other. It may, however, be remarked, that the apostle, being a Jew, began to reckon the day from sunset; and as public worship began very early on the Lord's day morning, his idea probably was, that their accounts being settled on, what we call, Saturday evening, they might bring their contributions with them the next morning.

3. *And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve, them I will send with letters*[1] *to carry your bounty to Jerusalem.*

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[1] *With letters.*] δι' επιστολων, "*brevis est locutio, q. d. mittens per literas eos commendabo; testimonio meo eos prosequar.*" Gro-

Whatsoever persons are recommended by you as properly qualified to be the messengers of your beneficence, I will give them letters of introduction to the apostles and other leading members of the church at Jerusalem. Ch. XVI. Ver. 3.

But if it be worthy of my going also, they shall go with me. 4.

If your contribution should, as perhaps it may, be so liberal as to authorize me to take the charge of it myself, I shall willingly undertake it in conjunction with the persons whom you may appoint; and they shall accompany me to Jerusalem, and be witnesses to the proper distribution of your bounty; as I would by no means be the sole agent in a trust, the administration of which I might be suspected as undertaking with selfish and mercenary views.

We may observe here, the oblique and delicate, but strong and persuasive manner, in which the apostle endeavours to excite their liberality in a cause which he was very desirous of encouraging.

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tius. This translation is favoured by Rom. xiv. 20. Bishop Pearce doubts whether διὰ ever signifies *with*, and translates, "those whom *you shall have approved* by your letters, I will send," &c. Macknight also disapproves of Grotius's interpretation, and gives this translation: "Whomsoever ye shall approve by letters, [*i. e.* of recommendation to the brethren at Jerusalem,] them I will send." Mr. Locke and Archbishop Newcome put the comma after δοκιμασητε, "as the opposition is between sending others with letters and going himself:" and Wakefield says, that all the Oriental versions with evident propriety adopt this punctuation. *q. d.* "whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters," &c.

Ch. XVI. Ver. 4. He suffers no opportunity to pass by of urging Christians in opulent circumstances to be liberal to the poor, and especially where, as in the present case, it would have a direct tendency to promote a spirit of candour and affection among Christians of different sects and parties, who might be inclined to think and speak ill of each other.

2. He promises to visit, and to spend some time with the Corinthians on his return from Macedonia, before the winter, ver. 5—7.

5. *Now I will come to you when I have passed*
through Macedonia, for I mean *to pass through*
6. *Macedonia. And perhaps I shall continue and*
even winter with you, that ye may conduct me for-
ward on my journey whithersoever I may go.
7. *For I do not desire to see you now in passing* only,
but I hope to stay some time with you, if the Lord
permit.

In the beginning of the summer, I intend to make a missionary progress through Macedonia. I do not however mean to call upon you in my way, as I formerly led you to expect, 2 Cor. i. 15, for I should have but little time to spend with you, and it will be more convenient to make you a longer visit upon my return, at the latter end of the year. At that time, I hope that, in consequence of the advice which I have given in this epistle, and which has been dictated by the purest friendship for you, I shall find party spirit so much abated, and the present irregularities so much checked and reform-

ed, that I shall be able to spend the winter with you with mutual satisfaction, if Christ, whose servant I am, and under whose direction I act, should not order me to some other district, and find employment for me elsewhere. Ch. XVI. Ver. 7.

This is plainly the apostle's meaning; and when he wrote the epistle, he no doubt intended to visit them before the close of the year. But it appears from the second epistle, that in this respect he was disappointed; for having received an account of the state of the church perhaps from Timothy, comp. ver. 10, with 2 Cor. i. 1, and certainly from Titus, 2 Cor. vii. 6, which, though upon the whole encouraging, was not altogether satisfactory, he determined to defer his promised visit to another year, the reasons of which change of purpose he explains in his second epistle.

3. The apostle expresses his intention to continue till Pentecost at Ephesus, where he was very useful, though he met with great opposition, ver. 8, 9.

But I shall remain at Ephesus until Pentecost, 8.
for a great door of employment[1] *is opened to me,* 9.
and there are many opposers.

[1] *A great door of employment.*] Θυρα μεγαλη και ενεργης, "a great door and full of labour." Pearce. "a wide door for my employment." Symonds. "a great door of employment." Wakefield. "He seems plainly to allude," says Pyle, "to the *Ostia Circi Maximi*, from whence the race-horses and chariots were wont to be started. And this is very much countenanced

Ch. XVI. Ver. 9. Amidst great opposition from wicked and interested men, I am making many converts at Ephesus, where I now am, and where I propose to continue till late in the spring, when I shall set out upon my journey to Macedonia.

Here we may observe, 1. That when the apostle wrote this epistle, he was certainly at Ephesus; and consequently that the postscript which says that the epistle was written from Philippi, is erroneous. 2. That the apostle did not continue at Ephesus so long as he intended, being driven away by the tumult which was raised by Demetrius and the artists, whose trade was injured by the progress of the Christian doctrine. It is probable, however, that this was not long before he meant to depart, as it is supposed that the letter itself was written about the time of the Passover.

4. He recommends Timothy to their attention and respect, and informs them that Apollos declined visiting them for the present, ver. 10—12.

10. *Now if Timothy come*[1], *see that he be among*

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by the phrase αντικειμενοι, those adversaries answering to the antagonists in the races, against whom the apostle was to run as it were, and strive to outdo."

[1] *If Timothy come.*] The more I consider the subject, the more I am inclined to believe that the first epistle to Timothy was not written by the apostle upon the occasion of his leaving Ephesus after the tumult of Demetrius; but rather when he left Ephesus to preach the gospel in Crete, or possibly after his second imprisonment, on his return to Rome. When the apostle wrote this epistle to the Corinthians, Timothy was upon a missionary progress; the apostle expected him to visit Corinth, and to make some little stay there; and he means to give the

you without fear, for he is employed in the work of the Lord, as I also am. *Therefore, let no one despise him, but conduct him forward on his journey that he may come to me in peace*[2], *for I and the brethren expect him*[3]. Ch. XVI. Ver. 11.

Timothy, though a young man, is a diligent and faithful fellow-labourer with me in the gospel. I have desired him to call at Corinth in the course of his present mission, and I and the brethren with me expect him to return before I leave Ephesus.

Corinthians notice of his visit, and to recommend him to their favour. He expected, therefore, that his letter would arrive at Corinth before Timothy. But if it was written at the season of the Passover, there would hardly be time enough, before the Pentecost, which was only six weeks, for the epistle to reach Corinth, and for Timothy to make a short visit there and to arrive at Ephesus, not at the Pentecost, but at the time of Demetrius's riot, which happened before that festival. It is probable, therefore, that Timothy was not at Ephesus when the apostle left the city, but that he met Paul in Macedonia. Yet it is also possible that Timothy in his progress might have declined making the intended visit to Corinth, and might have returned to Ephesus sooner than the apostle expected, and before he left it. And this supposition is favoured by the consideration that the apostle in his second epistle acknowledges having received good accounts from Corinth by Titus, but saith nothing of any tidings received through Timothy.

[2] *That he may come to me in peace.*] This punctuation is recommended by Bishop Pearce as the most natural; εἰρηνῃ, *peace*, he translates *safety*: he justifies the transposition of ἱνα ελθῃ, by referring to 1 Cor. ix. 15; Rom. xi. 31. The common version is, "conduct him forth in peace, that he may come to me."

[3] *I and the brethren expect him.*] εκδεχομαι αυτον μετα των αδελφων. "Our English version renders these words, '*for I look for him with the brethren*,' which may signify that St. Paul expected the brethren as well as Timothy; but this is not the sense. The brethren were present with St. Paul, as appears from the next verse, and therefore Paul and the brethren looked for Timothy." Bishop Pearce.

CH. XVI. Ver. 11. I hope he will bring me a good account of your state. Despise him not on account of his youth, but let the dignity of his character and the importance of his mission compensate for the tenderness of his years. Discourage him not by cold, harsh, contemptuous behaviour, but pay him the respect due to his character and mission, and help him forward in his journey.

12. *Now concerning our brother Apollos*[1], *I and the brethren were very importunate with him to go to you; however, he was by no means willing to go now, but he will go at a convenient season.*

I hoped that the presence of Apollos, in the present distracted state of your society, might have been of singular use, and that his knowledge and piety, his eloquence and zeal, might have contributed to silence faction, and to put a stop to the disorders of the church. For which reason, I and the brethren here earnestly importuned him to accompany the messengers, who are the bearers of this epistle to Corinth. We have not however been able to succeed, for at present he is disinclined to take the journey; but that you may not think that this delay arises from want of affection to you, he promises to make you a visit by the first convenient opportunity.

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[1] *Apollos.*] Some persons think it was a matter of delicacy in Apollos not to go to Corinth at this time, because his name had been mentioned in opposition to St. Paul: but it seems clear from 1 Cor. iv. 6, that he only used the names of Cephas and Apollos for convenience, because he did not choose to mention the name of his opponent. "*I and the brethren.*" Pearce.

II.

The apostle exhorts to Christian duties, recommends respect to faithful ministers, expresses his satisfaction in the visit of the Corinthian messengers, sends the salutation of the churches, and closes with his own salutation and the apostolical benediction. Ch. xvi. 13, to the end. Ch. XVI. Ver. 12.

1. The apostle exhorts to watchfulness, stedfastness, and mutual affection, ver. 13, 14.

Be vigilant, stand firm in the faith, acquit yourselves like men, be strong. 13.

Keep a strict guard against every thing, and every person, that would corrupt your faith, or seduce you into practices unbecoming your profession. Adhere firmly to the doctrine which you were taught by me. Behave with the dignity and steadiness of men, and not with the inconsistency and caprice of children, and be resolute in your opposition to error and vice.

Let all your concerns be transacted in love. 14.

In all your intercourse with each other, be solicitous to promote each other's welfare, both temporal and spiritual, and let benevolence govern your conduct. Where love is the ruling principle, party spirit will vanish, and divisions will soon be healed.

2. He recommends to them to treat the family of Stephanas, and all other ministers and teachers, with due respect, and expresses great satisfaction

Ch. XVI. in his interview with the Corinthian messengers, ver. 15—18.

Ver. 15. *Brethren, ye know*[1] *the family of Stephanas, that they are the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to minister to the*
16. *saints; I beseech you, submit yourselves to such persons, and to every associate in their work and labour.*

My brethren, you know the highly respectable character of Stephanas and his family; you recollect that they were the first converts to the Christian religion at Corinth, and therefore that they possess greater knowledge and experience than many others. You also know that this whole family in their several stations have devoted themselves to the service of the church, some being employed in public instruction, others, in supplying the wants of the stranger and the poor; let such be treated with due respect, and let all who have imbibed the same spirit, and who in one way or another lay themselves out to promote the welfare of the society, either by public or private instruction, or by acts of hospitality and charity, meet with the deference and the gratitude due to superior wisdom, experience, and goodness.

17. *And I rejoice at the arrival of Stephanas, and*

[1] *Brethren, ye know.*] Bishop Pearce translates οἴδατε imperatively. "I beseech you, brethren, have regard to the family of Stephanas," &c. The bishop also observes, that this verse proves, that in Rom. xvi. 5, in the received text, where Epænetus is called the first fruits of *Achaia*, there is an error, of *Achaia* instead of *Asia*. See Griesbach.

Fortunatus[2], *and Achaicus; for, what remained* Ch. XVI.
to be done[3] *on your part, they have supplied, for* Ver. 18.
they have refreshed[4] *my spirit, and yours. Acknowledge therefore such* men[5].

I am much pleased with the visit, which I have received from those eminent persons who brought your letter. Their kind attention has in some degree compensated for the want of your company. And they have executed their commission with so much affection and friendship as gave me great pleasure to witness, and will give you equal pleasure to hear. Such men are highly valuable members of a Christian society. I charge you to esteem and love them according to their worth.

3. The apostle transmits the general salutations

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[2] *Fortunatus.*] This excellent man outlived the apostle some years, and was the bearer of Clement's letter from Rome to the Corinthians.

[3] *What remained to be done,* &c.] "το ὑμων ὑστερημα, *they have supplied me with what you suffered me to want.*" Bishop Pearce; who observes that the word ὑστερημα in the apostle's writings, almost uniformly signifies want of money. See 2 Cor. viii. 14, ix. 12, xi. 9, and would have been so understood in this place, had not the apostle so frequently and expressly declared that he would accept of no supply from the Corinthians. Yet still the learned prelate thinks it not improbable that they might have brought a supply from some of the countries through which they passed. Archbishop Newcome, with most expositors, understands the apostle, *q. d.* "services, which you if present would have performed; my want of you; your absence."

[4] *They have refreshed my spirit, and yours.*] *q. d.* Both myself and you. "My spirit, and therefore yours; he means that his refreshment was theirs." Newcome and Pearce.

[5] *Acknowledge such* men.] Wakefield. επιγινωσκετε, "esteem such men as these." Pearce.

Ch. XVI. Ver. 18. of the Asiatic churches, and particularly of the friends who were with him, and exhorts them to observe the common forms of kindness to each other, ver. 19, 20.

19. *The churches of Asia salute you. Apollos*[1], *and Aquila and Priscilla, with whom I lodge*[2], *and the church in their house, salute you in the*
20. *Lord. All the brethren salute you. Salute one another with a holy kiss*[3].

My fellow-labourers at Ephesus, the friends with whom I lodge, the society of believers which resides under the same roof, or which from time to time assemble there for religious worship, and in general all the brethren who dwell in this city, and the churches in its vicinity, send their kind salutations to you. And be not you deficient in the common

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[1] *Apollos.*] One manuscript reads Απολλως και. See Griesbach. And Bishop Pearce suspects this to be the true reading, dropping πολλα, (salute you *much*,) as the apostle no where else joins an adverb with ασπαζονται. Apollos was at Ephesus when the apostle wrote; and from Acts xviii 26, it appears that he lived in the same house with Aquila and Priscilla.

[2] *With whom, or at whose house, I lodge.*] παρ' οις και ξενιζομαι. This is the reading of the Clermont and three other uncial MSS., and of the Vulgate, the Italic, and other versions. See Griesbach.

[3] *A holy kiss.*] See Rom. xvi. 16, and the note there. Dr. Doddridge on that text observes, that "the custom of thus saluting each other was borrowed from the Jewish synagogue, and as chastely and prudently as it was managed, it seems to have been the occasion of those false and scandalous reports which were so industriously propagated among the heathen, of the adulterous and incestuous practices in Christian assemblies, on which account it seems to have been laid aside very early."

and decent expressions of civility and affection to each other. Ch. XVI. Ver. 20.

4. The apostle with his own hand writes the salutation, denounces an anathema upon the enemies of the gospel, and concludes the epistle with a benediction, ver. 21—24.

The salutation is written *by the hand of me Paul.* 21.

To save myself the trouble of writing, I employ an amanuensis; but to authenticate the epistle, I write the salutation with my own hand.

If any one love not the Lord[4], *let him be anathema*[5]; *the Lord is coming.* 22.

If any person professing the Christian religion, is so entire a stranger to the doctrine and spirit of the gospel as to propagate dangerous errors, to sow dissention in the church, to set himself up as the head of a party in opposition to the apostles of Christ, and the authorized teachers of the Chris-

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[4] *The Lord.*] The words "Jesus Christ" in the received text, are wanting in the Alexandrine, Vatican, Ephrem, and other manuscripts, and in the Coptic and Æthiopic Versions. Griesbach also marks them as of very dubious authority.

[5] *Let him be anathema.*] Maran-atha, two Syriac words which signify, "The Lord is coming." See Philip. iv. 5. Some think the anathema unworthy of the apostle, and would expunge it. Vid. Bowyer. But it is similar to Gal. i. 8, 9. Mr. Wakefield understands it of excommunication. *q. d.* Let him be separated from you. Archbishop Newcome says, he has his opponents in view. "This being so different a sentence," says Mr. Locke, "from any of those writ with St. Paul's own hand in any of his other epistles, may it not with probability be understood to mean the false apostle, to whom St. Paul imputes all the disorders in this church, and of whom he speaks not much less severely 2 Cor. xi. 13—15?"

Ch. XVI. Ver. 22. tian religion, and thus to manifest his utter disregard to the person and authority of our common Lord; let that man know that in due time he will receive the reward of his deeds. It may not be in your power, or in mine, to treat such an offender according to his deserts; but the day is coming, when the judge will appear, and when all shall be judged according to their true characters. Let such an one tremble at the prospect of it.

The apostle is here supposed to allude to the superstitious notion which then prevailed among the Jews; who, when deprived of the power of life and death, devoted to destruction those who by their law had forfeited their lives, expecting that God would interpose in some miraculous manner to inflict a just punishment upon them.

Unless it be admitted that the apostle here speaks under the influence of the spirit of prophecy, and not of resentment, and that his words are a declaration of the punishment that will certainly be inflicted, rather than a wish that it might come to pass, we shall hardly be able to clear him of a degree of infirmity inconsistent with the general excellence of his character. But be that as it may, let no person from the apostle's example think himself authorized to denounce anathemas upon those whom he may ignorantly fancy to be the enemies of Christ; but let each, in the faithful discharge of his own duty, await the just award of that day, when every work shall be tried of what sort it is,

The favour of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you; may the love of God[1] *be with you all in Christ Jesus*[2]. Ch. XVI. Ver. 23. 24.

May you enjoy in abundance all the blessings of the gospel, in its privileges, in its spirit, and in its consolations, and having been converted to the knowledge of truth, and the practice of virtue, by the gospel of Christ, may you be enriched with the favour and love of God, which is the great source of happiness both here and hereafter. Amen.

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[1] *The love of God.*] The received text reads "my love (ἡ ἀγαπη μου) be with you." The Alexandrine and another manuscript omit μου; Bishop Pearce thinks it would be very strange if the apostle had prayed, or wished, that his love might be with the Corinthians, in the same form of expression in which he prays, or wishes, that the grace of Christ may be with them: he approves Le Clerc's conjecture, that ΜΟΥ is a mistake for ΘΟΥ, and reads "the love of God as it occurs in 2 Cor. xiii. 14." The bishop remarks, "that in no part of his writings does the apostle pray that his love may be with them." See Griesbach and the improved Version *in loc.* Note.

[2] The postscript which dates this epistle from Philippi, is evidently erroneous. It was written from Ephesus. See ch. xvi. 8—19.

THE SECOND EPISTLE

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

THE CORINTHIANS.

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

WHILE the apostle Paul resided at Ephesus he formed a purpose of visiting Corinth in his way to Macedonia, (2 Cor. i. 15, 16,) and of spending some time there in his return from Macedonia, on his way to Jerusalem, of which intention he had probably by some means apprized the Corinthians. In consequence, however, of hearing of the disorderly state of the Corinthian church, he laid aside this design previous to his writing his first epistle [1], and having sent Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia, (Acts xix. 21,) he meant, when he left Ephesus at

[1] *Previous to his writing his first epistle.*] Vide Paley's *Hor. Paul.*; 2 Cor. No. 4.

Pentecost, A.D. 56, to follow them thither, and he wrote word to the Corinthians that he would pass the winter of that year at Corinth, 1 Cor. xvi. 5, 6—8.

The fact however was, that he again postponed his journey for another year [1], and instead of visiting them at the time he proposed and promised, he went to Macedonia, and probably from thence to Illyricum [2], and having returned to Philippi, perhaps about the middle of A.D. 57, he there wrote this epistle to the Corinthians to assign the reasons for his delay, and to prepare them for the visit which he was now determined to make them in a short time.

The apostle, in consequence of the riot occasioned by Demetrius, (Acts xix. 19,) was probably obliged to leave Ephesus sooner than he originally intended. (Acts xx. 1.) He went to Troas, where he expected to have found Titus, whom he had sent with his first letter to Corinth, and from whom he expected an account of the impression which it had made, and the effect it had produced upon the Corinthians. For much as he wished to visit Corinth, he did not choose to go thither till he was informed of the state of the Corinthian church,

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[1] *Another year.*] Otherwise he could not have boasted to the Macedonians, that Achaia had been ready with her contribution a year ago. Vide 2 Cor. viii. 10.

[2] *To Illyricum.*] Rom. xv. 19; compare ver. 25, 26, from whence it appears, that the apostle must have accomplished this mission before he went from Corinth to Jerusalem.

and of the reception he was likely to meet with among them.

Not finding Titus at Troas, and being impatient to hear tidings from Corinth, the apostle gave up a flattering prospect of great usefulness at Troas, and leaving that city, he crossed the sea to Macedonia. In that province he met with Titus; but at what particular place does not appear either from Paul's epistle, or from Luke's history, for the narrative of Luke is in this instance very brief, and it is observable that he never mentions the name of Titus.

From Titus, the apostle received an account of the state of things at Corinth, which, though in the main favourable, (2 Cor. vii. 6,) was not altogether satisfactory. Indeed, it should seem from some passages in this epistle, that the false apostle and his adherents, finding their interest upon the decline in consequence of the apostle's letter, became more malignant, and more abusive in their opposition to the apostle than before; representing him as an unauthorized and mercenary teacher, upon whose purposes and promises no dependance could be placed; and who, though he blustered at a distance, would be very tame and gentle when he came among them. And upon the whole, though much had been reformed, so many irregularities still remained, that to avoid the necessity of using the rod of apostolic correction, he determined to postpone his visit for a year, hoping in the mean time that the advice given in his former epistle

would continue to operate upon their minds, and gradually produce a still further reformation.

Upon his return to Macedonia, he wrote this second epistle, to prepare the minds of the Corinthians for the visit which he intended shortly to make them. The postscript says, it was written from Philippi, and sent to Corinth by Titus and Luke, and this account is in part confirmed by the epistle itself, ch. viii. 16—18.

The apostle soon followed them to Corinth, and continued there three months (Acts xx. 3). By his personal presence, authority, and counsel, he probably completed the reformation which his epistles had begun; the abuses and disorders against which he so earnestly remonstrates were corrected; the factious and obstinate were excluded from the society; and the false apostle was either humbled or disowned: after which, as we learn from the epistle of Clement, (the companion of Paul,) written to the same church many years afterwards, the Corinthian believers as a body continued for a long time equally distinguished by their faith, their piety, their active zeal, and general good conduct.

This is one of those epistles, the genuineness and authenticity of which have never been called in question by any writer, ancient or modern. It has been acknowledged and quoted as the composition of the apostle from the earliest age of Christianity to the present time; and the many allusions to

facts and persons, the undesigned coincidences with Luke's history, and the occasional variations from it; the general purpose of the epistle, and the excellent temper and spirit which it breathes, constitute a body of presumptive evidence in its favour, which cannot but be satisfactory to an inquisitive and candid reader [1].

THE MAIN DESIGN of the apostle in this epistle is, to assert his claim as an authorized teacher of the gospel, in no respect inferior to any of the other apostles; and to manifest his decided superiority to his factious and boastful opponent; to defend his character from the imputation of inconsistency, of selfishness, of timidity, and imposture; and to warn his opposers, not to compel him, by their obstinacy, to proceed to measures of severity against them.

The apostle having INTRODUCED the epistle with the usual salutation, in which he joins the name of Timothy with his own, ch. i. 1, 2, proceeds, in

PART THE FIRST,

to clear his character from the imputation of inconsistency, and to assert the purity of his motives, and the propriety of his conduct in the discharge of his

[1] This argument is illustrated with his usual perspicuity and force by the late acute and learned Archdeacon Paley, in his celebrated *Horæ Paulinæ*.

ministry, and especially in his transactions with the Corinthians themselves. He also appeals to his integrity, his disinterestedness, his activity and zeal, his fortitude, his sufferings, and his distinguished success, especially in his ministrations among them, as clear testimonials to his divine mission, which he trusts that they will be ready to acknowledge and allow. Ch. i. 3.—vii.

1. He expresses his gratitude to God for his deliverance from the imminent danger which threatened him in Asia, alluding probably, to the tumult excited at Ephesus by Demetrius and the artists, ver. 3—14.

2. He apologizes for not having yet visited them according to his repeated promise, which was entirely owing to tenderness for them, and not to any caprice or inconsistency in him, ver. 15—Ch. ii. 3.

3. He advises them to forgive the incestuous offender, upon whose conduct he had severely animadverted in his former epistle, and who had become a real and much humbled penitent, ver. 4—11.

4. He relates, that in his anxiety to obtain tidings of them, he had sacrificed a great prospect of usefulness at Troas, and had passed over to Macedonia to meet Titus; and he breaks out into an animated expression of gratitude to God for the triumph and progress of the gospel which he was commissioned to preach, ver. 12 *to the end.*

5. The apostle appeals to their public and honourable profession of Christianity as superseding

all other letters of recommendation, and as abundantly establishing his claim as an authorized missionary of the gospel dispensation; the superior glory of which to that of Moses he illustrates at large, and infers the superior obligation which its ministers are under to sincerity and zeal. Ch. iii. 1.—iv. 6.

6. The ability of himself and of his fellow-labourers to support the hardships and the sufferings which they endured in the discharge of their ministry, exhibited a further proof of divine assistance and protection, and consequently of a divine mission; as no assignable motive could animate their activity and zeal, short of a firm conviction of the truth of their doctrine, and a lively expectation of the promised rewards, ver. 7—10.

7. As a further evidence of their divine legation, the apostle states, that from devotedness to Christ who died for all, and from duty to God who is the origin of all, they, as ambassadors of Christ, and co-operating with God, are continually employed in imploring men to accept the offers of the gospel. Ch. v. 11.—vi. 2.

8. By their inoffensive conduct, their integrity, their suffering fortitude, their persevering zeal, and their extraordinary success, they still further approve the validity of their claim, ver. 3—10.

9. The apostle requests a reciprocal share in the affection of the Corinthians, and warns them against imprudent and dangerous connexions with heathen idolaters. Ch. vi. 11.—vii. 1.

10. The apostle pleads his continued disinterested affection for them, and expresses his confidence that they will admit his claim; he repeats the acknowledgement of his great satisfaction with the report of Titus, and particularly in his account of their conduct towards the incestuous person, and of the affection which they had shown to that evangelist, who was highly gratified by the reception he had met with. Ch. vii. 2 *to the end.*

PART THE SECOND.

THE APOSTLE urges the Corinthians, after the example of the churches in Macedonia, to be liberal in their contributions to the relief of their indigent brethren in Judea, and informs them that he had sent Titus and others to complete the collection before he came. This subject occupies the eighth and the ninth chapters.

1. The apostle informs them of the extraordinary generosity of the churches in Macedonia, and urges various considerations to induce the Corinthians to exercise a similar liberality in contributing to the relief of their necessitous brethren in Judea, in proportion to their ability. Ch. viii. 1—15.

2. He informs them, that in order to forward the contribution, he had sent Titus with two other distinguished brethren, who had with great cheerfulness accepted the commission, and who, by their virtue and their zeal, were eminently qualified to be

intrusted with the distribution of the public charity, ver. 16—24.

3. He was the more anxious that the collection should be ready and liberal, because he had boasted of their generosity to the Macedonians; and though he is unwilling to prescribe minutely, he assures them in general that pure disinterested liberality would be highly acceptable to God, and would not fail to ensure an abundant blessing. Ch. ix. 1—9.

4. He concludes this portion of the epistle with prayer to God that their liberality may turn to the best account to themselves and others. Ch. ix. 10—15.

PART THE THIRD.

THE APOSTLE, changing his tone, establishes his claim to a divine commission in opposition to the allegations of the false apostle; he vindicates himself and his companions from the charges and calumnies of this impostor and his adherents; and threatens to animadvert severely upon them if they do not repent and alter their conduct before his arrival at Corinth. He then concludes his epistle with the usual salutations and benediction. Ch. xi.—xiii.

1. The apostle requests the Corinthians that they would not compel him to use severity; he assures them that whatever they might think, or whatever his opponents might insinuate, he was armed with full powers to vindicate his apostolic authority, and to punish those who were contumacious, and that he

did not, like some others, boast without reason. Ch. x. 1—11.

2. The apostle makes some sarcastic remarks upon the self-conceit of his opponent, and upon his officious interference in the concerns of the church at Corinth, which had been planted by the apostle, ver. 12—18.

3. The apostle, after apologizing for his self-commendation, asserts his complete equality with the other apostles, and vindicates himself from the calumnies which had been propagated against him by the false apostle and his associates, upon whom he animadverts with great freedom and severity. Ch. xi. 1—15.

4. The apostle again apologizing for the self-commendation to which in self-defence he had been compelled to resort, asserts, that in external advantages he was equal to any of his competitors; but that in labours and sufferings as a minister of the gospel, he was far superior to them all. Ch. xi. 16—33.

5. Being against his will compelled to speak in his own commendation, the apostle with great modesty touches upon the revelations and visions with which he had been favoured; but expresses still greater satisfaction in alluding to some consequent bodily infirmities, which, while they appeared almost to incapacitate him for active duty, so much the more illustrated the power of Christ, in the great success which attended his ministrations. Ch. xii. 1—10.

6. The apostle demonstrates his authority by an appeal to his miraculous powers, apologizes for not having accepted a maintenance from them, repels the calumnious insinuations of his adversaries, assigns the true reason of postponing his visits, and expresses his apprehensions concerning the characters of some who made profession of the Christian faith. Ch. xii. 11—21.

7. The apostle threatens to inflict condign punishment upon the refractory and contumacious, but at the same time expresses his earnest wish that they would disarm him by repentance, even though it should be at the expense of this proof of his apostolical authority; after which, he concludes his epistle with good wishes, salutations, and a solemn benediction. Ch. xiii. *throughout.*

Upon this general review of the epistle, it is impossible not to remark the very different tone and temper of the former and of the latter part of the composition. In the former part, including the first seven chapters, the apostle, addressing the great body of the Corinthian believers whom he knew to be well-affected towards him, expresses himself in the mild language of affectionate expostulation, conjuring them by his love, his zeal, his sufferings, and his success in publishing the gospel, to adhere stedfastly to their regard to his person, to their acknowledgement of his authority, to their profession of his doctrine, and to the practice of duty. In the latter part of his epistle, in the three last chapters, he as-

sumes a higher tone, and expresses himself in more dignified language. While he apologizes for his self-commendation by the necessity of self-defence, he at the same time substantiates his claim to the authority of the apostleship by an appeal to miracles and revelations, to his labours, his sufferings, and his success. He publicly arraigns his opponent as an impostor and an incendiary; he challenges him to competition, and assumes a superiority over him in the very articles in which he most prided himself; he charges him with exciting contentions and fomenting parties in the church, in order to gratify his ambition, and to glut his avarice; he denounces him as the base calumniator of himself and his fellow-labourers, and threatens that, in his approaching visit to Corinth, he will chastise him as he deserves; at the same time expressing his kind wish that his adversary would disarm him by timely and sincere repentance.

The apostle could not have expressed himself in this triumphant manner if he had not been informed that his first epistle had produced a great effect, and that a very general reformation had taken place. Of the impression made by this second epistle, and particularly upon the mind of the false apostle, we are not distinctly informed. Possibly, he might improve by the apostle's friendly admonition, and might make the requisite confession and submission to him when he came to Corinth. More probably, he continued hardened against reproof: and finding his influence at an end, he might either renounce Christianity,

or might make his escape before the apostle's arrival. At any rate, we know that the epistles and the personal instructions and advice of the apostle, were productive of the best effects. For in the epistle of Clement, which was written some years afterwards to the same church, the venerable writer speaks in the highest terms of the purity of faith and morals, and of the order and discipline which then prevailed in the Corinthian church. Such was the happy effect of seasonable instruction, and of mild and judicious reproof.

"Who that visited Corinth (says Clement in his admirable epistle) did not applaud your steady and exemplary profession of the gospel? Who did not admire your calm and rational piety as Christians? Who did not celebrate your amiable and generous hospitality? Who did not bestow the highest eulogies on your perfect and accurate knowledge of Christianity? In every instance of duty your character was irreproachable. In the commandments of God you walked; to your pastors you yielded obedience; to your aged you paid due honour; youth you carefully trained up in piety and virtue. You were, moreover, humble; in nothing elated; more delighted in giving than receiving; perfectly satisfied with the divine allotments; and diligently attending to his word, you treasured it up in your minds, and kept the divine instructions before your eyes. In this profound and happy tranquillity you all lived, cherishing an insatiable ardour to do good, and mutually enjoying the ample endowments of the

holy spirit. Full of holy desires and benevolent dispositions, you stretched out your hands with devout confidence to God, the universal governor, imploring his pardoning mercy if you had fallen into any involuntary errors. You were distinguished for sincerity and simplicity, and the mutual forgiveness of injuries. All discord, all dissension you regarded with horror. You mourned over the sins of your neighbours; their deficiencies you esteemed your own. You rejoiced in every opportunity to do a beneficent action; you were prompt to every good work; your minds were adorned with universal virtue; and the whole tenor of your religious conversation was governed by the fear of God. The statutes and ordinances of the Lord were engraven on the tablet of your heart [1]."

This epistle was written before the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple[2], that is, before A.D. 70. Probably three or four years after the death of the apostle; and ten or twelve years after the date of the second epistle to the Corinthians, and of the apostle's last visit at Corinth. It describes a state of things in the church at Corinth very different from that which the apostle exhibits in his first or even in his second epistle; and contains an unexceptionable testimony to the great and good effect which was produced almost immediately by the apostle's instructions, admonitions, and reproofs. Unfortunately,

[1] Clement's *Epistle to the Church at Corinth*, sect. 1, 2. Harwood's Translation.

[2] Ibid. sect. 40, 41.

this good effect did not continue long. In about ten years, and very soon after the martyrdom of the apostle, the same spirit of rivalry and insubordination broke out again, and produced the same evil effects upon the peace and discipline of the Corinthian church; to remedy which, this eminent and venerable Christian, the friend and companion of Paul, and at that time bishop of the Roman church, wrote this celebrated epistle, the effect of which upon the mind and conduct of those to whom it was addressed is not recorded in history.

THE SECOND
EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

THE APOSTLE'S INTRODUCTION.

THE apostle greets the church of Corinth in the usual form, joining the name of Timothy with his own. Ch. i. 1, 2. Ch. i.

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, and Timothy our *brother*[1], *to the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints that are in the whole region of Achaia*[2], *favour* be *to* Ver. 1. 2.

[1] *Timothy* our *brother.*] *i. e.* "either in the common faith, see Rom. i. 13, or, in the work of the ministry, see Rom. xvi. 21; 1 Cor. xvi. 12. St. Paul may be supposed to have given Timothy the title of brother here, for dignity's sake, to give him a reputation above his age, amongst the Corinthians to whom he had before sent him with some kind of authority, to rectify their disorders. Timothy was but a young man when St. Paul writ his first epistle to him, 1 Tim. iv. 12. Which epistle, by the consent of all, was written to Timothy after he had been at Corinth, and in the opinion of some very learned men, not less than eight years after; and therefore his calling him brother here, and joining him with himself in writing this epistle, may be, to let the Corinthians see that though he were so young, he was one whom St. Paul thought fit to treat very much as an equal." Locke.

[2] *Achaia.*] "The country wherein Corinth stood." Locke.—"*Voluit igitur Paulus ut exempla hujus epistolæ ad alias in Achaia ecclesias mitterentur, ut tum fieri solebat.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. I. Ver. 2. *you, and peace from God, our Father, and* from *the Lord Jesus Christ*[1].

I Paul, who have been chosen by the free goodness of God to be a messenger of Jesus Christ, a teacher of his gospel, and a witness of his resurrection, together with Timothy my brother in the common faith, and my fellow-labourer in planting the gospel at Corinth, unite in the most affectionate salutations to the church, which is associated for the worship of the true God at Corinth, and to all the believers in the gospel in the neighbouring regions. It is our earnest desire and prayer that you may all participate in the blessings of that gospel, which is the free gift of God, which is the source of all true comfort and felicity here and hereafter, which entitles you, though heathen, to look up to God as your father, and to expect an everlasting inheritance from him; and which was revealed to us by Jesus Christ, whom we regard as the holy prophet of God, and whom we acknowledge and revere as our Lord and Master.

After this introduction, the apostle proceeds to the main business of the first part of his epistle.

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[1] *And* from *the Lord Jesus Christ.*] This is not to be understood as a direct prayer to Christ, but as a devout wish that the blessing of God by Jesus Christ, which brings peace, *i. e.* the gospel, which is the way to happiness here, and hereafter, may be communicated to them and remain with them; *q. d.* "wishing you all divine favours and blessings from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour." Pyle.

PART THE FIRST.

THE APOSTLE CLEARS HIS CHARACTER FROM THE IMPUTATION OF INCONSISTENCY; ASSERTS THE PURITY OF HIS MOTIVES IN THE DISCHARGE OF HIS MINISTRY, ESPECIALLY TOWARDS THE CORINTHIANS; GLORIES IN THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL; AND APPEALS TO HIS INTEGRITY, HIS ZEAL, HIS FORTITUDE, AND HIS SUCCESS, AS AMPLE TESTIMONIALS TO THE AUTHENTICITY OF HIS MISSION. 2 Cor. ch. i. 3, to ch. vii. Ch. I.

SECTION I.

THE APOSTLE expresses his gratitude to God for his deliverance from the imminent danger with which he had been threatened in Asia, alluding probably to the tumult at Ephesus which had been occasioned by the clamours of Demetrius and the artists, ch. i. 3—12.

1. He gives thanks to God for the abundant consolations which had been imparted to himself, and by which he was qualified from his own experience to administer consolation to others, ver. 3—5.

Blessed be *the God and Father*[2] *of our Lord* Ver. 3.

[2] *Blessed* be *the God.*] "It is very observable," says Dr. Dodd-

Ch. I. Ver. 4. *Jesus Christ*[1], *the Father of tender mercies, and the God of all consolation. Who comforteth us in all our trouble, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, by the consolations with which we ourselves have been comforted by God.*

The God whom we worship and adore, the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who derived his existence, his power and his commission from him, and who, in the whole course of his ministry, acted in subservience to him; the God and father of tender mercies, who pities his dutiful children under their distresses; the God of all consolation, who alone can administer those supports, which enable us to triumph in the midst of suffering and persecution: this good and merciful God is the worthy object of our most exalted praise. And blessed be his name for the consolation which he has administered to me and to my companions in labour and in suffering, under the various afflictions and persecutions which we have endured, and which both

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ridge, "that eleven of St. Paul's thirteen epistles begin with exclamations of joy, praise, and thanksgiving. As soon as he thought of a Christian church planted in one place or another, there seems to have been a flow of most lively affection accompanying the idea, in which all sensibility of his temporal affliction or theirs was swallowed up, and the fullness of his heart must vent itself in such cheerful and devout language."

[1] *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*] ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. "That this is the right translation," says Mr. Locke, "see Eph. i. 3, 1 Pet. i. 3; and that it agrees with St. Paul's sense, see Eph. i. 17."—The public version renders the clause, "from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." The literal translation is, "from God the Father of us, and of the Lord Jesus Christ;" and this perhaps is the most correct.

dispose us to sympathize with those of our brethren, who are under similar trials, and to administer to them the consolations with which our own hearts have been cheered, and our strength supported. Ch. I. Ver. 4.

For as sufferings for the sake *of Christ*[2] *abound in us, so doth our consolation by Christ also abound.* 5.

I thankfully acknowledge that our consolations have ever been in proportion to our sufferings. For as the sufferings we endure for the sake of Christian truth are various and severe, so the consolation which we derive from Christian principles, and Christian hopes, have been and are proportionably great, and amply compensate all we feel, and all we fear.

2. The apostle and his brethren were the more reconciled to their sufferings, as being persuaded that the converts to the Christian doctrine, and particularly the believers at Corinth, were greatly benefited by them, ver. 6, 7.

But if we are afflicted, it is *for your consolation and relief*[3]*; or if we be comforted,* it is *for your con-* 6.

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[2] *Sufferings* for the sake *of Christ.*] Literally "the sufferings of Christ." "That is," says Archbishop Newcome, "such sufferings as Christ underwent; or, sufferings for the cause of Christ." "As we resemble Christ in our sufferings," says Dr. Priestley, "so we partake with him likewise in our consolations. We see here that the sufferings of Christ are placed in the very same light with those of other good men, his followers. As he laid down his life for the brethren, we also are exhorted to do the same if we are called to it; which shows that there was nothing peculiar in the sufferings of Christ, as making atonement for the sins of men. He suffered in the cause of truth and virtue, and his example should encourage us to do the same."

[3] *And relief.*] σωτηριας, "final salvation, which is promoted

Ch. I. Ver. 6. *solation, which* consolation *is wrought in you by your patience under the same sufferings which we also endure*[1].

And we are the better reconciled to our lot, as we trust that you and others are greatly benefited by our example. For whether we suffer persecution it is for your benefit, that you may be more confirmed in your adherence to the Christian faith, when you see with what cheerfulness and resolution the teachers of it, inspired by its hopes and animated by its spirit, suffer in the good cause in which they are embarked; and if, under affliction and persecution, we are enabled to rejoice in the consolations of the gospel, this likewise is for your benefit; as it is an implicit assurance, that if you suffer with the same fortitude and patience, you shall be supported by the same consolations.

7. *And our hope concerning you is firm, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so also will* ye be *of the consolation.*

From the knowledge which I have of your character, I have no doubt that your experience will correspond with my hopes and declarations. Knowing,

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by patience. Rom. v. 3—5." Newcome. "*Relief*, rather than *salvation*, which is understood of deliverance from death and hell; but here it signifies only deliverance from their present sorrow." Locke.

[1] *Which we also endure.*] This is the reading of Griesbach's text upon the authority of the Alexandrine and Clermont manuscripts. The received text reads, "But if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and relief which is wrought in you by your patience under the same sufferings which we also endure; or if we be comforted, it is for your consolation and relief."

as I do, that many of you are exposed to the scorn, the insults, and the persecutions of your heathen neighbours as we have been at Ephesus, and as you have borne these taunts and sufferings with that spirit of fortitude and magnanimity which the gospel inspires, I cannot doubt that you have already experienced and will still continue to experience the same consolation that we have enjoyed; and that you will ever have reason to acknowledge that whatever you lose in external enjoyment, is abundantly made up to you in inward peace and triumphant expectation. Ch. I. Ver. 7.

3. The apostle informs them of the extreme danger to which he had been exposed at Ephesus, and from which he had been extricated by the prayers of his friends, ver. 8—11.

For, brethren, we would not have you ignorant concerning the trouble which happened to us in Asia[2], *that we were pressed exceedingly, above* our *strength, so that we despaired*[3] *even of life.* 8.

[2] *In Asia.*] There can be little doubt that the apostle refers principally to the tumult at Ephesus raised by Demetrius and the artists (Acts xix.), in which his life was exposed to imminent danger, and after which he probably found it necessary to leave the city. It is possible that he might also allude to other persecutions not mentioned in the history of Luke. See Rosenmuller. This epistle was written more than a year after the apostle had left Ephesus; and yet we see how deep an impression still remained upon his mind of the danger which he had escaped, and in what strong and affecting language he describes it. It is hardly possible, therefore, that he should have written the first epistle to Timothy almost immediately after the event, without mentioning it, or making the least allusion to it.

[3] *We despaired.*] Qu. who despaired? It is usually under-

Ch. I. Ver. 8. I do not, my brethren, affect concealment. You have a right to be informed of the reasons of my change of purpose. Know, then, that since I last wrote to you, I have been in the utmost danger of losing my life in a tumult excited at Ephesus by Demetrius and others, who, fearing that their craft was in danger, by their wicked clamours raised a ferocious and sanguinary mob against me and my fellow-labourers, so that my friends entertained the greatest apprehensions on my account, and it was with much difficulty that I escaped and fled to Troas.

9. *Yea, we had the sentence of death in ourselves*[1], *that we might not trust*[2] *in ourselves, but in that*
10. *God, who raiseth the dead. Who rescued us from so great a death, and doth rescue*[3], *in whom we trust that he will still rescue.*

I knew that the object of this savage multitude

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stood of Paul himself. Others interpret the words impersonally, *q. d.* life itself was despaired of *i. e.* by his friends. Rosenmuller thinks that this sense best suits the context.

[1] *Yea, we had the sentence of death.*] "αλλα, *quinetiam ego ipse mortem quasi jam certam formidavi.*" Rosenmuller.—"*Sentence of death, q. d.* death itself had pronounced judgement upon me." Idem. The apostle, perhaps, alludes to his purpose of going out to the populace, which he could not have done but at the utmost hazard of his life, and from which his friends restrained him. Acts xix. 30, 31.

[2] *That we might not trust.*] ινα, *adeo ut*, so that we put no confidence in ourselves, "*ita ut perspicerem me nonnisi miraculosa Dei potentia e tanto vitæ periculo eripi posse.*" Rosenmuller; who observes, that the Hebrew writers sometimes speak of men as dead, who are in imminent danger of death, and as raised to life, when they are delivered.

[3] *And doth rescue.*] και ῥυεται these words are wanting in the Alexandrine and Clermont copies, and in the Syriac version. See Griesbach.

was to destroy me; and hoping that my blood would satiate their fury, and save my friends, I willingly and cheerfully disregarded my own safety, and was very earnest to go out and appear among them, believing, that, though I exposed myself to certain death, yet that God, if he pleased to employ me in further services, would either raise me from the grave, or interpose miraculously for my protection, as he had repeatedly done before. And from this danger he did indeed release me, by putting it into the heart of my friends to restrain my impetuosity, and to compel me to remain in a place of retirement and safety, till the prudence of the chief magistrate had calmed the uproar; after which, I took leave of them, and departed elsewhere in prosecution of my apostolic mission. And as the God, whom I serve, preserved me in this imminent peril, and has also continued to protect me in the dangers to which I have been since exposed, and is now protecting me from the idolatrous heathen and unbelieving Jews who oppose the gospel in Macedonia, I am persuaded that the same guardian providence will still protect me, and continue my life and mission as long as the interest of the gospel and the religion of Jesus may be promoted by my apostolic labours. Ch. I. Ver. 10.

You, also, assisting us by prayer for us, that so the favour obtained *for us*[4] *by means of many* 11.

[4] *The favour* obtained *for us.*] χαρισμα, "or, gracious deliverance." Newcome. "The gift bestowed," says Dr. Priestley, "was probably his deliverance which he thought to be miraculous, and obtained by the prayers of his Christian friends."

Ch. I. Ver. 11. *persons, may be thankfully acknowledged by many on our account.*

I ascribe my present safety in a great measure to the prayers of you, my friends at Corinth, and to those which have been offered on my account in other places. And as this favour has been obtained in answer to the prayers of many, I trust that many will unite with me in thanksgiving to a merciful and protecting God. For what can be more reasonable, than that mercies granted in answer to prayer, should be acknowledged in a corresponding tribute of thanksgiving from an affectionate and grateful spirit?

4. The apostle expresses in the strongest terms the simplicity and integrity of his character, and especially of his conduct towards the Corinthians, ver. 12.

12. *For this is our boast*[1], *even the testimony of our conscience, that with godly simplicity and sincerity*[2],

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The apostle upon all occasions appears to have entertained a high idea of the efficacy of prayer.

[1] *This is our boast.*] "From what St. Paul says in this section," says Mr. Locke, "which, if read with attention, will appear to be writ with a turn of great insinuation, it may be gathered that the opposite faction endeavoured to evade the force of the former epistle, by suggesting that, whatever he might pretend. St. Paul was a cunning, artificial, self-interested man, and had some hidden design in it."

[2] *Godly simplicity and sincerity.*] ἁπλοτητι. The Alexandrine and Ephrem, and some other copies and versions, read ἁγιοτητι, *holiness*: ἁπλοτης, "*candor animi et sinceritas, bonus et sincerus animus.*" Schleusner.—"plainness of heart." Locke. ειλικρινης, "*de mercibus usurpatur quarum puritas ad* solis splendorem *exigitur. Ab* ειλη solis splendor, *et* κρινω judico. ειλικρινεια, *sinceritas, puritas et* candor rei, quæ, ad solis splendorem spectata, examen fert." Schleusner. *Sincerity*, such as will bear the

not with carnal wisdom[3], *but according to the favour of God*[4], *we have behaved ourselves in the world, and especially towards you.* Ch. I. Ver. 12.

The sincerity of my character, my faithful zeal, and laborious exertions in your service, entitle me to this return of affection from you. I know indeed, by the information of Titus and others, that I am represented by some as insincere in my professions, as a man who says one thing and means another, and whose word is not to be depended upon. This

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light; which may be tried by a sunbeam: *godly sincerity*; such as the omniscient God will approve.

It is well known that the term *God* is one way of expressing the Hebrew superlative; upon this principle, Mr. Wakefield thus translates the passage: "For we boast in this testimony of our conscience, that with the greatest simplicity and purity, not in fleshly wisdom, but with the utmost kindness of behaviour, we have demeaned ourselves in the world, and more particularly to you."

[3] *Carnal wisdom.*] "secular wisdom, the selfish wisdom of this world." Newcome.

[4] *According to the favour of God.*] χαρις has so many significations in the apostle's writings, that it is impossible always to translate it by the same word. In this place it is understood by some to express divine assistance. See Newcome. Mr. Wakefield renders it, "the utmost kindness." The apostle here probably refers to his apostolical office, which in other passages he calls χαρις. Rom. i. 5, xii. 3, and his meaning is, that instead of being influenced by secular motives, his only concern had been to discharge faithfully the duties of the mission with which he had been honoured by God.

Εν χαριτι Θεϑ, "that is, says Chrysostom, εν σημειοις και τερασιν, by signs and miracles, which are the gifts of God. According to the wisdom of the spirit and the miraculous power given us by the grace of God for the propagation of the gospel." See Whitby. "*By the grace of God*, that is, by exercising his spiritual gifts without any mixture of ostentation or human artifices to set them off." Pyle; who cites a passage from Theophylact in support of his interpretation.

Ch. I. Ver. 12. charge I assure you is absolutely false. I am proud to affirm, and my own conscience is witness, that in the whole of my apostolic mission, and especially in the discharge of my ministry among you, I have been uniformly actuated by the best motives; in no case have I been influenced by worldly considerations, and by a regard to secular interest. Having been highly favoured by God, and intrusted with the apostolic mission, I am conscious that, in the discharge of it, I have continually acted as under the eye of God with perfect simplicity, and with undisguised sincerity. I am influenced by no motives but those which I publicly avow, nor am I unwilling that my character and conduct should be examined by the strongest light, being confident they will stand the severest test.

5. The apostle professes that he is as sincere and undisguised in his writing as in his teaching; he expresses his satisfaction in the confidence which they place in him, and hopes that their mutual affection will continue, ver. 13, 14.

13. *For we write no other things*[1] *to you than what*

[1] *We write no other things.*] Newcome translates, "we do not write different things to you, but only what ye read or even acknowledge." Which he explains in his note, "I am really plain and sincere. I do not write sometimes one doctrine and sometimes another, Gal. i. 7, but only such doctrines as ye now read, and acknowledge also, as to the sound and the greater part of you." "*Eandem animi integritatem, quam in vita mea exprimere soleo, etiam in epistolis meis agnoscetis. Non opus est mihi occulto et ancipiti scribendi genere; non scribo alia, vel diversa ab iis quæ animo cogito; sed aperte scribo; ut quivis epistolam legens statim intelligere possit.*" Rosenmuller.

ye read and even acknowledge, and I hope that ye will acknowledge even to the end. As part of you[2] *have acknowledged us that we are your glory*[3], *as ye also* will be *ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.* Ch. I. Ver. 14.

And however I may be calumniated by some, I assure you that I am as sincere and as undisguised in what I write as in my teaching, and in the rest of my conduct. There is nothing mysterious or equivocal in my last letter. What I write I mean to be understood in its plain literal sense, in which sense, as I am informed, you have understood me, and have acknowledged the justice and expedience of my counsels, and have followed my directions, as I hope you always will.

It is indeed with much pleasure that I hear, that though some are refractory, and will pay no regard to my advice, nor any deference to my authority, the majority are of a better spirit; that they glory in having been converted by me, and in having received their doctrine and their discipline from my

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[2] *As part of you.*] απο μερους. Vid. Acts xxv. 5; Gal. i. 11; Mark xii. 34. See Locke. "*Non sine causa apostolus dicit,* απο μερους. *Quæ enim de se scripserat,* ver. 12, *ea quidem noverant Corinthii omnes, sed non omnes perpendebant et sequebantur; multis, contra veritatem quam testari potuissent si voluissent, repugnantibus,* Act. xxvi. 5, *et rectiorem cognitionem ac sensum, per cupiditatem et pravum affectum reprimentibus atque pervertentibus.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *That we are your glory.*] "Whereby he signifies that part of them which stuck to him, and owned him as their teacher. In which sense *glorying* is much used in these epistles to the Corinthians, upon occasion of the several partisans *boasting*, some that they were of Paul, and others of Apollos." Locke.

Ch. I. Ver. 14. instructions: and in return, I solemnly assure you, that I regard my relation to you as my highest honour and joy, and that it will be the consummation of my felicity to meet you, and all my other brethren and converts, those whom I have been the honoured instrument of introducing into the knowledge, the faith, the hope, and practice of the gospel, at the tribunal of our common Master Jesus Christ, in that day when he shall come to be glorified in all them that believe, when all shall be rewarded according to their works, and when we who have served him faithfully and have suffered for him, shall be put into possession of that prize which is the glorious and ample reward of all our labours, our reproach, and our suffering.

SECTION II.

THE APOSTLE apologizes for not having yet visited the Corinthians according to his repeated promise, which he assures them was not owing to fickleness of temper, but to his tenderness for them.

1. The apostle states to the Corinthians what his original design had been, ver. 15, 16.

15. *And in this persuasion, I was intending to come to you before*[1], *that ye might receive a second gra-*

[1] *To come to you before.*] See Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, p. 116—124, where that sagacious and learned writer proves that

tification[2], *and to pass by you into Macedonia, and to return again to you from Macedonia, and to be conducted by you on my way toward Judea.* Ch. I. Ver. 16.

I frankly acknowledge that my conduct has some appearance of inconsistency; for being persuaded of your attachment to me, and desire of my company and advice, it was my original design, upon leaving Ephesus, to have spent a short time with you in my way to Macedonia, and in my return from Macedonia to have visited you again, and to have passed the last winter with you. And I expected that when I left you, some of your society would have been delegated to accompany me to Judea with the contribution that was to be made for the relief of the indigent Christians there; and I flattered myself that you would have been improved and gratified by this renewed visit. I have, however, been prevented from coming, and I find that my opponents have taken advantage of my absence, to represent me as a capricious irresolute man, who do not know my own mind, and who am not to be depended upon for any thing.

Paul's intention to pass through Corinth to Macedonia had been formed and laid aside previous to his writing the first epistle.

[2] *A second gratification.*] "By the word χαριν," says Mr. Locke, "which our Bibles translate *benefit* or *grace*, it is plain the apostle means, his being present among them a second time, without giving them any grief or displeasure. He had been with them before almost two years together, with satisfaction and kindness. He intended them another visit; but it was, he says, that they might have the like gratification; *i. e.* the like satisfaction in his company a second time."

Ch. I. 2. He assures them, that the delay of his visit was by no means owing to fickleness or instability of mind, ver. 17.

Ver. 17. *Now when I purposed this, did I use any levity*[1]*? or what I purpose, do I purpose from carnal motives*[2]*? that my Yea yea should be Nay nay*[3]*?*

Am I a man of a frivolous and inconstant mind? Have you any reason to believe that I was capricious either in the design I formed of making you a visit, or in laying that purpose aside? Am I governed in my removes from place to place by fancy, or inclination, or interest, or any other secular consideration that should lead you to believe, as some are pleased to insinuate, that I mean the contrary to

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[1] *Use levity.*] τῃ ελαφρια, "levitas animi, inconstantia qua aliquis subito sine justa causa consilium suum mutat: *ab* ελαφρος, levis pondere, *ita ut* gravi, *et* ponderoso, *opponatur*." Schleusner. "He changed his design with good reasons. See ver. 23, ch. ii. 13, vii. 6, 7. Titus having brought him information what the state of the Corinthian church was, he deferred going, lest he should be necessitated to punish his opponents." Newcome.

[2] *Carnal motives.*] Gr. "according to the flesh." "with worldly views. See ver. 12." Newcome.

[3] *That my Yea yea should be Nay nay.*] ινα η παρ' εμοι το ναι ναι, και το ου ου, that when I say Yes, I should mean No, that I should be fickle and false, so that no dependence could be placed upon my word. "*Ut unum idemque eodem tempore affirmem et negem?* Και *verti debet,* etiam. *Ad verbum, ut* το ναι ναι *apud me etiam sit* το ου ου, *ut affirmatio et negatio ejusdem rei apud me idem valeat. Adversarii Pauli forsan exinde, quod proposito non steterat, occasionem arripiebant eum accusandi etiam levitatis et inconstantiæ in doctrina.*" Rosenmuller. The Vulgate and one Greek manuscript read only one *yea* and *nay*. See Griesbach. Some have conjectured that the true reading is, that my *yea* should be *nay*, and my *nay*, *yea*. But this emendation is needless, and destitute of authority.

what I say; that my promise is not to be trusted? and that I vary my plans and purposes without any substantial reason? Ch. I. Ver. 17.

3. The apostle solemnly asserts and proves the uniformity and consistency of the doctrine which he had taught, ver. 18—22.

But as *God* is *faithful, our doctrine*[4] *among you was not yea and nay*[5]. 18.

Some among you are pleased to insinuate, that as my purpose is not to be depended upon, so neither is my doctrine. This is a calumny which I must not suffer to pass without contradiction; and I now solemnly declare, in the presence of the God of truth, that the doctrine which I taught at Corinth was not sometimes one thing and sometimes another, but that it was uniform and invariable, and strictly conformable to the instructions which I had received.

For the son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even *by me, and Silas*[6] 19.

[4] *Our doctrine.*] λογος, "doctrina, *ut alibi.*" Rosenmuller. It had probably been insinuated that his doctrine was as uncertain as his promise; sometimes one thing, sometimes another. This charge the apostle first rebuts with great solemnity and earnestness; and afterwards explains the cause of delaying his visit.

[5] *Was not yea and nay.*] "There is neither levity of purpose in me nor uncertainty of doctrine." Archbishop Newcome; who thinks that the objection to St. Paul's behaviour was made in this very language; that with him was Yes yes, No no, and that he vindicates himself by taking the expression in more senses than one."

[6] *Silas.*] Silvanus his Latin name. "He was a chief man among the brethren at Jerusalem, and one of the Christian pro-

Ch. I. Ver. 19. *and Timothy, was not yea and nay, but through him was yea* [1].

The doctrine I taught was uniform and consistent; for the important truth which I am commissioned to preach, and which, in conjunction with Silas and Timothy, I did preach at Corinth, viz. that Jesus is the Christ, the holy and anointed prophet, and the son of God by his resurrection from the dead, is a uniform and consistent doctrine; it is the substance of the Christian revelation, and the only foundation of Christian hope. It is what we always teach every where, and to the promulgation of which my whole life is devoted. It is not, therefore, probable, that I should capriciously alter the tenor of my doctrine, especially as my brethren and fellow-labourers, whose characters are unimpeached, would soon have detected and exposed the imposture. This sacred doctrine, therefore, as taught by him to me, and by me to you, is uniform and invariable.

20. *For all the promises of God which* were preached

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phets, Acts xv. 32. After the council of Jerusalem, he accompanied Paul in those journeys through the Lesser Asia, and Greece, which he undertook for spreading the light of the gospel. St. Paul inserted his name in the inscriptions to several of the epistles. By him, or by a person of the same name, the apostle Peter sent his first epistle, 1 Pet. v. 12." See Macknight. Silas is supposed to have been employed by the apostle as his amanuensis. See Rom. xvi. 22. Doddridge.

[1] *Through him was yea.*] The doctrine which was preached through him, by his authority and direction, was always uniform and consistent. "I did not advance affirmations and denials of the same doctrines concerning Jesus Christ; but always gave his faithful disciples positive assurances of eternal life through him." Newcome.

by us, were through him yea, and through him Amen[2]*, to the glory of God.* Ch. I. Ver. 20.

All the promises of God to believers in Christ, those promises of reconciliation and everlasting life, which we are authorized to proclaim, all of them, I say, without exception, are immutably established in Jesus Christ, by whom they were first announced, and by whose death and resurrection they are abundantly confirmed. And they will all receive their complete accomplishment in their proper season, when the power, wisdom, and goodness of God shall be equally and gloriously displayed in the final triumph of all the virtuous disciples of Christ.

Now he who establisheth our authority *with you*[3] *in Christ, and who hath anointed us, is God; who* 21. 22.

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[2] *Through him yea and Amen.*] *q. d.* are immutably confirmed. See Macknight. Yea is the Greek, and Amen the Hebrew form of affirmation. The repetition is one form of the Hebrew superlative. So Abba father expresses, that God is the truest kindest Father. He is a father in the best sense of the word. "*Promissiones certæ et indubitatæ.* Ναι *et* Αμην *idem valent, ideoque conjungi solent. Altera vox Græca est, altera Hebraica.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Who establisheth our* authority *with you.*] "Now he who establisheth my authority with you as an apostle of Christ, and who hath consecrated me to that high office by the gifts of the spirit, is God; who, to show that I am an apostle, and to fit me for that office, hath also sealed me, and given me the earnest of the spirit in my heart, the spiritual gifts abiding in me." Macknight.—"For he that gave us authority with you in Christ." Wakefield.

I have adopted this interpretation as best suiting the connexion: not, however, without some hesitation. The common interpretation is that which is given by Archbishop Newcome and others: "He that establisheth us together with you in Christ, is God; *q. d.* God establishes both me and you with respect to Christ, as disciples of Christ."

Ch. I. Ver. 22. *also hath himself sealed us, and hath given the earnest of the spirit*[1] *in our hearts.*

We instructed you in the doctrine of Christ, and communicated to you the blessings of the gospel; and we gave you abundant evidence that we are duly authorized to preach these glad tidings concerning Christ among you. From God we received our appointment: by him we were chosen and consecrated to this high and honourable office; he sealed our commission, he ratified the doctrine we taught by the miracles which he enabled us to perform; and he gave us the holy spirit as an abiding principle within us, for our consolation and encouragement: a proof that we are already adopted into his family, and a glorious earnest and pledge of the eventual accomplishment of all his promises, and the completion of all our hopes. And being thus publicly announced and approved as the messengers of these glorious tidings, we dare not tamper with the doctrine of the gospel; nor are we at liberty to vary our schemes according to the caprice of fancy, but are constrained always to act in subservience to the great end we have in view, and to go whithersoever

[1] *Earnest of the spirit.*] "Servants being hired by giving them earnest money, the apostle in allusion to that custom saith, God hath given us the earnest of the Spirit: he hath hired us to be the apostles of his Son by giving us the Spirit, or spiritual gifts, 1 Cor. xiv. 32. These gifts are called the earnest, because they were to them a sure proof of those far greater blessings which God will bestow on them in the life to come." Macknight. The Spirit *in our hearts:* that is, to reside in us as an abiding principle. The apostles were never destitute of the holy spirit; though they did not, like their Master Jesus, possess it without measure.

our presence may be most necessary for the advancement of the Christian cause. And I can assure you, that it is under the influence of those motives only that I have postponed my visit to Corinth. Ch. I. Ver. 22.

4. Returning from his digression, he justifies his conduct in delaying his visit, ver. 23, 24.

Now I call God to be my witness[2], *that out of tenderness to you*[3] *I have not as yet come to Corinth.* 23.

Having, I trust, cleared myself to your satisfaction of the graver charge insinuated by some, of inconsistency in doctrine, I now proceed to explain the reason why I did not fulfill the intention which I had formed, and which I had communicated to you, of visiting Corinth in my way to Macedonia. The truth is, and I appeal to the heart-searching God for the veracity of my declaration, that having determined to call at Corinth in my way to Macedonia, and to pass some months there upon my return, and having actually sent Timothy and Eras-

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[2] *I call God to be my witness*:] επικαλεσμαι επι την εμην ψυχην. "I call God for a record upon my soul." Public Version.—"I call upon God as a witness against my life." Newcome.—"I call God to witness, and may I die if it is not so." Locke.—"And I call upon God as a witness to myself." Wakefield; who says in his note, "I consider την εμην ψυχην as the customary oriental phrase for εμαυτον· *i. e.* "I call upon God to add his testimony to mine." This appears to me a judicious observation.

[3] *Out of tenderness to you.*] φειδομενος. See Wakefield. "to spare you I came not as yet to Corinth." Public Version, and Newcome. See verses 15, 16, and Paley *Hor. Paul.* 2 *Cor. No.* 4, 5.

Ch. I. Ver. 23. tus as my harbingers to Macedonia, I afterwards received from your Letter, and from other quarters, such disagreeable tidings of the state of things among you, that I was sure that if I visited you at the time that I proposed, I should be under the necessity of using very severe measures, to chastise the bad spirit and to correct the numerous irregularities and disorders which prevailed in the church; I rather chose, therefore, to write to you, hoping that you would profit by my admonition and advice. I was glad to hear by Titus that you had done so, and that you were greatly reformed: still, however, there was room for improvement; and in order to allow time to complete the work of reformation, I deferred my visit a year longer. But all these delays arose not from caprice in myself, but from tenderness to you, that I might not be compelled to use the apostolic rod.

24 *Not that we lord it over you on account of your faith* [1], *but we are fellow labourers for your joy; for in the faith ye stand* free [2].

[1] *On account of your faith*:] κυριευομεν ὑμων της πιστεως. Dr. Macknight justly observes, that the construction requires διὰ or ἕνεκα to be supplied after ὑμων, and that "the apostle could not say with truth that he and his brother apostles had not dominion over the faith of all who professed to believe the gospel. By the inspiration of the spirit they were authorized to direct the faith of all the people of God. But they had no dominion given them over the persons and goods of those who believed." —Storrius *ap.* Rosenmuller: "*Non modo non dominamur in vos credentes, sed vestræ etiam lætitiæ adjutores sumus. Respicere videtur Paulus ad Corinthienses pædagogos, qui ei crimini dederunt quod in eos, qui doctrinæ ipsius fidem habuerint, dominari soleat.*"

[2] *In the faith ye stand* free.] "that is, in the gospel. Your

Not, indeed, that I pretend to any secular authority over you because you are believers in Christ and members of that community of which he is the head. For though I am invested with powers which, under his direction, I am occasionally required to exercise for the correction of refractory members while they continue in communion with us, I possess no civil power whatever over life or property, and claim no right of compelling any against their will to continue in our society, or to prevent them from withdrawing from us. I have no power but what I am bound to exercise in concurrence with my brethren for the benefit of the community in general, and of every individual member in particular. The profession of the gospel does not abridge your civil rights, nor subject you to the rule of domineering ecclesiastics. The Christian religion is a law of liberty; the officers of the church, with the exception of that corrective rod which is sometimes placed in the hands of the apostles, and is exercised under the immediate direction of Christ, are armed with no secular power for the support of discipline, and possess no authority but that which they derive from superior wisdom, and experience.

Ch. I. Ver. 24.

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teachers have no dominion either over your persons or goods, on account of your being Christians." Macknight.—"*Fide enim (ad quam perducti estis a me) beati evasistis, et floruistis.* Στηκειν *enim interdum significat* absolvi, servari, salvum esse: *cui opponitur* πιπτειν, damnari. Rom. xiv. 3, 4."

SECTION III.

Ch. II. *THE APOSTLE advises the Corinthians to restore to the communion of the church that great offender whose misconduct had been one principal cause of keeping him away, but whose sincere and deep repentance now moved his compassion, and induced him to advise them to receive him again into Christian fellowship.* Ch. ii. 1—11.

1. The apostle could not prevail upon himself to visit Corinth a second time, till every cause of uneasiness was removed, ver. 1—3.

Ver. 1. *But I determined this with myself, that I would not come*[1] *again to you in grief.*

I formed this resolution in my mind, that as our first interview had been a source of mutual satisfaction, my second visit should not be the occasion of uneasiness either to you or to myself: but that I would absent myself from you till every cause of trouble should be removed.

2. *For if I occasion grief to you, who then is to gladden me*[2] *but he who is grieved by me?*

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[1] *Come again in grief.*] The apostle had not visited them in grief the first time: he means, therefore, that having visited them with satisfaction at first, he was resolved not to visit them with dissatisfaction the second time. Vide Locke.

[2] *Who then is to gladden?*] καὶ τίς. "And had I done it, what comfort could I have had among people I so much love, and yet am forced to punish in so severe a degree?" Pyle.—

If I should be under the necessity of exercising severity when I come among you, my visit would be as painful to myself as it would be to you; for I could derive no comfort or satisfaction from any thing during my residence with you, but from the contrition and restoration of the offender whom it would be my painful duty to chastise. Ch. II. Ver. 2.

And I wrote this very thing to you[3], *that when I came I might not be grieved by those in whom I ought to rejoice. Having this confidence in you all, that my joy is* the joy *of you all.* 3.

The reason why, instead of coming among you, I wrote to you, and that with some degree of asperity, was this: That I might excite you to reform those lamentable irregularities which prevailed among you, that when I came I might not be under the necessity of exercising that discipline which would be equally distressing both to myself and you. And the more so as considering the earnestness and faithfulness with which I laboured among you for two years and upwards, I had a right to expect that your conduct would have been so correct and exemplary as to have afforded me the most pure

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"*Nisi vos—ac proinde nemo. Quomodo enim tristis alium exhilarabit?*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *I wrote this very thing.*] "That is, in the first epistle. See ver. 9. He wrote to them to punish the fornicator. See ver. 11. Comp. 1 Cor. iv. 21, v. 8:—but now that he knows the Corinthians had punished him, in compliance with his Letter, and he had had this trial of their obedience, he is so far from continuing the severity, that he writes to them to forgive him and take him again into their affection." Locke.

Ch. II. Ver. 3. and unmixed satisfaction. And notwithstanding all that has passed, I know you so well, that I am very confident, if the affairs of your society were restored to such a state as to give satisfaction to me, that it would afford equal satisfaction to you all. In short, I am confident that such is your affection for me, you would all be gratified with seeing that I was pleased.

2. He assures them that the painful rebuke which he had administered was the result, not of personal animosity, but of affectionate regard to their interest, ver. 4, 5.

4 *For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears; not that ye might be uneasy, but that ye might know the love with which I abound towards you.*

The severity which was manifest in my late epistle was not the dictate of resentment against an individual, but of tender affection for you. I felt the deepest concern at the state of things at Corinth, and at the irregularities and crimes by which your society was disgraced. I wrote with many tears; and though I knew that you would feel great uneasiness at the strong expressions of disapprobation which I introduced, I trusted that you would see that my intention was kind, and that my only object was, the repentance and reformation of those who had done amiss. Nothing but the truest regard for you could have induced me to have performed so painful a task.

Ch. II. Ver. 5.

Now, if a certain person[1] *hath caused uneasiness, he hath not caused uneasiness to me, but in some degree*[2] *(that I may not bear*[3] *too heavily upon him) to you all.*

If a certain person, whom I need not name, has created much uneasiness, which cannot be denied, it is not to me that he has given pain. All that I have felt and suffered on account of his misbehaviour I reckon as nothing: I forgive it all. But you are the parties more immediately concerned; your

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[1] *If a certain person.*] Every one observes the delicacy and tenderness of the apostle in not mentioning the name of the penitent offender, nor using any harsh language in describing the offence.

[2] *In some degree.*] So Locke. απο μερους. "This phrase," says Mr. Wakefield, "here and in ch. i. 14, I apprehend to be equivalent to εν μερει." His translation is, "this uneasiness is not mine *only*, but the mutual uneasiness of us all." "απο μερους, *ex parte aliquatenus, quodammodo*." Schleusner. Ch. i. 14, the phrase seems to express a certain portion of the Corinthian congregation: here it is understood of a limited degree of uneasiness. So, Rom. xi. 25, it expresses a certain portion, meaning a large majority, of Jews who are at present blind to the evidence of the gospel. Rom. xv. 24, the same phrase expresses the degree of satisfaction which the apostle hoped to enjoy in the society of his friends at Rome. "St. Paul being satisfied with the Corinthians for their ready compliance with his orders in his former letter to punish the fornicator, intercedes to have him restored; and to that end lessens his fault, and declares, however he might have caused grief to the Corinthians, yet he had caused none to him." Locke.—"*Quodammodo vos omnes ille tristitia affecit. Facinus enim ab illo commissum tantum est et tam grave, ut ejus turpitudo ad universam societatem vestram redundare videatur.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *That I may not bear,* &c.] ινα μη επιβαρω· "*parenthesi includenda sunt hæc verba, et reddenda,* ne quid gravius dicam." Rosenmuller. The Syriac Version places these words after παντας, *all*; Mr. Wakefield begins the next sentence with them.

Ch. II. Ver. 5. moral feelings have been wounded, your character as a society has been disgraced. But I will not aggravate the case, nor bear too hard upon a penitent offender.

3. The offender being now brought to a proper sense of his guilt, he advises the Corinthians to restore him to the communion of the church, ver. 6—8.

6. *Sufficient for such a man* is *the censure which* hath been passed upon him *by the majority.*

The public solemn expulsion of this offender from your society has brought him to his right mind. It has convinced him of his misconduct, and therefore it has answered its end.

7. *So that on the contrary*[1] *ye* ought *rather to forgive and comfort* him, *lest such a man should be*
8. *swallowed up by excessive sorrow. Wherefore, I beseech you publicly to confirm*[2] *your love to him.*

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[1] *On the contrary.*] "This," says Mr. Locke, "has nothing to refer to but επιζαφω, overcharge, in ver. 5, which makes that verse refer to the fornicator."

[2] *Publicly to confirm.*] This is Dr. Macknight's judicious translation: he remarks, that "the original word, κυρωσαι, does not signify to confirm *simply*, but to confirm or appoint *with authority*; consequently the apostle's meaning was, that the reception of this offender into the church was to be accomplished, as his expulsion had been, by a *public act of the brethren* assembled for that purpose."

It may be thought extraordinary that an offender so atrocious should be so soon forgiven, and received again into communion with the church: but the Corinthians were lately converted from heathenism, and had not that sense of the enormity of vices of this kind which belongs to those who have been educated in Christian principles and habits. Many of them had been re-

I hear that this unhappy offender entertains so just a sense of the heinousness of his crime, and is so much affected at the censure of the society, that he is almost overwhelmed with grief. It becomes you, therefore, to forgive and to comfort him, instead of persisting in your severity against him; and I request that, being perfectly satisfied as to his repentance, you would receive him again into your communion, in as public and as solemn a manner as you expelled him from your society. Ch. II. Ver. 8.

4. As he was satisfied with their deference to his authority, which was one occasion of his writing, the apostle further recommends that they should act in unison with him in forgiving as well as in censuring offenders, that the adversary might not take advantage of their dissentions, ver. 9—11.

Moreover, I wrote for this purpose also, that I might have proof of you whether you would be obedient in every thing. 9.

I had heard such an alarming account of the disorderly state of your society, and of the hostility of opposing factions, that I entertained doubts whether my influence among you were not entirely lost. To satisfy my mind upon this subject, I wrote to you, requiring the immediate excommunication of the offending party, to try whether you would obey me or not. And I am happy to see, by your ready com-

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claimed from the most odious vices; and this offender, having been made sensible of his fault, was now resolved to renounce his crime.

Ch. II. Ver. 9. pliance with my direction, that I still retain that respect and deference among you which you had formerly shown.

10. *Now to whom ye forgive any thing I also* forgive it, *and indeed whatever I have forgiven, if I have forgiven any thing in the person of Christ*[1], it has been *for your sakes.*

As we have agreed in censure, let us now agree in forgiveness. If you forgive any offender, I forgive him too: and as I, in virtue of my apostolic authority, in the name and as the representative of Christ, have forgiven this penitent offender, I have done it for your sakes, to set you an example of Christian charity and meekness, and to point out your duty upon similar occasions. Join with me, therefore, in forgiving this penitent, and in restoring him to Christian communion.

11. *That we may not be over-reached*[2] *by the adversary*[3], *for we are not ignorant of his wiles.*

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[1] *In the person of Christ.*] "in the name and by the authority of Christ." Macknight.

[2] *Over-reached.*] "Πλεονεκτειν properly signifies *plus justo possidere*, to possess more than one is entitled to: but because persons of this description are commonly fraudulent and unjust, and sometimes violent in their conduct, the word signifies, to act fraudulently, unjustly, violently. ch. vii. 2, xii. 17." Macknight.

[3] *The adversary.*] Satan, the opposer; *i.e.* not an evil spirit, but their unbelieving neighbours, Jews and heathens, who would take advantage of their intestine divisions to disparage the Christian religion. Bishop Newcome explains it of wicked men, the instruments of Satan. "By Satan, or *adversary*, the apostle means the civil abettors of the Pagan superstition." Harwood.

"By Satan," says Dr. Priestley, "we are to understand any adversary; and Christianity had many of them in that and in-

Your unconverted neighbours will be upon the watch to take advantage of any dissentions which may take place between you and me, or in the body of your society, and will be glad to widen the breach, in order to injure the Christian cause. Be aware of their malicious purpose, and stand upon your guard. Let us ever act in union and harmony. Let us act with united vigour in excluding every member whose moral conduct would disgrace the society; and let us act with united sympathy and tenderness in restoring to their places in the church those unhappy persons who, having by irregular conduct exposed themselves to public censure, have been reclaimed to true repentance, and are desirous of being again admitted to the privileges of the Christian community. Ch. II. Ver. 11.

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deed in every age: and whatever man or thing has a tendency to obstruct a good design is called Satan, or something equivalent to it, in the Scriptures. Thus, our Lord called Peter *Satan*, when he would have diverted him from his resolution to die at Jerusalem. We are not, therefore, to infer from such passages as these, that there is in the universe a great evil spirit, the rival of the Supreme Being, and continually thwarting him in his designs; more especially prompting men to all vice and wickedness here, in order to be the instrument of their punishment hereafter. The vices of mankind are not to be excused in this manner: as if they were drawn into sin by some invisible agent, to whose powers their own were by no means equal. Men's own depraved appetites are sufficient to account for all the wickedness there is in the world."

SECTION IV.

Ch. II. *THE APOSTLE assures the Corinthians, that in his great anxiety to hear tidings concerning them, he had given up a fair prospect of usefulness at Troas, and had crossed over into Macedonia to meet Titus. And he bursts into an exclamation of gratitude and praise for the glorious success which attended the faithful preaching of the gospel.* Ch. ii. 12—17.

1. The apostle, disappointed in his expectation of meeting with Titus at Troas, and being anxious to hear concerning the state of things at Corinth, abruptly quitted a situation which promised considerable usefulness, and hastened into Macedonia, ver. 12, 13.

Ver. 12. *Now, when I was come to Troas, to* preach *the gospel of Christ, and a door was opened for me in*
13. *the Lord*[1], *I had no rest in my mind; because I found not Titus my brother. But, taking leave of them, I departed into Macedonia.*

When I was driven from Ephesus by the tumult excited by Demetrius, I fled to Troas, where I had

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[1] *In the Lord,*] "or, *by* the Lord: that is, to spread his gospel." Newcome. An opportunity offered of preaching the gospel with great probability of success; not by the immediate direction of Christ, for then the apostle, however anxious he might be to receive tidings of the Corinthians, would not have felt himself at liberty to depart from Troas.

directed Titus, who was one of the bearers of my last epistle, to meet me, and to inform me of the state of things with you. At Troas I found that many were disposed to hear the gospel, and that there was a great prospect of converting many to the Christian faith. But I could not make myself easy till I gained satisfactory information of the success of my advice to you; and therefore, taking leave abruptly of my friends at Troas, I went away to Macedonia, hoping there to find, as indeed I actually did find, that faithful companion of my labours, Titus, from whom I received the intelligence I desired. Ch. II. Ver. 13.

2. At the mention of his success, the apostle bursts into an affectionate exclamation of gratitude to God for the triumphs of the gospel, and for the gracious acceptance of his services, whatever might be the effect of his preaching upon different classes of his hearers, ver. 14—16.

Now thanks be *to God, who always leadeth us in triumph by Christ*[2], *and maketh manifest the* 14.

[2] *Leadeth us in triumph.*] "Θριαμβευειν, *in triumpho circumducere.*" Wetstein.—"*Triumphum ago, triumpho de aliquo, aliquem in triumpho captivum circumduco.*" Schleusner. "In allusion," says Dr. Macknight, "to the method of triumph, the apostle represents Christ as a victorious general riding in a triumphal procession through the world, attended by his apostles, prophets, evangelists, and other ministers of the gospel, and followed by all the idolatrous nations as his captives." Dr. Doddridge, after mentioning Witsius's explanation of the passage, as expressing "the joy with which the apostle reflected on the powerful and sovereign grace which had led him in triumph who was once so insolent an enemy to the gospel," adds, "I rather

Ver. 14. Ch. II. *odour of the knowledge of himself by us in every place.*

Nor can I recollect the success of the gospel, of which I have in so many places been the honoured instrument, without expressing the affectionate gratitude I feel to God, who in his great mercy put a stop to the mad career of hostility and rebellion, and who stationed me as a willing captive at the car of Jesus, to grace the triumphal procession of the gospel: not indeed as a helpless prisoner doomed to destruction, but as one permitted to enlist in the victorious army, and employed to scatter the perfume of the Christian doctrine concerning God and his plans of mercy to mankind, among the multitude

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think the apostle represents *himself* as triumphing through the divine power. And as in triumphal processions, especially in the East, fragrant odours and incense were burned near the conquerors, so he seems beautifully to allude to that circumstance in what he says of the odour of the gospel in the following verses. And he seems further to allude to the different effects of strong perfumes to cheer some, and to throw others into violent disorders, according to the different dispositions they are in to receive them."

Perhaps the apostle's idea may be, that having been subdued and taken captive, they are led in triumph by Christ to grace the victories of the gospel: but not as prisoners bound in chains and doomed to destruction, but as pardoned rebels received into favour, and as employed by the conqueror to scatter perfumes among the multitude, some of whom are revived and cheered by the grateful fragrance, while others, overpowered by the strength of the odour, faint and die; while the officers so employed are equally performing their duty, and equally acceptable to their sovereign, whatever be the result. Mr. Locke supposes that the apostle alludes to his victory over his opponents at Corinth. But this is too mean a sense, and unworthy of the apostle.

in every region through which the magnificent pro- Ch. II.
cession passes in its progress.

For we are to God a sweet perfume of Christ, in Ver. 15.
respect to them that are saved and in respect to them that perish[1].

Our labours as ministers of Christ are attended with various success. Some of our hearers receive our doctrine, and gladly accept the blessings and privileges of the gospel; others despise and reject our important message, and choose rather to remain and perish in ignorance, idolatry, and vice, than to embrace the glad tidings of salvation; but, whatever be the effect of our doctrine upon our hearers, our fidelity and zeal in all cases are equally exerted, and equally acceptable to God, in whose estimation they are as the fragrant incense of a costly sacrifice.

To the one we are a deadly odour unto death[2], 16.

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[1] *In respect to them that perish.*] "If we be faithful, we are equally approved by Christ, under whose commission we act, whatever be the success of our preaching, whether it be properly received or not: whether men secure their future happiness by their obedience, or aggravate their condemnation by their disobedience." Dr. Priestley.

[2] *A deadly odour unto death.*] Gr. "an odour of death unto death:" *q. d.* Upon some, the perfume which we dispense has a noxious and even fatal effect; it paralyses the nervous system, and produces death. To others it is an *odour of life unto life*, "a living savour unto life." Wakefield. The very same perfume which overpowers and oppresses some, is to others a delightful, refreshing, reviving fragrance, which cheers the senses and invigorates the powers. "*Dantur odores, qui alios reficiunt et recreant, alios enecant.*" Rosenmuller. "*An odour of death:* the fragrancy so rich in itself, instead of reviving, destroys them, and is efficacious to bring on death in its most dreadful forms." Doddridge.

Ch. II. Ver. 16. *but to the other a living odour unto life; and who is sufficient for these things*[1]?

Upon the surrounding multitudes the perfumes which we dispense produce different effects, according to the different constitutions and dispositions of those who are exposed to their influence. To some the odour is destructive; it is disgusting, overpowering, and dangerous. They labour either to resist or to escape from it, and are sometimes destroyed by it. To others, differently constituted and disposed, the very same odour is a refreshing balm, a reviving cordial: they inhale it with delight, and feel that it infuses into their spirits, animation, vigour, activity, and joy. Thus, to some, the doctrine of the gospel is a fatal venom: it excites contempt and hatred, malice and rage; they oppose it to the utmost; their guilt and misery are aggravated, and their ruin is sealed: so that the gospel, which should have been their salvation, becomes their bane. Upon others the effect is widely different. The doctrine of the gospel, approved by the

[1] *Who is sufficient*] "for this preaching of Christ to all? None is sufficient of himself. ch. iii. 5." Newcome.—"When we consider all these awful consequences which one way or other attend our ministry, we may truly say, Who is sufficient for these things?" Doddridge.—"Here (says Dr. Whitby) the Vulgate ridiculously reads, '*et ad hæc quis tam idoneus*,' *i. e. quam ego?* and this reading is defended by Dr. Mills, against all the Greek Scholia," &c.—Mr. Wakefield's version is, "according to the suitableness of each;" which, he says, "is the acceptation of the Ethiopic, but is not certain whether it followed the present reading, or whether the passage be clearly susceptible of this sense as it now stands." Griesbach notes the variation in the Vulgate, but not in the Ethiopic.

understanding and cherished in the heart, becomes a reviving, invigorating, exhilarating principle, which dispels their darkness, which soothes their sorrows, which animates their hope, which governs their lives, which prepares them for, and will in due time advance them to, a happy and immortal state of being. And when I consider the nature of the message with which I am intrusted, and the infinitely momentous consequences of its admission or rejection by those to whom it is addressed, and likewise reflect upon my own inability, and the frailty of human nature, I am constrained to say, Who is equal to the important task? and I most readily acknowledge, that I have no hope of success but in God. Comp. iii. 5. Ch. II. Ver. 16.

3. He has no merit to plead but that of his disinterestedness and his sincerity, ver. 17.

For we are not as others[2] *who adulterate the word of God*[3]*: but as in sincerity*[4]*, but as from* 17.

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[2] *We are not as others.*] The received text reads οἱ πολλοι, *the many*, or, *most*; but οἱ λοιποι, *others*, is the reading of the Clermont and three other ancient manuscripts, and of the Syriac and other versions. It is hardly to be imagined that the *majority* of the preachers of the gospel, οἱ πολλοι, adulterated the word of God.

[3] *Who adulterate*:] καπηλευοντες. A metaphor, taken from vintners who adulterate pure wine with foreign mixtures. The apostle is supposed to allude to the false teacher, who corrupted the doctrine of Christ to adapt it to the learned Greeks. "The apostle used this metaphor to show that he did not, like the false teacher, mix falsehoods with the gospel for the purpose of pleasing the vitiated taste of his hearers." Macknight.—"καπηλευων (ὁ καπηλος *institor, propola, caupo*) *non solum significat* vendere *aliquid, sed et* adulterare, artificiose fucare, *et* exornare."

[4] *In sincerity.*] εξ ειλικρινειας. See ch. i. 12. "This word is

Ch. II. Ver. 17. *God*[1], *in the sight of God we speak concerning Christ.*

If we are honoured with distinguished success in dispensing the grateful and reviving odour of the gospel, it is because we acquit ourselves with integrity and faithfulness in the work assigned us. We do not, as some that might be named, and who may not be unknown to you, adulterate the pure word of God with unwholesome mixtures, in order to win applause, and to gain an ascendancy over the minds of our hearers; but on the contrary, with the most uncorrupted sincerity, mindful of our sacred character and awful responsibility as messengers from God, we teach the doctrine of the gospel as in his presence, and as those who are shortly to be summoned to his tribunal to give an account of their mission and to receive the reward of their works.

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elegantly opposed to the impure and gainful mixture mentioned before." Newcome.

[1] *As from God.*] "I preach the gospel of Jesus Christ in sincerity: I speak as from God himself, and I deliver it as in the presence of God." Locke.—"ὡς ἐκ Θεου· *ut a Deo jussus, ut a Deo per spiritum edoctus sum.* κατενωπιον τȣ Θεȣ· *Deum præ oculis habens.* ἐν Χριςῳ· *nomine Christi: tanquam legatus ipsius*, ch. v. 20. *Vel etiam, plane idem doceo, quod Christus de se docuit.*" Rosenmuller.

SECTION V.

THE APOSTLE appeals to the conversion of the Corinthians to the Christian faith, and to their reputable profession of it, as the best testimonial to his apostolic mission; and from the superior glory of the new to the old dispensation, he enforces the superior obligation of the ministers of Christ to sincerity, fortitude, and zeal. Ch. iii. 1—iv. 6. Ch. III.

1. The conversion and exemplary conduct of the Corinthians themselves supersedes the necessity of all letters of recommendation, either to them or from them, ver. 1—3.

Are we beginning to recommend ourselves again[2]*?* Ver. 1.
or, do we need[3]*, as some* do[4]*, letters of recommendation either to you or from you*[5]*?*

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[2] *Recommend ourselves.*] Συνιστανειν must mean, not *commend*, but *recommend*. "It would seem that the faction had pretended that he had not proved himself an apostle by the things written in his former epistle." Macknight.

[3] *Or, do we need:*] η μη χρηζομεν. This is the reading of the Clermont and other copies, also the Vulgate and Syriac versions, and adopted by Griesbach. The received text reads, ει μη, *q. d.* unless *you think* that I want letters. Newcome says ει μη is used interrogatively, as Gen. iii. 11.

[4] *As some* do.] The false apostle had probably been introduced among them by letters of recommendation, perhaps from the Judaizing Christians at Jerusalem. See Macknight.

[5] *To you or from you.*] The received text reads, *or letters of recommendation from you*; but the word συστατικων, *recommendatory*, is wanting in the Alexandrine and Ephrem manuscripts,

Ch. III. Ver. 1.

I have been enlarging upon the honour which has been conferred upon me and my colleagues, in being permitted to accompany the triumphal procession of the gospel, and to diffuse the odour of its salutary doctrine; and I have asserted the faithfulness with which we exercise our ministry. But do you imagine, as my enemies may possibly insinuate, that by this I mean to establish my apostolic authority among you, as though it were not already sufficiently proved? or can you suppose that I need, like others who might be named, letters of introduction to you, or of recommendation from you? Does my authority with you, and other churches, rest upon so precarious and unsatisfactory a basis as a mere letter of recommendation?

2. *Ye are* yourselves *our letter, written in your hearts*[1], *understood and read by all men.*

If I am asked for a letter of recommendation, I appeal to the church at Corinth. The existence of a body of professing Christians at Corinth, and their general exemplary conduct, is such an evidence of my apostleship as every one may read and understand: it is a matter of public notoriety.

3. *Since ye are manifestly*[2] *the epistle of Christ*

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and in the Coptic and Vulgate versions. Mr. Wakefield renders, "unless we want, as some do, letters of recommendation to you (μαλλον η) rather than letters of recommendation from you."

[1] *Your hearts.*] The received text reads ἡμων, *our hearts*: ὑμων is the reading of one manuscript, and of the Ethiopic version. The connexion seems to require it. Mr. Wakefield pronounces it to be undoubtedly genuine, and Dr. Doddridge adopts it.

through our ministration[3]*: written, not with ink, but by the spirit of the living God; not on tablets of stone, but on the fleshly tablets of the heart.* Ch. III. Ver. 3.

Yes, my brethren, ye are yourselves my public letter of recommendation from Christ: who by you attests the authority with which I am endued to preach his doctrine, and the power with which I am invested for ensuring its success. This epistle he has written through my instrumentality, I having been the bearer of it; or, if I may so express it, the amanuensis that he has employed to write. And this epistle is written, not with ink in the ordinary way, but in characters inscribed by the spirit and power of God himself; and that not like the Mosaic decalogue, which was written by the finger of God upon tablets of stone, but upon the soft and

[2] *Since ye are manifestly.*] "The sense of St. Paul," says Mr. Locke, "in this third verse, is plainly this: That he needed no letters of commendation to them: but that their conversion to the gospel, written not with ink, but with the spirit of God in the tables of their hearts, and not in tables of stone, by his ministry, was as clear an evidence and testimony to them of his mission from Christ, as the law writ in tables of stone was an evidence of Moses's mission: so that he, St. Paul, needed no other recommendation. This is what is to be understood by this verse, unless we will make the *tables of stone* to have no signification here. But to say, as he does, that the Corinthians being writ upon in their hearts, not with ink but with the spirit of God by the hand of St. Paul, was Christ's commendatory letter of him, being a pretty bold expression, liable to the exception of the captious part of the Corinthians, he, to obviate all imputation of vanity or vain-glory, immediately subjoins what follows in the next verse."

[3] *Through our ministration*:] διακονηθεισα ὑφ' ἡμων. "*delivered by us*, of which we had the charge and management." Wakefield.—"Ministerio meo scriptus: *Christus, in scribenda hac epistola, meo ministerio usus est.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. III. Ver. 3. tender tablet of the heart of all of you who have been converted from a heathen state to the public profession of the Christian religion. In plain language, your conversion to the Christian religion in consequence of my preaching the gospel to you, and exercising miraculous powers among you, your abandoning the gross vices of your heathen state, and your present love and practice of virtue in obedience to the law of Christ, and from regard to the discoveries of the Christian revelation, is a plain and public proof that I have a commission from God to preach his gospel in the world. There is no other way of accounting for the great success of my labours at Corinth; and the wonderful change which has been wrought in your minds, in your hearts and lives, is a more satisfactory evidence of my apostolic mission, than the miraculous engraving of the ten commandments upon tablets of stone by the finger of God, was, of the divine legation of Moses.

2. The apostle, to avoid all appearance of ostentation, ascribes all his ability and his success to the power of God, who by his spirit qualified him to be the publisher of a new, a better, and a life-giving dispensation, ver. 4—6.

4. *Now we have this persuasion* [1] *through Christ*

[1] *This persuasion*:] πεποιθησιν. "a milder term for boasting." Locke. See chap x. 7.—"*certa apostoli persuasio de fructu muneris sui apud Corinthios.*" Rosenmuller.—"As if he had said, But mistake me not as if I boasted of myself. This so great boasting that I use is only my confidence in God through

towards God: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to place any thing to account[2] *as from ourselves, but our sufficiency* is *from God.* Ch. III. Ver. 5.

Though I assert with so much confidence my commission from God, which was communicated to me by Christ, I am far from arrogating to myself any superior merit on this account, and least of all from ascribing the success of my ministry to my own power or wisdom. I am well apprized, that of myself I can do nothing. I cannot calculate upon the least success from any powers of reasoning or talent of eloquence that I possess, or upon which I might value myself. No argument nor persuasion of mine would ever have induced any one of you to have renounced the idolatry in which you had been educated, or the vices to which you were habituated, and to have become the true worshipers of God, and the virtuous disciples of Jesus. Whatever ability I possess, whatever success I have met with, all is the work of God.

Who hath even qualified us[3] *as ministers of* 6.

Christ: for it was God that made me minister of the gospel, that bestowed on me the ability for it, and whatever I perform in it is wholly from him." Locke.

[2] *To place any thing to account*:] λογισασθαι τι. So Newcome.—"to reckon upon any thing as from ourselves." Doddridge.—"to reason any thing; *q. d.* we are unable by any reasoning of our own to bring men to conversion." Whitby. See Acts xix. 27; Rom. iv. 3, 6, 11, ch. viii. 18, 36; 1 Cor. iv. 1: in all which places λογιζομαι signifies, *to reckon*, or, *place to account.*

[3] *Who hath even qualified us*:] ικανωσεν. "who hath even made us sufficient ministers." Newcome.—"who indeed hath fitted us to be ministers." Macknight.—"who hath also thought

Ch. III. Ver. 6. *the new covenant*[1], *not of the letter, but of the spirit*[2]*: for the letter killeth*[3], *but the spirit giveth life.*

I am one of the last men who would have thought of engaging in the Christian ministry and apostleship, or who would have been selected by others. I was once a bitter enemy to the Christian name: but even me has God chosen and qualified for this high and honourable office. He subdued my prejudices, he brought me to the knowledge of the truth, he inspired my heart with gratitude and zeal,

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us worthy to be ministers." Wakefield.—" who hath made us able ministers." Public Version, and Doddridge. The apostle takes up the preceding word, " our sufficiency," ἱκανοτης, " is from God who hath made us sufficient," ἱκανωσεν.

[1] *The new covenant.*] καινης διαθηκης, *new covenant*, as it is rendered in the Public Version. The Mosaic dispensation was a covenant made by God with the Israelites, through the instrumentality of Moses; the Christian dispensation is the new covenant through the mediation of Jesus Christ.—" who hath even made us sufficient ministers of the new covenant." Newcome.

[2] *Not of the letter, but of the spirit.*] " *the letter*, the law of Moses, which was *written* on tables of stone—*the spirit*, the Christian covenant, the true spiritual religion, written on the heart by the power of the spirit. Rom. vii. 6." Newcome.—" St. Paul may be understood to intimate that the new covenant was also, though obscurely, held forth in the law. For he says, he was constituted a minister of *the spirit*, or spiritual meaning of the law, which was Christ. But both letter and spirit must be understood of the same thing: the letter of the law, and the spirit of the law. And in his epistle to the Hebrews he shows what a spiritual sense ran through the Mosaical institutions and writings." Locke.

[3] *The letter killeth, &c.*] *i. e.* " Pronouncing death without any way of remission on all transgressors, leaves them under an irrevocable sentence of death; but the Spirit, *i. e.* Christ, ver. 17, who is a quickening spirit, 1 Cor. xv. 45, giveth life." Locke. —" The end of the gospel is to give life. John x. 10; Rom. vi. 23." Newcome.

with benevolence and courage; he instructed me in the Christian doctrine in its fullest extent, and gave me a particular commission to preach the gospel to the Gentiles: and to this he superadded those miraculous gifts and powers, which were so clearly exhibited among you, and which alone could, in the present state of things, have excited that attention to the doctrine and to the evidences of the gospel, which would overcome inveterate prejudices, and would make a powerful and abiding impression upon the heart. Ch. III. Ver. 6.

Thus were I and my fellow-labourers amply qualified to dispense the blessings, not of the old dispensation, but of the new; not of that covenant which imposed rites and ceremonies, and which consisted in types and figures, but of that new and better covenant which was the completion of the Mosaic peculiarity, and which was the hidden spiritual meaning of all its pompous external symbols. And whatever may be affirmed by some who wish to hold you in bondage to the old dispensation, I can assure you that there is nothing in it which ought to attract your regard, or to alienate your affections from the Christian faith; for the law is a dispensation of death, as it passes a sentence of death upon every offence, and makes no provision for the pardon of the penitent. But the gospel is a life-giving spirit: it proclaims pardon to the penitent, and everlasting life to all who accept its offers and comply with its requisitions.

Ch. III. Ver. 6.

3. The apostle argues the superiority of the gospel ministry to that of the law, from the superior excellence and permanency of its object, ver. 7—11.

The apostle through this whole paragraph alludes to the history which is given, Exod. xxxiv. of the shining of the face of Moses, after he had passed forty days upon the mount in communion with God, and receiving the law from him. The historian, ver. 29, there relates, that when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in his hand, he was not aware that his face shone. But when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, and beheld the lustre of his countenance, they were afraid to come near him. And Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him, and Moses talked with them. And afterwards all the children of Israel came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with them in Mount Sinai, and till he had done speaking with them he put a veil on his face. But when Moses went to Jehovah to speak with him, he took the veil off until he came out. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses that it shone, and Moses put the veil upon his face again.

In allusion to this incident, the apostle declares, 1. That though the lustre upon the countenance of the Jewish legislator was glorious, and the honour thereby conferred on him was great, nevertheless it

was evanescent, and greatly exceeded by the spiritual and far more permanent glory which attended the publishers of the Christian dispensation: and, 2. That the Jewish lawgiver covering his face with a veil was an emblem of the dark and figurative genius of the Mosaic dispensation; whereas the first teachers of Christianity publicly exhibited the lustre with which they were dignified, and were bound in duty to state the great doctrines of Christianity in the plainest and the clearest light. Ch. III. Ver. 6.

But if the ministration of the law *of death, engraven in letters upon stones, was so glorious that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look upon the face of Moses, because of that lustre of his countenance, which* lustre *was to be abolished, how much more glorious must this ministration of the spirit be*[1]*!* 7. 8.

I have just been speaking of myself and my brethren who are commissioned to teach the gospel, as ministers, not of that old covenant which was written on tables of stone, and which denounced death upon the transgressor, but of that new dispensation, which is the scope and end of the first covenant, which was confirmed by the gifts of the spirit, and which contains the promise of life. I do not,

[1] *How much more glorious.*] Mr. Wakefield renders the clause, "must not this spiritual ministration be much more glorious?" literally, "how shall not the ministration of the spirit be more glorious?" Perhaps the best translation may be, "how is it possible that the ministration of the spirit (or spiritual dispensation) should not exceed in glory?" How can it be otherwise, than that the ministry of the spirit which giveth life should confer more glory and lustre on those who are employed in it?

Ch. III. Ver. 8. indeed, deny that the first dispensation was of divine authority, and that it was a great honour to Moses to be chosen to the office of communicating the will of God to the Israelites, by means of the law written by the finger of God on the tables of stone. And the dignity conferred upon him in being admitted to communion with God was marked by that lustre of his countenance which struck the beholders with awe, and made them afraid of approaching him. This lustre, however, was but temporary, an emblem of the limited duration of the dispensation which he introduced. But if the ministry of a dispensation which entailed death was honoured with a brightness which dazzled the eyes of the spectators, is it not reasonable to believe, may we not naturally expect, that the ministry of the dispensation of life will exhibit a still greater brightness; that the gospel, which is the soul and spirit of the law, will irradiate its officers with a greater and a more permanent glory?

9. *For if the ministry of condemnation* were *glorious, much more doth the ministration of justification exceed in glory.*

That the glory which attends the preaching of the gospel should greatly exceed that which accompanied the preaching of the law, is not at all wonderful, when we consider the nature and genius of the two dispensations; the law of Moses being a dispensation of condemnation only, requiring that uniform obedience which few or none could yield, and making no provision for repentance; whereas

the gospel is a dispensation of peace and reconciliation, and restores the penitent believer to a state of friendship with God. Being so much superior in its object, it is entitled to be introduced with superior magnificence. Ch. III. Ver. 9.

And indeed that which was then made glorious[1] *ceaseth in this respect to be glorious, because of the glory that surpasseth* it. 10.

The lustre which attended the introduction of the Mosaic dispensation is completely eclipsed by the superior lustre of the gospel; so that the honour conferred upon Moses by the lustre of his countenance was nothing in comparison with that which is conferred upon the apostles of Christ, by the superior knowledge of the gracious purposes of God to man, with which they are inspired, by the spiritual gifts and powers with which they are favoured, and by the ability which they possess of communicating those gifts and powers to their respective converts: a power which Moses either did not possess at all, or possessed in a very limited degree.

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[1] *That which was made glorious*:] "και δε δεδοξασται το δεδοξασμενον. *Munus Mosis quod fuit splendidum, ne excellens quidem nominari potest.* εν τουτω τω μερει, *hac ratione, hoc nomine,* ἑνεκεν, *respectu hujus eminentioris dignitatis: i. e. comparata ad hanc excellentiorem dignitatem, quæ inest nostro ministerio.*" Rosenmuller. "For indeed that glory is no glory, with respect to the excessive glory of the other." Wakefield. Mr. Locke puts the question, "whether in thus industriously placing the ministry of the gospel in honour above that of Moses, the apostle may not possibly have an eye to the Judaizing false apostle of the Corinthians, to let them see what little regard was to be had to that ministration, in comparison with the ministry of the gospel."

Ch. III. Ver. 11. *If, then, that which is abolished* was abolished *by glory*[1], *much more doth that which remaineth* remain *in glory.*

The lustre of Moses is eclipsed by the superior lustre of the apostles of Christ. Thus the law of Moses is wholly superseded by the gospel of Christ, and its ritual impositions are no longer obligatory upon the believing Gentiles; and as the knowledge with which the apostles are inspired, and the powers with which they are endued, are not momentary and occasional, but constantly inherent in them, so shall that glorious dispensation of which they are the ministers, remain in the world as a permanent and

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[1] *By glory—in glory*:] διὰ δόξης—ἐν δόξῃ. The translation given in the text is that of Hallet and Macknight, and best suits the construction and the connexion. The glory of the ministry of the law was eclipsed by the superior glory of that of the gospel: how reasonable, then, is it to expect, that the glory which obscured the other shall remain complete or unabated after the first has vanished! As, therefore, the glory of the gospel ministry will be more permanent than that which it displaces, so the gospel dispensation itself also will be more permanent than the law. The apostle's language, however, is elliptical, and admits of a different construction and interpretation: *q. d.* If that dispensation which was to be abolished was introduced with glory, much more will that which remains remain in glory. This was Mr. Locke's interpretation, and Archbishop Newcome's, who translates the words thus, "for if that which shall be done away was glorious, much more must that which remaineth be glorious;" and Mr. Wakefield, "for if that which is no more were with glory, much more must that which continueth be in glory."

The apostle's idea seems to be this: that as the lustre of the ministry of the law was obscured by the superior lustre of that of the gospel, it is highly reasonable to expect that the lustre which superseded the other will also be more lasting: insinuating, by this imagery, that the gospel was both a more splendid and a more permanent dispensation than the law.

extensive blessing, and shall never be superseded to the end of time. Ch. III. Ver. 11.

4. The apostle argues the indispensable duty of the ministers of the new and superior dispensation, to teach its doctrines with the utmost freedom and simplicity, ver. 12, 13.

Having therefore this persuasion[2], *we use great freedom of speech.* 12.

Being fully convinced that the dispensation of the gospel is in its nature and tendency greatly superior to that of the law, that it is better adapted to human frailty, and intended to continue to the end of time, and consequently that the ministry of the gospel is beyond comparison more honourable than that of the law, we who are intrusted with this honourable service, feel it to be our duty to rise superior to all mean and secular considerations, and

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[2] *This persuasion*:] ελπιδα. See Macknight, who refers to 2 Cor. i. 7; Philip. i. 20; Titus i. 2, for this sense of the word.

"That Paul by these words (says Mr. Locke, who has given a just and beautiful illustration of this portion of the epistle,) means the honourable employment of a minister of the gospel, or the glory belonging to his ministry, is evident by the whole foregoing comparison which he has made between the *ministry* of the law and of the gospel, and not between the law and the gospel themselves. The calling it *hope* instead of *glory* here, is the language of modesty: it is, *q. d.* Having, therefore, so honourable an employment as the ministry of the gospel, which far exceeds the ministry of the law in glory, though even that gave so great a lustre to Moses's face that the children of Israel could not with fixed eyes look upon him, I, as becomes one of such hopes, in such a post as sets me above all mean considerations and compliances, use great freedom and plainness of speech in all things that concern my ministry."

Ch. III. Ver. 12. to speak the truth with the utmost plainness, fidelity and courage, not taking into consideration either the offence which it may give, or the personal inconvenience with which it may be attended.

13. *And* we are *not as Moses,* who *put a veil upon his face, that the children of Israel may not see*[1] *distinctly the end of* the dispensation which is *about to be abolished.*

Moses put a veil upon his face to conceal its lustre; but this is not the practice of us, the apostles and ministers of Christ. It is not owing to any act of ours, nor to any obscurity in the delivery of the important message we have in charge, that the Jews remain ignorant of the true nature and design of that œconomy which, having answered its purpose, is just about to be repealed.

5. The ignorance and unbelief of the Jews are owing to their own prejudices and vices, which prevent them from seeing the true design of the ceremonial law, ver. 14—17.

14. *But their understandings were blinded*[2]*; for to*

[1] *That the children of Israel may not see.*] "These words must be understood, not of Moses, but the ministers of the gospel. It is not their fault that the Jews do not understand the scope of the law; but it is owing to the blindness of their minds, which shall be taken away when they return to Christ." Locke.

[2] *Their understandings were blinded.*] *q. d.* "We, the ministers of the gospel, speak plainly and openly, and put no veil upon ourselves as Moses did, whereby to hinder the Jews from seeing Christ in the law; but that which hinders them is a blindness on their minds, which has been always on them, and remains to this day. This seems to be obviating an objection, viz. If you preach the gospel and Christ contained in the law

this day the same veil remaineth during the reading of the old Testament[3], *it not being discovered*[4] *that it is abolished by Christ.* Ch. III. Ver. 14.

And to dwell a little upon this unhappy state of my mistaken countrymen: in justice to the preachers of the gospel I am constrained to say, that it is not owing to any defect of candour or simplicity in us, but to their own inveterate prepossessions that they remain so grossly ignorant of the true design of the law. Their prejudices render their minds callous to the impression of the clearest evidence. And even to this day, while they attend the reading of the scriptures of the Old Testament in their synagogues, the true sense of it is veiled from their sight. They continue to dream of the perfection and perpetuity of their dispensation, being totally ignorant that its purposes being fulfilled in Christ, the Mosaic œconomy is now about to be entirely set aside.

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with such a shining clearness and evidence, how comes it that the Jews are not converted to it? His reply is, Their unbelief comes not from any obscurity in our preaching, but from a blindness which rests upon their minds to this day: which shall be taken away when they turn to the Lord." Locke.

[3] *The old Testament.*] Gr. "the old covenant." But the words Old Testament being used familiarly to express the sacred books of the Jews, without any reference to the signification of the words, the phrase is retained in the translation, as exactly expressing the apostle's idea.

[4] *It not being discovered*:] μη ανακαλυπτομενον ὁτι. Bengel and Griesbach put a comma after μενει, and read ὁτι as one word. This punctuation is adopted by Newcome, Wakefield, and Macknight. The public version is, "for until this day remaineth the same veil, untaken away in the reading of the old Testament: which veil is done away in Christ."

Ch. III. Ver. 15. *Yea, even to this day, when Moses is read a veil covereth their heart*[1].

Though they listen to the word of the law, its true and spiritual meaning is completely concealed from them.

16. *But when* it *shall turn*[2] *to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.*

There is a time coming, when the whole Jewish nation shall be converted to the Christian religion; and, when this auspicious event takes place, the veil which now envelopes and darkens their understandings shall be withdrawn, all their prejudices shall be removed, and they shall see the true design of the ceremonial law, which was to prepare the way for a more liberal and more perfect dispensation, and to make it more welcome.

17. *But the Lord is that spirit*[3]*; and where the spirit of the Lord* is, *there* is *liberty*[4].

I have been speaking of the spirit as opposed to

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[1] *A veil covereth,* &c.] It is thought that the apostle here alludes to a custom of the Jews, which continues still in the synagogue, of wearing a veil when the law is read. See Locke, Macknight, &c.

[2] *When* it, &c.] "But when their heart shall turn to the Lord, and laying by prejudice and aversion shall be willing to receive the truth, the veil shall be taken away, and they shall plainly see him to be the person spoken of and intended. When this shall be, see Rom. xi. 25—27." Locke.

[3] *The Lord is that spirit.*] These words relate to ver. 6, where he says that he is a minister not of the letter of the law, nor of the outside and literal sense, but of the mystical and spiritual meaning of it, which, he here tells us, is Christ.

[4] *There* is *liberty*:] "because the spirit is given only to sons, or to those that are free. This is the liberty of speech mentioned, ver. 12. See the next chapter." Locke.

the letter, and of the ministration of the spirit as opposed to the ministration of death and condemnation. I now tell you very plainly, that by the spirit I mean Christ; that is, the doctrine of Christ, the dispensation of the gospel. To this great object all the types and sacrifices of the ceremonial Institution pointed; in this dispensation all its prophecies were accomplished, and all its promises fulfilled. And for this law of liberty all who groaned under the yoke of Moses panted with earnest desire. The legal dispensation introduced by Moses had its use, but it was limited and temporary: the spirit of the law was a spirit of bondage; its prevailing motive was terror. The obedience which it produced was a servile homage. Not so the spirit of the gospel. Believers in Christ are rescued from the terrors of the law; they become sons of God; their spirit is the spirit of adoption; their obedience is the fruit of faith, and hope, and love. They are no longer slaves, but sons: they have nothing to conceal; they no longer deal in types and mysteries, but they declare the important truths and the precious promises of the gospel with the greatest simplicity and plainness of language. Ch. III. Ver. 17.

6. The apostle, in allusion to the case of Moses, represents the ministers of the gospel as diffusing every where around them the radiance which they derive from Christ, ver. 18.

But we all[3], *with unveiled face, reflecting as* 18.

[3] *But we all.*] Mr. Locke observes, "that ver. 14—17 is a pa-

Ch. III. Ver. 18. *mirrors*[1] *the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image*[2] *from glory to glory*[3], *even as* proceeding *from the Lord, the spirit*[5].

To return from my digression: I was observing

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renthesis, which being laid aside, the comparison between the ministers of the gospel and Moses stands clear. Moses with a veil covered the brightness and glory of God which shone in his countenance: but we, the ministers of the gospel, with open countenances reflect as mirrors the glory of the Lord." Griesbach, Newcome, and Macknight all include these verses in a parenthesis.

[1] *Reflecting as mirrors.*] " Κατοπτριζω, *repræsento aliquid tanquam in speculo alteri, a* κατοπτρον *speculum. Medium,* κατοπτριζομαι, *meipsum intueor in speculo.*" Schleusner; who produces examples from Artemidorus, Ælian, and Diogenes Laertius. " Supposing κατοπτριζομαι to be in the middle voice," says Dr. Macknight, " I have translated it actively, in which I am supported by Estius and the Greek commentators, who explain it thus, ' *Instar speculi suscipientes atque reddentes.* Receiving and reflecting in the manner of a mirror the glory of the Lord.' "—" 'Reflecting as mirrors,' so (says Mr. Locke) the word must signify here, and not ' beholding as in a mirror :' because the comparison is between the ministers of the gospel and Moses, and not between the ministers of the gospel and the children of Israel. Now the action of beholding, was the action of the children of Israel; but of shining, or reflecting the glory received in the mount, was the action of Moses: and therefore it must be something answering that, in the ministers of the gospel, wherein the comparison is made: as is further manifest in another express part of the comparison, between the veiled face of Moses, ver. 13, and the open face of the ministers of the gospel in this verse. The face of Moses was veiled, that the bright shining, or glory of God remaining on it, might not be seen; and the faces of the ministers of the gospel are open, that the bright shining of the gospel, or the glory of Christ, may be seen. Thus the justness of the comparison stands fair, and has an easy sense; which is hard to be made out, if κατοπτριζομενοι be translated ' beholding as in a glass.' "

" The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shines as in a glass which reflects the image upon us, so that we all are transformed into the same image, deriving the gifts and graces of the spirit from Christ, the Lord and great distributor of them:

(ver. 13) that Moses veiled his face to conceal its lustre, and that this was a symbol of the obscurity of that dispensation which he introduced. But the case is widely different with us, the apostles of Christ and teachers of the Christian doctrine. The glory of Christ shines full upon us, and we, like polished mirrors, reflect its beams: so that they who see us, do in a sense see him from whom our brightness is

Ch. III. Ver. 18.

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and so the glory which the Father gave to him he hath given us," John xvii. 22. Whitby.

"κατοπτριζομενοι, *illuminati gloriâ Domini, tanquam specula quæ lumen accipiunt. Sic enim Græci intelligunt.*" Valla.—"*speculantes,* Vulg. *hoc loco a speculo ductum est, non a specula. Ut intelligas Dei gloriam a purgatis animis, ceu speculo, excipi ac reddi. Ad hunc enim sensum exponunt Græca scholia, ut κατοπτριζομενοι sit veluti speculo exprimentes ac referentes.*" Erasmus. —"κατ. attente spectantes: *qui speculum consulunt omnia singulatim intuentur.*" Grotius.

As it is plain from the Greek scholiasts, that the original word will bear the sense of *reflecting as a mirror,* though this may not be its usual classical sense, and as the connexion appears so plainly to require it, I have adopted it in the text, though with some little hesitation. Perhaps the apostle's idea may be this: Christ as a mirror reflects the image of God, and the apostles gazing at this mirror are illuminated by its reflected rays, and themselves reflect the image of Christ.

[3] *Into the same image*:] την αυτην εικονα. "*that very image:* that of Moses was but a faint reflection of the glory which he saw." Locke.

[3] *From glory to glory.*] "with a continued influx and renewing of glory, in opposition to the shining of Moses's face, which decayed and disappeared in a little while," ver. 7. Locke.

[4] *From the Lord, the spirit.*] "as if this irradiation of light and glory came immediately from the source of it, the Lord himself, who is that spirit whereof we are the ministers," ver. 6. Locke.—"The Lord of the spirit." Macknight. *q. d.* In diffusing the knowledge of God and religion through the world, we are the images or representatives of Christ, by the power of an abiding inspiration from him who is the Lord, or author, of the covenant of the spirit.

Ch. III. Ver. 18. borrowed. And as we are continually receiving fresh streams of glory from our Lord and Master, who is the spirit and end of the Mosaic dispensation, so we likewise, with correspondent effulgence, diffuse fresh lustre around us; till we at length become the perfect image of him whose glory we thus reflect. In plain language, we are all enlightened by Jesus Christ, in the knowledge of the nature and design of the gospel dispensation, which knowledge abides with us. And we are so far from endeavouring to conceal it, that we think it our duty to publish the whole of it every where in the plainest language. So that they who listen to our instruction gain as distinct and comprehensive a view of the doctrine of the gospel as we ourselves possess, and as if, like us, they had been taught by Christ himself.

7. Invested with this honourable ministry, the teachers of the gospel fulfill their commission with zeal and fidelity, ch. iv. ver. 1, 2.

Ch. IV. Ver. 1. *Therefore, as we have through mercy* [1] *obtained this ministry, we faint not* [2],

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[1] *Through mercy.*] "as we have been graciously intrusted." Wakefield. Gr. "having this ministry according as we have received mercy." Newcome; who refers to ch. iii. 6—9. *q. d.* "according as God has had compassion on me, who was a persecutor, and has intrusted me with it."

[2] *We faint not.*] ΟΥΚ ΕΚΚΑΚΟΥΜΕΝ. "we flag not." Macknight.—"ΕΚΚΑΚΕΩ. Proprie, *cedo et succumbo laboribus, segnesco:* metaphorice, *desum officio meo, negligens et ignavus sum. Sic miles qui arma abjicit, et signa militaria deserit et fugit,* ΕΚΚΑΚΕΙΝ *dicitur.*" Schleusner.—"I do not fail nor flag: I do not behave my-

Having, by the unmerited goodness and the transcendent mercy of God, been appointed to the high and honourable office of teachers of the gospel, we do not shrink either from toil or danger, but endeavour to discharge the duties of our station with courage and fidelity. Ch. IV. Ver. 1.

But have renounced the hidden things of shame[3]; *not walking in craftiness, nor fraudulently corrupting the word of God, but by manifestation of the truth recommending ourselves*[4] *to every man's conscience in the sight of God.* 2.

Whatever some may insinuate concerning us, I solemnly and confidently assure you, that we are not in the number of those who connive at the dissolute practices in secret which they condemn in public; or who suffer the disgraceful rites of hea-

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self unworthily in it, nor misbecoming the honour and dignity of such an employment." Locke.

[3] *We have renounced the hidden things of shame,*] "in which the priests of paganism deal so much, in order to impose on the people, practising in their mysteries so many impure and so many foolish rites." Doddridge; who well observes in his note, that the word απειπαμεθα, which we render *renounce,* does not imply that they ever had any thing to do with such things; and that the words "set them at defiance" seem more literally to express the original. Dr. Macknight renders it, "we have commanded away." "The expression (he says) is emphatical and picturesque: it represents the hidden things of shame as offering their service to the apostle, who rejected their offer with disdain, and bid them be gone."—"The whole business of the first part of the epistle (says Mr. Locke) is to justify to the Corinthians his behaviour in the ministry, and to convince them that in preaching the gospel he has been plain, clear, open, and candid, without any hidden design or concealed secular interest."

[4] *Recommending ourselves.*] "not requiring commendation from others, ch. iii. 1." Newcome.

Ch. IV. Ver. 2. thenism to pollute the purity of the gospel. We have no sinister designs, nor any selfish and secular ends to answer, while we profess to teach the truth; nor do we presume to debase the pure word of God by human mixture, Jewish or heathen, in order to render the gospel more palatable, and less obnoxious to the prejudices of our hearers. Truth is our sole object; and to prove our fidelity to the consciences of our hearers and to the eye of God, is the great scope of our ambition.

8. Hence it follows, that if the gospel doctrine remains concealed from any, the fault lies wholly with themselves, ver. 3, 4.

3. *But if our gospel be also veiled, it is veiled* only
4. *among those who destroy themselves*[1], *among those unbelievers*[2] *whose minds the God of this world*[3]

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[1] *Who destroy themselves.*] So Macknight. τοις απολλυμενοις, "those who are lost: if our gospel, like the law, ch. iii. 13, 14, be veiled, it is veiled among those who perish through vice and infidelity." Newcome.

[2] *Among those unbelievers.*] Newcome; who appeals to Grotius for the construction of this verse, as given in the translation. Gr. "among whom the God of this world hath blinded the understandings of unbelievers." See also Rosenmuller.

[3] *The God of this world.*] That is, Mammon, or self-interest; or rather perhaps Satan, the opposing power, the supposed leader and head of the unbelieving and idolatrous world, in opposition to Christ, who is lord and chief of the community of believers, the ruler of the kingdom of light, as Satan is the ruler and prince of the kingdom of darkness. He is represented as blinding the minds of his subjects, who are prevented by their inveterate prejudices and vices from seeing the light of truth in the gospel. See 1 Cor. v. 5; 1 Tim. i. 20; Eph. vi. 12; Col. i. 16.

The generality of commentators, assuming the existence of

hath blinded, so that the lustre of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God[4], *doth not shine upon* them. Ch. IV. Ver. 4.

I deny not that there are some to whom the nature and design of the gospel are as much under a veil as the dispensation of Moses was to the Jews: but who are the persons in this situation? They are men who are working out their own ruin: they are blind, and cannot see the light; the God of this world has deprived them of their mental eye, so that they cannot discern in the gospel the glory of Christ; who is the image of God, as we are the images of him. Their prejudices, their vices, and their attachment to worldly interest, prevent them from discerning, or from being properly impressed by, the evidence of the gospel, so that they either cannot or will not learn the will of God, as revealed by Christ. Their ignorance is not owing to the ministers of the gospel: it is owing to the blindness of their understandings, and to the badness of their hearts, and they must abide by the consequences of this wilful and criminal unbelief.

9. The apostle renounces all pretensions to spiritual authority, and ascribes the success of the gospel ministry wholly to the power of God, ver. 5, 6.

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such a being as the devil, of course apply the apostle's language to him.

[4] *Christ, the image of God.*] "Christ is represented as the mirror from which the glory of God is reflected upon us, by such an image of the sun as we have in a mirror. This is reflected upon us from Christ. But all the light comes originally from God, the father of lights." Priestley.

Ch. IV. Ver. 5. *For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus* as *the Lord*[1], *and ourselves* as *your servants for the sake of Jesus.*

I have been speaking in very high terms of the ministerial office; but do not mistake me, or imagine that it is my desire to domineer over you. The gospel of which we are ministers I have stated to be, not our gospel, but the glorious gospel of Christ. We are only his servants in common with yourselves and the universal community of believers. We are his missionaries; from him we derive all our instruction, he gives us our commission, and his name we bear. Nay, so far are we from pretending to govern you, that from love to Christ and zeal for his cause, we profess ourselves to be, not only his servants, but yours also: your very slaves. Nor is there any labour or drudgery to which we would not cheerfully submit, so that we may succeed in winning you over to the doctrine and service of Jesus Christ.

6. *For God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shone into our hearts, that* we might diffuse *the lustre*[2] *of his glorious knowledge*[3], which shines *in the face of Jesus Christ.*

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[1] *Christ Jesus as the Lord.*] "We preach not ourselves, *i. e.* not ourselves *as Lords*, αλλα Χριστον Ιησουν Κυριον, but Christ Jesus *as* the Lord; *q. d.* I have not given the least occasion to any to suspect I set myself up for the head of a party for any private advantage, but preach Jesus Christ as the common Lord and Head of all Christians." Pyle. See also Macknight.

[2] *Diffuse the lustre.*] "that I might communicate the knowledge and light of the glory of God, which shines in the face of Jesus Christ." Locke; who observes in his note, that this is a

That almighty Being who said "Let there be light," and there was light, has mercifully vouchsafed to shine upon our dark and benighted minds, which were once as remote from the light of the gospel, as blind, as ignorant, as strongly prejudiced, as any of its most inveterate opposers now are. And the reason why this holy and cheering light was imparted to us is, that we might diffuse it among the heathen: that so the lustre which beams from the countenance of our glorious Lord, and which is by him reflected from the Father of light and wisdom, might shine through the world; and the doctrine of the gospel might be manifest to all mankind. Not to ourselves, therefore, but to the mercy of God be the praise of that success with which the ministration of the gospel has been every where attended.

Ch. IV. Ver. 6.

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continuation still of the allegory of Moses, and the shining of his face, &c. so much insisted upon in the foregoing chapter."

It cannot be doubted that the apostle in the whole of this discourse, though he uses the plural number, chiefly refers to himself, and means to vindicate his own character; and in this sense he would be understood by the Corinthians. For this reason Mr. Locke and most other expositors use the singular number in their expositions. But as the apostle out of modesty commonly uses the plural number, including Timothy, whose name is joined with his own in the salutation, and the other apostles and ministers of the gospel, and as it is certainly a more graceful manner of address where he is speaking in his own praise, I have for this reason generally retained the plural number in the paraphrase, though with an allusion and leaning to the apostle's own particular case.

[3] *His glorious knowledge.*] The received text reads "the glorious knowledge of God." See Griesbach.

SECTION VI.

Ch. IV. *THE APOSTLE refers to the support which he and his fellow-labourers experienced under persecutions and sufferings, as an additional proof of their commission from God; and professes that nothing but the consciousness of their integrity, the assurance of success, and the hope of a future everlasting reward, could induce them to persevere in their laborious and hazardous enterprise.* Ch. iv. 7.—v. 10.

1. The frailty of their nature, and the danger of their situation and office, demonstrate that nothing less than a divine power could be effectual for their support, ver. 7—9.

Ver. 7. *Moreover, we have this treasure in earthen vessels*[1], *that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

The treasure which we dispense is of inestimable value; and the success of our mission is great and

[1] *In earthen vessels.*] "We who preach the gospel, are frail and feeble. St. Paul repeatedly alludes to his bodily infirmities." Newcome. "The treasure of the gospel was committed to earthen vessels, that is, to persons of low birth, destitute of literature, and of every thing which could give them influence with mankind, and utterly unable by their own power to defend themselves against their enemies, on purpose that the excellency of the power by which the gospel was contrived, and the world was persuaded to embrace it, might plainly appear to belong to God and not to them." Macknight.

wonderful. But we who are employed in diffusing the blessings of the gospel, are feeble, frail, and dying creatures; utterly insufficient for our own preservation, and still more incompetent to command success. It is evident, therefore, that no power less than divine is adequate to the accomplishment of such extraordinary effects by such feeble and contemptible means. Ch. IV. Ver 7.

We are *pressed on all sides, but not crushed*[2]. 8.

We encounter all kinds of difficulties and sufferings; but though severely pressed by them on every side, we are not totally disabled, nor so overpowered as to be compelled to yield.

Dubious[3], *but not in despair.*

We are doubtful, whether we shall survive the persecutions we meet with, but we do not abandon our confidence in God. We are apprehensive that we shall meet with no success in our exertions, yet trusting in the power of God, we do not relax from our labours.

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[2] *Pressed—but not crushed.*] "An allusion probably to wrestling at the Isthmian games." Macknight. "Θλιβειν *dicitur athleta quum adversarii corpus lacertis implicat, tamque arcte comprimit, ut spiritus coarctetur.* Στενοχωρεισθαι *dicuntur, quorum fauces, aliaque animæ trahendæ instrumenta ita coarctata et compressa sunt ut spiritus trahendi meatibus omnis fere aditus præclusus sit.*" Rosenmuller. "afflicted, but not utterly overpressed." Doddridge.

[3] *Dubious.*] απορεμενοι, perplexed. "So rendered," says Macknight, "it signifies persons involved in evils from which they know not how to extricate themselves. If the apostle had the combat of boxing in his eye, the word would signify being stunned with the blows of the adversary."

Ch. IV. Ver. 9. *Persecuted, but not forsaken*[1]; *thrown down, but not killed*[2].

We are hunted down by our enemies, and abandoned by the world; but God does not forsake us. He supports and delivers us. We are sometimes even overtaken and struck down by those who wish to destroy us and our cause; but when we seem wholly in the power of our enemies, and at the very last gasp, to our own astonishment and theirs, we are wonderfully rescued from destruction. What can afford a more striking proof that we are the faithful messengers of God, and under the protection of his providence?

2. They, like Christ, are continually exposed to death, in order to give evidence of his resurrection, to the end that their hearers may participate in the life that he enjoys, ver. 10—12.

10. *Always bearing about in* our *person*[3] *the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus*[4] *may be made manifest in* our *persons*.

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[1] *Persecuted*, &c.] "The critics who think the apostle alludes to the combat of the race, translate the clause, 'pursued, but not left behind.'" Macknight.

[2] *Thrown down, but not killed.*] Locke, Wakefield, and Macknight. *q. d.* "Though they were thrown down by their adversaries, they were not, by the fall, either killed or disabled from rising and continuing the combat. This is supposed to be an allusion to the Pancratium."

[3] *In* our *person.*] Gr. "our body;" and so in the last clause of the verse. *the dying of Jesus.* The received text reads "the Lord Jesus;" but the word Lord is wanting in the best copies, and is omitted by Griesbach.

[4] *The life of Jesus made manifest.*] "Bearing about the dying

Like our Master Jesus, we are continually exposed to suffering and death, in order that we may prove to our hearers, that Christ is now living. For, certainly, no one can believe, that we would undergo these dreadful persecutions if we had not sufficient evidence of the truth of the fact for which we suffer, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Ch. IV. Ver. 10.

For we, though *living*[5], *are continually delivered over to death for the sake of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus*[6] *may be manifested in our mortal flesh.* 11.

We, the apostles of Jesus, and preachers of the gospel, are as capable of enjoying the comforts of

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of Jesus, that is, a representation of his death, that at the resurrection we may also represent his glorious life. Dying like him, to live like him." Newcome. "That the life of Jesus now triumphant above all hostile power, may be manifested in the preservation of our feeble body." Doddridge.

[5] *We,* though *living.*] "We who survive persecution." Newcome. "As long as I live I shall be exposed to the danger of death." Locke.

[6] *That the life of Jesus.*] The sense of this passage seems to me generally misunderstood. Some suppose that the apostle means, that the life of Christ is exhibited by his power being shown in their protection; but it is plain, that he ascribes their protection to the power of God, not of Christ. Others understand it of the life of Christ being exemplified in their future resurrection, as his sufferings are now exemplified in their present persecution: vide Newcome. But this seems foreign to the argument. The apostle's reasoning appears to be this: We are continually suffering like Christ; we who live, and who love, and can enjoy life as well as any other men, nevertheless, voluntarily submit to the most severe privations and persecution. The design of this is, to prove that Christ is now living; so that while we suffer the pains of death, you in consequence of it enjoy the hope of life by the conviction you gain of the resurrection of Jesus, which is the foundation of your hope. To live, signifies to enjoy life, 1 Thess. iii. 8: Now *we live* if ye stand fast in the Lord, *i. e.* we enjoy life.

Ch. IV. Ver. 11. life, and are as much attached to life and its blessings, as others are; yet we suffer ourselves every day to be exposed to death for the sake of Christ, to the end that we may by our sufferings demonstrate his resurrection, and thus diffuse among our hearers the hope of life.

12. *So then death worketh in us, but life in you*[1].

The consequence of this zeal and fortitude in us is, that we are daily exposed to sufferings and death, to the end that you, our hearers, our converts, may be advanced by the resurrection of Jesus to the hope of a new and glorious life; which is the most powerful incentive to the practice of virtue.

3. The only consideration which inspired their fortitude and zeal was, the firm persuasion of the truth of their doctrine, and the hope of saving themselves and others, ver. 13—15.

13. *Yet having the same spirit of faith, which the scripture describeth* (Ps. cxvi. 10), "*I believed, therefore have I spoken*," *we also believe, and therefore speak.*

As David, when almost overwhelmed with distress, still retained his confidence in God, and still bore testimony to his goodness and faithfulness, so we, animated by a similar spirit, in the midst of trouble and persecution, retain a joyful confidence in the truth of the gospel, and therefore continue to preach it with resolute perseverance.

[1] *Death worketh*, &c.] "So that we die to Christ, and ye live to him; persecution has not reached you." Newcome.

Knowing that he who raised up the Lord Jesus, Ch. IV. Ver. 14.
will raise up us also[2] *by Jesus, and will present* us *together with you*[3].

Assured of the important fact, that Jesus our great master has, by the almighty power of his Father, been raised from among the dead, we are also assured that the same power will be exerted in the person of Christ to raise up both us and you, and all the faithful disciples of Jesus in all ages, and to unite us all into one glorious assembly in his blissful presence.

For all things are *for your sakes, that the abound-* 15.
ing grace[4] *might, through the thanksgiving of many, overflow to the glory of God.*

All our labours and our sufferings, and all that God himself has done in raising up Jesus from the dead, and in authorizing and qualifying the apostles to preach the gospel, is for the benefit of you and others, who are sincere believers in the truth, that the blessings of the gospel might be extended to, and accepted by multitudes, and that God might be glorified by the gratitude and obedience of those who will be saved by it.

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[2] *Will raise up.*] Newcome observes, that "this explains how the life of Jesus was to be manifested in his body or mortal flesh, ver. 10, 11."

[3] *Present* us.] Newcome renders it, "will place us before himself. See Eph. v. 27. God will admit us into his presence, and will favourably regard us."

[4] *That the abounding grace.*] Or favour, that is, the gift of the gospel which abounds to multitudes. Mr. Wakefield says, the sense of this verse is clearer than the phraseology. I have adopted what appears to be the construction of Newcome and Macknight.

CH. IV. 4. The joyful expectation of a future, everlasting recompense cheered and animated the apostles, and almost over-ruled the sense of present sufferings, ver. 16—18.

VER. 16. *Therefore*[1], *we faint not; but even though our outward man is perishing, nevertheless the inward man is renewed daily.*

Taking into consideration the glorious and benevolent object of our mission, we resolutely persevere; persecuted as we are, and almost overwhelmed with toil and suffering, we shrink not from the arduous struggle; but on the contrary, the more we labour, the more we suffer, and the more we are oppressed and overpowered by fatigues and persecution, the more earnest are we to persevere in our labours, and to spend all the little strength that remains in the same honourable and important cause.

17. *Moreover, the momentary lightness*[2] *of our affliction is working out for us an unmeasurable*[3],

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[1] *Therefore.*] "*For which cause.* Since we know that we shall be raised up to everlasting life." Newcome. Rather, since all we do is for your sakes and for the glory of God, ver. 15.

[2] *The momentary lightness.*] παραυτικα ελαφρον. See Beza and Macknight. "*Ad momentum*, etiam, in *præsenti*." Schleusner. *q. d.* the momentary light affliction of the present state.—"Our present light affliction, *q. d.* when compared with the weight of glory which will follow." Newcome.

[3] *An unmeasurable.*] καθ' ὑπερβολην εις ὑπερβολην, a very exceeding. Newcome; who remarks, that "the Greek word signifies *in excess to excess*. See Rom. i. 17, vii. 13." "A most excessively immense and eternal weight of unutterable felicity." Harwood.

"This sentence," says Dr. Doddridge, "is one of the most emphatical in all St. Paul's writings, in which he speaks as much like an orator as an apostle. The lightness of the trial is ex-

everlasting weight of glory[4], *while we aim*[5] *not at the things which are visible, but at those which are invisible; for the things which are visible,* are *temporary; but the things which are invisible,* are *everlasting.* Ch. IV. Ver. 18.

If our views were limited to the present state, our afflictions and persecutions might well be regarded as both heavy and tedious. But compared with that inexpressible, incomprehensible, immeasurable mass of glory and happiness which the gospel reveals, for which these sufferings are preparing and qualifying us, and to which by the mercy of God they entitle us, all these troubles are as dust in the balance, not deserving the least attention. And this is the true cause of that habitual cheerfulness which we maintain under the pressure of severe tribulation; our regards and best affections

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pressed by το ελαφρον της θλιψεως, as if he had said, It is even levity itself in the comparison. On the other hand, the καθ' ὑπερβολην εις ὑπερβολην is, says Mr. Blackwall, infinitely emphatical, and cannot be expressed by any translation. It signifies, that all hyperboles fall short of describing that weighty eternal glory, so solid and lasting that you may pass from one hyperbole to another, and yet, when you have gained the last, are infinitely below it." Blackwall's Sacred Classics, vol. i. p. 332.

[4] *Weight of glory.*] An allusion to the word כבד, which in Hebrew signifies both weight and glory. Macknight observes, that the apostle joins the two significations in one phrase, which is not unusual in his writings. See Philip. ii. 1; Eph. i. 8, 19. He adds, that "it is hardly possible in any translation to express the force of this passage as it stands in the original. Stephen says of it, Nothing greater can be said or imagined."

[5] *We aim.*] "The word σκοπειν," says Macknight, "properly signifies to look at a mark which we intend to hit, an object which we wish to lay hold on."

Ch. IV. Ver. 18. being fixed not upon visible and sublunary objects, but upon those which are invisible and permanent. The things of time and sense are light, transitory, and evanescent, they are not worth a thought; but the invisible objects of faith have a most serious and important reality; they are subject to no interruption or vicissitude, and when once possessed, they will be ours for ever.

Ch. V. 5. The apostle declares, that he and his fellow-labourers had a well grounded confidence, that when the present frail and dying state was past, it would be succeeded by a glorious and immortal state now reserved in heaven. Ch. v. ver. 1.

Ver. 1. *For we know*[1] *that if this tabernacle, wherein we dwell, which is fixed on the ground, be taken to pieces, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.*

The apostle here appears to be speaking not as he is generally understood of the human body, but of the state of man in the present life, which he contrasts with the state which will take place after the resurrection. The present state of man he compares to a residence in a low and crazy tabernacle, which is fixed upon the ground, and will be shortly taken to pieces. The state of man in a future life he compares to a residence in a magnificent building, such as no human hands can form, and which will last for ever without being liable to ruin or de-

[1] *For we know*, &c.] This beautiful translation is taken from Mr. Wakefield.

cay, a building of which God is the architect, and which he reserves at present in heaven, from whence, at the proper season, he will let it down into this world. And here it is proper to observe, that the apostle does not affirm that the virtuous in a future life will dwell in heaven, but only that the house, which is hereafter intended for them, is *now* in heaven, and will at the proper time descend into this world[2], which he more explicitly asserts in the next verse. The meaning, therefore, of the apostle's declaration, stripped of its metaphorical dress, is this; We know that when the present frail and mortal state is passed, it will be succeeded by a state of everlasting glory and felicity, which God has prepared for all his faithful servants. Ch. V. Ver. 1.

6. In the mean time, under the pressure of present sufferings, they look with earnest desire, not after an extinction of being, but after this happy change of state, ver. 2—4.

For truly in this tabernacle *we groan, earnestly desiring to be covered*[3] *with our habitation which is* to come *from heaven*[4]. 2.

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[2] *Descend into this world.*] Thus, in Revelation xxi. 2, the new Jerusalem is to descend from heaven to earth; the virtuous are not to ascend into heaven to inhabit it there.

[3] *To be covered.*] επενδυσασθαι· literally to be clothed upon: to be clothed with a habitation does not sound well. But the apostle does not always guard against mixing his metaphors. See ver. 4.

[4] *From heaven.*] The habitation is said to be at present εν τοις ουρανοις· but when it is to become the residence of the virtuous, it is to descend εξ ουρανου. The expression countenances the sup-

Ch. V. Ver. 2. Under the labours and sufferings of the present life, we cannot but look and sigh for that glorious and happy state which God has prepared for us,

3. and into which he will in due time introduce us.

Seeing that, though unclothed[1], *we shall not be found naked.*

Our desires, however, are founded upon the expectation and hope that when we are removed from

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position, that the earth is the place in which the virtuous are to reside hereafter.

[1] *Seeing that, though unclothed.*] The received text reads ενδυσαμενοι, *clothed*, of which it is difficult to make tolerable sense. The Clermont and some other manuscripts and versions read εκδυσαμενοι, unclothed; and this reading, though not received into the text by Griesbach, is marked by him as of good authority. Erasmus is inclined to this latter reading. Grotius, Castalio, Locke and others, who adopt the received text, suppose that the apostle might expect to live till the appearance of Christ to raise the dead, and so be exempted from dying." "Desiring," as Mr. Locke explains it, "without putting off this mortal earthly body by death, to have that celestial body superinduced; if so be the coming of Christ shall overtake me in this life, before I put off this body." Mr. Locke acknowledges that "this passage is not very easy;" but he understands "γυμνοι, naked, of the state of the dead, unclothed with mortal bodies until the resurrection." See 1 Cor. xv. 37. Pyle reads εκδυσαμενοι, *q. d.* If so be, or, since that being unclothed, *i. e.* of this body, we shall not remain naked, but shall have a heavenly one in its room, which he says is a much clearer construction than the common reading.

It is plain that what the apostle desires, is a change from the present state of labour, danger, and trial, to that state of glory and happiness which will take place at the appearance of Christ. But he deprecates the condition of mankind in the interval between death and the resurrection, which he calls being naked; being dislodged from the old habitation, and not yet admitted into the new. And it is evident, that notwithstanding all the burdens and sufferings of the present state, he by no means wishes to exchange it for the insensibility of the grave. This he expresses more clearly in the following verse.

the present state, we shall immediately, or at least in a very short time, enter upon our new habitation; for it is not at all our wish to be excluded both from the state of trial and that of recompense, and to lie as it were unsheltered and without a home, in the silence and inactivity of the tomb. Ch. V. Ver. 3.

And, indeed, we who are in this tabernacle groan, being burdened; for which reason[2] *we are desirous, not to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon*[3], *that mortality may be swallowed up of life.* 4.

In this state of frailty and suffering, we who are the heirs of the promised inheritance often groan under the pressure of affliction, fatigue, and persecution, and earnestly desire to be released from the burden. Not indeed that we desire death for its own sake, and much less do we covet that state of insensibility to which death for a time reduces us:

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[2] *For which reason.*] ἐφ' ᾧ, "upon which," "in consequence of which." Compare Rom. v. 12: vide Chancey on Universal Salvation, p. 43. "groan with the weight *thereof*; not that we wish," &c. Wakefield.

[3] *To be clothed upon.*] The apostle's wish seems to be, that the heavenly house might be let down, so as to cover the earthly tabernacle, and to conceal it entirely from sight. And his meaning is, that he was desirous, that the happy state which God intended should take place immediately without the intervention of natural dissolution, and of the season of insensibility in the grave, which, however, he probably expected to be very short. Dr. Doddridge renders and explains the passage thus: "*Nevertheless, we would not be unclothed,* or stript of the body, for that is what we cannot consider as in itself desirable." This is unquestionably the apostle's meaning; but it is difficult to see how the learned expositor could reconcile this passage to the doctrine of an intermediate state of happiness for the soul, while separated from the body between death and the resurrection.

Ch. V. Ver. 4. the object of our desire is, to enter upon a new and happy state of existence, and, if possible, to escape the pains of dying, and the disgrace of the tomb, so that this frail mortal condition might be immediately and at once absorbed and lost in a state of immortality and blessedness.

7. Of this desire of immortality, God is the author, and the gift of the holy spirit is a pledge of his design to gratify it in due season, ver. 5.

5. *Now he who hath wrought us to this very* state[1] *is God, who hath also given us the spirit as the earnest* of it[2].

It is God himself who has excited in our breasts these holy and ardent breathings after immortality; it is God that has so clearly revealed, and so explicitly promised eternal rewards to virtue in the gospel of his son; and as a further proof of his merciful design, he has communicated the gifts of the spirit to his apostles, and through them to others, as a pledge of our adoption into his family, and of our title to the heavenly inheritance.

8. Desirous, as they might be, to enter upon a better and happier state, in which they should dwell

[1] *Wrought us to this very* state.] "to these noble views and sublime desires." Doddridge. "*that hath prepared us for this very purpose, q. d.* framed, fitted us by calling us to preach the gospel." Newcome. "who will accomplish for us this very thing." Wakefield; who observes, that the Æthiopic appears to have read the verb in the future tense.

[2] *The earnest* of it.] Gr. the earnest of the spirit, *i. e.* "the spirit as the pledge of future acceptance." Newcome.

with their beloved Master, they were still more solicitous to approve their fidelity to him, whether living or dying, ver. 6—9. Ch. V.

Therefore, we are always of good courage[3], *knowing, that while we are present in the body, we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are,* I say, *of good courage, and are better*[4] *pleased to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord*[5]. *So then we are am-* Ver. 6. 7. 8. 9

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[3] *We are of good courage.*] Θαρρουντες· It is observed by Newcome and others, that agreeably to the Hebrew idiom, the participle is here used for the present indicative. See Rom. v. 11, and 2 Cor. v. 12. Mr. Locke observes, that the "word θαρρουμεν, *we are confident*, here signifies the same as ουκ εκκακουμεν, we faint not. Ch. iv. 1, 16. *q. d.* I go on undauntedly, without flagging, preaching the gospel with sincerity and great plainness of speech."

[4] *Are better pleased.*] ευδοκουμεν μαλλον· put a stop after μαλλον. Bengelius, Bowyer.

[5] *Absent from the body, and present with the Lord.*] That is, to quit the present state, and to enter upon that state of recompence and happiness which we are to enjoy with Christ. This text is usually understood as expressing the apostle's persuasion, that death is a separation of the soul from the body, and his expectation that the separate spirit would be introduced into a state of glory and happiness in the presence of Christ, while the body is perishing in the grave. But it is quite impossible that this should be the apostle's meaning, as he had expressly declared in his former epistle, 1 Cor. xv. 18, that if there be no resurrection of the dead, all who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished; which is palpably inconsistent with their possessing life and happiness in a separate state; and the apostle cannot be supposed to contradict himself. And in truth, the apostle's language in this passage will not bear the construction which is usually given to it; and gives no countenance to the doctrine of an intermediate state of perception, activity, and enjoyment between death and the resurrection. He is here only contrasting the present state of trial and suffering with the future promised state of happy existence in the presence of Christ. He never once mentions or even glances at an inter-

Ch. V. Ver. 9. *bitious, whether present in or absent from* the body, *to be well pleasing to him* [1].

Animated by the prospect of immortality, we keep up our spirits, and persevere in our labours with undaunted fortitude and resolution. While we dwell in the present state, we cannot indeed enjoy the society of the Master whom we serve and love. Our conduct in life, and in the discharge of our ministry, must be governed by faith in the great

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mediate state in which the spirit will be happy, when separate from the body. On the contrary, he represents the state which immediately succeeds to death, as a state of nakedness, ver. 3, which was so far from being the object of his wish, that he expresses his earnest desire to be exempted from it by being permitted to continue in the world till the appearance of Christ. That the apostle regarded the season of rest in the grave as an evanescent point, hardly worthy of notice when compared with the glory which was to succeed, cannot reasonably be doubted. See Phil. i. 23. But this is to be attributed to a prevailing but erroneous opinion, that Christ would appear to judgement before the generation which then existed should expire, rather than to the speculative, however correct opinion, that the idea of duration ceases while thought is suspended. We have no reason to believe that the apostle was a profound metaphysician. See 2 Thess. ii. 1, 2, and the note.

[1] *To be well pleasing to him.*] "Whether staying in the body or going out of it, *i. e.* whether I am to stay longer here, or suddenly to depart. This sense the foregoing verse leads us to. And what he says in this verse, that he endeavours, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to the Lord, *i. e.* to do what is well pleasing to him, shows, that neither of these words can signify here, his being with Christ in heaven. For, when he is there, the time for endeavouring to approve himself is over." Locke. I think with Mr. Locke, that the apostle's general meaning is, that he was desirous to approve himself the faithful servant of Christ both living and dying. See Rom. xiv. 7, 8. But at the same time it appears to me undeniable, that by the phrase "present with the Lord," the apostle means to describe that future state of existence in which the virtuous shall be happy in the presence of Christ

truths of the gospel revelation, and not by an actual perception of those glorious scenes, to the participation of which we shall hereafter be admitted. Nevertheless, although we derive so much satisfaction from the exercise of faith, we cannot but earnestly desire to be actually in the presence of him, whom, though unseen we love, and to share in his glory and felicity. But the desire that lies nearest our heart, and which has the greatest and most habitual influence upon our conduct, the object of our best and highest ambition, is, that whether living or dying, we may approve ourselves his faithful servants, and may obtain his approbation. Ch. V. Ver. 9.

9. The ruling motive in all cases is, the certain and awful expectation of a future judgement, ver. 10.

For we must all appear[2] *before the tribunal of Christ, that every one may receive* for *the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether* it be *good or evil*[3]. 10.

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[2] *We must all appear.*] "This," says Dr. Priestley, "clearly shows that the views of the apostle were not directed to any thing short of the resurrection of the dead and the future judgement; and that he had no prospect of any reward before that time. This, therefore, is the key by which we must interpret all that precedes this verse."

[3] *Whether* it be *good or evil.*] "That each may receive either good or evil according to his deeds in the body." Wakefield. Whether this appearance at the tribunal of Christ is to be understood in a literal or in a figurative sense, as meaning nothing more than that the final state of all shall be decided according to the principles and declarations of the gospel, must be left to time to unfold. See Rom. xiv. 10.

Ch. V. Ver. 10. And we have good reason for this anxiety to approve ourselves to the Master whom we serve. It is the great design of the gospel revelation to teach us, that there is a day appointed, when all the families of the earth, and every individual of the human race will be summoned to the tribunal of Jesus Christ, who will be delegated by the Father to this important office, and who, as the son of man, is peculiarly well qualified for it, John v. 27, though it be not in our power to comprehend either the nature of the office, or the reason of his appointment to it. But the fact is so; at his tribunal we must appear; and whatever may have been our character, or our conduct in this state of probation, exactly corresponding to this will be the just and impartial sentence, which will then be pronounced. It cannot, therefore, be matter of surprise, that it should be the object of our supreme and habitual concern to secure a favourable audit, and that every consideration in comparison with this should be esteemed of no account.

SECTION VII.

THE APOSTLE avers that, whatever ungenerous insinuations were thrown out to the contrary, the preachers of the gospel were conscious that they acted with the soundest discretion, and from the purest motives; and upon these grounds they press upon their hearers the immediate acceptance of the offers of salvation. Ch. v. 11.—vi. 2. Ch. V.

1. Under a deep impression of the final account, the authorized preachers of the gospel discharge their ministry with the most solicitous concern to approve themselves both to God and man, ver. 11.

Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord[1], *we persuade men. To God indeed we are manifest, and I trust that we are also manifest to your consciences.* Ver. 11.

Being fully apprized how terrible it will be to fall under a sentence of condemnation at the tribunal of Christ, we are solicitous, both upon our own account and that of our hearers, to prevail upon them to accept the gospel, and to obey its laws. Of my sincerity, faithfulness, and zeal in this important

[1] *The terror of the Lord.*] or, "how fearful the Lord is." Newcome; who explains, *q. d.* Knowing, therefore, how fearful this judgement will be to me if I discharge not my duty as an apostle, and to others if they persist in their sins; we persuade men to obey the gospel, and so act that our integrity is manifested to God.

Ch. V. Ver. 11. work, God is witness, who knows my heart; and I trust that I have given sufficient evidence to you at Corinth, among whom I have laboured, how much I am in earnest to establish your faith and to promote your edification.

2. What he declares upon this subject, is not from vainglory, but to satisfy his friends with regard both to his character and qualifications for the apostolic office, which his opponents appear to have called in question, ver. 12, 13.

12. *For we are not again recommending ourselves to you, but are giving you an opportunity to boast concerning us, that you may have* something *to* answer *those who glory in appearance*[1], *but not in heart.*

I do not speak thus of myself from a vainglorious spirit, as some insinuate, who wish to injure me in

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[1] *Who glory in appearance.*] Macknight renders it, "who boast on account of appearance, not of heart." He understands it of those superficial, outward qualities of which the false teacher boasted, while he was deficient in the virtues of the heart. But the sense given in the commentary is the most generally received, and appears to me the most eligible. Locke and most other critics suppose that his opponent had charged him with vanity, and had even insinuated insanity. "In these epistles to the Corinthians," says Dr. Priestley, "there are many concealed allusions to the state of things at Corinth, and especially to the apostle's enemies there, and their objections to him, which make them exceedingly difficult to be understood at this distance of time. It is probable that the apostle among other things was charged with a wild enthusiasm, and affecting to be more disinterested than was necessary. This he here seems to say arose from his zeal for the honour of God, and that of this God was judge; but that in the rest of his conduct, they themselves might perceive that he was in his sober senses, and that he had most earnestly devoted himself to their service."

your esteem, but from a desire to afford satisfaction to my friends and converts, that you may be assured that you have been converted to the Christian religion, and instructed in it by one who was fully authorized to do it, and amply qualified for it. And this will furnish a sufficient reply to those who endeavour to depreciate me, and to exalt themselves while they are at the same time conscious of their own incapacity and deficiency, both in Christian knowledge and a Christian spirit, and cannot but be apprized that I have given ample proof of my apostolic commission. Ch. V. Ver. 12.

For if we were beside ourselves[2]*, it was for God; or if we are of a sound mind, it is for you.* 13.

If, as some are pleased to represent me, I was out of my senses, it was owing to my zeal for God, to my activity in his service: or, if, as the truth is, I am in my right mind, and have said no more in my own commendation than what you know and acknowledge to be true; in this case, whatever gifts, or powers, or capacity I possess, all are devoted to your service and edification.

3. The love of Christ in dying for them animates all who believe in him, and especially the apostles

[2] *Beside ourselves.*] *i. e.* "in speaking well of myself in my own justification." Locke; who adds, "He that observes what St. Paul says, ch. xi. 1, 16—21, xii. 6, 11, will scarce doubt but that the speaking of himself as he did, was by his enemies called glorying, and imputed to him as folly and madness.

Ch. V. and preachers of the gospel, to devote their lives to his service, ver. 14, 15.

Ver. 14. *For the love of Christ bears us away*[1]; *while we thus judge, that if one died for all, then all were*
15. *in a state of death*[2]. *And* that *he died for all, that they who live*[3] *might no longer live to themselves, but to him who died and was raised* to life *for them.*

We, the apostles of Christ and teachers of the gospel, are borne on as with a delightful and irresistible force, in the discharge of our ministry, by a grateful sense of the great love of Christ in dying for

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[1] *Bears us away,*] "like a strong and resistless torrent." Doddridge; who observes in his note, "that this is the beautiful import of συνεχει, which suggests a noble simile which few translations preserve. See Phil. i. 23." "is urgent upon us." Wakefield.

[2] *In a state of death.*] "had forfeited life by their transgressions." Newcome. "were obnoxious to death, and condemned to it for their transgressions." Whitby.

The doctrine which the apostle here briefly asserts is the same which he has largely explained in the first five chapters of the epistle to the Romans. All mankind, whether Jews or Gentiles, were under a sentence of death, whether by the law of nature or by the law of Moses; and Christ was sent to publish the new covenant of pardon and reconciliation, and to ratify it by his death. In this sense he died for all.

[3] *They who live.*] That is, they who by entering into the gospel covenant are recovered from the sentence of condemnation. "Might no longer live to themselves," &c.; might consecrate their renewed powers to the service of Christ, and in obedience to his gospel. See Rom. xiv. 7—9. "If he died for all, his intention was, that they who by him have attained to a state of life, should not any longer live to themselves alone, seeking only their own private advantage, but should employ their lives in promoting the doctrine and kingdom of Christ, who for them died and rose again." Locke.

us. For this is the way in which we reason, and the conclusion we form upon the case: if one died for the sake of all, then all were in a state of death. The Jews had violated the law of Moses, and were exposed to its condemning sentence. The Gentiles had broken the law of nature, and could therefore have no claim to life. A sentence of death was passed upon all. But Jesus died for the benefit of all, and by his death ratified that new and gracious covenant, by which Jew and Gentile were again advanced to the hope of life upon the reasonable terms of faith and repentance. And the design of God in bringing us into this new and privileged state, was, that we might live not to ourselves but to Christ, that we might fulfil not our own pleasure, but that of our Master, whose will it is that we should co-operate with him in that great undertaking, for the accomplishment of which he died and rose again; that being ourselves put into possession of the invaluable blessings of the gospel, we should devote our lives to the promulgation of them through the world. Ch V. Ver. 15.

4. Governed by this principle, they renounced all former connexions in life, how dear and honourable soever, and acted as if they had entered into a new state of being, ver. 16, 17.

So that from henceforth[4] *we know no man after* 16.

[4] *So that from henceforth,* &c.] *q. d.* So that from henceforth we renounce all former connexions, and part with our dearest friends; yea, even if Christ were now upon earth, and if we

Ch. V. Ver. 16. *the flesh; yea, though we had known even Christ after the flesh, yet now we know* him *no longer.*

had the honour of being numbered amongst his chosen friends and companions, we must for the sake of duty, and of advancing the cause for which he suffered and died, resign his society, and all the blessings and delights of his personal friendship. We must relinquish the familiarity of Christ to promote the cause of Christ.

No one who is conversant with the phraseology of Scripture will hesitate to admit that this is a natural interpretation, and even the most obvious sense of the words. Κατα σαρκα, "according to the flesh," is frequently used to express what is natural, in contradistinction to what is spiritual, see Acts ii. 30.—Christ was the seed of David, κατα σαρκα, according to the flesh, Rom. i. 3: but the Son of God, according to the spirit of holiness; *i. e.* by natural descent, the son of David; by the holy spirit, the son of God.—1 Cor. x. 18, Behold Israel "after the flesh," that is, the *natural*, as distinguished from the *spiritual* Israel.—Eph. v. 6, your masters "according to the flesh," *i. e.* those who in a natural and civil sense are your masters.—To know Christ "after the flesh," therefore, is to have a personal acquaintance with him; to know him as a friend and a companion. And the apostle, to show how completely detached the ministers of the gospel were from the world, puts the strongest possible case; and argues that if Christ were still living in the world, and they were honoured with his intimate friendship, they must break from his society in order to promote his cause. The harshness of the supposition of abandoning the company, even of Christ himself, has probably induced expositors, for I find hardly any exception, to overlook the obvious sense of the words. But they forget that Christ requires not personal affection, but obedience to his gospel, as the test of true love to him, John xiv. 21.

Mr. Locke's interpretation is, "so that from henceforth I have no regard to any one according to the flesh, that is, for being circumcised, or a Jew. For if I myself have gloried in this, that Christ himself was circumcised, as I am, and was of my blood and nation, I do so now no more any longer." And he adds in his note, "This may be supposed to be said with reflection on their Jewish false apostle, who gloried in circumcision, and perhaps, that he had seen Christ in the flesh, or, was some way related to him." Most other expositors and critics agree in the main with Mr. Locke. "*Etiamsi vero Christum*

Being thus made partakers of the blessings of the new covenant, being appointed to publish the glad tidings through the world, and animated by the love of Christ to support his cause and devote our lives to the same benevolent work, we in a manner renounce all our former friends and connexions, however honourable, useful, or dear. We regard them all with a holy indifference, as obstructions rather than helps in the great business which we are now carrying on. And to show how entirely we are abstracted from all former connexions, I will venture to put the strongest possible case. If Christ himself were now upon earth, and we were personally connected with him, and attached to him, we must for the sake of Christ himself, and in order to promote the great cause he has at heart, renounce this dearest connexion, and must tear ourselves even from the personal friendship and society of Jesus, that we may go where duty calls, to publish the tidings of eternal life, and to advocate the cause of truth and goodness, for which he laboured and suffered. Ch. V. Ver. 16.

So that if any man be in Christ, there is *a new creation*[1]. *Old things are passed away*[2]; *behold, all things*[3] *are become new.* 17.

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ipsum in carne familiariter cognitum habuissemus, nunc tamen eum non ut talem consideramus et colimus." Rosenmuller; who gives the true sense.

[1] *A new creation.*] "So that if any one be in Christ, it is as if he were in a new creation, wherein all former mundane relations, considerations, and interests are ceased, and at an end; all things in that state are new to him." Locke.

[2] *Old things,* &c.] "The old things of this world. Jewish

Ch. V. Ver. 17. By our conversion to the Christian religion, and especially being invested with the Christian ministry and apostleship, we are, as it were, introduced into a new world. We have new perceptions, new habits of thinking, new expectations, new hopes and fears, new principles of action, and new courses of conduct; so that we are no longer influenced by the motives which had formerly the greatest effect upon us, and are no longer attached to those connexions which were formerly the most dear. We are governed by one principle alone, viz. obedience to the commands of God by Christ, in publishing the gospel faithfully and assiduously in the world.

5. Of this new order of things God is the immediate author, who having first brought them into a state of reconciliation, now employs them as the ministers of reconciliation to the world, ver. 18, 19.

18. *Now all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself*[1] *by Jesus Christ, and hath given to*

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ordinances, and heathen ignorance and guilt, are passed away; and new instructions, new obligations, new motives, and new hopes succeed." Newcome.

[3] *All things.*] τα παντα. These words are wanting in the Ephrem, Clermont, and other manuscripts; and in the Coptic, Italic, Æthiopic, and other versions. Archbishop Newcome considers it as a marginal gloss; and Mr. Wakefield drops it from the text. He translates thus, "the old things are passed away; behold all things are become new from God, who reconciled us," &c.

[1] *Reconciled us.*] who has changed our state; who has created us anew; who has transferred us from a state of enmity to a state of peace. "καταλασσω, 1.) *proprie* commuto, permuto; 2.) reconcilio partes a se invicem dissidentes, *nam tunc animi mutantur.*" Schleusner.

us the ministry of reconciliation. Namely, *that God*[2] *by Christ was reconciling the world*[3] *to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed to us the doctrine of reconciliation.* Ch. V. Ver. 19.

Of this new creation, as of the old, God himself is the original author. We are his workmanship. It is he, who by the gospel of Jesus Christ hath so enlightened our minds, and renovated our hearts, and subdued our prejudices, that we are, as it were, transformed into new beings, and introduced into a new state of existence. And having been thus brought out of a state of enmity into a state of peace and favour with God, he has graciously vouchsafed to honour us with a commission, to publish the joyful tidings of peace and reconciliation to others; and to invite sinners to repentance. And this is the gracious tenor of the message, That the gospel of Christ is now to be made known to the whole world, without distinction of Jew or Gentile, as a dispensation of pardon and of peace. It is a covenant of mercy, by which all past transgressions are freely forgiven, and provision is made for the restoration of offending creatures to virtue, life, and happiness. This is the true doctrine of reconciliation by Christ.

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[2] Namely, *that God.*] ὡς ὅτι· that this is equivalent to ὅτι, see ch. xi. 21; 2 Thess. ii. 2. Newcome and Wetstein.

[3] *The world.*] "all who receive the gospel." Newcome.—"It is to be observed," says Dr. Priestley, "that it is here said, that God was reconciling the world to himself by Christ. There was no occasion to reconcile God to the world. He was always disposed to be at peace with men, whenever they should repent and turn to him. All that was wanting, therefore, was to bring men to repentance and reformation by preaching the gospel."

Ch. V. Ver. 19. And I repeat it again as a fact upon which you may safely depend, and as a privilege in which we make our greatest boast, that we, notwithstanding all our unworthiness, have been selected by God for the high and honourable office of communicating this doctrine to mankind.

6. In conformity to this commission, the apostles and authorized ministers of the gospel, as ambassadors in the place of Christ, entreat and urge their hearers to accept and to improve the invitations and privileges of the gospel, ver. 20.—vi. 2.

20. *We, therefore, are ambassadors in Christ's stead, as though God entreated by us: we, in Christ's stead, implore, Be ye reconciled to God.*

In the execution of this high commission, we are the representatives of Jesus Christ. Christ was once the great ambassador of peace; but he has now ascended to the Father, and has ceased to exercise this honourable office. We, the apostles of Christ and preachers of the gospel, succeed to the same important task; we are now the ambassadors of God and the representatives of Christ, and as such, we urge and exhort you, yea, we entreat and implore all that hear us, Embrace the offers of the gospel, comply with its terms, accept its blessings, believe and obey, make your peace with God, and thus ensure your present and your everlasting felicity.

21. *For* God *hath appointed him who knew no sin,*

to be *a sin*-offering *for us*[1], *that we by him might be justified before God*[2]. Ch. V. Ver. 21.

As the sin-offering under the law, was the symbol of the restoration of the person who had committed an involuntary trespass to the privileges of the Mosaic covenant, so God has, in a figurative sense, appointed Jesus Christ as a lamb without blemish and without spot, to be the sin-offering for the whole world, ratifying by his death that new and gracious covenant by which all, whether Jew or heathen, who believe, are admitted into the community of the justified; and all who improve their privileges and obey the gospel, are entitled to everlasting life.

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[1] *A sin*-offering *for us.*] Gr. *sin, i. e.* sin-offering. See Hosea iv. 8; Heb. ix. 26, 28. Sin-offerings were appointed for sins of ignorance only. See Lev. iv. and Jennings's Jewish Antiquities, vol. i. p. 328. This shows how little foundation this text affords for the wild supposition that Jesus upon the cross was regarded as a sinner, and bore the punishment due to the sins of men. "The Rabbis limit the law to those sins of ignorance, which, if they had been committed knowingly and wilfully, would have incurred the penalty of *cutting off*." The offering, therefore, of the victim was a symbol of restoration to communion, and to covenant with God. So the death of Christ may be considered figuratively, as the ratification of the new covenant by the gospel. The sin-offering for a ruler was a kid without blemish. So Christ was a lamb without blemish and without spot. He knew no sin; he had committed no transgression by which his covenant privileges had been forfeited. "Christ was made sin, that sinners might become righteousness." Macknight.

[2] *Justified before God.*] So Newcome; δικαιοσυνη Θεου, the *righteousness* or *justification of God.* The apostle here alludes to the subject of which he treats at large in the epistle to the Romans. All men are sinners, without hope of relief antecedently to the gospel dispensation. By faith in Christ, who published and whose blood ratifies the new covenant, men are justified in the sight of God, and admitted into a state of reconciliation and hope.

Ch. VI. Ver. 1. *Therefore,* as *fellow-labourers, we also entreat* [1] you, *that ye receive not this favour of God in vain.*

As fellow-labourers in the same glorious cause, as successors of our Master Jesus Christ in the embassy of reconciliation, and as humbly co-operating with God himself, whose servants and messengers we are, we earnestly exhort and entreat you, not to make light of and to neglect the mercy of God in the gospel dispensation; but having received the grace of God, and having professed your acceptance of the blessings of the gospel, we press it upon you to make the best improvement of your privileges, to live under the influence of Christian principles, and not to forfeit your interest in the promises by a conduct unworthy of your character and profession.

2. *For* the scripture *saith* [2], (Isa. xlix. 8,) *In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee. Behold, now is*

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[1] *As fellow-labourers,* &c.] Working together *with God.* Newcome, Wakefield. See ch. v. 20. God entreats by us. ch. vi. 1. We, as workers together, also entreat; *i. e.* as working together with God. "As an apostle of Christ and a minister under him." Pyle. "I and my fellow-labourer Timothy." Dr. Taylor. "Now fellow-labourers in the ministry of reconciliation at Corinth," Dr. Macknight; who understands the succeeding discourse as an address from the apostle to the ministers of the gospel at Corinth.

[2] The scripture *saith.*] This quotation is made from Isaiah xlix. 8, which Bishop Lowth applies to the Messiah, and translates thus: "In the season of acceptance have I heard thee, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee." Mr. Dodson, adopting the bishop's translation, adds in his note, "It is certain that by *thee* is here intended Israel." The apostle applies this promise to those who live under the gospel dispensation. Behold, Now is the accepted time, &c. *q. d.* This is the happy season to which the prophecy refers, and in which God promises

the most acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. Ch. VI. Ver. 2.

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to hear and succour his people; and he presses it as a motive upon the Corinthians to improve their privileges, that they may not receive the grace of God in vain.

Dr. Taylor (see Taylor's Key, sect. 185,) conceives, that the apostle in this passage means to give a specimen of his address to unconverted Gentiles, and to those who had embraced Christianity.

1. "To unconverted Gentiles, ch. v. 20, 21. He speaks, ver. 19, of God's reconciling the *world* to himself. By the *world* he commonly means unconverted heathen, and *reconciling* signifies changing men from heathenism to the faith of the gospel, Rom. v. 10. Our translators have inserted *you* twice in ver. 20, very improperly; for the apostle could not address the Corinthians as unconverted heathen; but he gives a specimen of the manner of his address to unconverted Gentiles. Now then we are ambassadors on the behalf of Christ as though God did entreat by us, we beg on behalf of Christ, Be ye reconciled (changed from your enmity or idolatry) unto God. In such language the apostle addressed the Gentile world. He adds, ver. 21, the grand argument which they used to enforce this entreaty: For he has made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

2. "He gives a specimen of his address to those who had already embraced Christianity, ch. vi. 1, 2. And working together, (I and my fellow-labourer Timothy, ch. i. 1,) we moreover entreat, that You receive not the grace of God in vain. The Corinthians had received the grace of God, and therefore the apostle did not exhort them to be *reconciled*, but, not to *receive it in vain*. He subjoins the grand argument to persuade Christians to make a right improvement of grace and privileges received. For he saith, (explaining the blessed state of the church or people of God,) I have heard thee in a time accepted, &c. Behold, (take good notice, Christians,) now is the accepted time, &c. *q. d.* You are in the happy state of pardon, in which God has promised to hear your prayers, and to supply you with all needful succour and strength. Therefore make due improvement. Thus the apostles and ministers preached to such as had embraced Christianity. And it is evident they considered all professed Christians as in a state of grace, they have received the grace of God; but this will not absolutely secure their final salvation. For the grace of God is a motive to virtue; and if

Ch. VI. Ver. 2.

The language addressed by God to the Messiah in the visions of Isaiah for his encouragement and consolation, may in a somewhat different sense be applied to those, to whom the blessings of the gospel are now offered, and its invitations addressed. If they apply to God while the offers of reconciliation are continued, he will hear and answer their prayers; if they will improve the season allowed them to work out their salvation, God will grant them all needful aid. And let it be deeply impressed upon your minds, that now is the most acceptable time, that now is the day of salvation. Not only is it *Now*, the present time, under the gospel dispensation, that these promises of attention and succour are exhibited as powerful motives to faith and holiness; but it is *Now*, the present hour, in which it behoves you to pay the most earnest attention to them, and to make the best use of your privileges while you have it in your power. The present is the only season that you can call your own; and if you now neglect to comply with the invitations of the gospel, the offers may never be repeated, and the door may be for ever barred against you. You may be cut off unexpectedly in the midst of life, you may never have another opportunity of hearing the glad tidings of salvation, or your prejudices may

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they do not so improve it, they receive it in vain and shall perish for ever."

These remarks are ingenious, even if they should not be allowed to be completely satisfactory. Mr. Dodson, in his note on the text in Isaiah, expresses his approbation of them; and Dr. Macknight adopts the interpretation of ch. v. 20, 21.

become more and more riveted, so that your understandings may be incapable of discerning the evidence, or your hearts of feeling the power, of the gospel; and with the offers of life and invitations of mercy sounding in your ears, you may obstinately pursue the road to destruction, and may never be apprehensive of your danger till it is too late to make your escape. Ch. VI. Ver. 2.

SECTION VIII.

THE APOSTLE, in pursuance of his main design of satisfying the Corinthians with regard to the authenticity of his commission, and to preserve or recover their affection, alleges, that he and his fellow-labourers had given ample proof of their character and mission by the inoffensiveness of their conduct, by their patience and fortitude under persecution, by the integrity of their character, by the gifts of the spirit, and by their great success. Ch. vi. 3—15.

1. They avoided giving unnecessary offence, ver. 3.

We give to none offence[1] *in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed.* 3.

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[1] *We give to none offence.*] διδοντες, in apposition with συνεργουντες, ver. 1, or by a usual hebraism putting the participle for the indicative.

CH. VI. VER. 3. Anxious for the success of our sacred embassy, we carefully adhere to the rules of prudence. If we perform our duty faithfully, we know that many will take offence. But we avoid rendering the gospel more offensive, by unnecessarily wounding the innocent prejudices of others; or imprudently tempting those who are less informed, to do that which in their consciences they disapprove. In all things we endeavour to act with great caution and circumspection, so that no person may take occasion from our conduct to cast any reflection upon the Christian ministry in general, or to call in question our own authority in particular.

2. They further approved their ministry by patience and fortitude under tribulation and persecution, ver. 4, 5.

4. *But in every respect we approve ourselves ministers of God, by much patience*[1] *in afflictions, in*
5. *necessities, in streights, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults*[2]*, in labours, in watchings, in fastings.*

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[1] *By much patience.*] "by patiently enduring much." Wakefield. Then follows a long detail of distressing circumstances by which their patience and fortitude were exercised.—"*Magna tolerantia, quam demonstramus in calamitatibus, &c. Vox ὑπομενῃ construenda est cum sequentibus, usque ad vocem νηστειαις.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *In tumults*:] εν ακαταστασιαις. "*in disturbances*, as at Ephesus." Newcome. *Exagitationibus*, Beza; "who interprets this ('and I think,' says Dr. Doddridge, 'no man seems better to have understood the propriety of Greek words:') of such attacks as a man cannot stand against, but which bear him hither and thither by violence."—"In being tossed up and down." Locke.

In the exercise of our ministry, I and my companions have endured great persecutions; we have suffered oppression; we have been often in want of common necessaries; we have been in difficulties and dangers almost inextricable; we have been beaten with stripes; we have been cast into prisons; we have been in danger of losing our lives by the violence of lawless mobs; we have laboured incessantly in our ministry, and have often maintained ourselves by our own industry; we have added the toils of the night to those of the day, and in discharging the duties of our profession we have not unfrequently denied ourselves the refreshment of sleep; we have sometimes been destitute even of necessary food: yet in all these troubles, amidst all these dangers, under all these sufferings, we have shown no resentment, we have uttered no complaint, nor have we been deterred by them from the vigorous and persevering prosecution of our sacred work, and the discharge of our divine embassy. Ch. VI. Ver. 5.

3. They had further approved their ministry by the exemplary virtues of their character, as well as by the extraordinary powers with which they had been invested, ver. 6, 7.

By purity, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by a holy spirit[3], *by love unfeigned, by* 6. 7.

[3] *By a holy spirit.*] "by holy affections." Wakefield.—"by the gifts of the holy ghost." Locke.—"by a well-regulated spirit." Macknight; who observes, that the power of God, which signifies the power of miracles, is mentioned separately: and a holy spirit is here placed among good dispositions of mind.

Ch. VI. Ver. 7. *the word of truth, by the power of God, through the armour of righteousness*[1] *on the right hand and on the left.*

We approve our ministry, not only by the exercise of patience under suffering, but by the practice of every other virtue, which our state and circumstances may require: particularly by simplicity of motive and integrity of heart; by a comprehensive knowledge of Christian doctrine, and of the best means of promoting it; by meekly enduring the injuries and insults which we daily receive; by a spirit of kindness and good-will; by a temper and conduct worthy of our Christian profession, and which becomes those who are admitted into the community of believers; by ardent, diffusive, disinterested benevolence; by faithfully and fearlessly publishing the truth; by those signal interpositions of Almighty power, which attest the divine authority of the doctrine we deliver, and which impart ir-

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[1] *Through the armour of righteousness*:] διὰ. The apostle changes the preposition from ἐν to διὰ, *q. d.* the power of God is manifested in giving efficacy to the means which we use to defend and propagate the gospel of Christ: these he calls the *armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left.* The buckler was carried in the left hand, and the sword and spear in the right: it is the offensive and defensive armour of righteousness. Δικαιοσυνης perhaps signifies the gospel, the divine method of justification, see Rom. i. 17; and probably the sense of the passage is, "We approve ourselves servants of God by the use of that armour which the gospel provides, to ensure our triumph: the offensive armour of miracles and gifts accompanying and succeeding the preaching of the gospel, and the defensive armour of meekness, faith, patience, and universal virtue. These are the weapons which effectually pull down the strongholds of idolatry, error, prejudice, and vice.

resistible efficacy to the humblest instruments; which enable us, impotent as we are in ourselves, successfully to wield the whole armour of the gospel, and to subdue the opposition of ignorance and prejudice, either by a direct attack upon the strong holds of Satan, demonstrating the absurdity and wickedness of the popular superstitions, or by defending the Christian faith against the assaults of unbelievers, and establishing its truth upon the clearest evidence; or, finally, in recommending it to the acceptance of mankind by exemplifying its beneficial influence upon the heart and life. Thus it is, that in the whole of our character and conduct, whether as men, as Christians, as ministers of the gospel, or as apostles of Christ, we are solicitous to approve ourselves faithful to our important trust; to secure the approbation of God and man, and to advance the cause of evangelical truth.

Ch. VI. Ver. 7.

4. The apostle and his brethren in the ministry further approved their character by the simplicity of their conduct in the various scenes of prosperity and adversity through which they passed, and by the divine protection which they experienced amidst difficulties and dangers, ver. 8—10.

Through honour and disgrace; through evil report and good report; as deceivers[2], *and* yet *true;* 8.

[2] *As deceivers.*] Mr. Locke supposes that some of the opposite faction had called him a deceiver. Compare xii. 16. "as deceivers, in the opinion of some, and yet in reality true." Newcome.

Ch. VI. Ver. 9. 10. *as unknown, and* yet *well known*[1]; *as dying, and behold we live*[2]; *as chastened, yet not killed; as sorrowing, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich*[3]; *as having nothing, yet possessing all things*[4].

We pass through various scenes prosperous and adverse, and we meet with various treatment, yet in every situation our character is uniform; we constantly act as the messengers of God, as ambas-

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[1] *As unknown.*] "as an obscure unknown man, but yet known and owned." Locke.—Wakefield, upon the authority of the Æthiopic version, renders the clause, "as ignorant, but full of knowledge."

[2] *Behold we live.*] "He expresses himself as if this were wonderful, considering the many and great dangers to which he was exposed." Newcome.

[3] *Making many rich,*] "in spiritual gifts, in good works, and in future hopes." Newcome.

[4] *Possessing all things.*] "This," says Dr. Doddridge, "is certainly one of the sublimest passages that was ever writ." Comp. Phil. iv. 18; 1 Tim. vi. 17; Eph. i. 3; Rev. xxi. 7; 1 Cor. iii. 21—23.

"This," says Dr. Priestley, "was a noble appeal to the apostle's conduct, and especially to his daily sufferings in the cause of truth, for his sincerity and disinterested zeal in the service of the gospel, and of his Christian converts; and should serve to encourage others, in all ages, who suffer from calumny while they are strenuously labouring to promote the cause of truth. If the zeal of this apostle, his unwearied labours, his patient sufferings, and prudent conduct, could not save him from continual opposition, and even from those who professed the same gospel with himself, why should we wonder at the like happening at this day, when Christians are much more divided among themselves, and when there are consequently many more occasions of offence? It ought to satisfy every man, as it did the apostle Paul, that he can acquit himself to his own conscience, and to God, who knows the heart. Whatever we suffer from friends or enemies, while we act in this manner we shall be abundantly recompensed at a future day."

sadors in Christ's stead. When we are honoured beyond what is our due, we disavow improper marks of respect, and declare ourselves to be men of like passions with others. When treated with contempt and exposed to disgrace, we are willing to be despised by men, if we can secure the praise of God. If we are loaded with calumny and unjust reproach, we content ourselves with the testimony of conscience and the approbation of God. If we are treated with respect, and held in reputation, while we readily disclaim all unmerited praise, we are cheered by the approbation of the wise and good, and stimulated to persevere in the discharge of duty. There are some who represent us as deceivers, who have no authority from Christ, and who wilfully teach erroneous doctrine for Christian truth; but let such be assured that we little deserve the imputation which they cast upon us, and that if they will allow themselves impartially to examine, they will find that we profess nothing which we cannot prove, and assume no character which we cannot establish. There are some who affect to speak of us as persons of no consequence, who are not known to the apostles nor acknowledged by the apostolic churches, and whose character and doctrine are disavowed by the approved disciples and messengers of Christ, and the churches under their care: whereas the truth is, that these venerable founders of the church willingly give us the right hand of fellowship, acknowledge our claim and sanction our doctrine, though our commission is made

Ch. VI. Ver. 10.

Ch. VI. Ver. 10. out with greater latitude, and we are particularly commanded to teach the gospel to the Gentiles. We have often been in circumstances in which it seemed impossible to escape from death, yet to our own amazement, and that of others, we are still alive; and whether living or dying, our only solicitude is to discharge our office with faithfulness, and to be approved by him who sent us. We have undergone a severe discipline of persecution, but hitherto we have been saved from death.

To the eye of sense our condition is most wretched, continually exposed to insult, to want, to suffering, to danger; but such is our confidence in the goodness of the cause for which we suffer, and such our expectation of an exceeding great reward, that the consolation we feel abundantly overbalances all the sufferings we endure, and fills us with habitual and inexhaustible delight.

We, like the Master whom we serve during his personal ministry, are poor and dependent, without money, and without a home; yet are we authorized to dispense those spiritual blessings which are true opulence, and are daily enriching many with those consolations and hopes which they justly value beyond all the treasures of the earth. In this world we have nothing that we can call our own, we are destitute even of common necessaries: yet in truth we possess those inexhaustible stores of spiritual riches, both for our own use and for the use of others, that earthly treasures are of no value in our account; and in the possession of the spirit, the

blessings, and the hopes of the gospel, we enjoy far more than earth can give, and every thing which a wise and good man can desire. Ch. VI. Ver. 10.

And with all these credentials of a divine commission, we trust that all who sincerely profess the faith of the gospel at Corinth, and who have been converted by our doctrine, will be fully satisfied, and that our enemies will be put to silence and to shame.

SECTION IX.

THE APOSTLE requests to be admitted to a reciprocal share in the affection of the Corinthians, and warns them against forming imprudent connexions with unbelievers, and joining in their idolatrous worship. Ch. vi. 11—vii. 1.

1. In return for his affection towards them, he claims from them reciprocal regard, ver. 11—13.

Our mouth is opened to you[1], *O ye Corinthians! our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened*[2] *in* 11. 12.

[1] *Our mouth is opened to you.*] "I freely mention in what I glory: and I use this language for your benefit. See ch. v. 12. It is dictated by a heart which expands itself in love towards you." Newcome; who adds, that Mr. Locke observes, that St. Paul here expresses his affection for the Corinthians in a very pathetic manner. "*Aperte et libere vobiscum loquor. Sine ullo timore, tanquam familiaribus lætus loquor.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *Ye are not straitened:*] στενοχωρεισθε. "q. d. *Vos in animo meo quasi domicilio quodam estis, eoque minime angusto. Sed vos mihi non pariter locum facitis in animis vestris.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. VI. Ver. 12. 13 *us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels*[1]. *Now, as a recompence*[2] *for this, I speak as to* my *children*[3], *be ye also enlarged.*

We feel the warmest affection for you all, and as a proof of it we express our mind to you with the utmost freedom. There is no want of kindness on our part, but you are deficient in your regard to us. You do not feel that love for us, nor that respect to our authority, to which we are justly entitled. To this reciprocal affection we put in our claim. As to myself, I speak to you as a father: you are my children in the gospel. I feel the affection, and I address you with the authority, of a parent. Let my love to you be the measure of yours to me: enlarge your affection to an equality with mine. I shall then have no reason and no disposition to complain of the want either of filial gratitude or filial duty.

2. The apostle dissuades them from forming intimate connexions with unbelievers, and particularly

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[1] *Your own bowels.*] "τα σπλαγχνα, viscera vocat, Hebræorum more, teneriores illos affectus intimo cordi insidentes." Rosenmuller.

[2] *As a recompence.*] "την δε· i. e. κατα την αυτην αντιμισθιαν. Vicissim et vos, nam ut filiis loquor, dilatate vos: q. d. ad vicem rependendam. την αυτην, eandem, i. e. parem affectui meo." Rosenmuller.—"As a proper return for my affection, give me as your father the same room in your affections that you as my children have in mine." Priestley.

[3] *As to my children.*] The apostle, to avoid the appearance of egotism, commonly uses the plural number, including Timothy, though it is plain that he chiefly means himself. But as Timothy was a young man, and had no pretence to the character of a father, the apostle speaking under this character adopts the singular number.

warns them against every approximation to idol worship, ver. 14—16. Ch. VI.

Be not unsuitably associated[4] *with unbelievers; for what participation hath righteousness*[5] *with iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? or what concord hath Christ with Belial*[6]? *or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever?* Ver. 14. 15.

Form no connexions with idolaters. Do not associate with them more than is absolutely necessary, even in business, and in the common intercourses of society: contract no family alliances with them: and above all, do not unite with them in their acts

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[4] *Unsuitably associated*:] ἑτεροζυγουντες. This word occurs only once in the New Testament, and is variously explained. Some understand it *eodem jugo junctum esse:* so Mr. Wakefield translates it. "Be not yoke-fellows with unbelievers." Schleusner, with Hesychius and Kypkius, considers ἑτεροζυγειν as opposed to συζυγειν, the latter being understood *de animalibus paribus,* and the former *de animalibus disparibus jugo junctis.* And he renders the text, "*Nolite societatem inire cum paganis, vobis plane imparibus, eorumque mores imitari, et ita consortio vobis indigno uti.*" The public version is, "Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers;" and with this most other versions agree.—Archbishop Newcome remarks, after Bowyer, that there is a beautiful allusion to the idolatrous rite forbidden, Deut. xxii. 10: "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together." All agree that the apostle means to dissuade the Corinthians from partaking in the rites of idolatrous worship. The expression is general: perhaps he means to prohibit all intimate connexions with idolaters, whether by friendship, marriage, or religion. See ver. 16, 17.

[5] *Righteousness*:] δικαιοσυνη. Perhaps justification, the state of privilege and acceptance into which we are introduced by the gospel; in opposition to ανομια, the state of *outlawry* in which the gospel found us.

[6] *Belial.*] "A common name for the false Gods worshiped by idolatrous Gentiles." Locke.—"'The false God who profiteth not:' as the etymology of the word imports." Newcome.

Ch. VI. Ver. 15. of idol worship, and in celebrating their idolatrous festivals. That the disciples of Jesus and worshipers of the one true God should form alliances with idolaters, and join in their worship, is absurd and dangerous in the extreme. It is aiming to join things which are in their nature the most discordant. It is attempting to reconcile a state of friendship with God, with a state of alienation from him; to combine light with darkness; and to unite the kingdom of Christ with that of the idolatrous power, which it was his express commission, and the design of his advent, to overthrow. It is to confound the character, the state, and the final portion of the believer with that of the unbeliever; and thus to represent the Christian doctrine as nugatory and useless, and therefore unworthy of God.

16. *And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols*[1]*? For ye are the temple of the living God*[2]*: as God hath said*[3]*, I will dwell among them, and walk* among them, *and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

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[1] *What agreement.*] Dr. Doddridge well observes, "There seems a peculiar strength in this interrogation. If God would not endure idols in any part of the land in which he dwelt, how much less would he endure them under his own roof?"

[2] *Ye are the temple.*] "This (says Dr. Priestley) is a noble image, by which every Christian is taught to consider himself as the temple of God, and should therefore keep himself holy and undefiled."—"*the living God*, in opposition to the dead heroes and benefactors whom the heathen worshiped." Newcome.

[3] *God hath said.*] In the promise made to the Israelites, if they would continue to obey his laws, Levit. xxvi. 11, 12: "And I will set my tabernacle among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people."

Can the same building serve as a temple of the living God, and a place for the lewd and cruel rites of a heathen idol? No more can you be at the same time the servants of God and the associates of idolaters: for you, by assuming the Christian profession, are become temples of the living God, as the Israelites were of old; concerning whom God himself declares, that he will take up his residence with them, and will walk among them, that is, that he will honour them with the manifestation of his glory, and that he will take them under his protection; that he will sustain the character of their God, the object of their veneration, confidence, and love; and that they shall be his people, whom he will guide and teach, preserve and bless.—These are the privileges to which all who believe in Jesus are entitled: they cannot, therefore, without the most glaring inconsistency, contract habits of intimacy with those whose ignorance and whose vices keep them at a distance from God; who are aliens from that community which he calls his own, who abhor his worship, and are enemies to him by wicked works. Ch. VI. Ver. 16.

3. He urges them, by their relation to God as their Father, to separate themselves from idolaters, and to abstain from every connexion and from every practice which would pollute their minds, and infringe upon the sanctity of the Christian character, ver. 17—vii. 1.

Therefore, come out from the midst of them, and 17.

Ch. VI. Ver. 17. 18 *separate yourselves, saith the Lord*[1], *and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a father to you, and ye shall be to me for sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty*[2].

The exhortation which is addressed by the prophet to the Israelites at Babylon, urging them to join the pious band who were about to return to their own country, rebuild their temple, and reinstate the worship of the true God, and calling upon them to embrace the opportunity which then offered of quitting the land of their captivity and the metropolis of heathen idolatry, utterly renouncing all connexion with idolatrous persons and idolatrous practices, may be considered as addressed to all who have embraced the Christian faith. Separate yourselves immediately, entirely, and for ever, from idolaters and from their works; and if, in obedience to this injunction, you will be compelled to renounce some of the dearest connexions and the most intimate friends, remember that you can make no sacrifice of this nature, which God cannot and will not amply compensate; for the almighty, immutable

[1] *Saith the Lord,*] Isaiah lii. 11, addressed to the captives in Babylon: "Depart ye, depart ye! go ye out from thence: touch no unclean thing: go ye out of the midst of her: be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord."

[2] *Saith the Lord Almighty.*] It is asked where this promise is made? and some refer, erroneously I think, to 2 Sam. vii. 14, which is a promise to David and his family. Perhaps the text is lost from our copies. Perhaps the apostle only meant to give the general sense of the promises of God to his people. Perhaps he declares upon his own authority, that if they separated themselves from the society, the practice, the rites, and the vices of idolatry, God would be a father to them.

God has promised to be a father to you, and to regard you as his children, if you are faithful and obedient. And if God is your father, he will most certainly and amply fulfill all the obligations of this endearing relation: he will provide a rich and perpetual inheritance for you, and will use all proper means to train you for the possession and enjoyment of it; and he will supply you with every thing needful during the present state of minority and pupilage. Surely this consideration may well induce you cheerfully to comply with these injunctions which he lays upon you, which are intended for your ultimate advantage; though, perhaps, that compliance may at present require the exercise of much resolution and painful self-denial. Ch. VI. Ver. 18.

Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us purify ourselves from all pollution of flesh and spirit[3], *perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* Ch. VII. Ver. 1.

As the Almighty God has promised to be a father to us, and to treat us as his children, let it be our concern to behave in a manner suitable to this glorious and honourable relation; let us carefully abstain from those vices which idolaters practise, and in which they glory, but which are strictly forbidden by the Christian law, which are absolutely inconsistent with the duty which we owe to God, and which will inevitably exclude us from his presence and favour, and from all the privileges of his

[3] *Flesh and spirit.*] "all impure actions and desires. The precept is well adapted to the dissolute manners of Corinth." Newcome.—"of body and mind." Wakefield.

Ch. VII. Ver. 1. children and servants. Dreading, therefore, his displeasure as the worst of evils, let us not rest satisfied till we have attained that perfection of character to which, as the professors of Christianity, it is our duty to aspire; which will assimilate us most nearly to the divine being, and recommend us to his favour, and which can only be attained by keeping out of the way of temptation, by renouncing connexions, however dear, which would ensnare our minds and seduce us into idolatry and vice; and by the diligent use of all the means which will conduce to our improvement in knowledge and in virtue.

SECTION X.

THE APOSTLE, to recover the affections of the Corinthians, pleads his own earnest and disinterested attachment to them: he renews the declaration of his great satisfaction at the report of Titus, and particularly concerning their treatment of the great offender, and their kind behaviour to the evangelist himself, who was highly gratified by the reception which he experienced at Corinth. Ch. vii. 2—16.

1. The apostle requests a share in their affection and friendship, which he had done nothing to forfeit, and pleads his own disinterested affection for them, and his joy in their good conduct, ver. 2—4.

Make room for us[1]*: we have injured no man, we have corrupted no man, we have taken undue advantage of no man.* Ch. VII. Ver. 2.

Open your hearts to admit us; receive me into your affection, and yield to my authority. I have done nothing to forfeit your kindness and confidence. Whatever imputations may have been cast upon my character, or in whatever manner others may have acted, I can with confidence declare, and appeal to you for the truth of the declaration, that I have injured no man in his property, that I have corrupted no man by false and immoral doctrine, and that I have not taken advantage of any person's ignorance or credulity, to subserve any sinister purposes.

I do not mention this *to condemn* you, *for I have already told you*[2] *that ye are in our heart, to die together and to live together.* 3.

I do not mean to blame you, but only to express my earnest desire of an interest in your affections, and to clear my character from all unworthy imputations: my affection to you is unalterable, and what I have before said I now repeat. My earnest

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[1] *Make room for us.*] "*Receive us* with enlarged affection, ch. vi. 11, 12. We are unlike your factious leaders. We have openly injured no man; we have corrupted no man by false doctrines, we have artfully circumvented no man." Newcome. "This seems to insinuate the contrary behaviour of their false apostle." Locke.

[2] *I have already told you.*] "I do not mean to condemn your conduct. I have said before, that I have a deep affection for you, ch. vi. 11, 12. He refers to the sense, and not to the very words: which is his manner." Newcome.

CH VII. desire is, that the most perfect harmony may subsist between us, both living and dying.

VER. 4. *Great* is *my freedom of speech*[1] *towards you, great my boasting concerning you. I am full of comfort, I exceedingly abound in joy*[2] *under all our affliction.*

I open my whole soul to you with the utmost freedom, both in animadverting upon your faults, and in expressing my solicitude for your welfare. And having heard of your reformation, I mention it upon all occasions with delight and triumph.

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[1] *Freedom of speech.*] "Respecting my own conduct, and my enlargement of heart towards you." Newcome.

[2] *I exceedingly abound in joy.*] ὑπερπερισσεύομαι, "*superabundo supra modum, vel vehementer exubero: q. d. Abundo lætitia in omnibus miseriis meis, ita, ut gaudium illud summum, quo me affectum sentio, omnem tristitiam et dolorum sensum removeat.*" Schleusner. "This word," says Dr. Doddridge, "has an inexpressible energy, and is, if I mistake not, a word of the apostle's own making." It occurs but twice in the New Testament, here and Rom. v. 20, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."—"Ὑπ. *verbum rarum. Non solum tranquilla mihi mens rediit, sed et eximii gaudii sensum percipio.*" Rosenmuller.

"The apostle's success in preaching the gospel at Corinth (says Dr. Priestley in his admirable note), after spending a considerable time to very little purpose at Athens, gave him great joy; and it appears that, next to Antioch and Ephesus, the Christian church at Corinth was the largest of any out of Judea. The anxiety which the apostle had on his mind about the state of this church, we clearly see in every part of both these epistles. They discover the most genuine strong feelings, such as no forger or inventor of letters could have assumed. Every paragraph speaks the genuineness of these epistles; and the genuineness of them is one of the strongest internal marks of the truth of the Christian religion. For, as I have often observed, if the principal facts of the gospel history were not true, the existence of these epistles, written as they are, cannot be accounted for."

My heart overflows with joy which I cannot express; and all my labours and sufferings are abundantly repaid by the satisfaction which I feel in your good conduct. Ch. VII. Ver. 4.

2. He expresses the extreme gratification which, in the midst of his cares and troubles, he had derived from the pleasing intelligence which Titus brought of the state of things in the church at Corinth, ver. 5—7.

For indeed when we were come to Macedonia our flesh had no respite, but we were afflicted on every side: without were *oppositions, within alarms*[5]. 5.

When, being desirous of hearing tidings concerning you, I had crossed the sea from Troas into Macedonia, where I preached the gospel while I waited for the arrival of Titus, I met with the same harsh treatment which usually attends me in the exercise of my mission. Bodily refreshment and comfort I had none: I was harassed on all sides, with persecutions from without, with anxiety and

[5] *Within alarms.*] φοβοι, fears lest faction should prevail among you, ch. xi. 3. "I lay under the utmost uneasiness, partly from the opposition I met with against my doctrine, and more especially from the dread I had that your false teachers should still pervert you and gain credit in your church." Pyle.—"lest the false apostle, continuing his credit and faction among you, should pervert you from the simplicity of the gospel." Locke.—It cannot well be doubted that these learned expositors are right in supposing the apostle to allude to his insidious opponent, both here and elsewhere; but it is observable, that in this part of his epistle the apostle does not expressly point to him. He only marks him out by innuendoes, which his readers would easily understand.

Ch. VII. Ver. 5. fear within. The opposition I met with in my attempt to propagate the gospel was greatly aggravated by the anxiety that I felt on your account, lest any of you should be tempted to apostatize from the faith, or to disgrace your profession by an unworthy conduct.

6. *But that God who comforteth those who are brought low, comforted us by the coming of Titus;*
7. *and not only by his coming, but especially by the consolation with which he had been comforted concerning you, reporting to us your earnest desire, your lamentation, your zeal for me*[1].

When I was ready to sink under the pressure of outward troubles and inward conflicts, that merciful and compassionate Being, whose gracious attribute it is to comfort the dejected, administered the most reviving consolation to my spirit by the seasonable arrival of Titus, whom I had sent to inquire into the state of your society. I rejoiced in his arrival, as in that of an affectionate faithful friend, and an able assistant in my apostolic labours; but I was more especially delighted to hear how much he had been pleased and edified by your friendship and your Christian conduct, and to be informed by him how earnestly you desired to rectify every thing that was amiss; how sincerely you lamented your past misconduct, how much warmth of affection you ex-

[1] *Your earnest desire*] "to rectify every thing agreeably to my first epistle: your lamentation for past misconduct, your fervent spirit to obey me." Newcome. *Your zeal.* "*Ardorem vestrum in perficiendis iis rebus, de quibus scripseram.*" Rosenmuller.

pressed for my person, and how much deference to my authority and instructions. Ch. VII.

3. The apostle expresses his satisfaction that the severe epistle he had written to them, and which had been the occasion of so much uneasiness both to himself and to them, had nevertheless been attended with such beneficial consequences, ver. 8, 9.

So that I was the more glad[2] *on seeing no reason to repent of the uneasiness which I gave you by that letter: though I did repent*[3]. *For I see*[4] *that the epistle grieved you, for a short time only.* Ver. 8.

Now I rejoice; not that ye were grieved, but that ye were grieved to repentance: for ye were grieved with regard to God[5], *so that ye receive damage by us in nothing*[6]. 9.

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[2] *So that I was the more glad.*] This is Mr. Wakefield's translation, and appears to me to give a just idea of the apostle's meaning.

[3] *I did repent*] "when I reflected on the agitation of mind which I had occasioned among you." Newcome.—"*Non doleo quanquam doluit mihi.*" Grotius.—"He was sorry that he found himself obliged to write that letter." Macknight. "We see by this circumstance," says Dr. Priestley, "that the apostle wrote from the feelings of his own heart, and from no immediate inspiration of the spirit of God, which was indeed altogether unnecessary; for he could never have repented, or been inclined to repent, of what he had written by the suggestion of the holy spirit. But it was quite natural for him to suspect, that writing from his own quick feelings, he might have expressed himself too strongly, so as to have done more harm than good by his writing."

[4] *For I see.*] The Vulgate reads βλεπων, which Mr. Wakefield approves, and renders it, *For perceiving*, &c. *I now rejoice.*

[5] *With regard to God.*] "with a penitential and humble regard to the honour of the blessed God, which is so immediately

Ch. VII. Ver. 9. I sent you an epistle, which, though dictated by the truest friendship and Christian affection for you, contained much severe animadversion, much harsh reproof, many unpalatable injunctions. I knew that to some it would give offence, and that to many it would occasion grief; and after I had written it, I almost repented of the strong language which I had used, and was grieved at the thought of the great uneasiness which it would occasion. But now I no longer regret what I have done, because I see that the uneasiness which I apprehended was transient, and that it operated in a right direction. I am even glad that the epistle, severe as it was, was sent to you. I rejoice, not that you were made uneasy, but that the uneasiness occasioned by my letter took a proper turn, and produced that change of mind and conduct which it was my desire and intention to accomplish. The epistle, indeed, gave you pain, as I intended it should; but that pain arose from a just sense of your guilt, and of the greatness of your offence in the sight of God; and this produced that change of conduct which Titus has reported to me, and which has given me so much satisfaction: so

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and peculiarly affected by the irregularities of those who profess themselves his people." Doddridge. κατα Θεον. "*Tali enim tristitia estis affecti, cujus Deus auctor et suasor fuit.* Alii: *contristati estis convenienter divinæ voluntati. Intelligitur tristitia quæ oritur ex causis, e quibus Deus vult oriri tristitiam, et quæ habet eos affectus, quos habere Deus vult.*" Rosenmuller.—"In a godly manner, or, according to God." Newcome.

[6] *In nothing.*] "For this proved a beneficial sorrow, acceptable to God, that in nothing you might have cause to complain that you were damaged by me." Locke.—"*Ita ut nulla per me pœna, nullo damno afficeremini: ἱνα pro ὡστε.*" Rosenmuller.

that, upon the whole, you have been benefited, and in no respect injured by the severity of my faithful reproofs. Ch. VII. Ver. 9.

4. The apostle represents the happy effect of their godly sorrow, which had completely answered the purpose for which he had written to them, particularly in the case of the incestuous person, ver. 10—12.

For grief with regard to God worketh repentance to salvation, never to be repented of; but the grief of the world worketh death. 10.

Sorrow for sin, which arises from a regard to the omniscience, the purity, the justice, and the power, but especially to the goodness of God, produces that thorough change in the affections, views, and principles, which is the source of holy and virtuous practice; of which a man will never have any reason or any wish to repent, but, persevering in it to the end of life, will ultimately obtain that everlasting recompense which the gospel promises to those who continue patient in well-doing. But that sorrow for sin which arises solely from low and worldly motives, from the experience of evil consequences as to bodily health or secular interest, or, perhaps, from shame and regret because their follies and vices have attracted the notice, and exposed them to the contempt and the condemnation of the world, produces no good moral effect, lays no effectual restraint upon vicious passions, and will eventually terminate in destruction.

Ch. VII. Ver. 11. *For behold*[1], *this very thing that ye grieved with regard to God, what earnestness*[2] *it produced in you; yea,* what *excusing of yourselves*[3]*; yea,* what *indignation*[4]*; yea,* what *fear*[5]*; yea,* what *earnest*

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[1] *For behold.*] "The first clause in the preceding verse is here proved." Newcome.—Dr. Doddridge observes, from Gataker, that "Calvin and Reynolds, and some other divines of note, have been misled by taking it for granted that these verses contain seven distinct marks of true repentance, to be found in every sincere penitent; whereas indeed these are not characters of the temper of each, but of different persons in different circumstances, according to the part they respectively acted in the affair in question."

"St. Paul (says Mr. Locke), writing to those who knew the temper they were in, and what were the objects of the several passions which were raised in them, doth both here and in the seventh verse forbear to mention by and to what they were moved, out of modesty and respect to them. This is necessary to be supplied, as can be best collected from the main design of the apostle in these epistles, and from several passages giving us light into it."

[2] *Earnestness*:] σπουδην· "diligence to obey me." Newcome. "what carefulness it wrought in you to conform yourselves to my orders." Locke, Macknight.—"what diligence to reform what had been amiss." Doddridge.—"*Studium et industria in corrigenda illa vitiositate, quum antea levitas plerorumque animum corripuisset.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Yea,* what *excusing of yourselves.*] "αλλα *hic valet imo et.*" Rosenmuller. Απολογιαν· *i. e.* "*excusationem suæ negligentiæ apud Titum, unde culpa tantum ad paucos rediit, unoquoque diligenter proferente, quod antea ignorabatur.*" Idem.—"what clearing of yourselves from your former miscarriages." Locke.—"what defence of yourselves." Newcome.—"what excuses." Wakefield.—"what a solicitous care to make the best apology you could for what you had done; and of the sounder part to make their innocence appear." Doddridge.

[4] What *indignation*:] αγανακτησιν· "displeasure, dissatisfaction with yourselves for being so foolish." Macknight; who observes, that "the word properly denotes *pain,* the cause of which is in one's self." The primary signification of the word is, bodily pain: in its secondary sense it expresses pain of mind and indignation in general. See Matt. xxi. 15, xxvi. 8, Mark x. 14,

desire[6]; *yea*, what *zeal*[7]; *yea*, what *revenge*[8]. *In all things ye have proved yourselves to be clear in this matter*[9]. Ch. VII. Ver. 11.

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and Schleusner. In this connexion it is understood by most expositors as expressing indignation against offenders. So Locke: "what indignation against those who led you into them." And Newcome: "indignation against the incestuous person and my opponents."

[5] *What fear.*] φοβον. "what reverence." Wakefield.—"what fear to offend me." See ver. 15. Locke, Newcome.—"what fear lest any thing of that sort should be encouraged and repeated." Doddridge.—"fear of the displeasure of God." Macknight.—"*Cautam providentiam, ut omnia corrigerentur.*" Rosenmuller.

[6] *What earnest desire,*] επιποθησιν, "of satisfying me." Locke, Newcome, Macknight.—"what fond affections." Wakefield.—"what earnest desire of seeing me again, and confirming our friendship in surer bonds." Doddridge.—"Desiderium, *sive Pauli videndi, et ejus favore fruendi, sive per severiorum morum ordinem, Pauli placendi.*" Rosenmuller.

[7] *What zeal.*] ζηλον. "what zeal for me." Locke.—"what zeal in every method that could be subservient to these views." Doddridge.—"zeal for my honour." Macknight.—"vehemens *studium, sive rectè agendi, sive pro Pauli bona existimatione.*" Rosenmuller.

[8] *What revenge:*] εκδικησιν. "revenge against yourselves for having been so misled." Locke, Doddridge, Harwood.—"punishment in your animadversion on the impure offender." Newcome, Macknight. See 1 Pet. ii. 14.—"ultio, *sive animadversio severa in malos.*" Rosenmuller. This great diversity of opinions among expositors confirms Mr. Locke's observation, and shows how difficult it is to ascertain the true meaning of the apostle, though probably sufficiently obvious to the Corinthians.

[9] *Clear in this matter.*] αγνους εν τω πραγματι. "You have shown yourselves to be set right, and to be as you should be in every thing by this carriage of yours." Locke; who remarks, that the apostle could not mean that they were not guilty, because he had charged them with misbehaviour; but his meaning is, that they were now set right, and had resolved on a contrary course. Nor could he, by the words τω πραγματι, mean to limit his observations to the case of the fornicator; for that was not the subject upon which he had been speaking, but the Co-

Ch. VII. Ver. 11. With great satisfaction I can add, that in your own case you may see the excellent effect of that godly sorrow of which I have been speaking. With regard to the irregularities upon which I animadverted in my former epistle, such as that spirit of faction and dissention, that alienation from me, that disregard to my authority, that attachment to a false teacher, and especially the toleration of the incestuous offender: your sorrow for these offences has been of the most ingenuous kind, and has originated in the best principles. And its effects have been correspondent. What earnestness has it excited in you all to bring things into a better state; what apologies from some of you for past misconduct, and what solicitude in others to clear yourselves from any concern in the charge; what indignation against those who have seduced you from your duty; what fear of the consequences of your fault; what earnest desire to be reconciled to me, and to recover my friendship; what zeal to rectify every thing that has been amiss: and in order to this, how solicitous have you been to inflict that pu-

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rinthians siding with the false apostle against him. This lay nearest his heart, and is the subject of the preceding chapters. He would therefore translate εν τω πραγματι, "*in fact;*" *i. e.* by your sorrow, your fear, &c. In the following verse he mentions his having written to them concerning the fornicator, but this is only as an argument of his affection to them. The great cause of his rejoicing was the breaking of the faction: his mind was now at rest, and he doubted not that all would go well. Agreeably to this view of Mr. Locke, Archbishop Newcome explains the text, "clear at present: in the matter of fomenting divisions, of opposing me, of encouraging him who committed incest."

nishment upon the principal offender which might clear the character of the Christian society, and might bring him to a due sense of the enormity of his guilt. You have omitted nothing that could be done, to testify the sincerity of your repentance, in the whole business concerning which I wrote to you. Ch. VII. Ver. 11.

Wherefore, though I wrote to you, I did it *not* so much *for the sake of him who had committed, or of him who had sustained the injury*[1], *but for the sake of manifesting even to yourselves your earnest regard to us*[2] *in the sight of God.* 12.

I was desirous that the person who had been so grievously injured in his honour and his peace might

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[1] *Who had sustained the injury.*] Hence it appears that the father of the incestuous person was still living; which, as has been justly observed, must be a great aggravation of his crime. See Doddridge and Macknight.

[2] *Your earnest regard to us*:] την σπεδην· the same word which occurs ver. 11, and is there translated *earnestness*. The received text reads ἡμων την ὑπερ ὑμων, *our earnest regard to you*. This reading is followed by Locke: "that my care and concern for you might be made known to you." Doddridge and Macknight also adopt the same reading. But the Ephrem, Clermont, and many other manuscripts, and the Syriac, Coptic, and Æthiopic versions read ὑμων την ὑπερ ἡμων, *your earnest regard to us*. Griesbach marks it as of good authority, though he does not receive it into the text. Newcome, who seldom deviates from Griesbach, and Wakefield adopt this reading. "That your care for us might be made manifest to you in the sight of God." Newcome; who explains it, "Wherefore, in the wise providence of God the result of all is this: It appears by the event as if I had written to you, not for the sake of reclaiming the incestuous son, or of doing justice to the injured father, but to manifest among you your care for me in the sight of an approving God." This sense is agreeable to the plain scope of the passage, as Mr. Wakefield observes.

Ch. VII. Ver. 12. have his injury redressed. I was anxious that the heinous offender might by just animadversion be brought to a due sense of his guilt, and that the reputation of the society might be cleared. And this was my intention in writing to you. But a still further end has been answered by my epistle, and that an end of great importance. It has been a means of proving, even to yourselves as well as to the world, the great esteem and affection which you entertain for me, and the high value which you set upon the instructions which I have communicated to you in the name and under the authority of God, by a practical regard to which you will secure your final happiness.

5. The apostle assures them that he was much pleased with their behaviour to Titus, who was also himself highly gratified by it; and he concludes this part of his epistle with expressing his entire confidence in their present good dispositions, ver. 13—16.

13. *Therefore, we were comforted; and in addition*[1] *to this our comfort, we rejoiced still more exceedingly*[2] *in the joy of Titus, because his spirit was*
14. *refreshed*[3] *by you all. So that, if I had boasted*

[1] *And in addition,* &c.] With Mr. Wakefield I adopt the reading of the Ephrem, Clermont, and many other copies and versions. The received text, retained by Griesbach and Archbishop Newcome, reads, "We were therefore comforted by reason of your (ὑμων) comfort. And we rejoiced," &c.

[2] *Still more exceedingly.*] "περισσοτερως μαλλον, *duplex comparativus, ut* Marc. vii. 36." See Rosenmuller and Grotius.

[3] *His spirit was refreshed.*] *q. d.* he was refreshed. See Phi-

at all concerning you to him, I have not been made ashamed. But as we have spoken all things to you in truth, so this our boasting concerning you to Titus[4] *has likewise proved true.* Ch. VII. Ver. 14.

The information I received concerning your penitence and reformation afforded me great satisfaction. This satisfaction was exceedingly increased by the intelligence which I obtained from Titus, of your kind and friendly behaviour to him while he resided with you. I was pleased to hear that he had been made so happy among you; and I was the more pleased with it, because before he set out I had assured him that he would be treated with great kindness by you, and your conduct has verified the good opinion which I entertained of you. And it now appears, that as the doctrine which I taught you has always been founded in truth, whatever my adversary may have insinuated to the contrary, so likewise my favourable representation of you to Titus proved to be correct, though it is possible that some of your enemies might have alarmed his apprehensions by giving him a different account of your character.

And his tender affection is more abundant towards you, when he calls to mind the obedience of you all, with how much fear and trembling[5] *ye received him.* 15.

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lem. v. 25. "Refreshed by your becoming reception of him, and by the good disposition which prevailed among you." Newcome.

[4] *To Titus.*] "*apud Titum.*" Rosenmuller. "which I made before Titus." Newcome.—Some good copies read προς Τιτον.

[5] *With fear and trembling.*] "with anxious attention and re-

Ch. VII. Ver. 15. Titus never thinks of you but with the kindest and tenderest emotions, when he recollects the great concern which you expressed when you read the letter which he brought, and heard what he had further to impart to you from me; also the readiness with which you yielded to the advice and to the animadversions which the letter contained, and the zeal with which you hastened to reform the abuses of which I complained.

16. *I rejoice that in every respect I have confidence in you*[1].

To conclude, therefore, I cheerfully embrace this opportunity of declaring my entire confidence in you, that you will go on to rectify every thing that is still amiss; that you will persevere in faith and holiness; and that you will continue to cherish an affectionate regard to me, and to pay a just deference to my apostolic authority.

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verence." Newcome.—"Quod cum summa reverentia eum exceperitis: *i. e. ejus auctoritatem omnino sitis reveriti. Si enim eum revereuter exceperunt, obediverunt ei in omnibus, quicquid suaderet, moneret, institueret. Vid.* 1 Cor. ii. 3; Eph. vi. 5; Phil. ii. 12." Rosenmuller. Fear and trembling seems to have been a customary phrase with the apostle to express reverence and respect. See Eph. vi. 5.

[1] *I have confidence in you.*] "The address of all this part of the epistle," says Dr. Doddridge, "is wonderful. This, in particular, finely introduces what he had to say in the following chapter, and is strongly illustrated by ch. ix. 2—4." It is observable, that through the greater part of this chapter and the remainder of the epistle, the apostle drops the plural number and speaks in his own person, as he discourses upon subjects upon which Timothy could not with propriety be supposed to join him.

PART THE SECOND.

THE APOSTLE EXHORTS THE CORINTHIANS, AFTER THE EXAMPLE OF THE CHURCHES IN MACEDONIA, TO MAKE A LIBERAL CONTRIBUTION FOR THE RELIEF OF THEIR DISTRESSED BRETHREN IN JUDEA; AND INFORMS THEM THAT HE HAS SENT TITUS AND OTHERS TO COMPLETE THE COLLECTION BEFORE HE CAME. Ch. viii., ix. Ch. VIII.

SECTION I.

THE APOSTLE informs them of the generous liberality of the churches in Macedonia, and urges a variety of considerations to induce the believers at Corinth to follow their example. Ch. viii. 1—15.

1. He communicates to the Corinthians the generous zeal of the believers in Macedonia; which induced him to send Titus to Corinth, to finish the collection there, ver. 1—6.

Now, brethren, we inform you of the extraordinary generosity[2] *which hath been displayed by the* Ver. 1.

[2] *Extraordinary generosity.*] So Wakefield. "την χαριν τȣ Θεȣ· literally, the gift of God, or the godly gift, or the godlike gift." Newcome; who renders it "the very liberal gift. See 2 Sam.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 2. *churches of Macedonia; that under a great trial of affliction, the overflowing of their joy*[1] *and the depth of their poverty have eminently displayed*[2] *the riches of their bounty*[3].

The apostles at Jerusalem, when they gave the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas, ear-

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ix. 3; Psalm lxxx. 10; Acts vii. 20."—"I think it proper to acquaint you with the great and exemplary liberality lately shown by the Christians in Macedonia." Pyle. In his note he remarks, that "the name of God joined to any thing in the Hebrew language, is put to magnify it to the highest degree."—"Moreover, brethren, I make known to you the gift which by the grace of God is given in the churches of Macedonia." Locke; who adds in his note, "χαρις is here used by St. Paul for gift, or liberality; and is so used, ver. 4, 6, 7, 9, 19, and 1 Cor. xvi. 3. It is called, also, the gift of God; because God is the author and procurer of it, moving their hearts to it."

[1] *Of their joy*:] χαρας. "in their Christian privileges." Newcome; who observes, that Dr. Mangey and Mr. Wakefield conjecture χρειας, "of their necessity." Mr. Wakefield says, "It is an indubitable emendation, though not authorized, it seems, by any manuscript or version now existing."

[2] *Have eminently displayed.*] "επερισσευσεν, hath abounded to the riches of their liberality." Newcome.—"The abundance of their want, and their deep poverty were rich and plenteous in liberality." Wakefield.

[3] *Bounty*:] "liberality. So the word ἁπλοτης usually signifies, both in the Old Testament and the New. Prov. xi. 25; Rom. xii. 8; 2 Cor. ix. 11, 13; James i. 5." Whitby.

"The general poverty of the Jewish Christians," says Dr. Priestley in his introduction to this chapter, "from whom the gospel was propagated, is a circumstance highly favourable to Christianity, as it clearly shows that they with whom the gospel originated had neither power nor wealth to procure it any credit; so that there was nothing but its own proper evidence in its favour, and this proved to be sufficient to ensure its success.—What could induce the learned and the wealthy in all the considerable cities of Greece to become Christians, when the head of the religion was regarded as a crucified malefactor, and most of his followers in Judea were in poor and distressed circumstances? Had the first Christians been the great and the wealthy of a

nestly recommended to them to remember the poor, which the apostle Paul declares, they were by no means backward to do; and upon various occasions he encouraged contributions among the opulent Gentile converts, for the relief of the indigent believers in Judea; expecting, no doubt, that this liberality of the Gentiles would gradually soften the prejudices of the Jewish believers, and dispose them to regard with complacency their Gentile brethren, although they declined to submit to the yoke of the ceremonial institution. The apostle was now engaged in promoting a very considerable contribution in Greece for the relief of the Jewish Christians, which he had himself undertaken to carry to Jerusalem, in company with other deputies appointed by the respective churches. In his first letter to the Corinthians, written from Ephesus a year before, he had recommended the case; and in his progress through Macedonia he had collected contributions, which had surpassed his most sanguine expectations; and which he here announces to the Corinthians, to excite their emulation. Ch. VIII. Ver. 2.

Having thus given vent to the fullness of my heart, and the joy I felt at the report of Titus, I now proceed to inform you, my brethren, of the extraordi-

country, what a handle would that have furnished the unbelievers of this age for surmise and suspicion, even without any proper evidence of fraud! because the rich and the great are always known to have the means of imposing upon the vulgar; but the poor and ignorant vulgar have it not equally in their power to deceive the learned and the rich."

Ch. VIII. Ver. 2. nary liberality displayed by the churches of Macedonia. For under much experience of tribulation, in the midst of persecution and bereavement, their abundant joy in the discoveries and the promises of the gospel, and their deep poverty, occasioned by the spoiling of their goods by their unjust persecutors (see Acts xvi. xvii.), have magnified and set off to great advantage their extraordinary liberality in the contributions they have made for the relief of the necessitous brethren in Judea.

3. *For to* their *ability I bear them witness, and beyond their ability* they contributed *of their own ac-*
4. *cord*[1]*; entreating us with much importunity concerning this liberal contribution,* to accept *the ministration*[2] *of it to the saints.*

Having voluntarily contributed beyond their due proportion, and so as to put themselves to considerable inconvenience by their generosity, they ear-

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[1] They contributed *of their own accord.*] "*Sensus est, Pro viribus, quod vere testari possum, imo supra vires suas ipsi, nondum rogati, contulerunt.*" Rosenmuller.—*ὑπερ δυναμιν*, beyond their ability. For similar expressions in classical writers, see Whitby, Doddridge, and Rosenmuller.

[2] To accept *the ministration*:] *δεξασθαι ἡμας.* These words are wanting in copies and versions of the best authority, and are left out in the text of Griesbach; they were probably a marginal gloss, they, or some words to the same purport, being necessary to complete the sentence. Archbishop Newcome translates thus, from the Griesbach text: "beseeching us with much entreaty *concerning their* gift, and the joint ministration of it to the saints, or to *the wants of* the saints." With Mr. Wakefield "I express in our idiom the hendiadys of ver. 4." He translates in the following manner: "For I declare, according to *their* ability, and above *their* ability they besought us of their own accord, with much entreaty, to accept this liberal communication of their relief to the saints."

nestly requested that I with others would undertake the office of carrying their liberal contribution to the Christians at Jerusalem. Ch. VIII. Ver. 4.

And what was beyond our expectation[3], *they first gave themselves up to the Lord, and* then *to us, according to the will of God.* 5.

As they exceeded our expectation in the extent of their liberality, so likewise in the purity and sublimity of their motive: for, previous to the contribution, they avowed their entire subjection to the gospel of Christ; and, in obedience to the will of God, they gave themselves up to the service of Christ, agreeably to the instructions which they received from us; so that their generosity was of the most exalted kind, flowing wholly from Christian principles and from a pious and truly Christian spirit.

Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had already begun, he would also finish this contribution[4] *among you.* 6.

When I observed this generous spirit in the Macedonians, I was anxious that you, my brethren, with whose kindness of heart I was well acquainted,

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[3] *Beyond our expectation*:] ε καθως ηλπισαμεν, "and *this they did* not as we expected." Newcome.—"In this they outdid my expectation." Locke.—"The word is used by the Attics, say grammarians, not only touching good things, but simply touching the event of what is future. See Suidas. It has the sense of *expect*, see Hesychius and Phavorinus; and, according to Eustachius, of *conjecture*." Whitby.—"gave themselves to me to dispose of what they had as God should direct." Locke.

[4] *Contribution*.] χαριν. See Wakefield. "this work of liberality." Newcome. See ver. 1.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 6. might not be behind the believers in Macedonia in any virtuous and laudable exertion; and for this reason I have requested Titus to return to Corinth, and to finish the collection which he began when he was with you before.

2. He stimulates their liberality, by praising their excellence in other Christian virtues, and by the zeal of others, ver. 7, 8.

7. *Now, as ye abound in every* other good quality, *in faith, and in doctrine*[1], *and in knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us,* see *that ye abound in this* virtue of *liberality also.*

I need not say much to press upon you a duty to which you are already so well inclined: permit me, however, to hint, that as you excell so much in other Christian virtues, and particularly in the stedfastness of your faith, in the purity of your doctrine, in your comprehensive knowledge of the nature and the grounds of revealed truth, in your earnest zeal for the performance of every duty, and in your affectionate attachment to me who am your first instructor in the Christian religion, it becomes you to be consistent throughout, and complete in every branch of duty. Excell, then, I entreat you, in this virtue of liberality, as much as you excell in other virtues, and contribute handsomely to this collection for the necessitous brethren in Judea, and you

[1] *In doctrine.*] εν λογῳ. Wakefield. See Eph. i. 13, Col. i. 5. —"in utterance, or ability to instruct others." Doddridge, Newcome.

will then fill up the circle of Christian duties, and will be deficient in no branch of the Christian character. Ch. VIII. Ver. 7.

I speak not by way of command: but by the diligence of others, approving[2] *also the genuineness of your love.* 8.

I do not pretend to direct you in the disposal of your property, but I mention the liberality of others, in order to give you an opportunity of manifesting to the world that you are influenced by the genuine spirit of Christianity, and that you are not inferior to any in active benevolence, and in generous sympathy.

3. He recommends liberality, from the example of Christ, ver. 9.

For ye know the munificence[3] *of our Lord Jesus Christ, how, while he was rich*[4]*, for your sakes he* 9.

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[2] *Approving also.*] δοκιμαζων· "showing the world a proof of the genuineness of your love."—"Thus (says Mr. Locke) I think it should be rendered. St. Paul, who is so careful to show his esteem and good opinion of the Corinthians, could not in this place so far forget his design as to tell them that he sent Titus to make a trial of the sincerity of their love. This had been an ill expression of that confidence which he tells them he has in them in all things: taking, therefore, δοκιμαζων for *drawing out a proof*, it is, *q. d.* This I urge, not as a command from God; but, upon occasion of others' liberality, lay before you an opportunity of giving the world a proof of the genuine temper of your charity, which, like that of your other virtues, loves not to come behind that of others."

[3] *Munificence.*] Locke; who observes that "this is the signification in which St. Paul uses χαρις over and over again in this chapter."

[4] *While he was rich.*] επτωχευσε, πλουσιος ων. See Wakefield. The construction requires it to be understood, not of a

Ch. VIII. Ver. 9. *lived in poverty, that ye by his poverty might be enriched.*

You know the kindness of our great Master Jesus Christ, who, though he was endowed with miraculous powers, by which he could at pleasure have sup-

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passage from a preceding state of wealth to a succeeding state of poverty, but of two contemporary states. He was rich and poor at the same time. "Πτωχευω, *mendicus sum, mendicus vivo.* Steph. Thesaur.—*inops dego.* Constantin. Lex. επτωχευσε, *pauper fuit,* sive potius, *mendicavit.*" Erasmus. The word properly signifies an actual state, not a change of state. Literally, he was poor, or he was a beggar. See Odyss. O. l. 308. Our Lord was rich in miraculous powers, which he could employ, if he pleased, for his own advantage. But for the benefit of his followers he chose to lead a life of poverty and dependence, to deny himself the comforts and the luxuries of life for the good of others. See Grotius. This was a very proper example to the Corinthians, which they might feel and imitate. It was certainly much more pertinent and applicable than a supposed descent from a prior state of existence and happiness; to which there could be nothing analogous in the case of the Corinthians, and to which the apostle cannot in reason, or in consistence with grammatical construction, be understood as making the least allusion. *Improved Version,* note.

"*Rich,* in the glories of his divine nature. *Poor,* by taking on him human nature, and appearing even in a humble state of life." Newcome.—"Rich in the glories of the heavenly world, and in supreme dominion and authority there, became poor." Doddridge.—"Who though he was the Son of God, and the heir of all things, yet condescended to live the mean and poor life of man." Pyle. Such are the interpretations which pious and learned men, biassed by system, force upon a text, of which to an unprejudiced reader it could not suggest the slightest hint.

"The apostle," says Dr. Priestley, "recommends generosity to others by the example of Christ, whose grace or kindness he here speaks of. For though he may be said to have been rich, as he had the command of riches, and of all the powers of nature, which appeared in the miraculous draught of fishes, his multiplying provisions upon two different occasions, &c., yet he chose a low and indigent station of life, and never availed himself of his miraculous power to supply his own wants, or to relieve himself in any difficulty whatever; but devoted himself and

plied himself with all the conveniences and luxuries of life, and could have lived in splendour and magnificence; yet, while in full possession of these great powers, for your sakes he vouchsafed to live in a state of voluntary poverty, leaving himself destitute of the necessaries of life, having no settled abode, and depending upon the generosity of his followers for his daily bread; that you through his poverty might be enriched; that from his example you might learn the important lesson of temperance, modesty, of self-denial, and a readiness to sacrifice every enjoyment in the cause of truth, in the discharge of duty, and for the welfare of mankind. And that by these means you might attain true riches; that you might be rich in good works, rich in the approbation of conscience, in the gratitude of those whose wants you relieve, whose afflictions you mitigate, and whose best interests you promote, in the esteem of the wise and good, in the approbation of Christ, in the favour of God, and in the possession of an eternal and unfading inheritance. Ch. VIII. Ver. 9.

Nothing can exhibit the influence of prejudice, even upon upright and intelligent minds, in a more striking light, than the great stress which is laid by

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all his time to the good of others. There is no ground to infer from this passage, that the apostle considered Christ as having been rich any where but on earth. He says nothing like this; and therefore, to infer from this passage, that Christ had any being before he was born, and that he left a glorious pre-existent state to come and serve mankind here, is destitute of all foundation."

CH. VIII. VER. 9. many upon this text, as an argument in favour of what is called the pre-existence and divinity of Jesus Christ. The apostle's words express nothing more than this: That one who was rich denied himself the comforts and conveniences of life, and lived like a poor man; a case which often occurs from motives very different from those by which Jesus was influenced. He, though opulent in the possession of powers which might have commanded the treasures of the earth, nevertheless, for the sake of promoting truth and virtue, denied himself every comfort, and led a life of indigence and meanness. And from his example his disciples are taught to deny themselves the comforts of life for the good of others. How clear and forcible the argument! Who does not perceive, or who can deny, the justice of the conclusion? The popular gloss, that Jesus was rich in the glory of a pre-existent state, and poor by the assumption of human nature, is a forced interpretation, and even inconsistent with the true construction of the original. And what analogy is there between a supposed assumption of human nature by a superior spirit, and a generous contribution from the opulent to relieve the distresses of the poor? What conclusion can be drawn from one to the other?

4. The apostle presses them to complete the contribution which they had begun a year before, ver. 10, 11.

10. *I also give* my *judgement in this case. It is in-*

deed expedient for you to do this, *having begun a year ago*[1] *not only to will, but to perform*[2]. *Now, then, complete the performance; that as* there was *a readiness in willing, so* there may be *a completion according to your ability.* Ch. VIII. Ver. 10. 11.

Having stated the motives to liberality, I will offer my opinion as to what may be proper to be done. And, as it is known that you resolved upon and even began your collection with great cheerfulness a year ago, I advise you now to complete your contribution with the same liberal spirit as soon as possible, and to the extent that may be convenient; for I would not press too closely upon your liberality, nor ask for more than you can prudently afford.

5. The apostle advises them to give cheerfully what they can easily spare; as it was not his intention that they should impoverish themselves to enrich others, ver. 12—15.

For if there be first a readiness of mind, it will be acceptable according to what it hath[3], and *not according to what it hath not.* 12.

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[1] *A year ago.*] "The apostle," says Dr. Whitby, "had exhorted them in his epistle written a year ago to this contribution, 1 Cor. xvi. 2, and they in obedience to his directions had begun to lay up in store willingly: this charity he now exhorts them to consummate." This shows that the second epistle to the Corinthians was not written till a year after the first; and consequently that the apostle had postponed, probably for a twelvemonth, his intended visit to Corinth.

[2] *But to perform.*] I follow Mr. Wakefield in transposing θελειν and ποιησαι, upon the authority of the Syriac Version.

[3] *According to what it hath.*] The received text reads τις, *according to what* a man *hath.* But τις is wanting in the Cler-

Ch. VIII. Ver. 12. It is not to be expected that all should contribute equally; a generous spirit will supersede all specific advice; there will be no danger of deficiency. And let the liberal-hearted be assured, that whether the actual contribution be less or more, it will be equally acceptable to Him who knows the heart, and who approves the purpose of the willing mind.

13. *Not that others should be relieved, and ye bur-*
14. *dened: but* upon a principle *of equality: at the present time* let *your abundance* supply *their want, that their abundance may* at another time *supply*
15 *your want: so that there may be an equality*[1] *according to that scripture, He who* gathered *much had nothing over, and he who* gathered *little had no want.*

It is not my desire to change the order of providence, to depress the rich and elevate the poor; but let there be an equitable distribution of the blessings of life, so that no one may be destitute of what is really necessary to subsistence and comfort. Let

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mont, Ephrem, and many other copies and versions, and is dropped by Wakefield. "*Spectat Deus non id quod aliquis non habet, sed id demum quod habet: alioquin charitas esset divitum propria.*" Rosenmuller.

[1] *May be an equality.*] "So far," says Dr. Whitby, "Christianity seems to require this equality, as that we should not suffer others to lack the necessaries of this present life, while we abound in them." Dr. Priestley observes, that "there was not indeed any great prospect at that time, of the Jewish Christians being able to supply the wants of the Gentile churches in a pecuniary way. But, in general, nothing is more uncertain than riches; and they who now abound should always consider that they may come to want, and should therefore act while they are rich as they would wish to have done, and that others would do to them, when they became poor."

those who are now rich contribute to the supply of the poor. At some future time, it may be in the power of those who are now dependent, to repay the debt of gratitude to the rich; for such is the vicissitude of things, that we all in turns depend upon the kind offices of each other. At the present season, therefore, let the persons who possess abundance cheerfully contribute to relieve those who are in straits and difficulties: and it will be found, as in the case of the manna, related by Moses, Exod. xvi. 18, that providence distributes its blessings with so liberal a hand, that if there be no unnecessary waste there need be no distressing want. Ch. VIII. Ver. 15.

SECTION II.

THE APOSTLE, in order to forward the contribution, mentions, that he had commissioned Titus and two other distinguished brethren to assist in collecting it: who had accepted the office with great alacrity; and who from their exemplary characters were deserving of the confidence of the church. Ch. viii. 16—24.

1. He highly applauds the zeal of Titus, who voluntarily came forward to offer his services upon this occasion, ver. 16, 17.

Now, thanks be *to God*[2], *who hath put the same* 16.

[2] *Thanks* be *to God.*] χαρις τω Θεω. "*Maxime lætor Deum*

Ch. VIII. Ver. 17. *earnest concern for you into the heart of Titus; for he* not only [1] *accepted* my *exhortation, but being very earnest, he went to you of his own accord.*

I was very desirous that Titus, of whose fidelity and activity I have had much experience, should undertake the office of hastening your contribution, and I suggested the business to him. But I thank God, I had no occasion to use much entreaty; for Titus himself, in consequence of your kind behaviour to him, and the zeal for reformation which he observed among you, feels so strong an affection for you, and so great a desire to serve you, that he was as ready as I could wish him to be to undertake the concern. And he is going to you, prompted more by his own generous zeal than by any considerations which I could suggest.

2. With Titus the apostle also sent another messenger of high reputation in the church, being solicitous that the contribution should be directed by persons of unsullied integrity, ver. 18—21.

18. *And with him we have sent the brother* [2], *whose*

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idem hoc studium excitasse in animo Titi. Ex seria re quasi translata est ad proverbium, et hoc loco indicat studium hoc Titi Paulo valde placuisse." Rosenmuller.

[1] *He* not only *accepted.*] Literally, "he accepted, indeed, my exhortation; but being more earnest," &c. The apostle means, that Titus was so much in earnest to go, that he did not wait to be invited, but offered himself. "anticipating the time proposed by me." Newcome.—"*Ostendit se prævenisse mea desideria, et sua sponte jam id cupisse.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *The brother.*] Commonly supposed to be Luke, who is known from his history to have been the associate of Paul. The ancients suppose that the praise in the gospel alludes to

praise in the gospel is celebrated *throughout all the churches; and not only* so, *but who was appointed also by the churches according to our desire*[3], *to accompany us with this liberal gift*[4], *which is* to be *administered by us to the glory of the Lord himself.* Ch. VIII. Ver. 19.

With Titus I have sent another fellow-labourer, who, if he be not personally known to you, must be known by reputation as an eminent preacher of the gospel, and whose integrity and fidelity are so highly esteemed, that at my recommendation he has been elected by the churches in Macedonia, and other parts, to accompany me to Jerusalem, with that very liberal contribution which they have made for the relief of the Hebrew Christians, which is so much to the credit of Christ and his religion, by

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his having written the gospel which bears his name. But according to Lardner, Luke's gospel was not yet published. See Whitby. It is surely some objection against Luke being the companion of Titus upon this occasion, that Titus is never mentioned by him in his history. Could there be any difference between those eminent men and first teachers of the gospel? Or is it possible that Titus may be mentioned under some other name, as Peter is sometimes called Cephas? "Most think," says Newcome, "that Luke is meant. Apollos, Mark, Barnabas, Silas, Epenetus, and Sosthenes are mentioned by commentators. The praise of this Christian brother for his labours in preaching the gospel was spread throughout all the churches." "εν τω ευαγγελιω, *propter studium in tradendo evangelio.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *According to our desire.*] For και προθυμιαν Mr. Wakefield substitutes κατα, which he says he is compelled to by the context: for ὑμων, your desire, the best copies read ἡμων. See Griesbach. The words, says Mr. Wakefield, are in immediate connexion with χειροτονηθεις.

[4] *With this liberal gift.*] Newcome. Metonymice, "χαρις *vocatur id quod ex liberalitate datur.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 19. exemplifying the benevolent spirit of the gospel dispensation, and which I, in connexion with some others of approved character, have undertaken to convey and to distribute.

20. *We avoiding*[1] *this, that any one should blame us with respect to this abundant* contribution, *which*
21. *is to be administered by us, and providing for what is irreproachable*[2], *not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.*

Though I have accepted the office of distributing the contribution among the Hebrew Christians, I absolutely refused to undertake this business alone, but insisted upon their associating with me some persons of approved integrity, that there might not be the least suspicion of mismanagement, or of any selfish and sinister views in undertaking the disposal of so large a sum. For I am solicitous, not only to satisfy my own conscience, and to be approved in the sight of God, but that my conduct may always appear fair and honourable in the eyes of the world; and that my bitterest enemy may not have the least foundation for charging me with corrupt and secular views in my endeavours to propagate the Christian religion.

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[1] *We avoiding.*] Newcome. "Στελλόμενοι, *dum hoc caveo. Cohæret hoc participium cum verbo* συνεπεμψαμεν, ver. 18." Rosenmuller.

[2] *Providing for what is irreproachable.*] καλα, honest, honourable. "Paul, to avoid all suspicion of embezzlement, did not choose to take the charge of this benefaction himself, but had associates who joined him in the discharge of this trust." Priestley.

3. With these two he has also sent another person of approved character, and he speaks in high commendation of them all, expressing his hope that the Corinthians would treat them with due regard, ver. 22—24. Ch. VIII.

And with them we have sent our brother[3], *whose diligence we have often experienced in many affairs, but who is upon this occasion much more earnest, because of the great confidence which* he hath *in you.* Ver. 22.

With the two above mentioned, I have sent another Christian brother and fellow-labourer in the gospel, who has long been my companion, whom I have tried upon many former occasions, and whom I have always found faithful and diligent. But upon no occasion have I ever found him more earnest than the present, as he has no doubt that he shall meet with a welcome reception among you, having the greatest confidence in your generosity and zeal.

If any inquire[4] *concerning Titus, he is my partner and fellow-labourer with respect to you; if our brethren* be inquired after, *they are messengers of the churches*[5], *the glory of Christ*[6]. 23.

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[3] *Our brother.*] "Probably one of those whose names are mentioned above." Newcome. Theodoret and others suppose it to have been Apollos. See Whitby. Dr. Priestley and Dr. Doddridge agree in this conjecture; but it is a mere guess without any foundation.—"Confidence which *we have*." Newcome.

[4] *If* any inquire.] Ειτε ὑπερ Τιτ. "sc. *Si quæstio est. Si de Tito agitur.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *Messengers of the churches.*] "αποστολοι· *sive alii fratres nostri* ad vos veniant, *omnes sunt legati ecclesiarum, nempe* e gen-

Ch. VIII. Ver. 23.

If any inquiries are made concerning the character of the three persons who are sent to Corinth upon the errand of making this collection, you may say to those who inquire, that Titus is an Evangelist, my companion and assistant in my travels, my labours, and my sufferings, and who has in particular been my messenger to you, and by his exhortation and instruction has co-operated with me in producing that happy reformation which has taken place in the church at Corinth. As to his two excellent companions, our associates, and Christian

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tibus: *ut additur* Rom. xvi. 4." Rosenmuller.—" Messengers of the churches whom several Christian societies have chosen to send about this business." Doddridge; who remarks in his note, " I can think of nothing more unreasonable than to translate this word, *apostles*; as the English word 'apostles' is now by long use appropriated to what is only one signification of the original. As an apostle of Jesus Christ is one sent forth by him, so an apostle of any church must surely signify one sent forth by that society."

[6] *The glory of Christ.*] " δοξα Χριστου." Metonym. " *Instrumenta sunt gloriæ Christi. His igitur potestis fidem habere.*" Rosenmuller.—" They are persons of so valuable a character, and do so great credit to their profession, that I may not improperly call them the glory of Christ in the world." Doddridge.

The 23d verse in the original is so elliptical, that Mr. Wakefield by supplying different words has given a very different translation. Viz. ver. 22, 23: " We have sent, therefore, *I say*, with Titus, that our brother, whom we have often experienced in many *services* to be zealous, but in this unusually zealous; under much confidence in your *treatment of him* as my companion, *often* instead of Titus, and a fellow-labourer with *him* to you; and *of them both*, as our brethren, messengers of *various* churches, a glory to Christ." Upon this the learned writer remarks, " The reader will observe, that I have taken some pains to represent more intelligibly this perplexed and undigested passage of our exuberant, immethodical and careless writer." It is needless to add, that Mr. Wakefield's version of the passage differs from that of the generality of interpreters.

friends, they are the messengers of the churches, who have been selected to accompany me in my various missions, and whose character is an honour to their Christian profession. Ch. VIII. Ver. 23.

Show therefore to them before the churches[1], *the proof of your affection*[2], *and the* justice *of our boasting concerning you.* 24.

I have rendered myself deeply responsible to the churches in Macedonia, by the boasting which I have made of your affection to me, of your zeal for the gospel, and of your kind and liberal spirit; and I now look to you to support my credit. I have reported to the brethren here, how kind and generous you are, how deeply you have imbibed the spirit of the Christian religion, how ready you are to contribute to the relief of the suffering Hebrews. Let your conduct upon the present occasion prove to the churches, that I have formed a right judgement concerning you, and that the high esteem I have professed for you, and the confidence which I have placed in your piety and benevolence, are well founded.

[1] *Before the churches.*] The received text reads, *and* before the churches; which is wanting in the best copies, and is dropped by Griesbach and Wakefield.

[2] *The proof of your affection.*] "*Ostendite ipsis amorem vestrum erga nos, et ostendite vera esse quæ de vestro in me et meos affectu prædico.*" Rosenmuller.

SECTION III.

CH. IX. *THE APOSTLE was the more anxious that the collection should be ready and liberal, because he had boasted of their generosity to the Macedonians; and, without prescribing particulars, he reminds them that genuine liberality was most acceptable to God, and would not fail to ensure an abundant blessing.* Ch. ix. 1—9.

1. He tells them how much he had boasted of their liberality to the Macedonians, ch. ix. 1, 2.

VER. 1. *For*[1], *concerning the ministration to the saints*[2],

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[1] *For, concerning.*] "If γαρ in this place cannot signify *though, yet, however,* see ch. xii. 1, the sense may be; I mention the topics, ch. viii. 24, for as to the propriety and reasonableness that you should contribute to the wants of the Jewish converts, I have no need to insist on them." Newcome. I have paraphrased the text agreeably to the learned primate's suggestion; but every one who is acquainted with the apostle's style, must have observed that γαρ is often used by him with great latitude; and sometimes merely to introduce a collateral remark; viz. *Now, moreover,* &c. "γαρ, *but, indeed.*" Macknight.

[2] *Saints.*] "By *saints,*" says Dr. Priestley, "the apostle simply meant *Christians;* and did not use the term in that peculiar sense which it has acquired since, in which there is much of superstition, on which account it were well if the word could be exchanged for some other, which might more clearly express the apostle's idea. He certainly considered all Christians as men who professed to devote themselves to God and his service; and this is the original meaning of the words *holy* and *sanctified.* Some persons, no doubt, did this more earnestly and effectually than others; but speaking of the whole body of people for whom this charitable contribution was intended, he could not consider them all as saints in the Popish sense of the word, and least of

it is superfluous for me to write to you. For I know your readiness, concerning which I boast of you to those of Macedonia, that Achaia was prepared a year ago[3], *and your zeal hath excited the emulation of many.* Ch. IX. Ver. 2.

I have expressed my desire that you would show respect to the brethren who are about to visit you, for I know that it is quite needless to urge you upon the subject of the contribution. Your own generous spirit will prompt you to do even more than the exigency of the case absolutely requires. And I am so fully satisfied, that you set about the collection immediately upont the receipt of the letter which I wrote to you last year, that I have even ventured to

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all as men abstracted from the world, wholly devoted to contemplation and prayer, and living on the labour of others. There is no charity in giving to such persons. As this apostle himself somewhere says, *He that will not work neither let him eat.* The proper objects of charity are those who are willing to exert themselves, but labour under some impediment, sickness, &c.; those who have laboured, but whose labour has not been sufficient to secure them a competence in their old age; but more especially still, those young persons, whose parents are not able to introduce them into a life of labour and activity with proper advantage. Those you assist in order to qualify them to labour and to be useful in life, and not to be idle in it."

[3] *A year ago.*] "*Ne Macedonibus plus tribuere videretur, quod plus dedissent, solatur Achivos, quorum præcipui Corinthii, hoc honore, quod priores incepissent.*" Rosenmuller. Dr. Priestley remarks, that "the apostle recommends this contribution with wonderful address, but at the same time with the greatest propriety. And this refined address shows that he was a man in the full possession of all his faculties, and no mad or wild enthusiast; that he was, therefore, as good a judge of the evidence of Christianity as any other man, and that he would no more have sacrificed his flattering prospects in life, than any other young Jew of distinction, without sufficient reason."

Ch. IX. Ver. 2. boast of you in the Macedonian churches, where I now reside, that you had prepared your contribution a year ago; and what I have said in commendation of you, has excited many to imitate your reported honourable example.

2. He nevertheless thinks it expedient to send messengers to complete the business before his arrival, that neither he nor they may be disappointed and ashamed, which they would be, if the Macedonians, who were to accompany him, should find the collection in an unfinished state, ver. 3—5.

3. *Nevertheless, I have sent the brethren, that our boasting concerning you in this respect may not be void,* and *that ye may be prepared as I told them.*
4. *Lest if the Macedonians come with me, and find you unprepared, we, not to say ye, may be put to*
5. *shame by this confident boasting*[1]. *I thought it ne-*

[1] *This confident boasting.*] εν τη ὑποστασει της καυχησεως. The latter word is wanting in many good copies. Mr. Wakefield omits it; and upon the authority of the Æthiopic, he reads αποστασει, and translates thus; "lest if the Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we, not to say ye, by such a falling off should be brought to shame." Macknight says, "the word ὑποστασις is often used by the LXX. to denote confident expectation, or firm hope." Rosenmuller refers to Polybius; and Archbishop Newcome to Heb. iii. 14, and Wetstein's quotations. Both he and almost all the other expositors remark the apostle's delicacy and address in this passage.

"I would likewise observe from this passage," says Dr. Priestley, (and it is a just remark,) "that the apostle certainly could not intend that the churches in Macedonia should know what he was now writing, for that would have defeated his fine address. We may conclude, therefore, that he wrote from his present feelings only for the use of those particular churches to which his epistles are addressed, and for no other; without any thought

cessary, therefore, to exhort the brethren, that they would go to you first, and would complete beforehand your promised bounty[2], *that it might be ready, as* the effect *of bounty and not of extortion*[3]. Ch. IX. Ver. 5.

Upon the whole, however, not being quite confident that your contribution is complete, and being anxious that my boasting of your generosity should not prove to be unfounded, I thought it prudent to send these Christian friends, to advertise you of my coming, and to finish the collection among you before my arrival; lest, if any of the Macedonian brethren should accompany me to Corinth, and find that you are not prepared, as I assured them you were, both you and I should fall into disgrace; I, for

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that they would be preserved for the use of the whole Christian world in future time. But it is happy for us that the providence of God had further views than Paul himself had. These epistles furnish the most decisive evidence of the truth of the gospel history, at the same time that they are of the most excellent use in explaining and enforcing the doctrines of it. But all this will be much more sensibly felt, if we consider the apostle as writing from his own natural feelings only, and not from any particular inspiration, which was altogether unnecessary in the case."

[2] *Promised bounty.*] ευλογιαν, blessing, "so called from a metonymy of the effect, because it produces blessing." Newcome. "*Quia pro beneficiis agimus gratias.*" Rosenmuller.—*Promised:* some very good copies, viz. the Ephrem, Clermont, and many others, read προεπηγγελμενην. Griesbach marks this reading as of high authority. "*Beneficium promissum.*" Rosenmuller. The received text reads προκατηγγελμενην, "before spoken of *by me.*" Newcome.

[3] *Not of extortion.*] πλεονεξιας, "not as an unreasonable extortion." Wakefield. *Covetousness.* Newcome; who explains it in his note, "not as extorted from a sordid temper. Or, not as an advantage taken of you. See Bowyer, 4to. *in loc.*" "Ευλογια *adjunctam habet notionem doni satis copiosi;* πλεονεξια, *donum parcum et exiguum.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. IX. Ver. 5. having boasted without sufficient ground, and you, for having fallen short of the character which I had given of you in other churches. And whatever you think fit to give, let it be done, as I doubt not that it will, with cheerfulness, as flowing from your own goodness of heart, and not with reluctance, as if it were extorted against your will, or as if you had been over-reached.

3. The apostle exhorts them to give cheerfully and liberally, as God can and will reward all their kind and charitable actions, ver. 6—9.

6. *Nevertheless, this* I say, *He who soweth sparingly, will reap also sparingly; and he who soweth bountifully, will reap also bountifully.*

Though I would not have you contribute more than you can with convenience, and with a cheerful spirit; permit me, nevertheless, just to remind you of one important maxim, that as a man soweth, so he also reapeth. He who contributes generously to the relief of the poor, will reap an ample harvest of blessing and consolation; but he that bestows with a niggard hand the bounties of Providence, shall fall proportionably short of the rewards of virtue.

7. Let *every one* give *as he purposeth in his heart, not with regret*[1], *nor from constraint, for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

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[1] *Not with regret.*] "not grudgingly as if it were wrung from you." Locke.

Let every one consult the feelings of his own heart, and the dictates of his own judgement, and let him contribute freely and cheerfully what he believes in his conscience to be his just proportion. And what he gives, let him give not grudgingly, as if it were wrung from him against his will. Such a donation, however large, would have little merit, nor would it be acceptable to God, who searches the heart, and who, as he requires nothing burdensome, nor unreasonable, is pleased that his rational creatures should discharge their duty with a willing mind, and particularly when they are called upon to relieve the wants of their brethren. Ch. IX. Ver. 7.

And God is able to cause every act of liberality to redound[2] *to yourselves, that having at all times, all sufficiency in all* things[3], *ye may abound to every good work. As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor, his liberality remaineth for ever*[4]. 8. 9.

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[2] *To cause every act of liberality*, &c.] χαριν περισσευσαι, "to make every charitable gift of yours redound to your advantage." Locke; who remarks, that "χαρις ought to be translated 'gift,' or 'liberality,' as it signifies in the former chapter, and as the context determines the sense here." "*Potest autem Deus omnis generis dona largissimè in vos conferre.*" Rosenmuller; who interprets χαρις as signifying *Dei dona*, whereas it properly expresses the liberality and kindness of the Corinthian and Macedonian Christians. See ch. viii. 1—19. He justly observes, that the word περισσευσαι is here used in the Hiphil sense, *facere ut quis abundet*, to cause to abound.

[3] *At all times*, &c.] The apostle seems to play upon his words, παντι, παντοτε, πασαν, having always, all sufficiency, in all things, which is well preserved in the common translation.—"*Deus non concedet ut unquam ob egestatem, vel inopiam, hujus liberalitatis vos pœniteat.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *His liberality remaineth for ever.*] "δικαιοσυνη so in Scrip-

Ch. IX. Ver. 9. I will not affirm that liberality to the poor is of itself the means of growing rich. It is however true, that few have materially injured themselves by showing kindness to their necessitous brethren. For God can, if he pleases, recompense every act of liberality with a proportionable blessing; and cause riches to increase in proportion to the kindness and generosity with which they are dispensed; so that the means of doing good shall be enlarged as the inclination to it increases. And this case not unfrequently occurs, not indeed by miracle, but in the general course of divine providence: for the truly liberal man will be industrious and prudent, that he may enable himself to be generous. And all who know him will love him, and help him, and God will bless him; so that the words of David, Psalm cxii. 9, will be verified in him, He hath scattered abroad, he hath given to the poor; his kindness endureth as long as he liveth, it shall be rewarded both here and hereafter.

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ture language it often signifies. See Matt. vi. 1. i. 19." Locke. "his beneficence remaineth as long as he liveth." Macknight; who remarks, that "the Psalmist's declaration implies that, in the course of providence, the beneficent are often blessed with worldly prosperity."

SECTION IV.

THE APOSTLE prays, that the liberality of the Corinthian believers may yield an abundant return of the means of beneficence, so as to enable them to abound still more in acts of kindness. Ch. ix. 10—15. Ch. IX.

1. He recommends their pious liberality to the divine blessing, ver. 10, 11.

Now may he who supplieth seed to the sower, and bread for food[1], *supply and multiply this your seed, and increase the produce of your liberality*[2]: *that ye may be enriched*[3] *unto all bountifulness,* Ver. 10. 11. *which through us produceth thanksgiving to God.*

May God, who is the Lord of providence, and the giver of every good gift, reward all your kindness to the indigent and suffering saints in Judea! and by increasing your substance in consequence of this very benefaction, may he provide seed for a fu-

[1] *Seed to the sower, and bread for food.*] Newcome and others read with a different punctuation: Now may he who supplieth seed to the sower, both supply bread for *your* food, &c. I follow the same punctuation with Locke, Wakefield, and Macknight. An allusion is supposed to Isa. lv. 10.

[2] *Liberality.*] δικαιοσυνης, see ver. 9, "supply and multiply your stock of seed, and increase the fruit of your liberality." Locke.—"supply and multiply this seed of yours, and make this produce of your liberality to thrive by enriching you in every thing to all bountifulness." Wakefield.

[3] *That ye may be enriched.*] εν παντι πλουτιζομενοι. Some copies read ινα, which is confirmed by the Vulgate. "*Ut omni modo sitis divites ad omnem ingenuam liberalitatem. Post* πλ. *subaudiitur* εστε, *vel* εσεσθε." Rosenmuller.

Ch. IX. Ver. 11. ture harvest, and supply you with still further means of exercising that liberality which upon the present occasion is dispensed by us, and which will be received with the utmost gratitude, both to God and to you, by the humble and pious objects to whom it is appropriated!

2. The apostle, further to encourage the liberality of the Corinthians, adds, that this benefaction will not only supply the wants of the Hebrew brethren, but will excite their admiration, their gratitude, their congratulation, and their prayers, ver. 12—15.

12. *For the ministration of this service*[1] *not only supplieth the wants of the saints, but overfloweth*[2] *in many thanksgivings to God.*

Your kindness to the indigent brethren in Judea is an acceptable offering to God. It has a two-fold effect. It fills up the vacancy in their comfort by supplying them abundantly with all they want. And it overflows in devout acknowledgements of gratitude and thankfulness to God for infusing this spirit of liberality into your heart.

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[1] *Of this service.*] λειτουργιας. "This word," says Dr. Macknight, "was used by the Jews to denote the service of the priests at the altar." "This use of the word intimates that it was to be considered not merely as an act of humanity, but of religion most pleasing to God, and suitable to the nature of the gospel dispensation. Comp. Heb. xiii. 16." Doddridge.

[2] *Overfloweth.*] "The performance of this service doth not only bring supply to the wants of the saints, but reacheth further, even to God himself by many thanksgivings," &c. Locke; who includes ver. 13 in a parenthesis. "The supply of this contribution not only filleth up the wants of the saints, but also runneth over in many thanksgivings unto God." Wakefield.

While, through the experience of this ministration, they glorify God[3], *for that subjection to the gospel of Christ which you profess, and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all.* Ch. IX. Ver. 13.

For indeed your kindness to the Hebrew brethren cannot fail to subdue their inveterate prejudices against Gentile believers, who do not comply with the ritual of the law: and to induce them to give thanks to God for your conversion and subjection to the gospel of Christ, to offer you the right hand of fellowship, and to acknowledge you as their brethren and fellow-Christians; entitled to the same external privileges, and heirs of the same immortal hopes. And they will rejoice, when they see how the generous spirit of the Christian religion governs your hearts, and influences you to contribute with so much generosity and good will to themselves and others.

And in their prayer for you[4], *being affectionately disposed towards you, on account of the exceedingly bountiful gift*[5] bestowed *by you.* 14.

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[3] *While they glorify God.*] "δοξαζοντες pro δοξαζοντων, ut voci πολλων, vel ἁγιων, responderet. Laudabunt enim Deum propter hoc munus." Rosenmuller.

[4] *And in their prayer.*] "και αυτων, ante hæc verba repete ex ver. 12. ἡ διακονια—περισσευουσα. Sensus est: Liberalitas vestra etiam sic in Deum redundat quoniam pro vobis preces faciunt." Rosenmuller.

[5] *Exceedingly bountiful gift.*] Newcome. See ch. viii. 1, χαριν τȣ Θεȣ, grace of God, "that gracious gift of God bestowed on them by your liberality." Locke. "since they are affectionately disposed to you on account of your great and godlike kindness." Wakefield.—"on account of the eminent degree of good disposition bestowed on you." Macknight.—"the exceeding grace of God which is in you, and which produces fruits so highly ornamental to Christianity." Doddridge.

Ch. IX. Ver. 14. And this kindness of yours overflows to God, not only in thankfulness, but in prayer. Your pious and indigent brethren, relieved by your bounty, will offer up prayers to God for you. It is the only way in which they can express the gratitude they feel, and the kind affection which is kindled in their breasts by the large and generous contribution which God hath put it into your hearts to send for the supply of their wants.

15. *Thanks therefore* be *to God for this his unspeakable gift*[1].

Blessed be God, who has put it into your hearts to show this kindness to your indigent brethren; and who has enabled and disposed you to exercise your liberality in such a manner as to produce the most salutary effects, not merely in relieving the sufferings of the poor believers in Judea, but in abating their prejudices, inducing them to regard their kind benefactors as equally with themselves the disciples of Christ, and the children of God, and to entertain the warmest gratitude, and the kindest affection, to those who have so liberally contributed to their comfort and supply. Such is the genuine spirit, and the proper effect of the Christian religion, which is the best gift which God has bestowed upon men.

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[1] *Unspeakable gift:*] *i. e.* "this admirable charity, by which God is so much glorified; the gospel receives such credit; others are so much benefited, and you will be so plentifully by God rewarded." Whitby. Dr. Doddridge does not deny this interpretation; but he adds, "I am ready to think the apostle's mind, to which the idea of the invaluable gift of Christ was so familiar, rather by a stroug and natural transition, glanced on that."

PART THE THIRD.

THE APOSTLE, CHANGING HIS TONE OF ADDRESS, ESTABLISHES HIS CLAIM TO A DIVINE COMMISSION; HE VINDICATES HIMSELF AND HIS COLLEAGUES FROM THE CALUMNIES OF THE FALSE APOSTLE AND HIS ADHERENTS, AND THREATENS TO ANIMADVERT SEVERELY UPON THEM IF THEY DO NOT ALTER THEIR CONDUCT BEFORE HIS ARRIVAL. HE THEN CONCLUDES WITH SALUTATIONS AND THE BENEDICTION. Chapter the Tenth to the end of the Epistle. Ch. X.

SECTION I.

THE APOSTLE requests the Corinthians that they would not compel him to use severity; and he assures them that, whatever they may think, or whatever his opponents might insinuate to the contrary, he was armed with full power to vindicate his apostolical authority, and to punish those who were contumacious; and that he did not, like some others, boast without reason. Ch. x. 1—11.

1. The apostle earnestly requests that they would not compel him to use severity, ch. x. 1, 2.

Ch. X. Ver. 1. *Now I Paul*[1] *myself entreat you, by the mildness and gentleness of Christ; I, who as to* my *person* am *mean*[2] *among you, but being absent am*

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[1] *Now I Paul.*] The apostle now enters upon the third and last part of his epistle; and the change in his tone and manner of writing cannot escape the most superficial observation. In the first Part, after having cleared himself from the charge of levity and inconsistency, his address to the Corinthians is full of affection and confidence. He expresses his great satisfaction at the report which Titus had brought of the manner in which his former epistle had been received, of the impression which it had made, and of the good effects which it had produced; he only glances at the character and conduct of his opponent and his party; he confirms his mission by an appeal to his zeal, his sufferings, and his success, and expresses his earnest and cheerful hope of the perseverance of his friends at Corinth in their attachment to him, and in their practical profession of the gospel. And in general he speaks in the plural number, joining the name of Timothy with his own, and expressing their united sentiments. But in the Part upon which we are now entering, he assumes a very different tone and spirit. It is chiefly addressed to his opponent and his party; and he ably defends his character and mission by an appeal to plain and undeniable facts; and in his defence of himself he does not spare the character of his opponent, but denounces him in plain and strong language as an enemy to the gospel; retorts upon him with keen and bitter sarcasm; and threatens him and his party with the severity of the apostolic rod, if they do not, as he wishes and entreats that they would, disarm him by timely and sincere repentance. And throughout this Part he generally uses the first person; as, in fact, he was the individual more immediately concerned. What effect this remonstrance produced upon the chief offender himself is not known; but with respect to the church in general, this epistle and the apostle's subsequent visit seem to have succeeded to the utmost of his wishes; as it appears from the letter of Clemens cited in the Introduction, that the Corinthian church for many years afterwards was distinguished for the purity of its faith, and for the piety, harmony, benevolence, and sanctity of its members.

[2] *Person am mean.*] ταπεινος. "I think," says Archbishop Newcome, "that the ambiguous word in the original, means *base*; and that here, as in ver. 10, there is a reference to the language of St. Paul's adversaries."

"It

bold towards you; even *I request, that I may not be bold when present, with that confidence with which I think to be bold with respect to some, who think of us as walking according to the flesh*[3]. Ch. X. Ver. 2.

I regret that I am now under the necessity of changing the tone of my address. For though the account I have received from Titus is upon the whole favourable, yet I am sorry to find, that the spirit of faction and of dissention has not yet altogether subsided, and that there are still some among you, who continue to contemn my authority, to spurn at my admonitions, to calumniate my character, and to form a party against me in the church.

I am loth to prove by deeds, that I really possess the power of punishing the obstinate and the contumacious, and I would much rather that my opponents should repent and change their conduct, even

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"It is said by some pretty ancient writers," says Dr. Priestley, "that Paul was of a low stature, crooked, and bald. That he did not make so respectable an appearance as Barnabas, is pretty evident from the people of Lystra supposing Barnabas to be Jupiter, the king of the Gods, and Paul to be only Mercury his messenger. These new teachers at Corinth thought the style of Paul's epistles too high for his personal appearance and manner."

[3] *According to the flesh.*] "with secular views." Newcome.

"I would observe," says Dr. Priestley, "on this occasion, that no man's conduct was ever so truly irreproachable and disinterested, but bad and unworthy motives have been imputed to him. Our Saviour himself did not escape calumnies of this kind. Men of the world will judge of others by themselves, and cannot suppose that others will act a part of which they are incapable. We at this day, therefore, if we be conscious that truth and the good of mankind are our objects, ought not to be concerned or surprised at calumnies of a similar nature. We ought rather to rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer shame and reproach in a good cause."

Ch. X. Ver. 2. though my credit might in some degree suffer by it. They are pleased to represent me as a vain boaster, who can bluster and threaten while at a distance, but who am mean in my appearance, and sufficiently meek and tame when I am present. But even they will not presume to speak thus of our great Master Jesus Christ. If, then, they will not give me credit for meekness and forbearance, let me entreat them, by the mildness and gentleness of Christ himself, who, though unquestionably possessed of ample powers, was slow to execute vengeance upon his enemies and slanderers, whose disciple and messenger I am, and whose great example I desire to imitate, let me entreat them to alter their conduct. Yes, in the name of that kind and gracious Master, I request and implore that you will not compel me to resort to those acts of severity with which justice to my own character, and regard to the interests of Christianity will make it necessary to visit those who accuse me and my fellow-labourers, as biassed by sinister and unworthy motives, if they do not in due time repent of, and retract their false and malicious calumnies, by which they endeavour to alienate your minds from me, and from the gospel which I teach.

2. The apostle repels these calumnious imputations, professes the purity of his motives, and describes the efficacy of the means which he was authorized to use for the propagation of the gospel, ver. 3—6.

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh[1]. Ch. X. Ver. 3.

Though I and others who preach the gospel are men of the same feelings and infirmities with other human beings, and though we are engaged in a warfare the most hazardous and laborious, our method of conducting hostilities is widely different from that of the powers of this world.

(*For the weapons of our warfare* are *not carnal, but exceedingly powerful*[2] *for the destruction of fortresses;*) *beating down reasonings and every high thing*[3] *which raiseth itself up against the* 4. 5.

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[1] *Though we walk*, &c.] Mr. Wakefield translates thus: "For we walk in *the* flesh *indeed, but* not after *the* flesh; and carry on a war."

[2] *Exceedingly powerful.*] δυνατα τω Θεω, mighty through God, a Hebrew superlative; compare Acts vii. 20. Macknight, Newcome, Pyle, who expounds thus: "'Tis neither beauty nor stature of body, neither strength of eloquence nor depth of philosophy, that are the weapons I use for subduing mankind to the belief of the gospel; but the miraculous evidences of the holy spirit, which are arguments far stronger than all human reasonings, sufficient to destroy all the towering schemes and lofty flights of human literature; to regulate men's irreligious notions, and reduce them to the faith and obedience of the true religion of Christ." "*Mighty through God to the demolishing fortifications,* prejudices and difficulties, that like so many impregnable castles lay in our way, and yet are battered down and laid in ruins, by these our spiritual weapons." Doddridge.

[3] *Beating down reasonings and every high thing.*] The allusion here is to the custom of beating down fortresses by means of battering rams. The reasonings which the apostle threw down, were not the candid reasonings of those who attentively considered the evidences of the gospel, but the sophisms of the Greek philosophers, and the false reasonings of statesmen, &c. These the apostle overturned, not by forbidding men to use their reason, but by opposing to them the most convincing arguments. —"*Every high thing;* the apostle alludes to the turrets raised

Ch. X Ver. 6. *knowledge of God, and leading captive every thought to the obedience of Christ*[1]; *and keeping ourselves in readiness to avenge all disobedience, when your obedience is complete*[2].

We do not indeed make war, like the potentates of the earth, with swords, and spears, and battering engines. The weapons which we use are of a very different kind; they consist in the plain statement of Christian truth, in the application of Scripture prophecy, and in the exhibition of miraculous powers; they address themselves to the understanding, and to the heart. And these weapons of offence and defence, plain and simple as they are in themselves, neglected and despised as they may be by the pretenders to wisdom, and by the great men of the earth, are nevertheless of wonderful efficacy to subdue and captivate the enemies of the gospel; they demolish those systems of idolatry and superstition, which are the strong holds of ignorance and vice; they confound and put to silence the vain reason-

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on the walls of a besieged city." Macknight. "All proud imaginations which men have entertained of themselves with regard to their natural and moral excellencies, in consequence of which they neglect the gospel." Doddridge; who adds in his note, "This shows how ready men are to fortify themselves against it, and to raise as it were one barrier behind another, to obstruct the entrance of Christ. But when these fortifications are demolished, the soul submits to the conqueror; and then every thought, every reasoning takes law from him."

[1] *Obedience of Christ.*] The allegory is continued through these two verses, but the construction requires that the fourth verse should be in a parenthesis.

[2] *When your obedience is complete.*] "when you, who have been misled, shall withdraw from the false apostle, and return to a perfect obedience." Locke.

ings of the reputed philosophers, and thus beat down the artillery which is pointed at the doctrine of Christ; they level to the dust that high conceit of superior wisdom, which leads men to despise and to reject the proposals of the gospel; they are of power to subdue the most inveterate prejudices; and those thoughts and affections which were once hostile to the spirit and the purity of the Christian faith, are by these powerful weapons conquered and led captive, and bowed into complete and holy subjection to the yoke of Christ. And be assured that with these weapons we are fully prepared to inflict condign punishment upon all those who continue obdurate and refractory; and that we shall certainly proceed to animadvert upon such, after having allowed sufficient time for those who have been misled, by the calumny or by the sophistry of the enemies of the gospel, to return to their profession and their duty.

Ch. X. Ver. 6.

3. He assures the Corinthians, that he by no means pretended to powers, which he did not possess in the most ample manner, ver. 7—9.

Consider what is before you[3]. *If any one feel confident in himself that he is Christ's, let him reflect within himself, that as he is Christ's, so also are we*[4]. 7.

[3] *Consider what is before* you.] τα κατα προσωπον βλεπετε. Wakefield. *q. d.* Attend to a few plain facts, which I now proceed to state. The original is not necessarily interrogative. See 1 Cor. iv. 19; 2 Cor. xii. 12.

[4] *So also are we.*] The received text adds, Χριστου, Christ's;

Ch. X. Ver. 7. Allow me to suggest a few plain truths to your consideration, that will teach you to form a judgement, and to govern your conduct in the case before you. Is there any man in the Christian society at Corinth, that persuades himself that he is the messenger of Christ, and commissioned by him to preach the gospel? Does my vain and opinionated opponent regard himself in this light? Let him remember that he cannot have stronger proofs of a commission from Christ than I have, and am prepared on every proper occasion to exhibit, and let him acknowledge and submit to the authority which I claim.

8. *For if I should boast yet more abundantly of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for* your *edification, and not for your destruction, I should*
9. *not be disgraced*[1]. But I forbear[2], *that I may not seem as if I would terrify you by these epistles.*

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but this word is wanting in many copies and versions, and is omitted by Wakefield. See Griesbach.

[1] *I should not be disgraced.*] So Wakefield. "*I should not be ashamed,* i. e. I should not be put to shame, I should assert what fact would verify." Newcome. The case of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts v. and that of Elymas, Acts xiii. prove that in some instances the apostles were authorized to denounce judgements upon great offenders. And Paul no doubt was conscious that he possessed that power in the present case; but no one can suppose that the apostle was armed with a voluntary power of inflicting upon his opponents whatever punishment he pleased. No such power was fit to be intrusted to any one but to him to whom the spirit was given without measure; nor does the apostle claim it.

[2] But I forbear.] "*Non addam plura de ea re.*" Grotius. See Newcome, and Dr. Owen in Bowyer. Some such addition seems necessary to complete the sense. The apostle feels himself in

To convince you that I am a messenger of Christ, I might say much more on the subject of that power, which I derive from him, of punishing the disobedient and refractory; a power which is indeed not to be exercised but with the utmost caution, and never to gratify a spirit of revenge by the destruction of my personal enemies. This power, formidable as it is, and terrible as it has proved to some, who have presumed to set us at defiance, has only been committed to me and to my colleagues in the apostolic mission, for the purpose of confirming the faith of sincere professors of the Christian doctrine, by the just punishment of presumptuous and malignant offenders. And truth would bear me out in all that I should advance upon this subject. But I forbear, that I may not afford an opportunity to those who are eager to calumniate my character, by insinuating that I mean to alarm you with epistles, while I am afraid to visit you in person: for such it seems is the language which some presume to hold concerning me. Ch. X. Ver. 9.

4. He proceeds to assure his opponent that he shall find to his cost that his actions when present, shall fully correspond with his declarations while absent, ver. 10, 11.

For his *epistles, saith he*[3], are *weighty and for-* 10.

an unpleasant dilemma. If he does not assert his authority, he gives up the cause to his antagonist. If he does, he is charged with vainglory, and with using big words to frighten them, while at a distance.

[3] *Saith he:*] φησι. So Macknight; who observes, that "though

Ch. X. *cible, but* his *personal appearance* is *infirm* [1], *and*
Ver. 11. his *speech contemptible. Let such an one reckon upon this, that whatever we are in word, by epistles, when absent, the same* we will be *in deed also, when present.*

My inconsiderate adversary, who values himself

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it appears from ver. 12 and from ch. xi. 18, that there were several false teachers among the faction at Corinth, it is plain that the apostle here is speaking of one teacher only."—"*Certum quempiam istius sermonis auctorem designat.*" Rosenmuller.

[1] *His personal appearance.*] "The ancient writers represent St. Paul as a man of a low stature, with mean aspect of body, a bald head, and an impediment in his speech; which testimonies, added to several expressions in this and the eleventh chapters, make it highly probable that it was these natural defects he means by his infirmity, and his thorn in the flesh." Pyle.—Dr. Priestley remarks, "They could not say that his letters wanted eloquence, though he was an inelegant and embarrassed speaker. But with respect to composition, there is far from being any excellence in the apostle's writings. He writes, indeed, with energy, from the fullness of his heart; but there is a great want of perspicuity, the chief requisite of composition, in his epistles. However, prompted by his strong feelings, he often expresses himself so as to animate and affect his readers; and in some passages, he seems to imitate the splendid and figurative style in which the Greeks prided themselves so much."

The apostle Paul, whose heart was full of the dignity and importance of the object of his mission, certainly did not condescend to affect elegancies of style. But surely it is rather too much to say, that the author of the address to the Athenians, Acts xvii. and of the defence before Festus and Agrippa, Acts xxvi., was an inelegant and embarrassed speaker: and the want of perspicuity in the epistles is probably chiefly owing to the unavoidable obscurity of the epistolary style, in which allusions are continually made to circumstances at which modern readers can only guess, but which were perfectly intelligible to the parties to whom the epistles were indited. And that the Epistles of this apostle exhibit some beautiful specimens of polite address, and many occasional bursts of the finest and most glowing eloquence, has never been denied. See 2 Cor. vi. 3—11, xi. 21—30; and the Epistle to Philemon.

upon his learning and his eloquence, wishes to degrade me in your estimation, and to induce you to disregard my instructions, my warnings, and menaces. He tells you, that when at a safe distance from you, I make use of blustering language and empty threats which I never intend nor dare to fulfill; but that when I come among you, I shall be humble enough, that my language will be as pusillanimous, and my utterance as ridiculous, as my person is mean and vulgar. And that I shall be too prudent to attempt to execute the threatenings which I have denounced, and which no man of understanding will think worthy of notice. Ch. X. Ver. 11.

But let this conceited and intemperate man, be he who, or what, he may, rest assured that I advance nothing but grave and solemn truths; and that I do not, now I am absent from you, denounce a single menace in my letter, which I have not power, and which I am not fully resolved, to carry into effect, in my approaching visit to Corinth: unless the punishment shall be suspended, as I sincerely wish and entreat that it may, by the timely penitence of the offender, and of those whom his calumnies and artifices have unhappily misled.

SECTION II.

Ch. X. *THE APOSTLE passes some sarcastic animadversions upon the self-conceit of his opponent, and upon his officious interference in the concerns of the church at Corinth.* Ch. x. 12—18.

1. He animadverts upon the self-conceit of the false apostle, ver. 12.

Ver. 12. *For we presume not to rank*[1], *nor to compare ourselves with some who commend themselves; but they, settling their own measures among themselves*[2], *and comparing themselves with themselves, are not wise*[3].

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[1] *To rank.*] εγκριναι, to *number, reckon, rank.* Vide Hammond, Elsner, Macknight. "εγκρινω, *catalogo, ac numero insero: socium me addo.*" Schleusner; who gives examples from Demosthenes and Xenophon, and refers to Wetstein, and Stephens's *Thesaurus.*

[2] *Settling their own measures:*] εν ἑαυτοις ἑαυτους μετρουντες. The phrase is generally understood of estimating their own abilities too high; but as the word μετρον in the remainder of this section signifies the peculiar province which was allotted to every teacher of the gospel, I think that the apostle here represents the false teachers as choosing out their own provinces for themselves, instead of acting under the direction of Providence.

[3] *Are not wise:*] ου συνιασιν. Some copies leave out these words; in which case the participles are to be translated as verbs in the present tense, agreeably to the Hebrew idiom. Vide Newcome and Griesbach. Some take ου συνιασιν in the sense of not being aware that they were measuring themselves by themselves. Vide Bowyer and Wakefield. But this interpretation makes the passage obscure; at least it does not give a clear

Ch. X. Ver. 12.

The apostle's expressions are obscure, because he purposely in both his Epistles forbears to mention the name of his opponent, or particularly to describe his character; but he introduces oblique hints, which must have been perfectly intelligible to the persons to whom his epistles were addressed, however inexplicable to modern readers. This is an inconvenience necessarily attending the epistolary form of writing; but it is abundantly compensated by superior advantages. The apostle here sarcastically remarks, that though the Corinthians should certainly find him as good as his word, yet he did not for that reason presume to compare himself, or place himself upon a level, with those who in their own conceit were so greatly his superiors. As though he had said, There are some who assume a right to boast of more than they can perform. I am not one of that description, nor do I claim a privilege to exceed the truth. I do not presume to set myself upon a level with those who think their own recommendation of themselves sufficient; who allow no rule of action but their own will; who think themselves at liberty to go where they please, and to intrude into the provinces of others without

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sense.—Bos, *Exercit. Philol.* p. 178, renders it, We compare ourselves with ourselves, and not with the wise, "*nosmet nobis ipsis metimur, nosque ipsos comparamus nobis ipsis, non sapientibus:*" *q. d.* We do not presume to set ourselves upon a level with the wise men who are our opponents. Vide Rosenmuller and Doddridge. I have given the sense which appears to me the best, but without being confident that it is the true interpretation.

Ch. X. Ver. 12. their permission; and who, being infatuated with self-love, and fondly dwelling upon their own excellencies, imagine themselves superior to all the world. Such persons may fancy themselves wise; but, in truth, their folly is not less conspicuous than their vanity.

2. The apostle boasts that he arrived at Corinth after a regular progress in preaching the gospel, according to the appointment of God, ver. 13, 14.

13. *But we do not boast*[1] *of things without* our *measure; but that,* keeping to *the measure of that line*[2] *which God*[3], who assigneth *the measure, hath allotted us, we have reached even to you.*

It is no boast of mine, that I have preached where I had no authority to preach; but as God, who called me to be an apostle, has assigned to every

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[1] *We do not boast.*] I read καυχωμενοι, with some good copies. Vide Griesbach and Doddridge. "αμετρα, here and in ver. 15, does not signify *immense* or *immoderate*, but something that has not been measured out; something not committed to him, or, within his province." Locke.

[2] Keeping to *the measure.*] κατα το μετρον τȣ κανονος, *according to the measure of the line: i. e.* keeping close to the line, which is the measure, and which marks out the path I am to pursue. "κανων is the white line by which the part of the stadium was marked, in which the racers were to run: see Parkhurst's Dictionary." Macknight.

[3] *God,* who assigns *the measure.*] "ὁ Θεος μετρȣ, the God of measure." Macknight; who observes, that "in this figure God is represented as measuring out, or dividing, to the first preachers of the gospel their several offices and scenes of action."—"In the Isthmian games, each of the racers is said to have had a particular course marked out for him, to which he was to confine himself." Priestley.

person to whom he has given a commission, a proper province in which he is to exercise his ministry, it has been my care to adhere steadily to the line which he vouchsafed to allot to me; and in a regular progress of preaching the gospel, I in due time came to Corinth. And it is in this faithful and regular discharge of my apostolic mission that I place my glory. Others, perhaps, may govern themselves by different rules, and may value themselves upon a more expeditious progress. Ch. X. Ver. 13.

For we do not[4] *extend ourselves beyond* our line, *as though we had not reached you, for we have come even to you in the gospel of Christ.* 14.

I have not departed from the line which was marked out for me, and, passing by other places to which my labours were due, precipitately hastened forward to Corinth before the proper time; but I reached you in regular progress: preaching the gospel in every stage of my journey, and neglecting no opportunity which presented itself of planting Christian churches in the country through which I passed.

3. Having fulfilled his ministry at Corinth, he

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[4] *We do not extend ourselves.*] "As though I had skipped over other countries in my way, without proceeding gradually. I have reached unto you, preaching the gospel in all countries as I passed along." Locke; who adds in his note, "This seems to charge the false pretended apostle who had caused all this disturbance in the church of Corinth, that without being appointed to it, without preaching the gospel in his way thither as became an apostle, he had crept into the church at Corinth."

CH. X hoped to carry the gospel to the regions beyond it, where it was not yet known; as it was not his custom to take the credit of other men's labours, ver. 15, 16.

Ver. 15. *We boast not*[1] *of things beyond* our *measure*, that is, *in the labours of others; but entertain hope, that when your faith is increased, our line will be* 16. *enlarged and lengthened among you*[2], *so that* we *may carry the gospel into the* region *beyond you*[3],

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[1] *We boast not.*] Gr. *not boasting.* "not intermeddling, or assuming authority to intermeddle, or honour for intermeddling." Locke; who observes, that "he here taxes the false apostle for coming into the churches converted by another, and pretending to rule every thing"—"*beyond our measure.*" See ver. 13.

[2] *Our line will be enlarged and lengthened.*] "hoping, as your faith shall thrive, to have our rule lengthened abundantly among you." Wakefield. Archbishop Newcome gives the literal version: "having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged among you, as concerning our line, abundantly." The apostle hopes, that when their faith is sufficiently confirmed, his canon, the line which marks his course, ver. 13, will be enlarged εις περισσειαν, to *excess*, so as to exceed its present limits, and to reach the regions beyond. See Schleusner, and 2 Cor. iii. 9.

[3] *The* region *beyond you.*] Dr. Doddridge observes, that it does not appear that Paul or any other apostle ever did preach the gospel in Sparta, or in any other town of the Peloponnesus. Dr. Macknight, however, is confident, "from the inscription of both the epistles to the Corinthians, that the gospel had been preached through the countries of the Peloponnesus, and that the apostle must allude to Italy and Spain, whither we know he intended to go."

Mr. Locke remarks, that "Here St. Paul visibly taxes the false apostle for coming into a church converted and gathered by another, and there pretending to be somebody, and to rule all. This makes it probable that the opposition made to St. Paul was but by one man, who had made himself the head of an opposite faction."

and not boast in another man's line, of things already prepared. Ch. X. Ver. 16.

I place my reputation, not, as some do, in officiously intruding upon another man's province, meanly disparaging his person and his labours, taking to myself the credit due to another, and arrogating the honour of being the founder of a church which another had planted. My custom is, to advance in a regular progress; and having founded and settled a church in one place, to go forward to another, and to introduce the gospel where it was before unknown. And in this view it is my desire and hope, after having confirmed your faith, to find that my rule is enlarged: so that, leaving you to the care of your regular instructors, I may be authorized to advance to the cities which lie beyond Corinth, and to preach the gospel in other parts of the Peloponnesus. But I disdain the thought of treating others in the manner in which I have myself been treated: intruding into churches which they have planted, and assuming the credit of that success which they have accomplished with so much labour and hazard.

4. He concludes with observing, that, after all, no recommendation is available but that of God, ver. 17, 18.

But let him that boasteth boast in the Lord; for not he who commendeth himself is approved, but he *whom the Lord commendeth*[4]. 17, 18.

[4] *The Lord commendeth*:] *i. e.* "by the gifts of the holy spi-

Ch. X. Ver. 18. Whatever success any one may have in preaching the gospel, let him ascribe the glory of it to God, who calls him to the ministry, who qualifies him for the honourable work, and who crowns his labours with his own efficacious blessing. For nothing that we can say in commendation of ourselves will prove to the satisfaction of any reasonable person that we have received our commission from God. The missionary to whom God bears testimony, by imparting to him those gifts and powers, without which in the present state of things no considerable success can be expected, and he alone, carries with him credentials which none can dispute, and which cannot be invalidated. These credentials are mine; and they who make light of the authority which I claim, if they do not repent in time, shall find to their cost that it is in my power to exhibit full proof of my mission, in a way that they will long and bitterly remember.

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rit. These were the weapons of his warfare; and by these he would try which was the true apostle when he came among them." Locke.

SECTION III.

THE APOSTLE, after apologizing for his self-commendation, asserts his complete equality with the rest of the apostles, and vindicates himself from the calumnies which had been propagated against him by the false apostle and his associates, upon whom he animadverts with great freedom and severity. Ch. xi. 1—15. Ch. XI.

1. The apostle apologizes for the self-commendation to which his adversaries had compelled him to resort, alleging his apprehension concerning them, lest any should corrupt the simplicity of the Christian doctrine, ver. 1—4. [1]

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[1] "We cannot wonder," says Dr. Priestley, "at the apostle's anxiety about supporting his character and reputation at Corinth, as it was not merely a personal concern, but the credit of the gospel which he preached depended upon it." "We have here also the example of the apostle to justify great zeal in the defence of what we deem to be the pure truth of the gospel, and in opposing what we deem to be corruptions of it. The zeal of the apostle in this cause was hardly less than his ardour in preaching the gospel itself to the heathen world. Indeed the new teachers denied or explained away the most fundamental article of Christianity, viz. the doctrine of a resurrection. If any thing of Christianity be of value, this certainly is: though it does not appear that they denied a future state of rewards and punishments. But the apostle having no knowledge of a future state independent of a resurrection, treated their doctrine as undermining all belief in a future state of retribution." "The great corruption of Christianity in later ages, has been the abandoning the great doctrine of the Divine unity, which

Ch. XI. Ver. 1. *I wish that ye would bear with me a little in* my *folly; yea, and do bear with me*[1].

I am about to insist upon a subject the most offensive that can be imagined to a person of any delicacy and sensibility. I am going to set forth my own praises: it is a weakness, to which the calumnies of my opponents have compelled me to resort; but it is for your better information and advantage. It is, however, a weakness, and I trust that you will hear me with indulgence.

2. *For I am jealous over you with the greatest jealousy*[2], *having betrothed you*[3] *to one husband, that I may present* you as *a chaste virgin to Christ.*

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was the primary object of all revelation; and setting up the worship, first of Christ, then of the Virgin Mary, and then of innumerable saints and angels—so as to make Christianity in form, and in spirit too, resemble the worship of the heathen themselves. Certainly, then, a considerable degree of zeal is becoming us, in order to restore this invaluable religion to its primitive purity in this respect. Had the apostle Paul heard or suspected any such thing, he would no doubt have expressed himself with at least as much warmth as he did against the false doctrines which prevailed in his time."

[1] *Bear with me.*] There is some difference in the copies. See Griesbach. Mr. Wakefield's version is, "I wish ye had borne with my boasting a little: but do bear with it."

[2] *With the greatest jealousy:*] Θεᾳ ζηλῳ. Literally, *a jealousy of God.* "godly jealousy, or great jealousy." Newcome, Macknight.—"I am zealous for you with extraordinary earnestness." Wakefield.

[3] *Having betrothed you.*] Gr. *for I have.* "ἡρμοσαμην, *Ego vos præparavi et idoneos reddidi.*" Rosenmuller.—"Hammond and Schoetgenius suppose an allusion to the ἁρμοστυνοι among the Lacedæmonians, whose office was to form the lives and manners of the women." Newcome. Schleusner adds, "*qui curabant, ut non solum virgines bene et caste educarentur, sed etiam maritis honestis elocarentur.*"—"I have fitted and prepared you for one alone to be your husband." Locke.

As it has been my office to introduce you into that new and honourable and sacred relation in which you stand to Christ, I am very solicitous that you should maintain the purity of your character and the fidelity of your attachment; that you may adhere to Christ alone, acknowledging no other Master and head; and that you may not violate your engagement to him by encumbering his pure and simple doctrine with the rites of Moses, the traditional impositions of the Jews, or the vain speculations of a false philosophy. And when I consider the dangers to which you are exposed, I cannot but feel very considerable apprehensions on your account. Ch. XI. Ver. 2.

But I fear lest by some means, as the serpent[4] *deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds should be debauched from* your *singleness towards Christ*[5]. 3.

When I observe the artful conduct of men who are desirous of winning you over to those obsolete ceremonies, which are the reverse of the liberal spirit of Christianity, and which are abolished by it, I cannot help fearing lest, as in the story of the Fall, the serpent is represented as seducing the common

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[4] *The serpent.*] The apostle gives no hint that the serpent was the Devil. He alludes to the narrative of the Fall as to a story well known, but he by no means vouches for the truth of it as an historical fact.

[5] Your *singleness towards Christ*:] απο της απλοτητος της εις τον Χριστον. "simplicity due to Christ." Macknight; and Locke, who explains it, "I have formed and fitted you for one purpose alone, one husband, who is Christ. I am concerned and in care, that you may not be drawn aside from that obedience, that submission, that temper of mind which is due *singly* to him."

Ch. XI. Ver. 3. mother of mankind from her duty to God and to her husband, by his wily and specious discourse, you likewise should be debauched by the art and eloquence of your new teacher, from that singleness of attachment which is due to Christ, your husband and your head. I fear lest you should be induced to divide with the institute of Moses, or the dogmas of a false philosophy, that earnestness of zeal which is wholly due to the Christian doctrine, and to debase the purity of the Christian faith by a pernicious mixture with Jewish rites or with heathen superstition.

4. *For if, indeed, he that cometh preach another Jesus whom we have not preached, or* if *ye receive another spirit which ye have not received, or another gospel which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear* with him [1].

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[1] *Bear* with him :] καλως ηνειχεσθε. "You might even then have easily borne with *me*." Wakefield, Newcome. The argument then would be, If I were not quite equal to your new apostle, you might still have borne with my self-commendation, for I am at least equal to any of the other apostles: I do not, however, exactly see how the apostle's competitor introducing a new and a better religion could be a reason for their attending to the old and the erroneous doctrine of which, upon this supposition, Paul was the preacher. I prefer, therefore, the common interpretation: *q. d.* If your new apostle brought any thing better than what you have already been taught, you might well give him a preference; but you know the contrary; therefore attend to me. Dr. Doddridge has given an excellent exposition of this passage: viz. "For if he that cometh among you with such extraordinary pretences preach another Jesus as a Saviour whom we have not preached; if he can point out another Christ who shall equally deserve your attention and regard; or if ye receive by his preaching another spirit which ye have not yet received, which can bestow upon you gifts superior to those

If, indeed, my opponent could give you information concerning a more powerful and better qualified teacher and Saviour than Jesus of Nazareth, whose apostle I am; if he possessed superior miraculous powers to your former teacher, and could communicate them in greater abundance to his converts; or if he has a doctrine to communicate more interesting and of greater moment than the gospel which you have hitherto been taught, and which you now profess, there would be good reason for you to listen to him, and his instructions might justly supersede those of the apostles of Christ. But this, you know, is far from being the case. Ch. XI. Ver. 4.

2. He puts in his claim to their attention, from the equality of his rank and qualifications with those of the chief of the apostles of Christ, ver. 5, 6.

For I consider myself as in no respect inferior to the very chief of the apostles. 5.

Since, however, no one brings forward these superior claims, permit me to assert my own pretensions. I am, then, an apostle of Jesus. In the validity of my authority, in divine revelations, in the extent of my commission, in the possession of supernatural gifts and powers, I yield to none of my

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which we have imparted; or another gospel which ye have not accepted, the tidings of which shall be equally happy, evident, and important,—ye might well bear with him, and there would be some excuse for your conduct; but how far this is from being, or even seeming to be the case, I need not say at large." Archbishop Newcome well observes, that "*he that cometh* is a mild periphrasis for the principal leader of the faction."

Ch. XI. Ver. 5. venerable associates: not even to those who, having been the friends and companions of our Lord himself, might on that ground seem to claim precedence.

6. *But if* I am *unskilled in eloquence*[1], *yet* I am *not* so *in knowledge; but upon every occasion we have been manifested to you in all things*[2].

In the eloquence of the schools I acknowledge my deficiency: but let me be as low and vulgar a speaker as my enemies represent me to be, they cannot charge me with any defect in knowledge. I have upon all occasions fully instructed you in the whole of the Christian doctrine; nor have you ever upon any occasion detected me in any error or inconsistency; and let those who sneer at my qualifications as a rhetorician, show, if they can, an equally comprehensive knowledge of evangelical truth.

3. The apostle obviates an exception which had been taken against his character, for declining to accept a maintenance, to which, as an apostle, he was entitled, ver. 7—12.

7. *Have I committed an offence in humbling myself that ye might be exalted*[3], *because I preached to you the gospel of God without cost?*

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[1] *Unskilled in eloquence.*] ιδιωτης, "rude in speech or utterance. See 1 Cor. ii. 1, 4." Newcome; who remarks, that "St. Paul answers an objection to his pre-eminence as an apostle." "If I be but a vulgar man in speech." Wakefield. The word means *illiterate*, without education.

[2] *In all things.*] The phraseology is somewhat intricate. Some MSS. and the Æthiopic version omit εν πασιν· and Archbishop Newcome suspects it to be a marginal gloss.

Am I charged with a crime, because when I was at Corinth I submitted to want and inconvenience, because I worked for my subsistence in the occupation to which I had been educated; and because I took alms from others, that you might have the benefit of the gospel, and that without any cost or charge? Am I accused of the great offence of letting myself down to raise you up? Is any one so absurd as to argue from this circumstance, either that I was conscious of the defect of my title to the apostolic office, because I would not accept the emolument to which I had a claim? or that I declined your bounty from want of kind affection towards you? If this be imputed as an offence, be it known to my accusers that I avow and glory in the charge. Ch. XI. Ver. 7.

I made spoil[4] *of other churches, taking wages* from them *that I might minister to you; and when I was present with you, and in want, I was not at all chargeable to any one*[5]. *For the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied my want; and* 8. 9.

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[3] *Humbling myself*] "in working with my own hands, enduring hardships." Newcome.—*that ye might be exalted,* "to the dignity of those who know and believe in Christ." Doddridge. "The adverse party argued that he was no apostle, since he took not from the Corinthians maintenance. 1 Cor. ix. 1—3." Locke.

[4] *I made spoil.*] "It might seem as if I spoiled." Newcome.

[5] *I was not at all chargeable.*] ἀ κατενάρκησα αὐτῶν. "I was not idle to the injury of any one." Wakefield.—"I distressed no one." Macknight; who remarks, that "according to Jerome, it is a Cilician word. Some think it is derived from νάρκη, a torpedo; *q. d.* I benumbed, or oppressed no one."—Rosenmuller, "*obtorpere cum damno alterius, oneri esse alicui.*"—"I stunned nobody with complaints." Whitby.

Ch. XI. Ver. 9. *in every thing I have kept myself, and I will keep* myself *from being burdensome to you.*

I acknowledge that it was my resolution when I came to Corinth that I would accept of nothing from the Corinthians for my labours there; and to this end I endeavoured to support myself with my own manual labour; and when that was insufficient, I chose to endure considerable inconvenience from the want of the comforts, if not the necessaries of life, rather than I would accept a boon from any one individual among you: but at the same time, I accepted so large a supply from other churches towards my support at Corinth, that I may almost be said to have plundered them; or, at least, to have taken wages from them that I might serve you. Indeed, the present which I received from Macedonia, and particularly from Philippi, amply supplied all my wants: and this is the line of conduct which I am still resolved to pursue. I will accept of nothing from the Corinthians for preaching the gospel at Corinth.

10. As *the truth of Christ is in me*[1], *this boasting of mine shall not be stopped in the regions of Achaia.*

I solemnly affirm, that as certainly as the doctrine which I teach is the doctrine of Christ, so surely will I persevere in this conduct, as long as I

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[1] As *the truth of Christ is in me.*] "*Vobis ego per Christum vere affirmo,* ut Rom. ix. 1. *est formula jurandi, Quæ jam dico, ea vere dico, uti decet Christianum.*" Rosenmuller.—"The truth which Christ observed." Newcome. Rather, the truth which Christ taught, and commissioned me to teach. *q. d.* as surely as I truly preach the gospel.

remain in Achaia; and nothing shall deprive me of the honour of preaching the gospel at Corinth and in its vicinity, without receiving any emolument for so doing. Ch. XI. Ver. 10.

Wherefore[2] *Because I love you not*[2]*? God knoweth.* 11.

And why do I make this resolution? Is it, as some are pleased to insinuate, because I have no affection for you, and am determined to be under no obligation to you? and therefore that I will receive nothing from you? God knows the sincerity and the strength of my affection for you; and to him I can appeal as witness to the purity of the motives by which I am influenced.

But what I do, and will do, is, *that I may cut off occasion*[3] *from* those *who seek occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.* 12.

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[2] *Because I love you not?*] "Hence we learn, that some had attributed his gratuitous preaching among the Corinthians to his want of affection for them." Newcome.

[3] *That I may cut off occasion,* &c.] The apostle's expression is so very elliptical, that it is not easy to make out his meaning. It cannot, however, be what many suppose, viz. to cut off the occasion of imputing secular views to him for receiving maintenance, while they gloried in not accepting any thing, in which they had now no advantage over him: for it is plain, from verse 20, and from other passages cited by Dr. Whitby, that his opponents extorted considerable contributions from their adherents. It seems therefore probable that Mr. Locke expresses, at least in part, the meaning of the apostle, viz. "that I may cut off all occasion from those who, if I took any thing from you, would be glad to boast that in it they had me for a pattern." To which it may be added, that the apostle hints that if they would still boast, it would be wise in them to boast, as he did, that he taught them gratuitously, and would accept no compensation for his labours. Or, as Dr. Doddridge paraphrases the

Ch. XI. Ver. 12. The true reason of my refusing to accept a maintenance from the Corinthian church, and of my perseverance in that resolution, is this: Not that I do not think myself entitled to such support, for the validity of the claims of Christian teachers to decent maintenance I have proved in my former epistle: but that I may cut off all pretence from those who would be glad to represent my zeal in propagating the Christian doctrine in so opulent a city as Corinth, as proceeding wholly from mercenary views; and to preclude the possibility of an appeal which they would gladly make to my example, as authorizing their flagrant extortions. And finally, I act, and will continue to act, in this disinterested manner, that if they choose to make their boast, it may consist, not in exhibiting the riches which they have extorted from your liberality, but in pursuing the same humble and disinterested conduct which they

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words, "I would teach them by my example, instead of boasting that they have such an influence over you as procures them a plentiful, and perhaps splendid maintenance, that they rather emulate my disinterested conduct, and subsist on their own labours."

"There must," says Dr. Priestley, "have been some very particular reason why the apostle, who had no objection to receive money from the church at Philippi, should decline this at Corinth. It should seem that he was very soon apprized of the character and pretensions of these new teachers, and that he was determined to expose their avarice by his own disinterestedness, and, as he here perhaps intimates, make them ashamed of their own conduct, and conform to his. For this may be the meaning of his here saying, *that they may be found even as we.* "*Efficiam porro, gratis docendo, ut isti non amplius possint se ipsos laudare, nisi meum exemplum imitentur, et lucri studium deponant.*" Rosenmuller.

see in me: and thus proving that their design in preaching the gospel is not to aggrandize themselves at your expense, but to promulgate the vital truths of religion, and to reclaim men from idolatry and vice to wisdom and virtue. But of this change in the conduct of my opponents I have very little expectation, considering what their true character is. Ch. XI. Ver. 12.

4. The apostle solemnly denounces his opponents as hypocritical pretenders to authority from Christ; who will in due time be punished, according to their deserts, ver. 13—15.

For such[1] are *false apostles, deceitful workmen, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.* 13.

To open your eyes, therefore, to the danger that you are in of being misled by those artful men who calumniate me, and who endeavour to seduce you from the pure doctrine of Christ, I now plainly tell you, that though they presume to call themselves apostles, they are false apostles, who have no right to the character they assume, and who with all their eloquence and specious language can give no substantial proof of an apostolic mission. They call themselves workmen, labourers in the vineyard of Christ; and labourers they are, but not such labourers as Jesus has appointed in his church. They

[1] *For such.*] "The severity," says Dr. Priestley, "with which the apostle inveighs against these new teachers, is very great; but it was just, if, as we may infer from this epistle, they not only undervalued the apostle, making themselves superior to him, but taught what was in reality another gospel, in opposition to his."

Ch. XI. Ver. 13. fraudulently endeavour to impose upon you, and with persevering industry they labour to deprive you of the liberty, the privileges, and the hopes of the gospel. They call themselves indeed apostles of Christ, but they have no other pretensions to that honourable character than their own assumption of the name, without any warrant from him who is the only fountain of honour in the church; and in whom alone is vested the right of sending out messengers to bear witness to his resurrection, to preach his gospel, and to work miracles in his name.

14. *And no wonder, for Satan himself transforms*
15. *himself into an angel of light*[1]. It is *no great*

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[1] *An angel of light.*] "In this manner it *may be supposed*," says Macknight, "that Satan transformed himself when he tempted our Lord in the wilderness; and in like manner also when he tempted our first mother Eve." Dr. Chandler, in his sermon on the Fall, supposes that the devil, when he tempted Eve, assumed the appearance of an angel of light, a seraph, pretending that he brought a commission from God to revoke the prohibition. But in this case, where would be the sin of Eve?

Archbishop Newcome supposes an allusion to Job i. 6. Dr. Priestley says, "It is not easy to say what it is which the apostle alludes to in this place; but I think it is most probable that he had an eye to the book of Job, in which it is said, ch. i. 6, that there was a day when the sons of God, *i. e.* angels, came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them: appearing, perhaps, as one of them, though he was well known to God, who addressed him in his proper character. I need not observe, that the whole of this representation is an allegory, founded on the idea of God keeping a court like that of an eastern prince, and holding on certain days what we now call a levee, when his chief ministers attend upon him, to show their respect and to receive his orders: so that we are by no means authorized to infer the real existence, either of Satan or his angels, from this figurative description."—"*Sed ad singulare aliquod factum non videtur Paulus respicere.*" Rosenmuller; with whom agree Whitby and Doddridge.

thing, *then, if his ministers transform themselves into ministers of righteousness*[2]*: whose end shall be according to their works*[3]. Ch. XI. Ver. 15.

You have seen in the book of Job, ch. i. 6, that Satan is represented as assuming the appearance of one of the sons of God, and of mixing with the rest in a social festival. It is no wonder, therefore, if these bad men, who are the ministers of Satan, and the wretched instruments of extending the empire of ignorance and vice, should transform themselves into the semblance of ministers of the gospel of peace and reconciliation, the design of which is, to convert men from the errors and vices of their heathen state, and to make them wise, virtuous, and happy. But let such persons be assured, that however they may impose upon the ignorant and the thoughtless, and even upon some whose simplicity of character and unsuspecting integrity lay them open to the artifices of plausible hypocrisy, they cannot impose upon the Supreme Judge, at whose tribunal they must hereafter stand; and who will by his righteous sentence consign them to that shame and misery which is the merited doom of their folly, fraud, and malignity.

In this passage it appears probable that the apostle alludes to the history prefixed to the book of Job,

[2] *Ministers of righteousness.*] δικαιοσυνης, or *justification: i. e.* the gospel, which reclaims men from vice to virtue, and introduces a new and merciful scheme of justification. Rom. i. 17.

[3] *According to their works.*] "not their specious and hypocritical pretences." Whitby.

Ch. XI. Ver. 15. in which it is said that the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. After which, an account is given of a dialogue between Jehovah and Satan, concerning the character and condition of Job. This was an allegorical representation of the design of the calamities with which that patriarch was visited, and was intended to show that, severe as they were, they were not to be regarded as the punishment of sin, but as trials of virtue. The author of that prologue could never mean to be understood literally; nor can any judicious reader for a moment admit the literal account, as a representation of facts. And consequently, the apostle, in alluding to this allegory, ought not to be understood as teaching with authority the actual existence of such a being as the devil, possessed of great and indefinite powers, which are continually employed in doing mischief: a fact than which nothing can be more irreconcileable to the wisdom and benevolence of the divine government.

Some persons have supposed that Satan appeared as an angel of light to Eve, when he tempted her to eat the forbidden fruit; but this is merely a gratuitous supposition. In that narrative the devil is not once named: the serpent was the only agent concerned in the temptation, and there is no reason to believe that the apostle in this passage had any reference to that event.

SECTION IV.

THE APOSTLE, again apologizing for that self-commendation to which he had been compelled to resort in self-defence, declares, that in external advantages he was equal to any of his competitors; and that in labours and sufferings as a minister of Christ, he was greatly their superior. Ch. xi. 16—33. Ch. XI.

1. He declares, that though he might be thought unwise, he would freely represent the claim he had to the regard of the Corinthians, and he hoped that as they were willing to bear with the insolence and extortion of his rivals, they would excuse a degree of imprudence in himself, ver. 16—20.

I say again, Let no one think me foolish: but if otherwise, yet receive me though foolish, that I also may boast a little. Ver. 16.

I am about to speak in my own commendation: do not impute it to folly and self-conceit. I am under a necessity of writing thus in my own defence, and to counteract the calumnies of my enemies. If, however, you are of a different opinion, and think that there is no occasion for this self-applause, and that it is even a weakness in me, I entreat you to bear with it as such, that I may have an opportunity of saying something in my own behalf, as others

Ch. XI. take the liberty to depreciate my character, and to magnify themselves at my expense.

Ver. 17. *What I say I say not by direction from the Lord*[1], *but as it were in folly, in this business of boasting*[2].

The doctrine that I teach, whether in public discourses or epistles, is the doctrine of Christ my Master; but what I am now about to say of myself is not by inspiration, and you may, if you please, regard my boasting as an instance of mental infirmity: but let me request your attention to the facts which I shall produce.

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[1] *By direction from the Lord.*] κατα Κυριον. "It has been well remarked," says Archbishop Newcome, "that this is said by way of concession. Beza's words are, '*quod dixit se non secundum Dominum loqui per concessionem dixit, et formam ipsam orationis, non autem rem ipsam considerans: cum alioqui vera sit ipsius oratio, et sanctissimus ipsius scopus.*'" But what occasion for this apology? The apostle affirms that he does not write by direction from Christ; and we believe him. He is anxious that if he should be thought guilty of unbecoming vanity in speaking of himself, it might not be imputed to Christ, whose messenger he was. But there was no danger of this; for he says nothing but what is true, and in his circumstances proper and becoming. "The whole passage," says the learned prelate, "may be considered as the finest instance of self-commendation which occurs in any writer." Upon the same principle, when the apostle assures us that he writes by authority from Christ, we also believe him. See 1 Cor. xi. 23, and ch. xv.; and universally, in all that relates to the doctrine of Christ he was fully instructed by Christ himself, Gal. i. 12. In other cases the apostle writes as an honest and well-informed man, and he claims no higher authority. 1 Cor. vii. 25.

[2] *In this business of boasting.*] τῃ ὑποστασει τῃς καυχησεως. See Wakefield.—"*in hac substantia gloriæ*, Vulg. *in hac parte, sive materia gloriationis.*" Erasmus. The folly consisted, not in his *confident* boasting, but in his boasting at all: *q. d.* in this affair of boasting, this self-same boasting.

Since many boast according to the flesh[3], *I will boast also.* Ch. XI. Ver. 18.

As my rivals are disposed to value themselves upon their Jewish extraction, their observation of Jewish rites, their privileges as Jews, their skill in Hebrew literature, and their knowledge of the law, I will put in my claim to an equal share of this kind of merit with themselves.

For ye willingly bear with fools[4], *being yourselves wise.* 19.

You that are such zealous partisans of the new teachers, are very wise men; of very superior understandings, enriched with knowledge much beyond the lessons of your old instructors. Your candour, no doubt, is proportioned to your wisdom; you can bear with a little folly: nay, you do bear with a great deal. Let me hope that you will bear with mine.

For ye bear it, *if one enslave* you[5], *if one devour* 20.

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[3] *According to the flesh.*] κατα την σαρκα. "as to external privileges." Newcome. *i. e.* in the law of Moses, as he afterwards explains it: compare Gal. vi. 12. And in that whole epistle the law is called *flesh*, the gospel *spirit*. So, likewise, in the Epistle to the Romans. "Since many glory in their circumcision or extraction. See ver. 22." Locke.

[4] *Bear with fools.*] "You, who are men of understanding, easily bear with such foolish people." Wakefield. "A bitter irony; alluding to their bearing with the insolence and covetousness of their false apostle." Locke.

[5] *If one enslave* you.] "if a certain person make slaves of you." Wakefield.—"The bondage here meant, was subjection to the false apostle, not to the Jewish rites; otherwise the apostle would have spoken more openly and warmly. It is plain that no such thing was yet attempted openly." Locke.

"He delicately alludes," says Archbishop Newcome, "to

Ch. XI. Ver. 20. *you*[1], *if one take* of you[2], *if one exalt himself*[3], *if one strike you on the face*[4].

There are some who trespass far more upon your patience and liberality than I presume to do, and yet you take it all in good part. If they bring you into bondage to their own will and pleasure, you willingly submit. If they waste your property by maintaining themselves in luxury at your expense; if they accept of large presents from you; and if in return they conduct themselves with insolence, and even treat you with personal indignity, you bear it all with wonderful composure and temper, because they represent themselves as apostles of Christ, acting under a divine authority. Let me, then, entreat you to hear me patiently, while I vindicate my title to your regard; and be assured that I shall never make a similar use of the authority I claim.

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some leading person among his opponents. If a man subject you to his imperious will, exact a large stipend, receive private gifts beside, proudly exalt himself over you, treat you contumeliously in the highest degree."

[1] *If one devour you.*] "If he eat you up, by living in luxury at your expense." Macknight.

[2] *If one take* of you.] λαμβανει, "take your goods." Macknight. "αφ' ὑμων understood: what is yours." Whitby.

[3] *Exalt himself.*] "επαιρεται, as if he were your absolute sovereign." Doddridge.—"if *he raise himself against* you in wrath, when you refuse to comply with his will." Macknight.—"The Jews had a very high opinion of themselves, and mean and despicable thoughts of all others." Whitby.

[4] *Strike you on the face.*] "if his mad passion were to transport him even to blows, your fondness for him would prevent your calling him to a just account, and you would find some way of excusing or accommodating the affair, rather than come to a breach with him." Doddridge.

2. The apostle asserts his full equality with his rivals, with respect to Jewish privileges and claims, ver. 21, 22. Ch. XI.

I now speak[5] *with respect to dishonour; namely, that we were destitute of power.* Ver. 21.

What I am now about to advance, is with a view to repel the calumny urged against me by the false teachers; who hesitate not to affirm, that I can produce no valid proof of a title to the dignity and authority of an apostle, but that they are themselves greatly my superiors in every qualification of a Christian teacher.

Yet whereinsoever any one is confident, I speak foolishly, I also am confident. —21.

Let them be as confident as they please in their own excellent qualifications, I hesitate not to say, though it may appear like vanity, that I am willing to enter the lists with them, and am not afraid but that I shall appear fully equal to them in all the

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[5] *I now speak.*] "As concerning dishonour, I say, that we have been weak. With regard to the usual causes of dishonour, I say that I have had my share of infirmity." Newcome and Grotius. I think Dr. Macknight's interpretation more probable: "In what follows I speak in answer to the reproach cast upon me, namely, that I am weak." His enemies had presumed to say, that though his words at a distance were big, yet his presence was weak and contemptible; and that he neither possessed the character nor the power to which he pretended. The apostle declares, that what he was about to write was to clear himself from this imputation.—Dr. Harwood gives the same sense in his *Liberal Translation*: viz. "What induces me to recount the following particulars of myself is, the reproach that hath been cast upon me as if I had nothing to support my apostolic character. But I have as just pretensions to it, I speak with humble submission, as any of my opponents."

Ch. XI. circumstances in which they place their confidence.

Ver. 22. *Are they Hebrews*[1]*? So* am *I. Are they Israelites? So* am *I. Are they the posterity of Abraham? So* am *I.*

Do they value themselves upon their skill in the Hebrew language, and upon their capacity to read the law of Moses in its original dialect? I am not inferior to them in this useful learning.—Are they by birth and profession Israelites; and are they proud of their knowledge of the law, of their attachment to it, and of the advantages they derive from it? They cannot be better acquainted with it than I am, or hold its privileges in higher estimation than I once did.—Are they the genuine descendants of Abraham, native Jews, and not proselytes from the heathen? I can boast the same privilege; being of the tribe of Benjamin, and descended by both parents from the Abrahamic family. In this view, my rivals enjoy no pre-eminence over me, whatever airs they may assume; and I hesitate not to say, that in the points which I am now about to enumerate, I possess a decided superiority over them nor will they deny it.

3. He proves his superior claim to the character

[1] *Are they Hebrews?*] "By language, and not Hellenists." Newcome.—They who used the Greek translation were held in contempt by the Hebrew Jews: vide Locke. I explain this verse agreeably to Mr. Locke. It is impossible to ascertain with precision the apostle's meaning, nor is it material. "Perhaps," says Dr. Priestley, "these phrases may all mean the same thing."

of a minister of Christ, by his pre-eminence in labours, in dangers, and in sufferings, ver. 23—27. Ch. XI.

Are they ministers of Christ, I speak as one out of his mind[2], *I am above* them. Ver. 23.

They pretend to be servants of Christ, employed in his work and acting under his commission. Be it so: in this character I am greatly superior to them. It may appear like vanity and folly to assert this in terms so plain and direct; but I am about to produce satisfactory evidence of the validity of my claim, in which I believe they will themselves readily yield the palm to me.

In labours more abundant[3], *in stripes far exceeding, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often.* —23.

I have taken greater pains than they, in preaching the gospel; and while they have been indulging themselves in all the comforts and luxuries of life, living in ease and plenty at your expense, I have been exposed to stripes, to imprisonments, and to the most imminent perils, in a degree to which they are utter strangers, and in which they will not pretend to a competition with me. This will appear more evident, if I enter into a brief detail.

From the Jews five times I have received forty stripes *except one*[3]. 24.

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[2] *Out of his mind.*] παραφρονων, "as one void of reason; as beside myself." Newcome; who observes, that this is a very strong apology for his glorying. See *Sophocl. Philoct.* l. 833.

[3] *In labours more abundant.*] "*Plures quippe labores, plura verbera, plura vincula, plura mortis pericula subii.*—Ειναι εν τινι, *hoc loco significat* subire aliquid; *obnoxium esse alicui rei, ut* Luc. xxiii. 40." Rosenmuller.

[4] *Except one.*] The number of stripes might not exceed forty,

Ch. XI. Ver. 24. The Jewish law forbids the infliction of more than forty stripes at one time. But what they could they did; and five times have I been exposed by the malice and the bigotry of my countrymen to this judicial sentence.

25. *Thrice I have been scourged with rods*[1].

The heathen magistrates having been instigated by the Jews to inflict this punishment upon me.

—25. *Once I was stoned.*

At Lystra, very soon after having been worshiped as a god for healing a lame man, I was persecuted by the deluded populace, instigated by the Jews, as a wretch who did not deserve to live; and being stoned by them, I was dragged out of the city, and left for dead; but by the miraculous energy of divine Providence, I revived and was rescued from this imminent danger. Acts xiv. 19.

—25. *Thrice I suffered shipwreck*[2]. *A night and a* 26. *day I floated on the deep*[3]. *In journeys, I* have

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Deut. xxv. 3. The Jews, that they might not transgress the law, only gave thirty-nine: *i. e.* thirteen stripes with a scourge having three lashes. Newcome, Doddridge, Whitby.

[1] *Scourged with rods.*] This was a Roman punishment, inflicted on Paul at Philippi. Acts xvi. 21 and 22; and elsewhere.

[2] *Thrice I suffered shipwreck.*] Of these shipwrecks nothing is recorded in the Acts: that at Malta happened several years afterwards, and was therefore at least the fourth.

[3] *Floated on the deep.*] See Newcome and Wakefield. "This clause," says Paley, "I am inclined to interpret of his being obliged to take to an open boat, or *a wreck* upon the loss of the ship, and his continuing out at sea in that dangerous situation a night and a day. Paul is here recounting his sufferings, not relating miracles." *Horæ Paulinæ*, p. 139.—"Ποιεω, *dego, commoror*. Act. xv. 33, xx. 3." Schleusner.—"*Alii intelligunt* carcerem *subterraneum: alii* puteum *in quo latendum fuerit apostolo totum per diem, ut insidias effugeret.*" Rosenmuller.

often been *in dangers from rivers*[4], *in dangers from robbers*; *in dangers from* my own *nation*, *in dangers from heathens*; *in dangers in the city*, *in dangers in the desert*; *in dangers on the sea*, *in dangers among false brethren*. *In labour and toil*, *in watchings*[5] *often*, *in hunger and thirst*, *in fastings often*, *in cold and nakedness*[6]. Ch. XI. Ver. 26. 27.

In the circuits which I have taken in the discharge of my mission, either to preach the gospel where it was not known, or to instruct and edify the

[4] *In dangers from rivers.*] In Bowyer's *Conjectural Emendations* it is ingeniously conjectured, that as the causes of danger are here mentioned in pairs, ποταμων probably was not the word used by the apostle, and that πειρατων, *pirates*, or some similar word, should be substituted for it; also, that as shipwreck was mentioned, ver. 25, it is probable that θαλασσῃ is not the right word in ver. 26.

[5] *In watchings often.*] "obliged to add the fatigues of the night to those of the day, either in extraordinary devotion, which hath kept mine eyes waking while others have slept, or in preaching to those who have pressed in upon me to hear the gospel as privately as possible, or by corresponding with Christian churches who needed my advice; by which I have lost the rest of many nights in my long journeys, or in other circumstances to which Providence has called me." Doddridge.

[6] *Cold and nakedness.*] "It must have been a strong persuasion of the truth of the gospel, a disinterested zeal for the happiness of mankind, and a high degree of fortitude indeed, which moved a person of Paul's station and education to submit to such a long course of sufferings as reduced him to the condition of the poorest of men. And yet, while we admire his disinterestedness, his fortitude, and his patience in suffering, the greatness of his spirit is no less admirable, which enabled him, notwithstanding his poverty and bad clothing, to speak to persons in the highest stations without fear, and to plead the cause of his Master with such a noble freedom tempered with respect, as we find he did to the magistrates and philosophers in Athens, to the chief priests and elders at Jerusalem, to the Roman governors Felix and Festus, to king Agrippa, nay to the Emperor himself." Macknight.

Ch. XI. Ver. 27. churches which I had planted, I have been exposed to the most imminent dangers both by land and sea, and have repeatedly experienced the most wonderful escapes. My progress has been interrupted by floods: I have been assailed by robbers. The bigots of my own country have persecuted me with unrelenting malice, and have often excited against me, either the heathen magistrate or the heathen populace. In cities, I have been in danger from the violence and malice of persecutors; in deserts, from the attacks of wild beasts; on the sea, from pirates and from storms: and in the very churches which I have planted, wicked and artful men have introduced themselves, who, professing to be messengers and ministers of Christ, have done their utmost to alienate the affections of my converts, to injure my character, and to destroy my usefulness. But far from being daunted by difficulties, labours, and dangers, I have resolutely and cheerfully persevered in the duties of my office, amidst toil and fatigue: often have I been deprived of rest by working for subsistence after the day has been spent in public instruction; and even thus I have obtained a very scanty supply, so that I have sometimes been destitute of food: at other times, I could with difficulty satisfy the demands of hunger, and have even been in want of comfortable and decent apparel.

If these facts do not vindicate my character, establish my claim, and prove to demonstration the sincerity and firmness of my conviction that I am acting under a divine commission, and that I am no

hypocrite or impostor; and if they do not incontestably prove my pre-eminence to my rivals and competitors at Corinth, who pass their time in ease and luxury, I shall despair of producing conviction by any thing which I may have further to offer. But if you will admit, that no person possessed of the understanding and feelings of a man would sacrifice his ease, his safety, his comfort, yea, the very necessaries of life, and expose himself to unceasing toil and ignominy, to suffering and danger, to persecution and death, without an adequate motive, without some important consideration, to balance his losses and sufferings, you must admit that I have given, and that I still give, the most satisfactory evidence which it is in the power of a human being to produce, of the claim which I advance to the character of a faithful, zealous, and approved servant of Jesus Christ. Ch. XI. Ver. 27.

4. The apostle's public cares added much to his personal troubles, ver. 28—30.

Besides these outward troubles, *this pressure*[1] cometh *upon me daily, solicitude for all the churches.* 28.

In addition to external sufferings, my mind is oppressed with a weight of care and anxiety for the welfare of the churches which I have planted; which are not only exposed to persecution from their hea-

[1] *Pressure* cometh *upon me daily.*] επισυστασις· "*rushing in upon me every day.*" Doddridge; who observes, that "the word properly signifies a tumult or crowd of people rising up against a man at once, and ready to bear him down."

Ch. XI. Ver. 28. then neighbours, but to discord and confusion by the officious intrusion of ignorant and bigoted teachers, who would introduce doctrines, and impose rites, which are not only unreasonable in themselves, but foreign to, and inconsistent with, the spirit and design of the gospel.

29. *Who is weak, and I am not weak*[1]*? who is ensnared*[2]*, and I burn not?*

Who is feeble in faith, encompassed with prejudice, and in danger of being misled by artful and insidious teachers, and I do not sympathize with him, and feel anxious for his improvement in knowledge and stability in the truth? Who is in danger of being ensnared, and led into the practice of what their consciences disapprove, by the injudicious conduct of those who, being themselves better informed, should be more tender of the innocent prejudices of others, and I do not burn with indignation at a behaviour so unbecoming the kind and gentle spirit of Christianity?

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[1] *Weak.*] beset with Jewish prejudices. I sympathize with such, knowing the danger to which they are exposed, of being imposed upon by Jewish bigots: vide Rom. xvi.; 1 Cor. viii. "Who is weak in the faith, and I do not sympathize with him? do not bear with him, do not avoid leading him into sin by my example?" Newcome.

[2] *Ensnared.*] σκανδαλιζεται· taken in a trap, or made to stumble; tempted to do what conscience disapproves. *And I burn not:* am not incensed at the unkind, ungenerous behaviour of those who make no allowance for infirmity and prejudice. "do not burn with zeal to restore him." Newcome.—"*fired* with grief and indignation to see such a dishonour brought upon religion; and with zeal to redress the grievance." Doddridge.

If I must boast, I will boast of the things *which relate to my infirmity.* Ch. XI. Ver. 30.

It may be a weakness in me to feel so much concern for the failings and misconduct of others: and men who fancy that they possess very strong minds may sneer at my infirmity. But this excess of sensibility at least proves my sincerity in the cause; and so far am I from being ashamed of it, that I even pride myself on it, and would greatly prefer that sympathetic temper which is the incidental cause of considerable uneasiness, to that total insensibility to the conduct and the sufferings of others, upon which some people value themselves as the mark of a superior mind.

5. The apostle makes a solemn appeal to God for the veracity of his assertions, and incidentally mentions a remarkable escape from Damascus, at the commencement of his ministry, ver. 31—33.

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed for ever, knoweth that I speak not falsely. 31.

Some of the facts which I have related, and to which I have alluded, and some which I am about to mention, are such as I can produce no earthly witness to attest, and the state of my mind is cognisable by none but an all-seeing eye: it is therefore to the blessed God himself, to him from whose power and goodness our great Master derived both his existence and commission; by whom he was also raised from the dead, and whom he acknowledges

Ch. XI. Ver. 31. and adores as his God and Father; to this great and awful Being I make my appeal, and in his presence I aver, that all which I have declared or shall declare, in vindication of my character and commission, whether relating to my labours, dangers, and persecutions, or to my zeal, fortitude, and perseverance, or to extraordinary visions and revelations, is in every article literally true. And the circumstance which I am now about to mention, and which did not occur to my recollection in the recital of my past persecutions, may be depended upon as a certain fact, which happened to me when I opened my ministry at Damascus, not long after my return from Arabia, about three years after my conversion to the Christian faith.

32. *In Damascus*[1] *the governor under king Aretas placed guards about the city of the Damascenes,*
33. *with an intention to apprehend me; and I was let down by the wall, through an aperture*[2] *in a basket, and escaped from his hands.*

Thus it appears, from the very beginning of my ministry to the present hour, I have been exposed to the most imminent dangers in the discharge of the duties of the apostolic office, which nothing but the

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[1] *In Damascus the governor.*] "The prefect of Syria Damascena, under Aretas king of Arabia, who had subjected Damascus." Vide Newcome, and the authorities quoted by him. This incident comes in abruptly: the apostle probably forgot to mention it in the preceding catalogue of his sufferings.

[2] *Through an aperture.*] δια θυρίδος. Harwood; who observes, from Burman, "*Nihil aliud intelligitur quam foramen in mœnibus, qualia habebant multa, ad emittenda tela.*" Burman *in Not. ad Phædri Fab.* 13.

strongest conviction of a divine call to it could have induced me to encounter, and from which nothing but the almighty power of God, and the special protection of his providence, could have effected my escape. Ch. XI. Ver. 33.

SECTION V.

Being against his will compelled to speak in his own commendation, THE APOSTLE with great modesty touches upon the revelations and visions with which he had been favoured, but expresses still greater satisfaction in alluding to those severe bodily infirmities which were the consequence of his celestial visions; and which, while they appeared almost to incapacitate him for active duty, so much the more illustrated the power of Christ, in the great success which attended his ministrations. Ch. xii. 1—10. Ch. XII.

1. The apostle alludes with great modesty to an extraordinary vision with which he had been favoured fourteen years before the date of this epistle, ver. xii. 1—4.

It does not indeed become me to boast[3]; *nevertheless* Ver. 1.

[3] *It does not*, &c.] Many copies read Καυχασθαι δει, *I must needs boast. Yet it is not expedient.* The Vulgate and some other authorities prefix ει, which Mr. Locke approves: *q. d.* "*If* I must be forced to glory." Γαρ must have the force of *yet*, or *nevertheless*. See Newcome, Doddridge, Macknight. Comp. Mark vii. 28; 1 Pet. iv. 15.—"Chrysostom, Theodoret, Œcumenius, and Theophylact, all agree in the received text." Whitby.

Ch. XII. Ver. 1. *less, I will come to visions and revelations*[1] *of the Lord.*

It hurts my feelings to say so much in my own commendation: nevertheless as my opponents at Corinth have imposed this disagreeable necessity upon me, I must go on, till I have proved to your satisfaction, and beyond all contradiction, the superiority of my claims to theirs, and have convinced you that I have been truly delegated by Christ himself to the office of an apostle.—Having, therefore, proved my superiority to my boasting rivals in labours and in sufferings, in which, indeed, they do not care to vie with me, I now proceed to mention certain supernatural communications with which I have been favoured, and the direct intercourse with Jesus Christ to which I have occasionally been admitted. And I shall first appeal to a very extraordinary scene which was graciously exhibited many years ago, to one who can never forget it, and who never thinks of it but with astonishment and gratitude.

2. *I know concerning a disciple of Christ*[2], *(whe-*

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[1] *Visions and revelations.*] Newcome observes, that "a vision is an appearance presented to the mind of a person sleeping or waking; a revelation is a suggestion of a truth or fact by the spirit of God."

[2] *A disciple of Christ.*] Gr. "a man in Christ."—"Grotius rightly explains *hominem in Christo*, by *Christianum*. St. Paul modestly speaks of himself." Newcome. Griesbach places the comma after Χριστῷ q. d. "I know a man in Christ, who fourteen years ago," &c. Mr. Wakefield's version is, "I know a man, after he had been a Christian fourteen years, carried away," &c.

ther in the body I know not, or whether out of the Ch. XII. Ver. 2.
body[3] *I know not, God knoweth,) that such an one,*
fourteen years ago[4]*, was caught up to the third*
heaven[5]*. And I know concerning such a man,* 3.
whether in the body or out of the body I know not,

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[3] *Whether in the body, or out of the body,* &c.] Dr. Macknight concludes from this expression, that "the apostle supposed his spirit might be carried into the third heaven and into paradise without his body. Hence it is plain, that he believed that his spirit could exist out of his body; and that, by the operation of God, it could be made to hear and see without the intervention of the body." But this is surely building a great superstructure upon a very slender foundation. All that the apostle can reasonably be understood to say is, that he could not decide whether it were a real or a visionary scene.

[4] *Fourteen years ago.*] This epistle was written A.D. 57. The vision, therefore, was A.D. 43: seven years after his conversion. Dr. Benson supposes it to have been the vision related Acts xxii. 17; in which Dr. Priestley agrees. This was the year in which Paul visited Jerusalem with Barnabas, to carry a contribution from Antioch.—This conjecture of Benson's is, however, uncertain, not to say improbable. See Gal. ii. 1, and the note there.

[5] *The third heaven.*] Archbishop Newcome observes, that the Jews divide the heavens into the seat of the clouds, the seat of the stars, and the seat of God. "Paul did not know," says Dr. Priestley, "whether he was carried up into the third heaven, or whether it was only a vision. That it was a vision, is much the most probable; since a local heaven, which the reality of the representation would suppose, has no existence, God being alike every where present, though in the figurative language of Scripture he is represented as keeping a court somewhere above the clouds, attended by angels as his ministers. But all these representations are adapted to our low and imperfect conceptions concerning God and the manner of his existence; and there is no inconvenience attending them, for still the providence of God is supposed to extend to all things, and sees and takes cognisance of every thing."—"*Illud,* in cœlis esse, *magis indicat statum, conditionemque hominis quam locum certum. Nam Deus etiam, quum in cœlo esse dicitur, non tam dicitur ibi esse ut in suo quodam loco, quam potius superior omnibus.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. XII. Ver. 4. *God knoweth, that he was carried away into paradise*[1], *and heard unspeakable words, which it is not possible*[2] *for man to utter.*

I was well acquainted with a certain sincere and highly favoured servant of Christ, whose name I need not mention, who, either in person or in vision, God only knows which it was, for I cannot ascertain it, was transported fourteen years ago into the highest heaven, the peculiar residence of God, and into paradise, the abode of invisible and happy

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[1] *Carried away into paradise.*] Archbishop Newcome thinks that the apostle is here speaking of the same vision, and that paradise is the same place as the third heaven. But Dr. Priestley, in agreement with all the ancient writers, except Origen (see Macknight), takes this to be another and a distinct vision. In the former vision he seemed to be in the third heaven, where God is supposed to reside with Christ at his right hand; but in this vision, he was in paradise, in the place of the virtuous dead. "These souls were not supposed to be in heaven, but in some place under ground, where they waited for the resurrection of the body. Such, also, was the idea of philosophizing Christians, for more than ten centuries after Christ. It by no means follows from this representation, which, from being at first merely figurative, was afterwards supposed to be real, that there is any such place as this paradise, or general receptacle of the dead, any more than that there is such a place as heaven where God dwells: these are only accommodations to our conceptions of things. The dead are merely deposited in the earth, some in one place, some in another, and God is equally every where."

[2] *It is not possible.*] "ἀρήτα ῥήματα, *res non dicendas, quæ dici nequeunt effarive non possunt, aut eloqui non fas est.* ῥῆμα, *res, negotium.* ἐκ ἔξον." Rosenmuller.—"It is not lawful, or it is not possible, as the word often signifies. Not unlawful, by any divine command, but impossible to be expressed in human language." Pyle, from Clemens of Alexandria.—"Through the divine assistance they were understood by him, though they are unspeakable to man." Newcome.—"ἔξον is often used by Xenophon to express what is possible to be done. See Raphelius." Macknight.

beings; and who there saw and heard many wonderful things which no language can express, and the sight and hearing of which was intended for his own instruction, encouragement and consolation, in the arduous mission in which he was engaged. Ch. XII. Ver. 4.

Here we may observe, that though through modesty the apostle conceals his name, yet it is plain from the connexion, that he could mean no one but himself who was thus highly favoured. And further, that the whole was probably a visionary scene; and that by the expression, *in the body or out of the body*, he does not mean to decide any thing concerning the metaphysical nature of the soul, and a state of intermediate existence, but merely to say, that the impression was so vivid, that he could not ascertain whether it was a real fact, or a scenic representation supernaturally exhibited to his mind. We may be well satisfied that it was the latter; because there is no such place as that which the gross philosophy of the Jews called the third heaven, which was supposed to be a glorious place, beyond the region of the clouds and the region of the stars, where God manifested his peculiar presence by some splendid symbol. The discoveries of modern philosophy concerning the true structure of the universe have put an end to all such puerile conceits. Whether paradise and the third heaven were, in the Jewish mythology, the same place, does not seem to be well ascertained, nor whether the apostle here alludes to two visions or to one. Paul imagined

CH. XII. VER. 4. himself transported into the third heaven; but this no more proves the existence of such a place, than the representations impressed upon the imagination of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John, are proofs of the real external existence of those places which they saw in vision. Paul saw and heard what he was either not permitted, or not able, to describe. It is therefore vain and useless to form any conjecture upon the subject. There can be no doubt that it answered the purpose intended, of strengthening the apostle's mind, extending his views, confirming his faith, and improving his qualifications for his apostolic office.

2. The apostle declines to dwell upon this topic, that he may not lead his readers to think too highly of his person and merits, ver. 5, 6.

5. *Of such a one I will boast, but of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities*[1].

A person so highly favoured as the man to whom I allude might be permitted to think highly of himself, and to say something in his own commendation; but for my own part, I would rather dwell upon my personal weaknesses and incapacity, upon those very infirmities which are the objects of some men's malignant sarcasms, and which I am not unwilling to join with them in holding up to public

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[1] *Except in my infirmities.*] "This (says Dr. Newcome) is a delicate and beautiful way of commending himself:" at least it indicates extreme reluctance on the part of the apostle to say that in his own praise which he was compelled to do by the insulting language of his opponents.

notice; thereby illustrating and magnifying the power and grace of Christ, in accomplishing such important ends by so feeble an instrument. Ch. XII. Ver. 5.

Nevertheless[2], *if I should incline to boast, I should not be a fool, for I should speak truth; but I forbear*[3], *lest any* one *should esteem me above what he seeth me* to be, *or what he heareth of me*[4]. 6.

Let not my opponents, however, take undue advantage of my reluctance to commend myself, by insinuating that I am conscious that I have no recommendation of this kind to produce; for if I should enlarge upon the topic of visions and supernatural communications, I might say much without being in danger of being convicted of empty ostentation, as I should advance nothing but what is strictly true: but I decline insisting upon this topic, lest, if I should relate every thing that has passed, I should lead you to conceive of me too highly, and to forget that I am a man of like infirmities with yourselves, pretending to no other distinction than that of being honoured with a commission to preach the gospel, and to confirm the word of Christ by the gifts of the holy spirit.

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[2] *Nevertheless, if.*] εαν γαρ, "if however." Wakefield.—"Compare ver. 1; supply, *and yet I may be permitted to glory,* FOR, &c.; or, render γαρ *yet.*" Newcome.

[3] *I forbear.*] "but I refrain from the mention of what is true, desiring no other opinion of me than what is suggested by my miracles which you have seen, or my inspired doctrines which you have heard." Newcome.

[4] *Of me.*] εξ εμε. So Wakefield.—"*pro* περι εμε· *ne quis majorem de me opinionem habeat, quam dicta et facta mea mereantur.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. XII. 3. He was better pleased to boast of the infirmity which was the consequence of visions and revelations; as it best illustrated his own incapacity, and the power of Christ as working by him, ver. 7—10.

Ver. 7. *And lest I should be too much elated by the transcendency of revelations*[1], *a thorn in the flesh was given to me, an angel-Satan*[2] *to buffet me*[3].

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[1] *Transcendency of revelations.*] τῃ ὑπερβολῃ. Macknight.—"lest I should be too much exalted by the exceeding greatness of God's revelation." Newcome.

[2] *A thorn in the flesh, an angel-Satan.*] Mr. Farmer, in his learned Essay on the Demoniacs, chap. i. sect. 1, note (*s*), observes, that "in the original it is not αγγελος τω Σαταν, *an angel of Satan*, but αγγελος Σαταν, an *angel-satan*, or *adversary*. The best commentators suppose that the bodily affliction, or *thorn in the flesh*, here referred to, was some paralytic symptom: see Gal. iv. 13. In confirmation of this opinion, it may be observed that the word ασθενεια used here in the original, is that by which both the New Testament writers and the Greek physicians describe the palsy. This disorder seems to have been occasioned by the splendour of his visions affecting his nervous system; and was purposely designed by God, not merely to prevent a too great elation of the apostle, but, by taking off from the gracefulness and energy of his delivery, to render the divine power more conspicuous in the success of his ministry. It is impossible that St. Paul should refer this disorder to the devil: he speaks of it as proceeding from God, or, which is the same, his angel acting the part of an adversary to the apostle, to whom this dispensation of divine providence was exceedingly humiliating and painful, however wisely designed by God." Mr. Farmer also remarks, that "*satan* is a word which the Scripture very commonly applies to every one who is an adversary, and who acts in opposition to another: viz. Numb. xxii. 22, 33; 1 Sam. xxix. 4; 2 Sam. xix. 22; 1 Kings v. 4, xi. 14, 23, 25, &c. In the New Testament Christ says to Peter, Matt. xvi. 23, 'Get thee behind me, *Satan*:' *i. e.* thou adversary."

Archbishop Newcome, after Whitby, Bengelius, and others, points and renders the sentence thus: "There hath been given to me a thorn in the flesh, that a messenger of Satan might buffet me;" which he explains, "the event of which was, that Sa-

You plainly see that I was the person to whom these extraordinary visions and revelations were vouchsafed; but as a counterbalance to them, and in consequence of them, and to the end that I might be kept humble, and might not think too highly of myself because of these extraordinary favours, a bodily disorder was permitted to attack me, which greatly incapacitated me for the duties of my office, and which exposed me to the contempt and scorn of the false teachers and enemies of the gospel: so that it might even be regarded as a messenger of divine providence, that was sent to chastise me, to humble my pride and apparently to impede my usefulness. Ch. XII. Ver. 7.

Concerning this, I besought the Lord[4] *thrice,* 8.

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tan's instruments, such as the false apostles among you, despised and vilified me."—"Since he calls the false apostles ministers of Satan, it is not to be wondered at that he here styles them, or the chief of them, who reviled and contemned him for his infirmity, an angel of Satan, &c." Whitby.

[3] *To buffet me.*] The received text adds, *lest I should be exalted above measure;* but many of the best manuscripts leave out the last clause, which is indeed merely a repetition; though, as Archbishop Newcome (who retains it) observes, not uncommon in Paul's writings. *To buffet.* κολαφιζω, *proprie,* pugnis percutio, *et ita differt a* ῥαπιζω, *quod significat* faciem plana palma contundere." Schleusner.

[4] *I besought the Lord.*] "Here (says Slichtingius) is an instance of prayer directed to Christ: Ergo, say I, here is an instance of his divinity; prayer made to Christ by all Christians in all times and places, and for all things, being an evidence of his omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence." Whitby.

It is needless to point out the difference between the case of the apostle and that supposed by this learned divine, and the futility of the conclusion which he draws from it. What this learned and pious divine wrote in his Commentary, he wrote, as Archbishop Sancroft expresses himself, "in the integrity of his

Ch. XII. Ver. 9. *that it might depart from me. And he said to me, My grace*[1] *is sufficient for thee; for power is* seen *to perfection in weakness*[2].

This being the consequence of the disorder with

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heart, in the great integrity of his heart;" and he afterwards lived to see, to acknowledge, and honourably to retract his error.

"The person to whom Paul addressed himself at this time," says Dr. Priestley, "was probably Christ, whom he saw in his vision. But this is far from authorizing us to pray to Christ when we do not see him, and cannot know that he is present to hear us, or authorized to do any thing for us if he did: it is God only, that Great Being who is styled the God and Father of Jesus Christ, and to whom he always prayed, that is the proper object of our prayers."

"St. Paul repeatedly besought the Lord Jesus when he appeared to him in a vision: and in a vision he received the answer recorded ver. 9." Newcome.

But why in vision? Why may we not suppose that Christ really appeared to the apostle, and conversed with him? The apostle's language seems to imply as much; and our Lord appears to have maintained personal intercourse with the church during the apostolic age. See Matt. xxviii. 20, and the note in the Improved Version.

I besought the Lord thrice. "Τρις, sæpius, *veteri loquendi usu.* τον Κυριον *i.e. Christum, quod et Sociniani fatentur.*" Rosenmuller. And why should the Socinians not confess that the apostle addressed his Master when present? It is to be hoped that it is the desire of that calumniated body to discover and to express the true meaning of the sacred writings, whether it makes for or against any hypothesis of their own.

[1] *My grace.*] ἡ χαρις μου. I have retained this theological word in the translation, as more correctly expressing the sense of the original than the modern term *favour*. Rosenmuller renders the clause, "*sufficere debet tibi, quod tibi bene volo.*"—"My grace, *i. e.* my gift; the gift of the Spirit, for demonstrating the truth of his doctrine by miracles." Pyle.

[2] *Power is* seen *to perfection in weakness.*] This is the lively turn of Mr. Wakefield's translation; who, upon the authority of the Clermont and other copies, and the Æthiopic and Vulgate versions, drops the pronoun which is found in the received text: viz. *my* strength is made perfect in weakness.

which I was attacked, and apprehending that my usefulness in the Christian ministry and apostleship might be greatly diminished by it, I repeatedly applied to the Lord Jesus Christ, from whom I received my commission, and who occasionally vouchsafes to make known his presence with me, earnestly requesting that this formidable impediment might be withdrawn. Nevertheless, he did not judge it expedient to comply with my solicitation. It is enough for thee, said he, that thou art acting under my commission: it is my concern to endow thee with the necessary qualifications, and to ensure the success of thy labours. Do not apprehend that your usefulness in the church will be diminished by this infirmity of which you complain. I will command success: and the weaker you are, and the more incapable of doing any thing by your own power, the more illustriously will my energy be displayed in the extraordinary blessing which will attend your labours, and in the multitudes which will be converted by your ministry. Power is never more strikingly illustrated, than when it accomplishes splendid and magnificent effects by simple and apparently inefficient means.

Ch. XII. Ver. 9.

Most gladly, then, I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me[3]. *I take pleasure, therefore, in infirmities, in*

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[3] *May rest upon me.*] επισκηνωσῃ, "*ut efficacia Christi super me tabernaculum collocet: i. e. ut eo magis vis illa Christi per me appareat.*" Rosenmuller. "*May pitch its tent upon me,* and surround me on every side. This seems to be the strong emphasis of the original word." Doddridge.

Ch. XII. Ver. 10. *injuries*[1], *in necessities, in persecutions*[2], *in distresses*[3], *for the sake of Christ: for when I am weak, then I am strong.*

Now this explains what I have just advanced: that I would rather boast in those infirmities, which were sent to humble me, by appearing to disqualify me for my office, and to convince me that my success is not owing to my own talent and eloquence, than I would glory in those extraordinary revelations with which I have been occasionally honoured. For this depressing infirmity of mine illustrates to a very great degree the benignity and condescension of my Master Christ, by whose power I perform those miracles which excite attention to my doctrine; and to whom the glory of my success is to be wholly ascribed.

And with these views, and under these impressions, I am no longer discouraged by difficulties, or daunted by danger, or depressed by suffering. I can even triumph in bodily weakness, in personal injury and abuse, in the want of the common necessaries of life, in all the persecutions I endure from the

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[1] *Injuries.*] ὕβρεσιν, "in bodily hurts." Wakefield.—"in shameful treatment." Newcome.—ὕβρις· 1. *insolentia*; 2. *injuria ex insolentia.*" Schleusner.

[2] *In persecutions.*] διωγμοις, "in wrongful usage." Wakefield.—"διωγμος, *persecutio, exagitatio, a* διωκω, *celeriter curro: fugientem, hostili animo persequor.*" Schleusner.

[3] *In distresses.*] στενοχωριαις, "in imprisonments." Wakefield; who gives the same sense, Rom. viii. 35.—"in straits." Doddridge.—"στεν. 1. *proprie*, angustia loci; 2. *metaphorice*, summa anxietas et sollicitudo animi, *etiam*, pœnæ gravissimæ, *in quibus est summæ miseriæ et inopiæ sensus.*" Schleusner.

avowed enemies or from hypocritical professors of the gospel; and, in a word, in all the embarrassments by which my progress is impeded, and my usefulness obstructed and interrupted: for I am confident that if these are permitted to occur, whatever their immediate effect may be, they will ultimately promote the success of that cause which I have most at heart, and to which the labours of my life are devoted, the cause of Christian truth and virtue. For such is the wonderful energy of Christ, and the wisdom of the method which he chooses to promote the diffusion of the gospel, that when to outward appearance I am almost entirely incapacitated from doing any thing, at that very crisis my labours are rendered most signally useful to the church; so that, in truth, more good is done, and the gospel is more effectually promulgated by those infirmities and sufferings by which I am in a manner laid aside from active services, than could have been accomplished by the most animated and laborious exertions.—Thus, though it may seem a paradox, when I am weakest I am also the strongest: at the time when I appear to myself to be totally disabled, and utterly incapable of service, to my own astonishment, and to that of every one around me, my labours are successful beyond example, and multitudes are converted to the faith. Ch. XII. Ver. 10.

Concerning the apostle's conduct upon the occasion to which he refers, it may be proper to observe, that it cannot reasonably be doubted that he ad-

Ch. XII. Ver. 10. dressed his prayer for relief immediately to Jesus Christ. But in him it was not in the least degree improper, having been called by Christ himself to the profession of the gospel, having been invested by him with the office of an apostle, having been instructed by him in the Christian doctrine, and endued with the gifts of the holy spirit; having been honoured by him with visions and personal appearances, upon various occasions; and acting in the whole course of his ministry immediately under his direction. It was probably at one of these sacred interviews that the apostle humbly and earnestly requested to be relieved from that bodily infirmity which was so great an obstruction to him in the course of his public duty; and it was upon such an occasion that he received the gracious and memorable answer here recorded. But all this, though perfectly proper in the apostle in his peculiar circumstances, being in fact no more than asking a favour of a friend who is sensibly present, is no warrant for the general practice of praying to Christ in the present circumstances of the church, when all sensible intercourse is withdrawn, and in direct disobedience of his express command to worship the Father only. And such will-worship is undoubtedly an unjustifiable encroachment upon the honour and sole prerogative of his Father and our Father, of his God and our God.

SECTION VI.

THE APOSTLE demonstrates his authority by an appeal to his miraculous powers; apologizes for having declined to accept a maintenance from the Corinthians; repels the calumnious insinuations of his adversaries; declares in very explicit language the reason why he had hitherto postponed his visit, and expresses his apprehensions concerning the characters of some who continued in the practice of the vices of their heathen state. Ch. xii. ver. 11—21. Ch. XII.

1. He asserts that he had exhibited the fullest proof of his apostleship in every case but that of claiming a maintenance, ver. 11—13.

Am I foolish[1]*? ye have compelled me. For I ought to have been recommended by you; for I have in nothing fallen short of the very chief of the apostles: though indeed I am nothing*[2]. Ver. 11.

[1] *Am I foolish?*] I read interrogatively, with Macknight and others. The received text adds καυχωμενος, *in boasting:* which is wanting in the best copies, and dropped by Griesbach.

[2] *Though I am nothing.*] "This is beautifully added, to soften the seeming arrogance of what he had said." Newcome.—Macknight justly remarks, in his note upon ver. 12, that "the appeal which the apostle here and 1 Cor. 4, 7, makes to the whole church of the Corinthians, in which there was a great faction which called his apostleship in question, concerning the miracles he had wrought in their presence, and the spiritual gifts which he had conferred upon many of them, is a strong proof of the reality of those miracles and gifts."—"though my enemies would persuade you I am nothing." Macknight.

Ch. XII. Ver. 11. Is there an appearance of unbecoming vanity in my letter to you, and in being thus the herald of my own praises? Whatever blame I may incur thereby is imputable to yourselves; for, by encouraging and listening to those who disparage my character and commission, you compel me to produce the proofs of my authority. Allow me to speak plainly: had you acted with a proper degree of candour, there would have been no occasion for this. You ought to have been the first to have defended my claims; for the truth is, and you know it be so, that no apostle, whatever be his character or his claim, ever exhibited to any church a more satisfactory proof of his apostolic commission, than I have exhibited to you. And this I assert with confidence; though there are some among you who have the assurance to say that I am nobody, and deserve no attention. And there is a sense in which I acknowledge the charge: I am deeply sensible of my own utter unworthiness of the office, and of my own absolute inability to discharge its duties; that in myself I am nothing, and that I owe all I am and have to Christ, whose servant I am.

12. *Truly the signs of an apostle*[1] *have been fully wrought among you with all patience*[2], *in signs*

[1] *The signs of an apostle.*] "the signs whereby an apostle might be known." Locke.—"These," says Macknight, "were his performing great and evident miracles openly in the view of the world. But the greatest of all signs was, his conveying spiritual gifts to those who believed: a power which none possessed but the apostles. See Tit. iii. 6."

[2] *Patience.*] "This may well be understood," says Mr. Locke, "to reflect on the haughtiness and plenty, wherein the false

and wonders, and mighty works. For in what respect *were ye inferior to other churches, unless it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this injury*[3].

Ch. XII. Ver. 13.

I have exhibited the most satisfactory evidence that I am an apostle Christ. I have spoken divers languages, I have wrought miracles, I have communicated spiritual gifts, I have continued for several months among you in the full and frequent exercise of these extraordinary powers, patiently instructing you in the Christian doctrine; exhibiting its evidence, reasoning with its adversaries, enduring with fortitude the persecutions to which I was exposed in the promulgation of truth, and submitting to many voluntary inconveniences and hardships. Can you mention a single privilege which any other church planted by any other apostle has enjoyed, and of which you have been destitute? You may—wherever the other apostles preached, they have been maintained at the expense of the churches among whom they laboured, and they had a right to this maintenance; and the Christian societies contributed cheerfully to the support of their venerable instructors, and were glad of the opportunity of showing their respect and gratitude. I own that

apostle lived among them."—"He makes this virtue one sign of a true apostle, with a view to the characters of the false apostles." Newcome.

[3] *Forgive me*, &c.] "a fine irony." Newcome.—"There is a fine address in this," says Dr. Priestley: "the apostle intimating that his not taking any thing of them was a wrong done to themselves, as they would thereby appear to less advantage than other churches."

Ch. XII. Ver. 13. I did not allow you the same privilege. You have not had a similar opportunity of showing your generosity and your affection. I doubt not that you would have been willing and glad to have contributed to my support. I had my reasons for declining it. Forgive me this offence; the only injury that you have received from me, the only circumstance in which you appear inferior to the rest of the apostolic churches.

2. He declares his resolution of accepting nothing from them in the visit that he was soon to make them, and of serving them to the utmost of his power, whatever return he might receive from them, ver. 13, 14.

14. *Behold, this third time*[1] *I am ready to come to*

[1] *This third time I am ready to come.*] τριτον. This is the reading of many good authorities. The apostle had been but once at Corinth; he must therefore mean, as has been observed by Paley, Newcome, and many others, not that he was about to make a third visit, but that now for the third time he announced his intention of making them a second visit. But both those learned critics seem to be mistaken in reckoning the first annunciation of his purpose to be his first visit, the second annunciation to be that mentioned ch. i. ver. 15, and the third, his declaration here: whereas, in fact, the apostle had disappointed the Corinthians twice before he wrote this letter. The first time was that alluded to above, ch. i. 15, when he proposed taking Corinth in his way to Macedonia, and returning back from Macedonia to Corinth on his way to Jerusalem. Of this purpose he had probably sent an intimation to the Corinthians by Timothy and Erastus, Acts xix. 21, 22, who he expected would call at Corinth, 1 Cor. xvi. 10. In the mean time, having received the letter from the Corinthians, and having heard of the disordered state of the church, he alters his first plan, and determines to postpone his visit to Corinth till after he had finished his mission in Macedonia; of which change in his purpose he gave them notice

you, and I will not be burdensome to you; for I am not seeking yours, but you. For the children are not expected *to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children*[2]. *And I will most gladly exhaust* all, *and be exhausted myself for your sakes*[3], Ch. XII. Ver. 14. 15.

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in his first epistle, 1 Cor. xvi. 5, when he proposed to pass the following winter at Corinth. But arriving in Macedonia, probably about Pentecost, A.D. 56, not being quite satisfied with the account brought by Titus, he again postponed his visit to Corinth for upwards of a year; and having made a missionary circuit through Macedonia, Dalmatia, and Illyricum, he returned to Philippi in the autumn of A.D. 57: from whence he wrote his second epistle to the Corinthians, above a year after the first, see 2 Cor. viii. 10, ix. 2; and in this epistle he for the third time announces his determination to make them an early visit. And it cannot be considered as very surprising that his opponents should avail themselves of the two preceding disappointments, to charge the apostle with irresolution and levity, and to give out that he had no serious intention to make them a visit at all. See Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, 1 Cor. No. xi. 2 Cor. No. xi.

Mr. Locke connects this verse with ch. xiii. 1, and supposes the intervening verses to contain incidental topics which crowded into the apostle's mind, and which in his usual manner he dispatches previously to his going on with his main subject.

[2] *But parents for the children.*] "If fathers of the flesh, they ought to lay up for them temporals; if spiritual fathers, as St. Paul was, 1 Cor. iv. 15, to provide spirituals for them, good instruction and advice for the welfare of their souls." Whitby. The apostle certainly could not mean that Christian teachers had no right to expect a maintenance from their hearers: the contrary to which he repeatedly maintains.—"By laying up for his children," says Dr. Priestley, "the apostle could only mean his providing for their spiritual wants, as we may say; and therefore the observation does not appear quite pertinent, since the Corinthians might supply his wants of one kind, and he supply theirs of another."

This observation is very true; but the apostle could never intend to allege this topic as a serious argument, but merely by way of illustration.

[3] *Exhaust* all, *and myself.*] δαπανησω και εκδαπανηθησομαι. "I would not only exhaust all I possess, but be exhausted myself." Harwood.—"I will very gladly spend, and be altogether

Ch. XII. Ver. 15. *even though the more abundantly I love you, the less I should be loved*[1].

Three times it has been my intention to visit you since I first planted the gospel at Corinth. First, I proposed to pass by you into Macedonia, and to return from Macedonia, through Corinth, to Judea (2 Cor. i. 16). Being prevented from accomplishing this design by the intelligence I received at Ephesus, in your letter and by your messengers, I altered my plan; and it was my purpose when I last wrote to have visited Macedonia first, and, having spent some time there, to have passed the winter with you (1 Cor. xvi. 5, 6). But in this purpose I was likewise disappointed; for, not being quite satisfied with the account I received from Titus of the present state of the church, and hoping that the reformation which was begun would continue to advance, I deferred my visit to another year. But now, having completed the circuit I proposed, and being come back to Philippi, I have formed a third design of making you a visit soon; and whatever my adver-

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spent for you. Gr. *for your souls*, spend my labour, my substance, and my life." Newcome.—"I will most gladly bestow, and bestow even my life for your souls." Wakefield.

[1] *The more abundantly I love you*, &c.] "Though loving you most abundantly, I am less loved by you." Newcome; who adds in his note, "I suppose that the comparative is here used for the superlative, see ch. ii. 4; or, the sense may be, Even supposing that the more abundantly I love you, the less I were loved by you."

The apostle must be considered here as addressing himself, not to the great body of believers at Corinth, but to the party who were inclined to follow the false apostle; and who were probably some of the wealthiest members of the church.

saries may think, and however they may affect to represent me as fickle and wavering in my schemes, and not likely to keep my word, you may depend upon it that I will be at Corinth very soon after you have received this letter. And I warn you, that I am determined still to adhere to my first resolution of accepting no maintenance from you. You are opulent and liberal, and could easily, and would readily, supply me not only with the necessaries but the comforts and elegancies of life. But this is not my wish: I do not desire your possessions, but yourselves. I am anxious for your improvement in knowledge, in faith, and in virtuous practice; which are the greatest ornaments of your profession, and the best pledges of your final salvation. I am your spiritual father: you are my children in the gospel. It is my duty to provide for you, not yours to lay up in store for me; and I am desirous to communicate to you in the greatest abundance the invaluable treasures that I possess. I am willing to impart my instructions and spiritual gifts, to exhaust myself in labours and in sufferings: nay, I am ready to sacrifice life itself for your benefit, whatever return I may meet with from you; and though, the more affection I feel to you, and the more I exemplify my regard, in the labours I undergo, in the dangers which I encounter, and even in the faithful reproofs which I administer, the more I am disliked among you, and the more unkindly I am treated by you, or at least by some who desire to take the lead among you, and who would be thought to speak the sense of the church.

Ch. XII. Ver. 15.

Ch. XII. 3. The apostle repels with indignation the calumnies of those who represented him as overreaching the Corinthians, and as extorting presents from them in an indirect and fraudulent way, ver. 16—18.

Ver. 16. *But be it so, I did not burden you*[1]*: nevertheless, being crafty, I took you in by artifice.*

And this mention of my intention to visit you again without being burdensome to any of you, reminds me of the ungenerous attack which some have been pleased to make upon my character in my absence; as though, pretending to disinterestedness, I extorted through others what I would not take myself. They allow, indeed, that I have oppressed no one; but they have the assurance to represent me as a very artful man, who inveigled others to receive presents as my agents and representatives, and who thus enriched myself at your expense. To repel these infamous calumnies, I need only appeal to facts of the greatest notoriety.

17. *Did I overreach you*[2] *by any of those whom I*
18. *sent unto you? I entreated Titus* to go[3], *and with* him *I sent a brother. Did Titus any way over-*

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[1] *I did not burden you.*] This is one of the short turns in the apostle's style, in which, without any notice, he introduces another person, an opponent, as a speaker stating an objection, to which the apostle immediately makes a reply.

[2] *Did I overreach you?*] επλεονεκτησα· "did I by him make a gain of you? ('*avarè extorsi*,' Estius.) The original phrase signifies, to make gain by improper or fraudulent methods." Macknight.

[3] *I entreated Titus* to go.] As we know nothing of this mission of Titus but what we learn from this letter, (Luke never mentioning his name,) we cannot tell the specific object of it; nor do we know who it was that accompanied him in it.

reach you[4]? *Did we not walk in the same spirit?* did we *not tread in the same steps?* Ch. XII. Ver. 18.

Can these base accusers bring any proof of their false and malignant charge? Did I send any persons after I had left Corinth, to raise contributions upon you; or, under any false and specious pretences to accept any thing from you, either in their name or my own? I requested Titus to visit you, and I sent a Christian friend and brother with him; being anxiously desirous to know the state of your affairs, and the impression which my first letter had made upon your minds. You treated him and his companions with a degree of kindness upon which he reflects with gratitude. But did he take any thing from you upon my account? Did he accept of any thing but a bare maintenance, while he remained among you? Did he receive any rich presents from you, in which I might take a share? Are you not convinced that the same disinterested spirit governed us both? And will you then give credit to the mean and contemptible calumnies of my wicked accusers?

4. He expresses his apprehensions lest his proposed visit should be too early for some who were not yet recovered from the evil habits of their heathen state, ver. 19—21.

Think ye that we are again making an apology[5] 19.

[4] *Did Titus overreach you?*] "Did he draw any money from you, either on account of his own maintenance, or on pretence that he would persuade me to receive it for mine?" Macknight.

[5] *That we are again making an apology.*] Titus and his com-

Ch. XII. Ver. 19. *to you? Before God*[1] *we speak in Christ; and* we do *all these things, beloved, for your edification.*

After having written my first letter, I sent Titus to Corinth, and in consequence of his report I postponed my visit, and sent you an excuse. But do not imagine, because the same messenger is also the bearer of the present letter, that I am about to make a similar excuse, and to postpone my journey again. I have no such intention: nor were my purposes ever the result of levity and caprice. Far from it. I solemnly declare, in the presence of God, who knows the heart, and of Jesus Christ, whose servant and messenger I am, and who directs every step of my progress, that all the determinations I have formed, whether as heretofore to postpone my visit, or as now to come to you very soon, have been influenced, my dear brethren, by a regard to your spiritual advantage, to your instruction, admonition, and improvement; and particularly to allow time for the candid and ingenuous to reflect and reform,

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panion being mentioned, the apostle thought it necessary to obviate a suspicion that might be raised in the minds of some, as if he had proposed to send these as an apology for not coming himself. This he disclaims utterly; and, to prevent any thoughts of that kind, solemnly protests, that in all his carriage towards the Corinthians he had done nothing but for their edification, and had never had any other aim: and that he forbore coming, merely out of respect and good will to them.

[1] *Before God.*] Vide Bowyer. "Before God in Christ, we speak all these things, beloved *brethren*, for your improvement." Wakefield.—"In the presence of God I solemnly protest, that I speak by the direction of Christ, when I say that all these things, beloved, are done for your edification, that the guilty may have time to repent." Macknight.

and to separate themselves from those who are hard- Ch. XII.
ened in their crimes.

Yet I fear[2] *lest when I come, I may not find* Ver. 20.
you such as I would, and may be found by you such as ye would not: lest there be contentions, envy-

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[2] *Yet I fear*, &c.] "γαρ, *yet, nevertheless.*" See Macknight. "*Hæc, et quæ in immediatè antecedentibus dicta sunt, non convenire videntur, cum istis laudibus, quæ supra c.* vii. 6, 16, *et c.* viii. ix. *commemorantur. Suspicatur Semlerus a cap.* x. *esse aliam schedulam, a Paulo postea ad Corinthios missam, quum didicisset ex novis Titi, aut aliis literis, quo in loco res jam Corinthi essent, quantumque auctoritatis quidam Judaizantes sibi hic sumerent, qui sc. non crederent tantum argenti a Paulo ad Palæstinenses allatum iri. Haud improbabilis est hæc conjectura.*" Rosenmuller.

It is impossible, as has been before remarked, not to observe the different tone of the apostle between the first nine and the last four chapters of this epistle. But it does not seem necessary, in order to account for this difference, to have recourse to the violent and unauthorized supposition of Semler, that the last four chapters were a third epistle, written and sent at a subsequent time, in consequence of fresh intelligence received from his correspondents at Corinth. To explain the apostle's change of style and manner, it seems quite sufficient to allow, what indeed is highly probable, that in the course of a year and a half, which is the interval that passed between writing the first and second epistles, the two parties at Corinth had separated from each other. The major part being quite reclaimed from their attachment to the false apostle, and recovered to the doctrine of Christ and the standard of Paul, the apostle addresses himself to them in the first part of the epistle. But the smaller party, which consisted perhaps of the more opulent and philosophical members of the community, continued to adhere to the false teacher. Of these some were grossly immoral in their conduct, and disposed to treat the apostle with great insolence and contempt, while others, and those perhaps the majority, were only misled in their judgements: they meant well, and might possibly be reclaimed. This is the party which the apostle addresses in the latter part of the epistle, and upon which he animadverts with great severity; yet not without many expressions of kindness, and some hope of their reformation. It should seem

Ch. XII. Ver. 20. *ings, animosities, provocations*[1], *slanderings, whisperings, swellings*[2], *tumults.* And *lest when I come again to you*[3], *my God should humble me; and I* 21. *may bewail*[4] *many, who have heretofore sinned, and who have not repented of the impurity, and fornication, and lewdness, which they have practised.*

I have put off my journey to Corinth till I can delay it no longer; and yet I am very apprehensive lest, with regard to many of you, I have deferred my visit to little purpose, and lest you have not taken advantage of my delay to reform your conduct, but have rather been encouraged by it to har-

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that the event answered to his wish: the false apostle either fled or recanted, and the whole church was brought into that state of regularity, harmony, and mutual affection, of which Clemens speaks with so much satisfaction in his epistle written ten years afterwards.

[1] *Provocations.*] ἐριθειαι, *brawlings.* Macknight; who adds, "that according to Suidas, this word expresses contentions by words, or, abusive language."

[2] *Swellings.*] φυσιωσεις, "those vain boastings by which proud and ambitious men endeavour to make themselves look big in the eyes of their fellows." Macknight.

[3] *Come again to you.*] Some good copies join προς ὑμας to ελθοντα με, which reading Mr. Wakefield adopts.

[4] *Bewail.*] "punish, but with pain to myself." Newcome, Macknight.—"against whom, I fear, I shall find myself obliged, in virtue of my office, to pass such censures as it pains and pierces my heart so much as to think of." Doddridge.

"We see by this," says Dr. Priestley, "in how very imperfect a state the church of Corinth was at this time: which clearly shows, that the belief of Christianity did not operate immediately as by a charm, which some pretend to be the case at present, but gradually; good principles naturally leading to good conduct, and forming good habits. But this is necessarily the work of time. Our Saviour compares the effect of the gospel to seed sown in the ground; and we know that all seeds require time to spring up and produce plants."

den yourselves in opposition. I fear that I shall find many of you very different from what I desired, and had reason to expect, considering the instructions, the admonitions, and the warnings, that you have had. And I also fear that you will find me very different from what you have been taught by your assuming instructor to expect; that you will see reason to regard me with terror, and not with contempt. I fear that I shall find some among you of a contentious and litigious spirit; some that are jealous and envious of the superior talents or endowments of their brethren; some that give way to intemperate passion, and use names of scurrility and abuse, highly unbecoming the dignity and gentleness of the Christian character. I fear that I shall find some who are guilty of defamation, and of whispering away the reputation of their neighbours, and who spread reports to their disadvantage which they dare not honestly and openly avow. Also some who are puffed up with pride and vain conceit of their superior gifts; despising others whose powers, though less splendid, may be more useful. And finally, lest there should be dissentions and quarrels among you, inconsistent with the mild spirit of the Christian religion, and with the peace and reputation of the church. Ch. XII. Ver. 21.

I much fear lest God in his wise and mysterious providence should suffer me, when I next visit you, to undergo the mortification of seeing a church which I took so much pains to plant and to cultivate, where I have employed so much labour, where

Ch. XII. Ver. 21. I have exhibited so many proofs of my apostolic commission, and distributed so many miraculous gifts and powers, distracted and disgraced by contending factions, and by the immorality of some of its most distinguished members: and lest I should be under the painful necessity of inflicting severe chastisement upon many, who, while they profess the Christian religion and continue members of a Christian church, are not recovered from the vices and the debaucheries of their heathen idolatrous state.

SECTION VII.

Ch. XIII. *THE APOSTLE threatens to inflict condign punishment upon the contumacious and refractory; but at the same time expresses his earnest wish that they would disarm him by a timely repentance, even though it should be at the expense of this proof of his apostolic mission. After which, he concludes the Epistle with good wishes and salutations, and a solemn benediction.* Ch. xiii. throughout.

1. The apostle declares, that he is now coming to them in good earnest, ver. 1.

Ver. 1. *This third time I am preparing*[1] *to come to you.*

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[1] *I am preparing to come.*] ἐρχομαι. So Wakefield. The Alexandrine manuscript, with the Syriac and Coptic versions,

By the mouth of two or three witnesses[2] *every matter shall be established.* Ch. XIII. Ver. 1.

I have twice declared my purpose of repeating my visit at Corinth, and have both times been disappointed. I now announce my intention a third time. And, as the law, Deut. xix. 15, declares two or three witnesses to be competent to establish a fact, so my repeated promise shall now be verified by the event.

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resumes the very words which are used ch. xii. 14. It is evident that the apostle is now taking up the subject which he there began; and *that*, as Mr. Locke observes, "very solemnly, with the word Behold! and tells them now 'the third time' he was ready to come to them: to which joining, what was much upon his mind, that he would not be burdensome to them, this suggested an objection that this personal shyness was but cunning, and that he designed to draw gain by other hands. From this he clears himself by the instance of Titus and another messenger. Here he thought it necessary to obviate another suspicion which might occur to some, that he sent these two as an apology for not coming himself: this he disclaims utterly. So that, from ch. xii. 14 to xiii. 1, must be looked on as an incidental discourse which fell in occasionally: a way of writing very usual with our apostle, and other writers who abound in quickness and variety of thought. Such men are often put by from what they had begun to say, which they are therefore fain to take up again and continue at a distance; which St. Paul does here, after the interposition of eight verses."

[2] *By the mouth*, &c.] "My thus repeating my engagements ought as fully to satisfy you of the certainty of my performance, as the testimony of two or three witnesses carries a cause in any court." Pyle.

This appears to me to be the plain and obvious meaning of the apostle's words. Most of the commentators take them differently: *q. d.* I shall have many causes coming before me, and this shall be the principle upon which I will decide; agreeably to Deut. xix. 15. See Doddridge, Newcome, Macknight.—Mr. Locke interprets the two epistles as the two witnesses, in the presence of whom, according to our Lord's rule, Matt. xviii. 16, 17, the offending parties were to be warned previously to their being visited with the censures of the church.

Ch. XIII. 2. Instead of demanding proof of his apostolical authority, of which he is determined to give them sufficient, he advises them to consider seriously the evidence of their own title to be acknowledged as members of the Christian community, ver. 2—6.

Ver. 2. *I have said it before, and as being a second time present, though now absent*[1], *I forewarn those who have heretofore done wrong, and all the rest, that if I come again I will not spare:*

I have repeatedly declared my resolution to punish those who continue impenitent and refractory; and I now, as if I were actually present with you upon my second visit, as I shortly expect to be, solemnly renew the declaration; and give you this public notice beforehand, that whatever certain offenders may think of my pretensions, and however they may affect to despise my threatenings, I will no longer forbear to exercise the power with which I am invested, but will inflict upon them, and upon the rest who associate with them, some exemplary punishment, which shall bring them to a due sense of their misconduct.

3. *Since ye desire a proof that Christ speaketh by me, who is not weak*[2] *with respect to you, but powerful among you*[3].

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[1] *Though now absent.*] The received text reads, "and being absent, I now write:" the authorities for the omission of γραφω may be seen in Griesbach. Newcome renders the clause, "I told beforehand, and I *again* tell beforehand (as present the second time, though now absent), those," &c.; and observes, that "this shows that his personal appearance among them would be his second visit."

[2] *Who is not weak,* &c.] Griesbach begins a parenthesis here,

You are desirous of further proof of my apostolic mission, though it might naturally have been expected that the many miracles which have been already wrought among you in the name of Christ, and the miraculous gifts and powers with which you have been supplied, would have been sufficient proof of the fact: yet as you desire it, you shall have it. Ch. XIII. Ver. 3.

For if he was crucified through weakness[4], *yet he liveth through the power of God; so we also are weak in him*[5], *yet we shall show ourselves alive*[6] *with him through the power of God towards you.* 4.

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which he continues to the end of the fourth verse. Newcome, with greater propriety, includes the 4th verse only in the parenthesis.

[3] *Powerful among you.*] "Christ showed his power among them, by enabling St. Paul to preach the gospel to them in demonstration of the Spirit and power, 1 Cor. ii. 4. In that variety of gifts by which their testimony of Christ was confirmed, 1 Cor. i. 6. By his power in seconding St. Paul's delivery of the incestuous person up to Satan, 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. By the chastisements they suffered for communicating in the Lord's supper unworthily." Whitby. It may reasonably be doubted, whether in the two last mentioned particulars any supernatural power was manifested. Archbishop Newcome, with more brevity and correctness, describes the power of Christ as exerted "in a display of miracles and spiritual endowments."

[4] *Crucified through weakness.*] This verse is, with great judgement, placed by Archbishop Newcome in a parenthesis. "The meaning of the phrase," says Mr. Locke, "is this: Though Christ in his crucifixion appeared weak and despicable, yet he now lives to show the power of God in the miracles and mighty works which he does. *So I*, though I by my sufferings and infirmities appear weak and contemptible; yet shall *I live* to show the power of God in punishing you miraculously."

[5] *So we also are weak in him.*] και γαρ και. "These particles," says Dr. Whitby, "signify *atque ita*, even so, in like manner; and are rendered by Pasor, *sic et nos: q. d.* Though Christ appeared to the world weak, and unable to escape his sufferings, even so we seem weak to you Corinthians, because we do not

Ch. XIII. Ver. 4. Christ, when crucified, appeared to his adversaries weak and contemptible; but notwithstanding their wicked taunts, he was raised by the power of God, and by that power he continues alive, and is advanced to the high office of head of the Christian church: dispensing among you by his apostles a variety of gifts and powers. So likewise, with regard to myself, though my personal appearance, like his, may be mean and despicable, and I may be treated by some of you with similar contempt, as unworthy of notice; yet be assured, that as Christ was raised to life, to the terror of his wicked enemies, so you will also find that I am not that insignificant being which some represent; but that, feeble as I am in myself, I shall be supplied with life and energy from God, through him, sufficient to overwhelm the loftiest of my opponents with consternation and dismay.

5. *Try yourselves whether ye be in the faith; make proof of yourselves. Do ye not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you*[1]*? Are ye destitute of proof*[2]*?*

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exercise that power among you which God hath given us; but we shall show ourselves to live, by the power of God exercised upon the offenders in your church."

[6] *Shall show ourselves alive.*] ζησομεν. Wakefield. See Whitby, in the last note.—"*Sic et ego, ejus exemplo, adhuc imbecillem me gessi erga vos, sed præstabo me vivum et vegetum ejus exemplo, et Dei potentia utar apud vos.* εν αυτῳ, ejus exemplo, *sicut ille*; εις ὑμας, apud vos, *si fuero apud vos.*" Rosenmuller.

[1] *Jesus Christ is in you.*] "Vos ipsos pertentate an persistatis in doctrina Christiana. *Vos ipsos experimini, non me aut Dominum meum: an nempe vigeatis fide, examinate vos. Non quid*

You are very forward to demand proofs of my apostolic mission, and whether I have power to execute what I have threatened. You shall know this in due time: in the mean time it would better become you to reflect, what your own character and state may be, and whether you will be secure at the approaching visitation. Are you well acquainted with yourselves? Is all right at home? Examine yourselves thoroughly, whether you are true be- Ch. XIII. Ver. 5.

Christus, per me præcipiens, inter vos possit v. 3, quidve, ego nunc Domini causa leniter agens, nec autoritate med utens, cum Christo adversus vos valiturus sim, sed vos ipsos experiri, atque ita cavere debetis, ne validam Domini severitatem experiamini. εν ὑμιν. *Adeone desiistis Christiani esse, ut nemo vestrûm vim et efficaciam doctrinæ Christi experiatur?*" Rosenmuller.—So Pyle: "Let those busy and factious examiners of me and my ministry look into and try themselves first, whether they be true Christians themselves." And so likewise Dr. Doddridge. This appears to me to be clearly the apostle's meaning: *q. d.* Are you worthy of the profession you make, and clear of all danger of being visited with the apostolic rod? alluding to what he had mentioned ch. xii. 20, 21. It would be trifling, to ask whether they possessed proofs of their being an apostolic church, by the gifts of the spirit. See Macknight.

[2] *Destitute of proof?*] αδοκιμοι. *q. d.* If you are not destitute of all available proof that you are true members of the church of Christ, you must possess this proof, viz. that Christ is in you, that his doctrine is a practical principle; otherwise no other proof or profession will stand you in any stead. See Col. i. 27, 28.

"ει μη τι αδοκιμοι εστε; *numquid ergo reprobi estis? an a religione vobis tradita, omnino defecistis?* ει μη τι, *nunquid, Kypke ad Luc.* ix. 13." Rosenmuller.

"αδοκιμοι, translated here *reprobates*, 'tis plain has no such signification, reprobation being very remote from the argument the apostle is here upon; but the word is used for one that cannot give proof of Christ being in him. Compare ver. 3 and 6. Since you seek a proof, you shall know that I am not destitute of proof." Locke.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 5. lievers in Christ; whether you are approved members of that holy community of which he is the head. What! do you hesitate? You that know so much, and that are so very inquisitive about the character and authority of others, do not you know yourselves? Do not you know, that if you are what you profess to be, true believers in Christ, Christ dwelleth in you? that you resemble him in his doctrine, in his character, in love to God, in good will to man, in purity of heart and life? If this be not your character, and you are the best judges whether you can stand the test, allow me to say, that whatever your profession be, and whatever pretences you may make to superior knowledge, dignity, and sanctity, you are still destitute of the only substantial and satisfactory proof that you are genuine members of the Christian community.

6. *But I hope that ye will know that we are not without proof*[1].

I flatter myself that I shall produce evidence that will convince the most unwilling and the most prejudiced among you, that I am a true apostle of Jesus Christ.

3. The apostle expresses his earnest wish, that by timely reformation they might deprive him of the power of inflicting miraculous punishment; and so

[1] *We are not without proof.*] *q. d.* If you are destitute of proofs to support your lofty pretensions, I trust that you will find that I have not lost mine.—"*Spero autem vos persensuros esse quod ego vere sim legatus Christi.*" Rosenmuller.

far diminish the evidence of his apostolic character, Ch. XIII. ver. 7—10.

Now I pray to God that *I may do you no evil* Ver. 7.
at all[2]: I pray, *not*[3] *that we may appear as having proof; but that ye may do what is right, and* that we should be *as if destitute of proof. For we can-* 8.
not do any thing[4] *against the truth, but* only *for the truth.*

And yet, my brethren, as the time approaches, my heart relents, and I feel extreme reluctance to the exercise of that discipline which your conduct and situation appear to call for, and which my duty requires. God knows I have no desire to establish my own character at your expense. And indeed, I earnestly pray that God would put it wholly out of

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[2] That *I may do you no evil at all.*] μη ποιησαι ὑμας κακον μηδεν. "*Ne cogar cuiquam pœnam infligere, quæ* malum *dicitur quia dura est toleratu. ποιησαι cum accusativo, pro quo Latini dativum ponerent.* Matt. xxvii. 22; Luc. xv. 19." Grotius. This interpretation I prefer, both to the usual translation, "I pray God that ye may do no evil," and to Mr. Wakefield's version, "I pray unto God that he would do you no evil at all."

[3] I pray, *not.*] "So Vatablus and Menochius in *Pol. Synop.*" Newcome.

[4] *For we cannot do any thing.*] "My prayer is, that ye may do what is good. For then no apostle of Christ can inflict judgements upon you." Newcome.—"He means," says Dr. Priestley, "it would not be in his power to make an improper use of his apostolical power in inflicting punishments. Indeed this power, though it might be said in one sense to belong to the apostles, being exerted when they spake, as when Peter declared that Ananias and Sapphira would instantly die, and Paul that Elymas would be struck with blindness, was not, properly speaking, at their command: on all these occasions they only spake as they were prompted by the spirit of God at the time."

CH. XIII. Ver. 8. my power to inflict any evil whatsoever upon you. I solemnly assure you that I have no wish to exhibit this sad proof of my apostolical mission. I desire nothing but your complete reformation. Correct your errors, and return to the path of Christian duty, and I shall be well content to be deprived of this evidence of my commission from Christ, even though it should expose me to the hazard of being thought vainglorious. For I am not ashamed to acknowledge, that these powers are not intrusted to us to be exercised at our discretion, and to gratify our private resentment: they can only be brought into action to inflict exemplary punishment upon some notorious offender, who wilfully obstructs the progress of the gospel; and can never be used to the injury of those who see their errors and repent of their misdeeds.

9. *For we rejoice when we are weak*[1] *and ye are strong; and for this also we pray*, even *your restoration*[2].

You may perhaps suspect, that after having said so much of my power to chastise, it would be a mortification to lose the opportunity. But this is not

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[1] *When we are weak.*] "si appearem velut infirmus; *i. e. si mihi liceat abstinere a duris remediis, licet ab aliis ultro contemnar.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *Your restoration.*] καταρτισιν "the verb properly signifies, to reduce a dislocated member to its right place in the body; also, to restore and make things whole which have been broken, Matt. iv. 21; Gal. vi. 1; Ezra iv. 12, 13. The word, therefore, is applied with great propriety to a church in which many of its members had misbehaved, and put themselves out of their places." Macknight.

true; for I can assure you, that it would give me the sincerest pleasure to be totally deprived of this power of inflicting punishment, by your speedy return to order and duty. And it is the sincere desire of my heart, and my earnest prayer to God, that the church at Corinth may no longer exhibit a scene of confusion and disorder; but that its erring members, being all restored, like dislocated limbs, to their proper place in the body, may each perform its respective functions with ease and delight, and may all contribute to the symmetry, beauty, and perfection of the whole. Ver. 9. Ch. XIII.

Wherefore I write these things being absent, that when present I may not act severely, according to the power which the Lord hath given me for edification and not for destruction. 10.

And the true cause of my adopting this sharpness and severity of style is, not to gratify a splenetic humour, but to bring you to consideration and reformation. And I wish to exhaust my severity in words while I am at a distance from you, that I may not be compelled to express it by deeds when I come to you, and that I may be under no necessity of visiting the irregularities and the misbehaviour of any with that apostolic rod which some, perhaps, who now make light of it, will find to their cost that I have authority to wield; and which God has actually intrusted into my hands; which yet he will never permit me to use as an instrument of private resentment and revenge, but solely as the means of edifying and reforming the church, by restoring

CH XIII. Ver. 10. those who are reclaimable, and by cutting off those who wilfully and obstinately obstruct the progress of the gospel and resist the offers of mercy.

4. The apostle concludes with expressing his good wishes and salutations, and with a solemn benediction, ver. 11—13.

11. *Finally, brethren, farewell*[1]*: restore yourselves*[2]*: encourage each other*[3]*: be of one mind*[4]*: live in peace*[5]*: and the God of love and peace will be with you.*

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[1] *Brethren, farewell.*] "χαιρετε, *rejoice.*" Wakefield.—"How charming a spirit," says Dr. Doddridge, "breathes in those sentences in which the apostle takes his leave of the Corinthians! So much wisdom and goodness, that one is almost grieved, that he who bids farewell in such an engaging manner does it so soon. Let us, however, bear his parting words in mind."

[2] *Restore yourselves.*] καταρτιζεσθε. See ver. 9. *q. d.* set yourselves to rights.—" be perfect." Newcome, with most translators.—" make yourselves complete." Wakefield.—" be perfect, or be reformed: according to Chrysostom, mend what is amiss." Pyle.—" *Be ye fully restored*; namely, by repentance and reformation." Macknight.

[3] *Encourage each other.*] παρακαλεισθε. So Wakefield.—" regulate and perfect whatever is amiss among you, exhort and encourage one another to it." Pyle.—" be comforted." Doddridge, and others.

[4] *Be of one mind.*] το αυτο φρονειτε· *i. e.* " set your affections on the same great objects; namely, the glory of God and the interests of the gospel." Macknight.—" *Be of the same mind.*" Newcome; who observes, " this is an exhortation to concord and unanimity, in opposition to the divisions about teachers which prevailed among them. See Rom. xii. 16, xv. 5; Phil. ii. 2, iii. 16, iv. 2."—" hold together in communion and love." Dr. Wall.—" *cavete ne sint inter vos dissensiones.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *Live in peace.*] " abstaining from mutual injuries." Newcome.

And now, my brethren, after all the expressions of tender affection for you; after all the advices and admonitions which I have suggested in the course of this epistle, I have nothing more to add, but my earnest wishes for your welfare and prosperity, in the noblest and the most comprehensive sense. Rectify what is amiss; restore what is out of place; aim at perfection, as individuals and as a church of Christ: do not remit your exertions till all is right. Encourage one another in the performance of duty; comfort each other under difficulties, trials, and persecutions. Attend unanimously to one object: to mutual edification, in faith, in love, in every good word and work; and indulge not a schismatical spirit. Let none usurp pre-eminence: let none enlist under the banner of party. Ch. XIII. Ver. 11.

Live in peace; in the exercise of mutual good will: not reproaching, not ensnaring each other. Be always tender to each others prejudices and infirmities; abound in liberality, and in all offices of kindness and friendship. If this be your character, your state will be happy beyond expression; for the God of love and peace, He who is love itself, the author of peace and the lover of concord, will dwell with you, and will crown you with his blessing.

Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the saints salute you[6]. 12, 13.

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[6] *Salute you*] "with the sincerest affection, and will always rejoice to hear of your peace, prosperity, and edification." Doddridge.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 13. Express your kind affection to each other by every customary and decent symbol of respect: for acts of kindness will cherish the sentiments of love. The believers at Philippi, from whence this epistle is written, all desire to express their affectionate salutations and good wishes.

14. *May the favour of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the participation of the holy spirit*[1] *be with you all.*

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[1] *The participation of the holy spirit.*] "κοινωνια, *participatio spiritûs sancti; i. e. dona spiritûs sancti.*" Rosenmuller.—"The word here signifies the joint fruition, or the participation of the gifts and graces of the holy spirit." Macknight.—"communion and fellowship of the holy ghost, in the richest anointings of his gifts and graces." Doddridge; who remarks in his note, "It is with great reason that this comprehensive and instructive benediction is pronounced just before our assemblies for public worship are dismissed."

Dr. Priestley explains the passage thus: "May all the blessings of the gospel, the love of God, and the participation of the gifts of his spirit, attend you all. For the phrase 'holy spirit' has no other meaning in the New Testament; it never means any direct influence of God upon the mind, and such as many persons expect even at this day. The knowledge of the gospel and the motives to virtue exhibited in it are abundantly sufficient for us, and we have no reason given us to expect any thing more. We pray indeed for virtuous principles and habits, but it is as we pray for our daily bread; neither being imparted to us immediately from God, which would be a miracle, but being produced by our own labour and endeavours in the use of proper means to supply our own wants. But still, since all the powers we can exert, and all our opportunities of exerting them, are from God, it is to him that our gratitude is due for every advantage that we procure for ourselves, whether of a temporal or of a spiritual nature. Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things."

Upon the whole it is sufficiently evident, in the first place, that it is highly improper to use these words of the apostle as a general form of benediction at the close of our public assem-

I conclude this long epistle with expressing my earnest wish that all of you, without exception, may continue to enjoy all the blessings of the gospel of our Master, Jesus Christ; which are the free gift of God through him, and which, having been bestowed gratuitously, can never be prized too highly. Ch. XIII. Ver. 14.

May you also be the highly favoured objects of the love of God; received into his family, adopted as his children, and made heirs of a glorious and everlasting inheritance. And finally, may you all be favoured with abundant communications of that holy spirit, which is so much and so justly the object of your desire; which is the proof of your adoption, the earnest of your inheritance, and which in his various manifestations, as arranged and distributed by divine wisdom, is essential both to the conversion of unbelievers, and to the instruction, the comfort, and the edification of the church.

I cannot close the exposition of this admirable epistle without once more requesting the reader to direct his attention to the state of things at Corinth, to the posture of the apostle's mind at the time

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blies for Christian worship, as the gifts of the holy spirit are now withdrawn. And further, that this text, so far from supplying an argument in favour of the distinct personality of the holy spirit, militates directly against it: for the participation of a *person* is absolutely unintelligible.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 14.

when he indited the epistle, to the mode of his address, and to the important conclusions which unavoidably follow from a general review of the whole.

When we consider the critical state of the Corinthian church, the schisms which prevailed in it, the strong party formed against the apostle and his doctrine, the pains taken by an eloquent and artful opponent, to bring his person, his talents, his pretensions, and his labours, into contempt; when we contemplate the state of the apostle's mind, his piety to God, his ardent gratitude to Christ, his zeal for the diffusion and purity of the gospel, his affection for the Corinthians, his desire of reclaiming them from their errors, their follies, and their crimes, by the gentlest means; and his humble, generous, condescending spirit; when we further attend to the good sense which he discovers, and to the skilful manner in which he conducts his argument, to the irresistible evidence which he produces, and to the public and notorious facts to which he appeals in proof of his apostolic authority, and which he knew that his adversaries could not contradict; when we also consider the power which he claims of punishing refractory offenders by some miraculous act, his reluctance to exercise this power, his earnest desire that they would not put it to the proof, his willingness to suffer the suspicion of boasting of a power that he did not possess, rather than to establish the truth of it at their expense; and, at the same time, recollect his determined resolution to give complete satisfaction upon this

head, to the utter confusion and dismay of his adversaries, if they would not be reclaimed by any other means: when, I say, we take all these things into consideration, it seems almost impossible to avoid coming to the following conclusions:—First, that this epistle is GENUINE; that it was written by Paul himself, and not by an impostor assuming his name. And therefore, Secondly, that the facts stated in this epistle are TRUE, and consequently that the CHRISTIAN RELIGION IS OF DIVINE ORIGINAL; that the apostle Paul was fully authorized and amply qualified to publish this heavenly doctrine to the world, that he justly challenges the most serious and attentive regard to his instructions, and that THEY WHO REJECT HIS TESTIMONY REJECT IT AT THEIR PERIL. Ch. XIII. Ver. 14.

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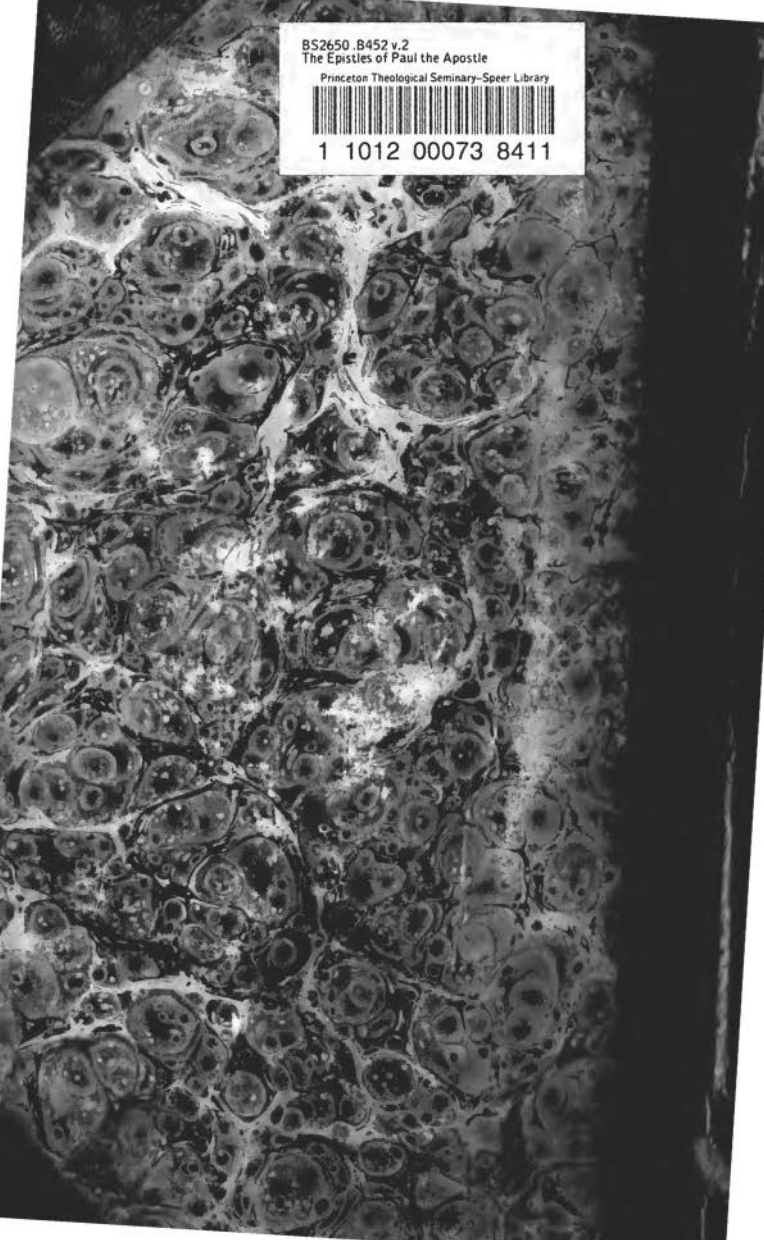
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THE EPISTLES

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TRANSLATED.

VOL. III.

THE EPISTLES

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TRANSLATED,

WITH

AN EXPOSITION, AND NOTES,

BY THE REV. THOMAS BELSHAM,

MINISTER OF ESSEX-STREET CHAPEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

" *Affer animum rectum et simplicem, veritatis supra cætera amantem,* " *præjudiciis vacuum. Ne protinus tanquam nova, tanquam inaudita et* " *absurda damnaveris, quæ tibi nova, tibi inaudita, et absurda occurrent.* " *Ea quæ dicimus, non cum aliorum judiciis, non cum vulgi inveteratis* " *opinionibus compone, ut inde rem æstimes, sed cum autoris divini verbis,* " *scopo, ipsoque rationis filo. Hinc tibi veritas petenda est: hinc de nobis* " *ferenda sententia. Equidem nos sicubi lapsi, aut D. Autoris mentem non* " *satis assecuti sumus, amice admoniti, ultro manus dabimus, gratesque in-* " *super accumulabimus.*" SLICHTINGIUS Præf. ad Heb.

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THE EPISTLE

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

THE GALATIANS.

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS is one of those compositions of the apostle Paul the genuineness of which has never been disputed in ancient or in modern times. The external evidence of this epistle is the same with that of the most authentic and approved ancient writings. It professes at its very commencement to have been written by Paul the apostle; who had been invested with his high and honourable office, not by men, but by Christ himself, who had appeared to him for that express purpose, and by God, who had raised Jesus from the dead. It appears to have been received as the production of that apostle by the whole primitive church without a dissenting voice: it is quoted by the early

ecclesiastical writers under the apostle's name; and the passages they cite from it are to be found in our present copies.

This epistle also contains every internal character of authenticity. It treats largely of a controversy, viz. the obligation of converted Gentiles to observe the Mosaic ritual, which could have had no existence later than the apostolic age. It recites many events in the life of the apostle, which are also related in Luke's history, with the addition of some incidental circumstances which are not noticed in the Acts of the Apostles, omitting others, which, though mentioned by Luke, were not necessary to be introduced into the epistle. The writer also alludes to many circumstances relating to the state of the Galatian churches, and to occurrences which took place while he exercised his office among them, which would be fully understood by those to whom the epistle was addressed, though necessarily obscure to others. To which may be added, that the unusual brevity of style, and the elliptical mode of expression and reasoning observable in this epistle, which render it peculiarly obscure to common readers, would probably be not unintelligible to those who were familiar with the apostle's phraseology and manner of speaking; and would therefore create no objection to the authenticity of the epistle, but rather the contrary. It may also be remarked, that the train of thought and the mode of reasoning, which the apostle has adopted in this epistle, are very similar to those which occur in his other writings, and particularly in the epistle

to the Romans. Thus, he argues the right of the Gentiles to be admitted into the church, from the call of Abraham; he represents the Christian church, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, as one mystical body, of which Christ is the head; and he zealously defends the liberties of the Gentile church, in opposition to those who would subject converted heathen to the yoke of the Mosaic law. These peculiar topics and modes of argument occurring in different epistles, constitute a presumptive proof that they were all of them the productions of the same individual.

GALATIA was a province of the Lesser Asia, which was inhabited by a colony of the Gauls. In this country the gospel had been preached by Paul with great success, and several churches had been formed by him, about A.D. 50, Acts xvi. 6. Soon after he had left the country, some bigots to the Mosaic ritual intruded themselves into the church, who zealously insisted upon a strict conformity to the law of Moses, as essential to obtaining an interest in the blessings of the gospel. These men represented the apostle Paul as a teacher of inferior rank, subordinate to the apostles, and who had no authority from them to teach the abolition of the law. And what was worse, they charged him with gross inconsistency, both in doctrine and practice: for that though, in order to ingratiate himself with the converted Gentiles, he had insisted upon the abrogation of the Jewish ritual while he was teaching in

Galatia, he nevertheless taught the contrary doctrine at other places; submitting to all the rigour of the law himself, and enforcing it strictly upon others. These assertions, which were repeated with great confidence and warmth by the false teachers and their adherents, had made a considerable impression upon the unstable minds of the simple Galatians, and had thrown their churches into great confusion. Their affections were greatly alienated from the apostle, and his authority among them was much diminished. Many had adopted the doctrine of the false apostle, and had submitted to the yoke of the law; and the introduction of these doctrines and rites had been the source of much violent animosity and contention, so that the genuine spirit of Christianity was in danger of being lost in the heat and bitterness of controversy.

Of this state of things in the Galatian churches the apostle was probably informed during his short residence at Ephesus, in his way to Jerusalem, Acts xviii. 19—21; and to remedy the growing evil he wrote this epistle immediately, which, next to the two epistles to the Thessalonians, is of the earliest date of any that are now extant. It was probably written before he left Ephesus, A.D. 53, previously to his second visit to Galatia, which he made at the latter end of that year or the beginning of the next. Acts xviii. 23.[1]

[1] Learned men are much divided in their opinions as to the date of the epistle to the Galatians. I have adopted the opinion of Dr. Lardner; which agrees in the main with that of L'Enfant,

Contrary to the apostle's usual custom, and in order to show his earnestness in the cause, and his great affection to the Galatians, this epistle was written with his own hand, Gal. vi. 11; and as writing was probably an irksome employment to him, who was engaged so much in travelling and public speaking, this circumstance may account for the many instances which occur of elliptical forms of expression, and for an unusual brevity and obscurity in the style.

The main design of the apostle was to reclaim the Christians of Galatia from their novel and unreasonable attachment to the Mosaic ritual, to the pure and simple doctrine of the gospel which they had learned from him; to restore peace and concord to the church; to vindicate his own apostolical authority, the simplicity of his character, and the consistency of his conduct, in opposition to the calumnies of the false apostle and his faction; to reinstate

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Beausobre, Lord Barrington, Dr. Benson, and Dr. Doddridge. Most of these learned writers seem indeed to think it probable, that the apostle had heard at Corinth of the defection of the Galatian churches, and that he wrote his letter a little before he left that city in the spring of A.D. 53. From the warmth of style, and the marks of haste which appear in it, we may conclude that it was written under the impression of the first intelligence; and as it is not unlikely that the apostle received the first tidings of these unpleasant circumstances at Ephesus in his way from Corinth to Jerusalem the same year, it is probable that he immediately wrote the epistle to the Galatians, intending to make them a visit in his return from Jerusalem to Ephesus, at the end of the year, or the beginning of the year following. Gal. iv. 20; Acts xviii. 23.

himself in their esteem; to recover the ground which he had lost in their affections by the base artifices of his opponent; and, finally, to expose this deceiver and his doctrine to the contempt and detestation which they deserved. In pursuance of this design, after having addressed them in a suitable introduction, ch. i. 1—5,

I. The apostle establishes his own authority, and repels the charges of inconsistency in his character and conduct. Ch. i. 6—ii. 21.

1. He expresses his great surprise and concern at the change which had taken place in the views and conduct of the Galatian churches since his departure, and denounces a solemn anathema upon any one who should presume to teach a doctrine different from that in which he had instructed them; and even upon himself, if he should be found guilty of this glaring inconsistency, ver. 6—10.

2. He proves by an induction of facts that he had received his commission from, and had been instructed in the Christian doctrine by, Christ alone; it was not therefore probable that he would be induced to betray his trust, ver. 11—24.

3. He alleges that in all his interviews with the apostles, and in all his intercourse with the church at Jerusalem, he had upon every occasion asserted his plenary apostolical authority, and defended the liberties of the Gentile churches; and that these claims had been allowed by the apostles themselves, ch. ii. 1—10.

4. As a further proof both of his authority and

his consistency, he relates the reproof which he administered to Peter in public at Antioch, for the duplicity of his conduct, and comments upon the speech which he delivered on the occasion, ver. 11—21.

II. The apostle urges a variety of arguments to reclaim the Galatians from their attachment to their new teacher and to his judaizing doctrine, and to recover their affections to himself and to the simplicity of the gospel. Ch. iii. 1—v. 12.

1. He produces many reasons to prove that the obligations of the Mosaic law did not extend to the converted Gentiles, ch. iii. 1—iv. 7.

2. He expostulates with them concerning the unreasonableness of their apostasy from the truth and the alienation of their affections from himself, ver. 8—20.

3. He illustrates his argument by an allegory taken from the history of Hagar and Sarah, ver. 24—v. 1.

4. He faithfully warns them of the dangerous consequences of a blind attachment to the law of Moses, ver. 2—12.

III. The apostle suggests many pertinent advices to promote a spirit of peace and love, and universal virtue, ver. 13—vi. 10.

IV. He closes the epistle with a solemn protest against the extension of the Mosaic ritual to the Gentile churches, and with a general apostolical benediction, ver. 11—18.

Many of the same thoughts and arguments occur in this epistle which are introduced in the epistle to

the Romans; which, as I have already remarked, is a strong presumption that they were indited by the same author. But it has been observed, that the apostle treats the Romans with a considerable degree of deference and ceremony, as not being personally acquainted with them, that church not having been planted by him. But he expostulates with the Galatians with the freedom of a parent and a teacher, to whom they were indebted for all they knew of the Christian religion, who possessed authority and a right to remonstrate freely, and even sharply, with them, for the errors and faults into which they had been betrayed, and for the diminution of their affection and regard to him for whom they had so lately, and indeed justly, professed the highest veneration and gratitude. But these paternal and apostolical rebukes are softened and qualified by many expressions of affection and tenderness, and there can be little doubt that they produced the desired effect; so that when he visited them in the course of the following year, he probably found them in that state in which he had left them, and to which it was his desire to recover them.

THE
EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

THE APOSTLE'S INTRODUCTION.

CHAP. I. 1—5.

THE apostle, intent upon silencing the objections which had been made to his authority, solemnly asserts his apostolical commission in his introductory salutation to the Galatian churches. Ch. i. 1—5. Ch. I.

PAUL an apostle[1], *not from men nor by* any *man*, *but by Jesus Christ*, *and* from *God* the *Father*[2] Ver. 1.

[1] *Paul an apostle.*] The apostle here evidently alludes to the calumnies which had been circulated to injure his character and to lessen his influence, viz. that he was no apostle, that he was a missionary from, and subordinate to, the apostles at Jerusalem, &c. He begins with a solemn assertion of his own apostolical rank and authority. He was no apostle of theirs or of any man's: they had not even been instrumental in investing him with the office, as in the case of Matthias, Acts i. On the contrary he received his commission from God alone, and had been invested with it by Christ himself; he was therefore inferior to none of the apostles, nor did he hold himself accountable to any. With Le Clerc I understand απο before Θεου to correspond with απ' ανθρωπων in the preceding clause. See Bowyer.

[2] *God* the *Father.*] "Here again you see how Jesus Christ is distinguished from God, to whom he was subordinate, and by whose power, and not his own, he was raised from the dead." Dr. Priestley.

Ch. I. Ver. 2, 3. *who raised him from the dead, and all the brethren*[1] who are *with me, to the churches of Galatia*[2]: *favour* be *to you and peace, from God* our *Father and* from *our Lord Jesus Christ.*

This epistle is written by Paul, who, whatever insinuations may have been circulated to the contrary, most assuredly is an authorized and duly qualified apostle: an apostle not indeed of men, let their rank and station in the church be what it may. I received my commission from none of them: I am the delegate of none, I am subordinate to none, I am accountable to none. They were not even employed as the instruments of setting me apart to the office. I am the apostle and messenger of God himself, from whom alone I derive my authority and qualifications; who having raised his holy servant Jesus Christ from the dead, appointed him to appear personally to me to invest me with the office and the powers of an apostle to the Gentiles. This epistle, thus written by Paul the apostle, is addressed by him to those churches which a few years ago he planted in the province of Galatia; and to which he and all his associates who are at present with him

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[1] *All the brethren.*] *i. e.* his associates who had accompanied him from Greece; or, as Dr. Chandler apprehends, the whole congregation of Christians in the place from whence he wrote his epistle, that the Galatians might understand that they had seen the epistle and unanimously approved of it.

[2] *Churches of Galatia.*] Dr. Macknight remarks that these churches "are not in the apostle's usual manner designed churches of God, or of Christ; perhaps to signify that they did not deserve these honourable appellations on account of their great defection from the truth of the gospel."

unite in affectionate salutations, and earnest wishes that they may abundantly participate in the blessings of that gospel which is the free gift of God our adorable Father; through Jesus, the true Messiah, our Master and Lord. Ch. I. Ver. 3.

Who gave himself for our sins[3], *that he might deliver us from the present evil age*[4], *according to the will of God our Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* 4. 5.

Great indeed are our obligations to our gracious Master, who voluntarily, and while we were yet sin-

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[3] *For our sins.*] "i. e. *pro nobis peccatoribus.*" Rosenmuller. "for us sinners."

[4] *From the present evil age.*] Mr. Locke, to whom we are indebted more than to any other commentator for the great light which he has thrown upon this obscure and difficult epistle, understands the "present evil age," ενεστωτος αιωνος πονηρου, of the Jewish dispensation; which in the New Testament is designated as αιων ουτος, 1 Cor. ii. 6—8, in opposition to that of the gospel, which is αιων μελλων, the age to come. The principal objection against this interpretation, which so well accords with the connexion, is from the use of the word πονηρος, *evil*; to obviate which Mr. Locke observes, that the law is said to be contrary to us, Col. ii. 14, and to work wrath, Rom. iv. 15; also, that the apostle speaks diminishingly of it in many places. He might have added that the apostle in his epistle to the Romans proves at large that the law leaves men under a sentence of death, Rom. ii. iii. with an utter incapacity to extricate themselves from it. See chap. vii. Upon these principles we easily explain the phrase of Christ giving himself for our sins: a sacrifical phrase, which signifies that by the death of Christ a new covenant was ratified by which all former legal incapacities and disabilities were abrogated, and Gentiles, who were formerly sinners and enemies, as well as Jews, the ancient people of God, are now admitted to a free participation of the blessings of the gospel, upon the condition of faith only, without subjection to the yoke of the law. This is the doctrine which the writer to the Hebrews argues at large, chap. ix. x.

Ch. I. Ver. 5. ners, gave himself up as a sacrifice for us, to purify us from the incapacities of our heathen state, and to qualify us for admission among the people of God, and for a participation of the privileges of the gospel, without submitting to the yoke of the law. For, indeed, though this dispensation was originally of divine authority, and well adapted to the circumstances in which it was given, its impositions are so burdensome, and the state in which it leaves us as sinners is so imperfect, and indeed deplorable, that it may justly be called evil in comparison with the new and glorious dispensation of the gospel. For this happy state of things we are wholly indebted to the rich mercy of God, our kind and compassionate Father, to whom we can never be sufficiently grateful; and to whom we ascribe never-ending praise.

PART THE FIRST.

THE APOSTLE VINDICATES HIS OWN AUTHORITY, AND REPELS THE CHARGE OF INCONSISTENCY IN HIS CHARACTER AND CONDUCT. Ch. i. 6—ii. 21. Ch. I.

SECTION I.

THE APOSTLE expresses his great surprise and concern at the change which had taken place in the views and conduct of the Galatian churches since his departure, and denounces a solemn anathema upon every one who should presume to teach a doctrine different from that in which he had instructed them, and even upon himself if he should be found guilty of this glaring inconsistency. Ch. i. 6—10.

I am astonished[1] *that you have so soon*[2] *transferred yourselves from him who invited you into* Ver. 6.

[1] *I am astonished.*] Θαυμαζω expresses great surprise at something very extraordinary and unexpected. So the people were astonished at the miracles of Christ, Matt. viii. 27; Mark vi. 51; Luke viii. 25; and of the apostles, Acts iii. 12. It sometimes expresses wonder mixed with indignation, Mark vi. 6; John v. 28, vii. 21. See Schleusner.

[2] *So soon.*] The gospel was preached in Galatia, A.D. 50: and this epistle was written, probably from Ephesus, A.D. 53, pre-

Ch. I. Ver. 7. *the favour of Christ* [1], *to a different gospel, which is nothing else than this* [2], *that there are some who trouble you, and who are desirous to subvert the gospel of Christ.*

I am perfectly amazed, my Christian friends, and can hardly give credit to the reports which I hear of your general defection from the plain and simple doctrine, and from the gentle and easy service of Christ; of the alienation of your affections from me, who was your first instructor in the Christian religion; and of your conversion to a system which you may, if you please, call a gospel, but which I can assure you is very different, both in its doctrine and its spirit, from the gospel of Christ. And what renders this apostasy and alienation the more extraordinary is, the short space of time in which it

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viously to his second visit to them, A.D. 54, Acts xviii. 23. Saurin observes, that the Galatians were a colony of the Gauls, who have always been reproached with taking impressions easily, and as easily suffering them to be effaced.

[1] *Who invited you into.*] "The apostle probably means himself. See ch. v. 8. εν χαριτι Χριστου may either signify, *by* the favour of Christ, which is the literal rendering; or, see ver. 15, *into* the grace of Christ, *i. e.* the gracious dispensation of God by Christ." Chandler.—"εν is often put for εις." Newcome.—"The word Χριστου is omitted in some MSS. of good authority." Griesbach.—Mr. Wakefield renders the passage, "I wonder that ye are so soon transferring yourselves from Christ, who called you with favour," &c.

[2] *Is nothing else than this, that,* &c.] This, I think with Mr. Locke and Dr. Chandler, to be the true rendering of the words ὁ ουκ εστιν αλλο· ει μη, &c. *q. d.* Your removal from me, who have called you to the grace of Christ, is owing to nothing but this: the crafty endeavours of designing men, &c. Mr. Locke justly remarks that if ὁ had referred to ευαγγελιον, it would have been more natural to have kept the word ἑτερον.

has taken place; as it is no more than two or three years since I left you in a very promising state. But I know how it happens. I see that some evil-minded persons have introduced themselves into your society, who are determined to disturb the harmony of the church, and, if possible, to overturn and to abolish the genuine gospel of Christ, by substituting in its place a system of useless and burdensome ceremonies. Ch. I. Ver. 7.

But if even we, or an angel from heaven, preach to you any gospel different from that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema[3]. 8.

What I have already said[4] *I now repeat: If any man*[5] *preach a gospel to you different from that which you have received, let him be anathema.* 9.

The gospel of Christ is, I assure you, one and the same without any variation. If, therefore, the reports which you have heard of me should have

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[3] *Let him be anathema.*] αναθεμα εστω, "let him be rejected." Wakefield. "This word," says Dr. Chandler, "does not signify accursed, or condemned of God to the punishment of another world. This the apostle would not wish to the worst of men. The meaning is, Let him be as a person excommunicated, or wholly cut off from the synagogue or church; with whom it is unlawful to have any commerce or correspondence whatsoever. It is not properly a wish of the apostle, but a direction to the Galatians how to behave." "*Excludatur a cœtu vestro. Theodoret ad* 1 Cor. xvi. 22. *Suicer. Thesaur. ad voc.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *I have already said.*] Some copies with the Syriac and Æthiopic versions read προειρηκα. The received text reads, *We* have, &c.

[5] *If any man.*] Mr. Locke thinks that in the former verse the apostle insinuates that they might as soon suspect an angel from heaven of corrupting the gospel as himself; and that in this verse he lays the anathema wholly and solely upon the Jewish seducers.

Ch. I. Ver. 9. been true: if I had actually taught a doctrine at other places different from that which I taught in Galatia; yea, if even a messenger, professing to be a celestial spirit, should presume to teach a doctrine different from that which I taught you at first, it would be your duty to regard us as impostors, and to expel us from your community as enemies to the doctrine and to the church of Christ. I repeat it again, that what I now denounce may appear to be a deliberate act, and not the hasty ebullition of a momentary feeling; and I wish you seriously to weigh the solemn admonition, If any one should presume to teach a doctrine different from that which you have already learned, and to call this corrupt doctrine the gospel of Christ, let such a teacher, whatever be his talents or pretensions, be expelled forthwith from your society, and hold no brotherly intercourse with him, lest you should be corrupted by him.

10. *For am I now*[1] *endeavouring to conciliate men*[2], *or God? or am I seeking to please men*[3]*? If, indeed, I were still a pleaser of men, I should not be* the *servant of Christ.*

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[1] *Am I now.*] This refers to his former life, when he was employed by men in their designs, and made it his business to please them, Acts ix. 1, 2. See Locke.

[2] *Endeavouring to conciliate.*] πειθω "this word frequently signifies, to obtain by entreaty, or to endeavour after the friendship or goodwill of any person, Matt. xxviii. 14; Acts xii. 20. πεισαντες, having made Blastus their friend. See also 2 Mac. iv. 45. to persuade God, *i. e.* to endeavour to secure his approbation." Chandler.

[3] *Or am I seeking to please men?*] "This clause is omitted in

Is it possible, my friends, that you can give such easy credit, as I find that you do, to the reports to my disadvantage which are so industriously circulated by my enemies? Is it for me, at this time of life, after all my professions, after all my labours, after all my sufferings in the cause of truth, so far to contradict my character as to make it my prime object, as I once did, to conciliate the favour of men, by teaching doctrines that will be agreeable to their prejudices, rather than approve myself to God, whose messenger I am, and to whom I must render my account? Can you believe so improbable a calumny as that the object of my ministry is to gain human applause? There was indeed a time when I was ambitious of popularity. But if this were still my object, I should justly forfeit all claim to that which I now regard as the most honourable of all distinctions, to be acknowledged as the faithful servant, the zealous apostle of Jesus Christ.

Ch. I. Ver. 10.

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the Æthiopic with the approbation of Dr. Mill, Dr. Owen, and Mr. Wakefield. Dr. Owen thinks it probable it was a marginal explanation of ανθρωπες πειθω." Newcome.

SECTION II.

Ch. I. *THE APOSTLE to obviate the charge of his being a subordinate teacher of Christianity, and of inconsistency in his conduct, proves, by an induction of facts, that from having been a bigoted persecutor, he became a zealous teacher of the gospel, having received instruction and authority from Christ alone.* Ch. i. 11—24.

1. The apostle solemnly avers that he received his doctrine from Christ only, ver. 11, 12.

Ver. 11. 12. *But I declare to you, brethren, that the gospel preached by me is not according to man*[1]*; for I neither received it from man, nor was I taught* it, *but*[2] *by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

You have been told, my brethren, that I am only a missionary from the apostles at Jerusalem; and that, in denying the obligation of Gentile converts to submit to the Jewish ceremonial, I have greatly exceeded my commission. In contradiction to this charge, I solemnly declare, that the doctrine I have

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[1] *According to man.*] "of human origin." Newcome. "pliant to human interest." Locke.

[2] *Nor was I taught* it, *but* &c.] "I have removed the point from εδιδαχθην, though contrary to the authority of the best editions." Newcome; whose punctuation I follow. Mr. Wakefield's translation is, "indeed I did not receive it from man, nor from mine own knowledge."

taught you, and which I still continue to preach, is no human invention, nor is it pliant to views of secular interest. I am no man's missionary; nor is there a person upon earth who can say that he was my instructor in the Christian religion. I was honoured with the personal intercourse of my Master, Jesus Christ himself; and by immediate illumination from him alone, I learned all I know, and all I teach. Ch. I. Ver. 12.

2. To establish this fact, the apostle gives a brief account of his proceedings and removals for three years after his conversion: from which it appears impossible that he should have derived either his authority or his instructions from the other apostles, ver. 13—24.

1.) He reminds them that he was once a bigoted persecuting pharisee, ver. 13, 14.

For ye have heard of my former way of life in the profession of *Judaism*[3], *that I outrageously persecuted the church of God, and laid it waste:* 13.
and made proficiency in Judaism above many of the same age in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous[4] *for the traditions of my fathers*[5]. 14.

[3] *Judaism.*] "Mr. L'Enfant well observes, that this does not signify the religion taught by Moses, but that which was practised among the Jews at this time, and much of it built upon the traditions of the elders." Doddridge. "Ιουδαϊσμος *est studium Judaicorum rituum.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *More exceedingly zealous.*] "ζηλωτης, *i. e. studiosissimus religionis.* ζηλος, emulatio, *est acrè studium rei impensum.* περισσοτερως, *plus quam alii.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *Traditions of my fathers.*] "traditiones patriæ *sunt partim,*

Ch. I. Ver. 14.

To prove that the charges alleged against me are totally destitute of foundation, I will briefly recapitulate a few of the most material circumstances of my former life. You must have heard from myself and others what I originally was: a Jew, educated at the feet of Gamaliel in all the tenets both of the written and the oral law; a bigoted persecuting pharisee, who, filled with rage against the disciples of Christ, thought I could not exert myself too strenuously, nor too barbarously, for the extirpation of that holy community, which the most high God acknowledges as his own; and which he has taken under his immediate and powerful protection. And you have certainly heard how much I distinguished myself above other young men who were my associates, by the progress which I made in the pharisaic doctrine; by an earnest attachment to rites and ceremonies; and by a furious zeal for those traditions which, being transmitted, as they pretend, from our ancestors, are enjoined by them as of equal obligation with, if not superior to, and even occasionally superseding, the written law. Judge, then, whether such a zealot as I have formerly been to all the erroneous notions and burdensome superstitions of pharisaic Judaism, should have been likely to have abandoned them completely and at once, without some very sufficient and cogent reason.

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ipsa doctrina. Lex et prophetæ: partim, doctrinæ humanæ, quæ ore traduntur et ad conservandam legis olim civilis auctoritatem perpetuam, sensim a magistris inventæ erant." Rosenmuller.

2.) The apostle relates that after his conversion he passed some time in Arabia; and opened his ministry at Damascus previously to his return to Jerusalem, ver. 15—17. Ch. I.

But when it pleased God, who set me apart from my birth[1], *and called* me *by his favour, to reveal his son to me*[2] *that I might preach his gospel to the Gentiles; immediately*[3], *without consulting any one*[4], *or going up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, I went away into Arabia and returned again to Damascus.* Ver. 15. 16. 17.

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[1] *Who set me apart from my birth.*] Gr. *from my mother's womb.* See Dr. Symonds's Observ. p. 32. The apostle means to say, that he was originally intended for the office which he then held: it was not his intention to express himself with philosophical accuracy concerning the divine eternal decrees.—There is, therefore, no foundation for the remark of Dr. Chandler, that God is *sometimes* pleased to separate persons, even before their birth, for particular offices and duties, as if he did not always do this; and as if all events were not equally under the direction and controul of Divine Providence.

[2] *To reveal his son to me*] "by a miraculous vision from heaven." Dr. Chandler. εν εμοι, *to* me, that I might preach his gospel, εν τοις εθνεσι, *to* the Gentiles. So Locke, Chandler, Macknight, Symonds.—"to reveal his son *by* me." Tyndal, Wakefield, Newcome.

[3] *Immediately without consulting,* &c.] I take this construction of the passage from Mr. Wakefield. Literally, *I consulted not—I went not up.* Luke in his history takes no notice of this journey to Arabia; but it is highly probable that it took place before Paul opened his ministry at Damascus; and that during his retirement in Arabia, Jesus Christ appeared to him and communicated the doctrine which he was commissioned to teach.

[4] *Without consulting any one.*] In the original, *flesh and blood.* See Matt. xvi. 17; Eph. vi. 12. "I did not confer immediately with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem," &c. Newcome.—"immediately, without having recourse to flesh and blood, or going up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me." Wakefield.—"I applied not myself to any man for

Ch. I. Ver. 17. Bigot and cruel persecutor as I was, the mercy of God was nevertheless extended to me; and by that sovereign goodness which selects what instruments it pleases for carrying on its own designs, I was from my birth set apart in the divine councils, as one who was afterwards to be employed as a teacher of the gospel; and in due time I was, as you very well know, by a merciful and most extraordinary interposition of Divine providence in my way to Damascus, invited into the Christian church and converted to the Christian faith. But as soon as it had pleased God in his abundant mercy thus to change my heart by the personal appearance of Christ from heaven, and in general terms to give me a commission to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, what was then my conduct? Did I converse with, or desire information from, the Christians at Damascus? or did I go up to Jerusalem, to learn the doctrine of Christ from those who had been first appointed to the apostolic office? and to request instructions and authority from them? Far from it. I went immediately away to a great distance into Arabia; where, in an obscure retirement for many months, my mind was fully enlightened in the plain and

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advice what to do." Locke; who in his note observes, "This and what the apostle says in the following verse, is to evidence to the Galatians the full assurance he had of the truth and perfection of the gospel, which he had received from Christ by immediate revelation; and how little he was disposed to have any regard to the pleasing of men in preaching it, that he did not so much as communicate or advise with any of the apostles about it, to see whether they approved of it."

simple truths of the gospel, and my heart weaned from pharisaic prejudices, by communications from Christ himself. After this I returned to Damascus, and there I opened my apostolical commission, and preached the gospel with great freedom and success; till at length, a persecution having been instigated against me by my unbelieving countrymen, I was compelled to flee for my life. Ch. I. Ver. 17.

3.) The apostle gives an account of a short visit which he made to Peter at Jerusalem, which was not till three years after his conversion, ver. 18—20.

Then, after three years[1], *I went up to Jerusalem to visit Peter*[2], *and I abode with him fifteen days. But I saw none other of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother*[3]. *Now as to what I am writing to you, behold, in the presence of God, I falsify not*[4]. 18 19. 20.

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[1] *After three years.*] The apostle is generally understood to mean three years after his conversion, about A.D. 39. Acts ix. 26.

[2] *To visit Peter.*] ἱστορῆσαι, "to inquire for Peter." Mr. Wakefield.—If the apostle had been converted, and had preached or at least learned the gospel, three years before he saw Peter, it is plain that he did not derive his instructions from him. If he saw no apostles but Peter and James, it was evident that he did not act under a commission from them, and that his authority was independent.—"That I might *see* Peter, not learn of him, not consult him." Newcome.

[3] *The Lord's brother.*] This was James the son of Alpheus and Mary the sister of our Lord's mother: so that James was cousin-german to Christ. See Doddridge. "This James," says Dr. Priestley, "from his residing all his lifetime in Jerusalem, is often considered as the bishop of that place. None of the apostles, however, were properly bishops of any particular place, but had a general superintendence over all Christian churches wherever they went."

Ch. I. Ver. 20. It was about three years after my conversion that I was compelled to quit Damascus. I then came directly to Jerusalem; and having with some difficulty, by means of Barnabas, obtained access to the believers there, I made a visit to that eminent apostle Peter, who entertained me hospitably in his house. But from him I could not learn much during the short visit of fifteen days which I passed with him: much less could I have received a commission from the original apostles, as some would have you believe; for in truth, and I most solemnly appeal to an omniscient God in attestation of my veracity, I at that time saw no apostle besides, excepting James the son of Alpheus, the near relation of Jesus, all the other apostles happening then to be absent from Jerusalem; nor was I permitted to prolong my residence there, being warned in a vision to depart and preach the gospel in other places where my ministry would be more useful. My life also was in imminent danger from the malice of my enemies, which made it necessary for me to hasten my departure.

4.) The apostle therefore went down immediately into Syria and Cilicia, without making himself known to the churches in Judea, ver. 21—24.

21. *Afterwards I went into the regions of Syria*

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[a] *In the presence of God.*] As this was not a fact of public notoriety like the rest, the apostle solemnly appeals to God in attestation of his veracity. It was probably during this visit that he had the trance mentioned Acts xxii. 17. See Doddridge *in loc.*

and Cilicia; and I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea which were *in Christ*[1]. *But they only heard that he who formerly persecuted us, now preacheth the faith which he formerly extirpated; and they glorified God on my account.* Ch. I. Ver. 22. 23. 24.

Being obliged to leave Jerusalem, and the Jews being greatly exasperated against me, it was thought prudent for me not to preach in Judea, and therefore I went down immediately to Syria and Cilicia, to preach the gospel to my fellow citizens at Tarsus and in the neighbouring regions. All this time, so far was I from acting in subordination to the churches in Judea, and deriving my instructions from them, that I was not even personally known to them. They had only heard that Saul of Tarsus, who had been a few years before the malignant and unwearied persecutor of the disciples of Jesus, is now by a signal interposition of divine mercy converted to the Christian faith, and is become the zealous teacher of that holy doctrine which he once threatened and laboured to exterminate. And hearing this, so far from calling me to account for preaching the gospel without permission from them, they rejoiced in my conversion, and gave thanks to God for his great mercy to me, and for employing me as an instrument in this honourable and glorious work.

Having thus proved that I received my doctrine

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[1] *Churches in Christ,*] *i. e.* "believing in Christ. Rom. xvi. 7." Locke. "which had acknowledged Christ." Wakefield. Or, as we should say, the Christian churches.

Ch. I. Ver. 24. and my commission from Christ alone, and from no human authority, I shall next show that many years afterwards, when these were called in question, their validity and divine authority were fully acknowledged by the apostles themselves.

SECTION III.

Ch. II. *THE APOSTLE vindicates the independence of his apostolical authority, the consistency of his character, and the truth of his doctrine, by an account of his conduct at another visit which he made at Jerusalem, and by the public concessions of the apostles themselves.* Ch. ii. 1—10.

1. Having by divine direction taken a journey to Jerusalem, he communicated privately and fully to the apostles of greatest eminence the doctrine which he taught, ver. 1, 2.

Ver. 1. *Then, after fourteen years*[1], *I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took with* me *Titus*

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[1] *Fourteen years.*] That is, according to the generality of commentators, after his conversion; and the visit to which the apostle here refers is that which is mentioned Acts xv., when Paul and Barnabas were deputed by the church at Antioch to go up to Jerusalem to consult the apostles there, concerning the obligation of the Gentile converts to submit to circumcision. Grotius and others for *fourteen* read *four*, by conjecture, supposing the apostle to allude to his second journey to Jerusalem, Acts xi. 30; when, together with Barnabas, he carried up a collection from the Christians at Antioch for the relief of the indi-

also[2]. *And I went up by revelation*[3], *and communicated to them that gospel which I preach to the Gentiles; but separately*[4] *to those who were of reputation*[5], *lest I might run, or might have run, in vain*[6].

Ch. II. Ver. 2.

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gent believers at Jerusalem under the pressure of the famine predicted by Agabus. But this is expressly said to have been remitted to the elders of the church, so that it is possible that Paul might not then even have seen any of the apostles. It is not, however, likely that all the apostles would be absent from Jerusalem at the same time, Acts xii. The fact seems to be, that the question concerning circumcision does not appear to have been started, or at least to have attracted much notice, at the time of the second visit; which was antecedent to the mission of Paul and Barnabas into the Lesser Asia, and to the conversion of such large numbers of heathen idolaters to the Christian faith. See Acts xiii. xiv. *After fourteen years:* δια δεκατεσσαρων. "δια is used for μετα Matt. xxvi. 61; Mark ii. 1." Newcome.

[2] *Took with* me *Titus.*] This, as Dr. Doddridge observes, is the first mention of Titus in the New Testament, Luke having, for whatever reason, wholly omitted the mention of him in his history, though he was an eminent Gentile convert, a proselyte, a friend and a frequent associate of Paul. The apostle gives him a very high character, 2 Cor. viii., and it is even conjectured that the brother whom he speaks of ver. 18, as associated with Titus in collecting the charitable donations of the Corinthian Christians, was Luke himself. See 2 Cor. xii. 18. It is uncertain when Titus was converted.

[3] *By revelation.*] This circumstance is omitted by Luke. The apostle might perhaps demur to accept the commission from the church at Antioch to consult the apostles at Jerusalem, lest it should appear as the acknowledgement of an authority superior to his own, till his objection was overruled by a divine communication. That his missions were frequently undertaken by a special direction from heaven, is evident to all who read the apostolic history. See Acts xvi. 7, 10, 22.

[4] *Separately.*] κατ' ιδιαν, severally, individually. See Chandler.

[5] *To those of reputation.*] τοις δοκουσι see ver. 6, 9. to those who were pillars of the church, to James, Peter, and John.

[6] *Lest I might,* &c.] See Newcome: *i. e.* I communicated to the apostles the whole doctrine I had taught, lest they, being

Ch. II. Ver. 2.

To confound the ignorance and malignity of those who presume to give out that I am no apostle, and that neither my mission nor my doctrine was approved by the true apostles of Christ, I will now mention some important circumstances which occurred in a visit to the church at Jerusalem fourteen years after my conversion to the Christian religion, being the first which I made to the apostles, after having by divine appointment fulfilled a mission to the Lesser Asia, for the purpose of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. And Barnabas my fellow-labourer accompanied me: I also thought fit to take with us Titus, an eminent convert from heathenism. This journey we undertook at the desire of the church at Antioch, in order to settle a question which had been moved concerning the obligation of the Mosaic ritual. And for this purpose I was permitted and even commanded to go to Jerusalem by an express revelation from Christ, by whose direction I act in all the steps which I take relative to the purposes of my apostolical mission. Now when I came to Jerusalem, knowing the prejudices which existed against me, I fully communicated to the apostles of greatest note whom I found there, the whole of the doctrine which I preached to the Gentiles, without omitting the circumstance of their entire exemption from the yoke of the ceremonial

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misled by the false reports of others, should oppose my doctrine and obstruct my usefulness. Dr. Mangey, in Bowyer's *Conjectures*, proposes to read ὡς for πως, *not as though*, &c. Mr. Wakefield adopts this reading, and Dr. Priestley approves it.

law. This communication, however, was made to them individually and in private, to avoid the noise and clamour of prejudiced persons, and to secure the countenance and support of these apostles, without which I was apprehensive that my past and future labours might be rendered in a great measure fruitless. Ch. II. Ver. 2.

2. The apostle shows in the case of Titus, that the apostles at Jerusalem did not insist upon the subjection of Gentile believers to the yoke of the law, ver. 3.

But not even Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. 3.

Much as I wished to conciliate the affections of the apostles and Jewish Christians, I would not upon any account sacrifice the liberties of the Gentile church to this object. Nor was it indeed expected, or at least insisted upon; for, whatever might be their secret wishes, they by no means absolutely required that Titus should submit to the institutions of Moses, though they knew that he was a Gentile born, and not only a proselyte to, but a teacher of, the Christian religion.

3. The apostle further declares his determined opposition to the demands of Judaizing bigots, ver. 4, 5.

And with regard to the false brethren[1] *who were* 4.

[1] *With regard to, &c.]* διὰ δὲ τοὺς ψευδαδελφους. "διὰ regit accusativum, et valet quod attinet ad, Rom. iii. 27, viii. 10." Schleusner.

Ch. II. *clandestinely introduced, who privily slipped in*[1], *as spies upon that liberty which we have in Christ*
Ver. 5. *Jesus, that they might enslave us, to these we yielded subjection no not for an instant*[2], *that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.*

I have constantly withstood every attempt to impose the Jewish ceremonial upon the Gentile believers. Some half-Christians, bigots to the law, had come down to Antioch with great professions of regard for the new converts, but in fact with no other view but to see whether we complied with the Mosaic ritual, to deprive the Gentiles of their liberty, and to insist upon their subjection to the law of Moses. And some of this description, and with

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Schleusner. This appears to me to be the easiest construction and explanation of the words; but I am inclined to think that in fact the apostle in the hurry of writing having introduced a parenthesis, forgot, and altered the construction of this sentence, as he certainly did of the next.

[1] *Who privily slipped in.*] οἵτινες παρεισῆλθον. These words are omitted by Mr. Wakefield, upon the authority of the Syriac, Æthiopic, and Coptic versions. They appear like a marginal explanation of παρεισακτους. They *privily slipped in:* at Antioch, Acts xv. 1, they introduced themselves, probably pretending a mission from James (see Gal. ii. 12), and the other apostles at Jerusalem, to inquire after the welfare of the Gentile church and to promote their edification, when their real purpose was, to enforce subjection to the ceremonial law. And it is not unlikely that some of these zealots had contrived to get themselves nominated among the messengers who were sent to consult the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. Acts xv. 2.

[2] *Not for an instant.*] πρὸς ὥραν, for an *hour*. "with whom we complied not even for a moment." Wakefield.—"*ne ad breve tempus quidem*, h. e. *nunquam*." Schleusner; who, however, gives the sense of "*momentum, punctum temporis, minima quævis temporis particula;*" and refers to Matt. viii. 13, ix. 22; Luc. xii. 39, 46.

the same design, had artfully introduced themselves among the messengers who were deputed from Antioch to apply to the apostles and elders at Jerusalem for the decision of this question. But I have uniformly and invariably opposed them, and have never upon any occasion, even for a moment, acquiesced in their impositions. For I was determined that the gospel should be offered to the Gentiles in its truth and purity, as I had received it from Christ, unincumbered with the burdensome ceremonies of the Jewish law. Ch. II. Ver. 5.

4. His knowledge of the Christian doctrine was so complete, that the most eminent of the apostles at Jerusalem could make no addition to it, ver. 6.

Moreover those who were[3] *of consideration*[4], *whatever they formerly were*[5] *it maketh no difference to me, God accepteth no man's person: even* 6

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[3] *Those who were.*] In the original, *from those,* απο δε των. The apostle evidently intended to say, *from those,* &c. *I received* no information: but having inserted a parenthesis, he changes the structure of his sentence, and concludes with, "*they added* no information to me."

[4] *Who were of consideration.*] των δοκουντων ειναι τι. Literally, *who appeared to be somewhat: i. e.* by a well known elegance of the Attic dialect in the use of the word δοκεω, *who actually were somewhat,* who were persons of note and eminence in the church; pillars, as he afterwards expresses himself, ver. 9. "The Greek is equivalent to των οντων τι." Newcome.—"Δοκεω, *solet interdum eleganter pleonasticè poni.*" Schleusner. See Marc. x. 42; Luc. xxii. 24.

[5] *They formerly were.*] ὁποιοι ποτε ησαν. "however some would set them up above me, as having conversed with Christ on earth, and been apostles long before me." Doddridge.

Ch. II. Ver. 6. *those who were of the greatest consideration communicated to me no instruction*[1].

Are there any among you who presume to charge me with not being so well informed concerning the doctrine of the gospel as the apostles at Jerusalem? Nothing can be more remote from truth than this accusation. There was a time, indeed, when they were greatly my superiors in Christian knowledge, but that makes no difference at present; they are not my superiors now. For God, with whom there is no partiality, and who disposes of his favours as he pleases, has vouchsafed to place me upon a level with the most eminent of them all; so that when I came to converse even with men of the greatest estimation in the church, so complete had my instructions been, that it was not in their power to communicate any new information to me, nor did they discover any error which required to be corrected.

5. So far were the other apostles from affecting any superiority over him, that after having conversed with him, they readily acknowledged him as their colleague, upon a footing of perfect equality with themselves, ver. 7—10.

7. *But on the contrary, when they saw that I was*

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[1] *Communicated to me no instruction.*] οὐδὲν προσανεθεντο. "Πρ. *facta* collatione addo aliquid, examine habito corrigo, meliora doceo." Schleusner; who renders the words, "*me inquam apostoli, quorum maxima erat auctoritas, nihil novi docuerunt, aut correxerunt.*—" in conference added nothing to me." Newcome.—" they, I SAY, who had this character gave me no instructions." Wakefield.

intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, as Ch. II.
Peter was with that *of the circumcision; for he* Ver. 8.
who exerted his energy[2] *in Peter for the apostle-*
ship of the circumcision, exerted also his energy in
me for that *to the Gentiles; and perceiving the fa-* 9.
vour[3] *which had been conferred upon me, James*[4]
and Cephas, and John, who were pillars, gave unto
me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship,
that we indeed[5] might go as apostles[6] *to the Gen-*
tiles, but they to the circumcision.

The persons of eminence to whom I particularly allude, were James and Peter and John, who then resided at Jerusalem; and who, being looked up to

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[2] *He who exerted his energy.*] ενεργησας· "who wrought powerfully in Peter," &c. Newcome.—"who gave Peter the authority of an apostle to the Jews, gave me also a commission to the Gentiles." Wakefield. The apostle means to say that his commission to the Gentiles was established by miracles as clearly as that of Peter to preach the gospel to the Jews; and that the other apostles were perfectly satisfied with this evidence. See Locke.

[3] *The favour*, &c.] την χαριν. "This word," says Dr. Taylor, "is put for the apostolic office, Rom. i. 5, xii. 3, xv. 18; 1 Cor. iii. 10: and in general may signify any office, &c. which is the effect of favour."

[4] *James*, &c.] Of the three apostles who are here mentioned as the pillars, that is, the supports and ornaments of the church at Jerusalem, James is mentioned first. He was probably the bishop or president of the church at Jerusalem: an honour assigned to him, perhaps, from his near relationship to our Lord, Gal. i. 19. It is observable that he was the person who spoke last, and summed up the arguments, in the council which was held upon the question of circumcision, Acts xv. 13—21.

[5] *We indeed.*] ημεις μεν. or, "that *we on our part.*" This is the reading of the Alexandrine, Ephrem, and other ancient copies. See Griesbach.—αυτοι δε, "but *they on their part.*"

[6] Might go as apostles.] The ellipsis is the same as in ver. 8, and ought to be supplied in the same manner.

Ch. II. Ver. 9. as the heads and pillars of the church, its best ornaments and supports, took particular cognizance of the cause referred to them by the Christians at Antioch. These apostles, therefore, having conversed with me concerning the nature and objects of my mission, and my qualifications for it, soon discovered and ingenuously acknowledged my equality with them. For they found that as Peter and others were commissioned to preach the gospel to the Jews, to work miracles in confirmation of it, and to impart spiritual gifts to believers, God had also given to me a similar commission, confirmed by similar powers, to teach the gospel to the heathen. Most readily, therefore, they acknowledged my apostolical authority; they received me as an associate and an equal, and agreed that each of us should labour in the province respectively assigned to us: so that, while they continued for the present to exercise their mission among the Jews, Barnabas and I should go on with plenary apostolical authority to preach the gospel to the Gentiles; in the conversion of whom they greatly rejoiced, and to our arduous labours for whose benefit they cordially wished success.

10. *Only* they desired *that we should remember the poor, which very thing I also was earnest to do*[1].

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[1] *Earnest to do.*] Not only from sympathy and compassion to the indigent Christians at Jerusalem, who are probably the persons intended, but from the hope that the generosity of the Gentile Christians might gradually soften the prejudices of the Jewish bigots. "All that they proposed was, that we should

So far were these distinguished men from desiring to innovate upon our doctrine, or to impose a burdensome ritual upon the Gentile converts, that they assumed no authority whatever; but only requested that we would not forget the indigent believers in Jerusalem, who stood in great need of relief: an object which I was myself particularly anxious to promote, not merely from sympathy in their distresses, and a sincere desire to supply their wants, but from the hope that the liberality of the Gentile converts might gradually soften the prejudices of the Hebrew Christians, and reconcile them to the liberal spirit of the new dispensation. Ch. II. Ver. 10.

AT the close of this interesting Section, it may be of use to compare the accounts which are given by Luke and Paul of this celebrated interview with the apostles at Jerusalem, when the liberties of the Gentile church were fully and authoritatively established: in which we cannot fail to remark the difference between the narrative of the calm impartial historian, and that of the party personally and deeply concerned. Luke, Acts xv., relates that certain Jewish zealots visited the Gentile church at Antioch, and troubled its peace by insisting upon the indispensable necessity of circumcision; that Paul and Barnabas warmly opposed this unauthorized en-

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remember to make collections among the Gentiles for the poor Christians of Judea, which was a thing that of myself I was forward to do." Locke.

Ch. II. croachment upon the liberty of the Gentile church; that the dissentions rose to such a height that it was thought advisable to depute Paul and Barnabas, in company with other members of the church, to go up to Jerusalem to consult the apostles upon the case; that the apostles and elders, being assembled to deliberate upon the subject, after hearing the account which Paul and Barnabas gave of their great success in converting the Gentiles, came to an unanimous resolution, at the suggestion of James, that the Gentiles who believed were not subject to circumcision, nor to the yoke of the ceremonial law; but that they should be advised, out of regard to the prejudices of the Jews, to abstain from certain kinds of food which were forbidden by the law of Moses. And with this answer they returned to Antioch, and restored peace to the divided church. This is Luke's account.

The apostle Paul, as one personally concerned and deeply interested in the business, gives a narrative of the same journey with much greater animation than the historian; and details many circumstances which Luke omits. In the first place, he expresses great indignation at the intrusion of these unwelcome visitors from Jerusalem, who had artfully insinuated themselves into the society, in order to abridge the liberties of the Gentile converts, and to sow discord in the church. He further remarks, that he did not consent to undertake this journey at the request, much less at the bidding, of the church at Antioch. No: he would not compromise the au-

thority which he derived from Christ: nor would he go, till he was directed by Christ himself, to accept of the mission from the brethren at Antioch. Neither would he for a moment give place to the intruders: and to exemplify the right which he claimed, he took Titus, a converted Gentile, with him to Jerusalem, whom he protected by his own authority from the imposition of the ceremonial law. CH. II.

The apostle further relates, that in his intercourse with his elder brethren, the apostles of the greatest note in the church at Jerusalem, he did not profess to ask their advice, to apply for instruction, or to solicit approbation: he simply communicated the doctrine he had taught, the rules which he had observed, the injunctions he had imposed, the authority under which he had acted, the power which he had exercised, and the success which had followed his preaching. If they approved his proceedings, it was well: if not, he should still go on as he had been directed by him from whom he had received his commission. He communicated this information in private, that the multitude might not take offence. And as he expected, so it happened. In the first place, the apostles could make no addition to his instructions; and in the second place, they were delighted with his narrative, rejoiced in his success, and cordially received and acknowledged him as their equal and associate, commending him and his labours to the blessing of God.

These circumstances, so vividly described, give interest and credibility to the narrative; and con-

Ch. II. tribute powerfully to his main design, of convincing the Galatians that he was truly an apostle of Jesus Christ, entirely independent of the other apostles, and equal in all respects to those who had been honoured with the apostleship many years before him.

SECTION IV.

THE APOSTLE, as a further proof of his independent authority, and of the consistency of his character, mentions the rebuke which he administered publicly to Peter at Antioch for the timidity and duplicity of his conduct; and comments upon the speech which he then delivered. Ch. ii. 11—21.

1. He states the misconduct of the apostle Peter, ver. 11—13.

Ver. 11. *Moreover, when Peter came to Antioch*[1], *I opposed him to the face because he was to be blamed*[2].

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[1] *Peter came to Antioch.*] This was probably soon after the council at Jerusalem; and the first time that Peter had ever visited a Gentile church. Dr. Lardner observes, that this is the last time that Peter is mentioned in the New Testament, except in his own epistles, and 1 Cor. i. 12, iii. 22. Luke takes no notice of this journey.

[2] *To be blamed.*] κατεγνωσμενος, the participle for the adjective. The apostle uses a strong expression. Peter's behaviour deserved "not only a gentle reproof, but to be entirely condemned, as being contrary to his own knowledge, and tending to subvert the simplicity of the gospel." Chandler.

For before certain persons came from James[3] *he used to eat*[4] *with the Gentiles; but when they came he withdrew*[5], *and separated himself, fearing those of the circumcision*[6]. *And the rest of the Jews also acted hypocritically*[7] *with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with* them[8] *in this their hypocrisy.* Ch. II. Ver. 12. 13.

Having represented the independence of my cha-

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[3] *From James.*] As it is mentioned that they came from James, it is probable that these officious zealots either had, or pretended that they had, authority from that apostle for the advice they gave. And though, after what had passed at the council, neither James nor the rest of the Jewish Christians could insist upon the subjection of the believing Gentiles to the yoke of the law, they might still think it inexpedient to associate familiarly with them.

[4] *He used to eat.*] So Wakefield. This cannot, as Dr. Priestley observes, be understood of his eating any thing forbidden by the laws of Moses, but probably of familiarly associating with them at their meals. See Acts x. 28. Dr. Chandler, however, thinks that the apostle, having been taught by vision that nothing was unclean, esteemed it no sin to eat of their meats without distinction.

[5] *He withdrew.*] " υπεστελλε, *se subduxit, subtraxit furtim id agens.*" Newcome; who justly adds, " his reason was an undue fear of the converted Jews: from which unworthy motive he acted contrary to the revelation made to him, and to his declared sentiments; and thus obstructed the progress of Christianity among the Gentiles." See Acts x. 15, 28, 34, 35.

[6] *Of the circumcision.*] τους εκ περιτομης. Jewish Christians, zealots for the law, who came from Jerusalem, who would be offended at his familiar intercourse with the Gentile believers, and would report it to his disadvantage.

[7] *Acted hypocritically.*] " contrary to their better judgement and conviction; concealing their real sentiments through fear." Newcome.

[8] *Was carried away.*] " απαγω signifies to carry or drive a person away against his will; here it signifies to be carried away by the force of authority and example, in opposition to conviction and judgement." Chandler.

Ch. II. Ver. 13.

racter and conduct with respect to the apostles in circumstances in which we perfectly harmonized with each other, I will now show how little I was disposed to make improper concessions where our conduct differed. Soon after the important question concerning the obligation of the Mosaic law had been decided in favour of the Gentile believers by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, Peter made a visit to the church at Antioch; and here I was under the painful necessity of administering to him publicly, and in the presence of the whole assembled church, a severe rebuke, and of remonstrating with him against the duplicity of his behaviour; for indeed his conduct was most inexcusable, and deserving of condemnation. It was this: When Peter first came to Antioch he associated familiarly with the Gentile converts, and made no scruple of eating with them; knowing that under the gospel dispensation ritual distinctions are set aside. But afterwards, when some troublesome zealots came down from Jerusalem, and pretended that James, and the most respectable members of the Hebrew church, though they did not insist upon imposing the Mosaic ritual upon Gentile Christians, nevertheless held it to be inexpedient to associate familiarly with those who declined subjection to the law, Peter, instead of boldly adhering to his principles, and rebuking the false maxims and unauthorized intrusion of these officious bigots, meanly submitted to them, and acquiesced in their illiberal suggestions. So that, lest he should give offence

to these narrow-minded Jews, he suddenly broke off his connexion with the Gentile converts; to the great surprise and discouragement of that numerous and respectable body of believers. The other Jewish Christians naturally followed Peter's example; and, like him, in order to silence the clamours of unreasonable men, they acted contrary to the conviction of their better judgement. But what is most astonishing, even Barnabas himself, my friend and associate in the mission to the Gentiles, was carried away with the stream, and had not firmness sufficient to avow his principles, and to maintain his ground against the general defection. Ch. II. Ver. 13.

2. The apostle states the reproof which, under these circumstances, he administered to Peter, ver. 14—17.

But when I saw that they were not walking in the straight path of the true gospel[1], *I said to Peter*[2] *before them all;* 14.

When I saw them all deviating from the right line of duty, departing from the genuine principles

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[1] *In the straight path.*] ορθοποδουσι. "directly according to the truth of the gospel." Chandler; who observes, that "the truth of the gospel was the gospel unmixed with the Jewish law." "keeping the straight path of the truth of the gospel." Wakefield.

[2] *I said to Peter.*] Dr. Doddridge observes, that "had this been matter only of private offence, Paul would have known that duty required him to expostulate with Peter privately upon it; but as it was a public affair, this method was the most proper. Probably this happened after public worship; and it would seem the less surprising, considering the conferences which were

Ch. II. Ver. 14. and spirit of the gospel, impeding its progress, wronging their own consciences, and grieving and discouraging the Gentile converts, so far from submitting to the authority of Peter, or being restrained by an ill-timed complaisance to the age, character, and station of this distinguished apostle, I made no hesitation to address him in public, in the presence of the whole assembled church, in the language which I shall now repeat.

—14. *When thou who art a Jew livest according to the manner of the Gentiles, and not according to that of the Jews, how is it*[1] *that thou compellest the Gentiles*[2] *to observe Jewish rites*[3]*?*

It is but lately, my venerable brother, that you associated without scruple with the Gentile converts; and, though a Jew yourself, yet having been instructed from above to esteem nothing unclean which God had purified, you hesitated not to live as

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held in the Jewish synagogues before the assembly was broke up. It is a very just observation of Mr. Jeffery here, that had any imposture been carried on, the contention of these two great managers would probably have been an occasion of discovering it."

[1] *How is it.*] The best copies read πως, instead of τι. See Griesbach.

[2] *Compellest the Gentiles.*] αναγκαζεις. "Though this word," says Dr. Chandler, "frequently signifies to compel by force and violence, yet it is as frequently used to denote moral compulsion." Matt. xiv. 22; Acts xxviii. 19.

[3] *To observe Jewish rites.*] ιουδαϊζειν, to judaize. "to live like the Jews." Wakefield. "Why, by an inconsistent conduct, and by the influence of a great example, do you induce the Gentiles to think that Jewish rites and customs are of indispensable obligation; those very rites with which you have occasionally dispensed?" Newcome.

the Gentiles do, notwithstanding the rigour of the ceremonial precept. What, then, can be the meaning of this sudden change? What can induce you, as far at least as your example goes, to compel the Gentile believers to submit to a yoke from which you know they are exempt; and to lead them to conclude, that unless they subject themselves to the ceremonial law, they are not worthy to be acknowledged by you as Christian brethren? Ch. II. Ver. 14.

We who are *Jews by birth*[4], *and not sinners of the Gentiles*[5], *yet convinced*[6] *that no man is justi-* 15. 16.

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[4] *Jews by birth.*] φυσει, by nature. "What the Jews thought of themselves in contradistinction to the Gentiles, see Rom. ii. 17—23." Locke.

[5] *Sinners of the Gentiles.*] The apostle, by this expression, does not appear to have any reference to the moral but to the ceremonial state of the Gentiles: what they were by birth, not by practice. We who are Jews by nature, *i. e.* by birth, God's peculiar people, and not Gentiles, who are by birth sinners, out of covenant, unholy, ceremonially unclean. In this sense the word occurs very frequently in the New Testament, as must be evident to all who read with attention and impartiality. See ver. 17: *while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves are found sinners;* surely, not profligate and abandoned, but in an unholy state, ceremonially impure, and out of covenant with God, like the Gentiles themselves. "*Sinners:* such terms are applied to the whole body of the Gentiles, as ἁγιος is to that of Christians." Newcome. The word 'sinners' occurs in a national and not a moral sense in many passages in the New Testament. See Luke vii. 39, xix. 7; Matt. ix. 10, xi. 19, xxvi. 45; Luke vi. 32. The Gentiles, as Archbishop Newcome observes, "were idolatrous and immoral from their very religion; and therefore the terms sinners and Gentiles are often used as synonymous."

[6] *Convinced.*] ειδοτες, *knowing.* "convinced that no man can be acquitted." Wakefield.—"since we know that a man is not justified." Newcome; who in his note adds, "cannot be accepted of God, so as to enter into the new covenant with him on a plea of obedience to the law of Moses."

Ch. II. Ver. 16. *fied*[1] *by* the *works of* the *law, but through faith in Jesus Christ; even we have believed*[2] *in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by* the *works of* the *law; for by* the *works of* the *law no man can be justified*[3].

You and I are descendants of Abraham, born under the Mosaic covenant, subject to its authority, and by birth-right entitled to its blessings; not like these poor heathen who know nothing of the promises, and have no share in them. And yet so sensible are we that we have forfeited all claim by law to an interest in the promises, that we have professed faith in Jesus as the Messiah, in order to secure a title to covenant blessings, independently upon our observance of the ceremonial law. For, to say the truth, the law is so strict in its injunctions, and so merciless in its penalties, that no individual can ever say that he has fully come up to

[1] *No man is justified.*] δικαιται. The word 'justified' is used in contradistinction to 'sinners' in the preceding clause, and is to be understood accordingly. To be *sinners* is to be out of covenant with God; to be *justified* is to be in covenant with him, to be in the number of his peculiar people. No man can be justified by law, because the law makes no provision for repentance; but believers are justified by faith in Christ, *i. e.* they become members of the Christian community, holy and consecrated to God by faith in Christ, as they formerly became members of the Jewish community by submission to circumcision. See Taylor's Key to the apostolical Epistles, chap. xii. xvi. xvii.

[2] *Even we have believed,*] and by our faith have acknowledged the incompetency, and therefore the inutility, of the law. "*Even we,* &c., and much more should the Gentiles, whose religious advantages are so far inferior to what we enjoy." Newcome.

[3] *No man can be justified.*] "St. Paul gives the reason, Rom. iii. 20; because the law multiplied offences. See also Rom. iv. 15, v. 20, vii. 7, viii. 3; Gal. iii. 10." Newcome.

its requisitions, and is upon that ground strictly entitled to its rewards. Shall we, then, send these poor heathen converts to seek for justification, for pardon, and for life, upon the very ground which we have ourselves abandoned? Ch. II. Ver. 16.

Now, if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves are still found to be sinners[4], *then Christ is the minister of* a dispensation of *sin*[5]: *which can by no means be allowed*[6]. 17.

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[4] *Sinners.*] See note, ver. 15.

[5] *Then Christ.*] αρα Χριστος. Literally, "then Christ is the minister of sin." See Taylor on Rom. v. 20, p. 296. The particle αρα is so frequently used by the apostle to introduce an inference, (see ver. 21, where the very same expression occurs without any suspicion of an interrogation,) that it seems surprising that so many learned expositors should understand it in this case as interrogatory; especially as the sense is so much more clear and easy if the words are taken in their proper illative signification. If, believing in Christ, we are still sinners, *then* Christ is a minister of sin. Which God forbid. By a minister of sin the apostle means not, as it is commonly understood, a dispensation which allows and encourages sin, but a dispensation which while it professes to justify leaves men in an unholy unjustified state. So that, upon this supposition, believers in Christ would be no more the people of God than heathen themselves. And Christ, who taught them that by faith in him they would become the covenant people of God, equally with the Jews, would, upon this supposition, be a liar and impostor.

[6] *Which can by no means be allowed.*] μη γενοιτο, *let it not be:* the form of expression which the apostle uses when he rejects a conclusion as utterly inadmissible and absurd: as a mathematician would say, Q. E. A., *Quod est absurdum.*

Here the address to Peter ends, as is evident from the change of persons in the next verse, where he proceeds to comment upon the rebuke he administered to Peter. There can be no doubt that this reproof, so ably and faithfully administered, produced its proper effect. This open rebuke was more honourable, and more truly friendly, than it would have been to have opposed and blamed him in private, while he abstained from

Ch. II. Ver. 17.

Consider, my brother, the tendency of your conduct, and the dishonour which it entails upon our great Master and his gospel. We who are Jews believe in Christ for justification; a plain proof that we regard the law as incompetent to this end. But your example leads the Gentile believer to conclude, that faith will not justify him independently of submission to the law. Thus, according to the obvious tenor of your conduct, the dispensation of Christ is also imperfect; and Christ is the minister and medium of a dispensation which, while it professes to justify, leaves men in the same unpardoned and unholy state in which it found them. So that, in fact, our Master is a deceiver, an impostor, who makes pretensions which he cannot substantiate. But God forbid, my dear brother and associate in the gospel, that you or I should ever, by our language or example, give countenance to so false and dangerous a conclusion. Such, my friends, was the reproof which I administered to Peter; and which, upon the ingenuous mind of that holy and generous apostle, produced an immediate and beneficial effect. But you will plainly see from this history that I neither needed instruction from him, nor yielded subjection to him.

3. The apostle argues that it was not likely that

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public censure. That it left no unfavourable impression upon the mind of the apostle Peter, is evident from the kind and respectful manner in which he mentions Paul in his second epistle. 2 Pet. iii. 15.

after this rebuke of Peter he should himself become an advocate for the law, ver. 18. Ch. II.

Now, if I build up again what I have destroyed, I acknowledge myself a transgressor[1]. Ver. 18.

I must be very weak indeed if I should now become, as some report of me, an advocate for Jewish rites, after having so publicly remonstrated against them; for it would be making a confession that I never have made, and never will, that I acted wrong in the rebuke which I administered to Peter.

4. He avers that the law had itself taught him to renounce all dependance upon it, ver. 19.

Moreover, I through the law am dead to the law[2], *that I may live to God.* 19.

The law itself teaches me its own inefficacy. It pronounces the sentence of death upon every act of disobedience. I have fallen under its condemnation, and can derive no hope from it. If I live at all, it must be by the mercy of God, and to his service must my restored life be devoted.

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[1] *Now if*, &c.] The sense I have given to this passage appears to me to be the most just, though it is not the most common.

[2] *I through the law.*] The law foretells its own dissolution, by the introduction of a superior dispensation, Rom. iii. 21; Gal. iii. 24, 25, iv. 21. Perhaps the sense will be more clear if the phrase is considered as a hypallage not unusual with the apostle. To avoid the offensive expression, 'the law is dead,' he says, I am dead to the law; meaning that with respect to himself the law had ceased to exist, and he was now at liberty to enter into the service of a new master, *i. e.* the gospel; in the profession of which he was devoted to the service of God. See a form of expression exactly parallel to this, Rom. vii. 4; with Dr. Taylor's note.

Ch. II. 5. By faith in Christ he was become a new person; nor would he degrade the gospel by having recourse to the law, ver. 20, 21.

Ver. 20. *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live*[1]. *Yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me*[2]. *And* the life *which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God*[3], *who loved me and delivered up himself for me.*

Professing to believe in Christ, I am become dead to the law. My expectations from it and my subjection to it are as much at an end as those of a dead man with respect to the living world. But though crucified like Christ, like him I am raised to life! I am introduced into a new state of existence. I was formerly the poor, devoted, condemned slave of the law: I am now the pardoned, free, and happy believer in the gospel. So that I am not the

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[1] *I am crucified,* &c.] The apostle often represents conversion to the Christian religion under the emblem of death to a former state and dispensation, and of a resurrection to a new life and state of being, with new views, hopes, duties, and ends, so as to be quite different from his former self. See Rom. vi. 2—14, vii. 4.

[2] *Yet no longer I.*] I am no longer the same self, ουκ ετι εγω, but I am one with Christ, a portion, a limb of his mystical person. It is a favourite figure of the apostle to represent the whole Christian church as one body, of which Christ is the head. It is an idea which occurs in almost every epistle, and plainly appears to have been always uppermost in his mind. See Rom. xii. 4, 5; 1 Cor. xii. 12—27, vi. 15; Eph. i. 23.

[3] *By faith in the Son of God.*] *i. e.* in other words, faith in the resurrection of Jesus, by which he was declared to be the son of God, Rom. i. 4. Righteous men are called sons of God, as they are to be raised to an immortal life, Luke xx. 36. And Christ is called the first born, as having been first raised to immortality. Col. i. 18.

same self, I am a new being, a member of Christ, a living portion of his mystical body. And the vital principle which animates the whole system, and pervades every individual member, that principle, which in my present new state of existence is the master spring of my whole character, and of every particular action, is faith; faith in that glorious event by which Christ was declared to be the Son of God; his resurrection from the dead. And this principle induces me to consecrate my renewed life, and all its faculties and powers, to him who loved us, and who died for all mankind, without excepting even me, who am the chief of sinners. Ch. II. Ver. 20.

I do not contemptuously reject[4] *the favour of God; for if justification* come *by the law, then Christ died in vain.* 21.

If I submitted to the Mosaic ritual as matter of obligation, and enforced it upon others, I should treat the mercy of God in the gospel with indignity and contempt: for, if the law could justify, the gospel were needless, and the death of Christ of no use. So that the whole Christian dispensation would be marked with consummate folly. But such a conclusion would be absurd and impious. Let us then seek for justification only by faith in Christ, wholly renouncing every expectation from the ceremonial law.

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[4] *Contemptuously reject.*] "ἀθετω signifies to reject or contemn; and this sense seems to be the best here, as it best suits the scope of the apostle's argument." Chandler.

PART THE SECOND.

CH. III. THE APOSTLE OFFERS MANY CONSIDERATIONS TO RECLAIM THE AFFECTIONS OF THE GALATIAN CHURCHES FROM THEIR FALSE TEACHER, AND FROM HIS PHARISAIC DOCTRINE, AND TO RECOVER THEM TO THE SAME PRINCIPLES AND SPIRIT IN WHICH HE HAD LEFT THEM. Gal. iii. 1—v. 12.

SECTION I.

THE APOSTLE urges a variety of arguments[1] *to prove that the Mosaic ritual was in no degree obligatory upon, or beneficial to, the Gentile Christians.* Ch. iii. 1—iv. 7.

1. The apostle apostrophizes the Christians of

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[1] *Urges arguments.*] It may perhaps be asked why the apostle condescends to argue upon a point of pure revelation, when it would have been quite sufficient, and perhaps most satisfactory, to have appealed to inspiration only? But, admitting his inspiration, the tenor of his argument is perfectly just: for his first object is to establish his own apostolical authority by an appeal to his miraculous powers, ch. iii. 1—5, and then to reconcile his readers to the gospel mode of justification, by showing that it had a precedent in the case of Abraham, and that it was even the subject of a promise to Abraham's spiritual posterity: so that the gospel mode of justification by faith, without regard to the ceremonial law, was not only consistent with the divine au-

Galatia upon their infatuation in forsaking the doctrine of Christ, which had been so fully explained to them, ch. iii. ver. 1. Ch. III.

O thoughtless Galatians! who has fascinated you[2], *before whose eyes Jesus Christ crucified has been so clearly represented*[3]*?* Ver. 1.

Thus have I ever maintained, and ever will, the inutility and absolute nullity of the Mosaic ritual with respect to the believing Gentiles. This was the doctrine which I inculcated upon you, and to which I have ever most firmly adhered. And, O thoughtless Galatians! what powerful magician can have so blinded your eyes and stupified your understandings as to have induced you to depart so widely

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thority of the Mosaic dispensation, but was actually foretold, introduced and supported by it. It may indeed be allowed, that where reasoning is introduced, the claim to inspiration is in that instance waved, and the apostle's *doctrine* may be *true* and his conclusion *just*, though his *reasoning* may be sometimes *illogical*, and his premises *doubtful*.

[2] *Who has fascinated*, or enchanted *you?*] It seems strange that the converted Gentiles should be so easily seduced, and so strongly attached to the burdensome ritual of the ceremonial law. But they might perhaps hope to escape persecution by passing for Jews, ch. v. 10, 11. Also, having been accustomed before their conversion to the pomp and ceremony of idolatrous rites, their minds might not be sufficiently purified and elevated, to relish the simplicity of the Christian religion. And finally, some even of the first converts to the Christian religion might entertain the notion, too generally prevalent, that a deficiency in moral virtue might be compensated by a rigid adherence to ceremonial institutions. N.B. The words " that ye should not obey the truth," are omitted in the most approved manuscripts and versions, and in the editions of Griesbach and Newcome.

[3] *Represented.*] The words *εν ὑμιν, among you*, obscure the sense, and are omitted in the Alexandrine and other manuscripts, and in Mr. Wakefield's version.

Ch. III. Ver. 1. from the plain simple doctrine of a crucified Master which I so clearly defined to you, and to fancy that faith in a once dead but now risen and exalted Messiah is not of itself sufficient to entitle you to an interest in the blessings of the gospel, without subjecting yourselves to the grievous and intolerable yoke of the law?

2. He reminds them that the gospel was first preached to them by himself, who had therefore a prior claim to their regard, ver. 2.

2. *This only I desire to learn from you, Did ye receive the spirit*[1] *from* him who insisted upon *the works of the law, or from* him who taught *the doctrine of faith*[2]*?*

Tell me truly which of the two is most entitled to your regard, your new teachers or myself? Which of us first instructed you in the spiritual, refined, and liberal doctrine of Christianity? Was it the man

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[1] *Receive the spirit.*] The expression, owing to the apostle's haste, and the brevity which he affects in this epistle, is ambiguous and obscure. The word *spirit* probably in this verse, and unquestionably in the following, signifies the spiritual dispensation of the gospel, in opposition to the law; and I conceive the argument to stand as I have explained it in the commentary. This distinguishes it from the argument in the fifth verse, where an appeal is made to miraculous powers.

[2] *From him* who insisted, &c.] By the phrases εξ εργων νομου, εξ ακοης πιστεως, the apostle undoubtedly means to designate himself, who taught justification by faith, and the false teachers, who insisted upon justification by law. It is to be remembered, that the apostle wrote this whole epistle with his own hand, and that writing Greek was difficult to him, Gal. vi. 11. This led him to study brevity and an elliptical mode of expression, which throws great obscurity over a considerable part of this epistle.

who insists upon the expediency of Jewish ceremonies, or was it he who told you that faith alone was sufficient? And surely some little deference is due to him to whom you are indebted for all you know of the gospel of Christ. Ch. III. Ver. 2.

3. He urges the folly and absurdity of supposing that the superior dispensation could need the aid of a subordinate ritual, ver. 3.

Are ye so inconsiderate? having begun with the spirit[3], *are ye now seeking to be made perfect by the flesh?* 3.

Can you possibly be so absurd as to believe that the gospel needs the aid of the law to make up for its defects? Can you suppose that, if you act up to the dictates and spirit of the gospel, you will not be accepted by God if you do not add to them the low, and comparatively puerile, rigours of the law?

4. The apostle pleads the inconsistency of deserting a doctrine which they had openly professed, and for which they had even suffered persecution, ver. 4.

Have ye suffered[4] *so many things in vain? if, indeed, it be in vain?* 4.

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[3] *Spirit—flesh?*] *i. e.* the gospel and the law. This, as Mr. Locke observes, is a way of speaking very familiar to St. Paul. As this great commentator saw the true meaning of the word *spirit* in this verse, it is the more surprising that he should have understood it differently in the preceding, where he interprets it of spiritual gifts; which confounds the argument with that in ver. 5.

[4] *Have ye suffered*, &c.] Mr. Wakefield observes, that the

Ch. III. Ver. 4. Have not you been persecuted for your profession of the Christian religion, and by whom? By the Jews chiefly; the bigoted adherents to the institutes of Moses? Are you now gone over to the party of your persecutors; and virtually acknowledging, that your firmness and fortitude when suffering in the cause of truth and liberty was folly and enthusiasm? Let me hope that matters are not carried to this disgraceful and dangerous extreme, but that you may still be reclaimed from this strange delusion.

5. He appeals to the miracles wrought, and to the miraculous gifts imparted, as decisive in favour of the doctrine which he had taught, ver. 5.

5. *He who supplied you*[1] *with the spirit*[2], *and who*

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word πασχω is what grammarians call a middle verb; and he renders the clause, "Have so many things been done for you in vain?" The apostle is generally understood to allude to their past firmness in bearing persecution, from which they now desire to shield themselves by assuming the character of Judaism. "If, indeed, the event shall prove that they have been suffered in vain; which I will not suppose, but rather trust that you will see your errors and amend them." Newcome.

[1] *He who supplied you.*] *q. d.* Was it my opponent or myself? This is a direct appeal to the existence and exercise of miraculous powers in circumstances in which an appeal to them would be infatuation and insanity, if they did not actually exist. Historic evidence can hardly be even conceived to rise to a higher degree than that which proves the existence of these supernatural qualifications; and consequently of the truth of the Christian religion, which they were intended to establish. It may seem surprising that the false teachers, who performed no miracles, should be more attended to than the apostle, who exercised and even communicated miraculous powers; but it is to be considered that these false teachers represented themselves as commissioned by the apostles at Jerusalem, whom they represented as Paul's superiors, from whom he had derived his authority and

performed miracles among you, was he the teacher[3] *of the works of the law? or of the doctrine of faith?* Ch. III. Ver. 5.

I will at once appeal to the most decisive evidence. You know that when the gospel was first preached to you, miracles of an extraordinary kind were wrought among you, and spiritual gifts were imparted to many of you upon your profession of the gospel. Tell me plainly, was it my opponent or myself who produced these high credentials? Did he or I work miracles among you? Did you receive your extraordinary powers from the man who tells you that you must submit to the ceremonial law; or from him who assures you that faith alone will entitle you to all the privileges of the go-

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instructions. And they affirmed that the apostle had greatly exceeded his instructions, in teaching the inutility of the Mosaic ritual: for that the apostles at Jerusalem required the observance of it as absolutely necessary; and that Paul himself was so sensible of this, that he insisted upon the obligation of the law in other places, though he excused the Galatians. All this will be very evident to those who read the epistle with attention; and it easily accounts for the deference which was paid to the judaizing instructors.

[2] *The spirit.*] The spirit is here universally understood as signifying miraculous gifts and powers; though the same word is used immediately before, ver. 2, 3, to express the gospel, in opposition to the law. This is one instance among many, of the apostle's sudden change of the signification of his words without any previous notice. This is remarkably the case in this epistle; which being written by his own hand, he affects brevity, and uses as few words as possible.

[3] Was he the teacher?] The apostle's expression is so very elliptical, that it is necessary to insert some such words as these, to make it at all intelligible. Archbishop Newcome says, "I understand ην after each of the participles, and suppose that St. Paul speaks of himself with his usual delicacy. None but apostles could impart the spirit."

Ch. III. Ver. 5. spel? Put the question closely to your understandings and to your consciences: How can you possibly resist such cogent evidence?

6. He argues from the case of Abraham, who was justified by faith, ver. 6, 7.

6. *As Abraham believed God, and it was accounted*
7. *to him for righteousness; therefore know ye, that those who are* of the party *of faith*[1] *are the children of Abraham*[2].

It is no novel doctrine which I am labouring to inculcate. You are admitted into covenant upon the same terms that Abraham was: he believed the divine promise, and by his faith obtained the blessing. And be assured, that however others may boast of their natural descent from this pious patriarch, it is upon the heirs of his faith only that the promise is entailed. They who believe in the doc-

[1] *Who are* of the party *of faith.*] οἱ ἐκ πίστεως, they who rely on faith for justification, in opposition to οἱ ἐκ νόμου, "they who are of the party of law:" they who seek for justification by the works of the law. These, that is, these only (see Wakefield), are children of Abraham; or, in other words, are justified after his pattern; namely, by faith. They believe in the *actual* resurrection of Jesus, and are justified thereby: he believed in the *possible* resurrection of Isaac, whom he was about to sacrifice, and his faith was imputed for righteousness, without regard to the ceremonial law. This argument, which the apostle barely glances at here, he insists upon at large Rom. iv.: a strong presumption that both the epistles were written by the same author; for a train of ideas and arguments so peculiar would hardly have entered the imagination of two different writers.

[2] *Children of Abraham.*] "His imitators, and heirs of the promise made to him." Newcome. With Locke and others I join the seventh verse to the sixth, from which it appears to be an inference. See Worsley and Rosenmuller.

trine of the gospel, and who expect its blessings exclusively of all regard to legal rites, are the true descendants of Abraham, and heirs with him of the divine inheritance, upon the same terms on which he obtained the blessing. Ch. III. Ver. 7.

7. The scriptures had foretold to Abraham that all nations should be accepted by God, upon the same terms with himself, ver. 8, 9.

Now the scripture, having foreseen that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, prophetically announced[3] *the glad tidings to Abraham: "In thee shall all the nations be blessed*[4]*." So then, they who are* of the party *of faith*[5] *are blessed with Abraham, who believed.* 8. 9.

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[3] *Prophetically announced,* &c.] προευηγγελισατο· "proclaimed before glad tidings to Abraham." Newcome. "gave this joyful promise long ago." Wakefield. "he gave Abraham a foreknowledge of the gospel." Locke.

[4] *In thee,* &c.] This promise first occurs Gen. xii. 3, when Abraham was required to leave his native country and to reside in Canaan; and was repeated several times afterwards to Abraham, and to his son Isaac and to his grandson Jacob. It is generally understood as referring to the descent of the Messiah from him, whose doctrine would be a blessing to the whole world: nor do I see any reason to recede from this acceptation of the promise. It is so explained by the apostle Peter, Acts iii. 25, and by the apostle Paul in this place. Some expositors understand the promise as signifying nothing more than this, that the posterity of Abraham should become so prosperous, that their prosperity should become proverbial; so that others should bless themselves in them, or wish themselves as happy as the descendants of Abraham. See Dr. Priestley on the text. Observe here, that the scripture is personified, yet who supposes the scripture to be a real person? so the gifts of the spirit may also be personified, without implying that the holy spirit is a distinct intelligent agent.

[5] *Who are* of the party *of faith.*] "of faith and of the

Ch. III. Ver. 9. Believers under the gospel are not only justified, after the example of Abraham, without regard to ceremonial institutions, but it is expressly foretold that they should be so. For God, foreseeing and intending that under the gospel dispensation believers should be admitted into covenant without submitting to Jewish ceremonies, was pleased to announce this his kind design repeatedly to Abraham, in the promise recorded in the Jewish scriptures: the purport of which is, that at some future period all the nations of the earth should be admitted to share the privileges of the covenant, upon the same easy terms with himself. This happy period is now arrived; and all who believe the gospel are now admitted into the same state of privilege and favour which he enjoyed as the reward of his strong and operative faith. But if Jewish rites were also made necessary, the promise of God would in this instance have been violated.

8. The law condemns all who seek for justification by it, ver. 10.

10. *Moreover*[1], *as many as are for* the *works of* the *law are under a curse; for it is written, Cursed* be *every one who continueth not in the performance*

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works of the law, spoken of two races of men; the one as the genuine posterity of Abraham, heirs of the promise, the other not." Locke.

[1] *Moreover.*] γαρ here introduces a collateral argument, not an inference; in the second clause it assigns a reason for the preceding affirmation, and is properly translated *for*.

of all things which are written in the book of the law[2]. Ch. III. Ver. 10.

It is quite absurd for any one to expect advantage by adherence to the ceremonial law. For, allowing that much benefit might be derived from perfect obedience, this itself is morally impossible. And the law denounces a solemn curse upon all who disobey it in any particular; and makes no provision for the forgiveness of the penitent. Every one, therefore, who, rejecting the mercy of the gospel, hopes to obtain the blessing by adherence to the law, is, by that very circumstance, a convicted and condemned culprit, utterly destitute of help and hope.

9. The prophetic scriptures announce a mode of acceptance with God different from that which the law prescribes, ver. 11, 12.

But that by the *law no one is justified before God,* is *evident; for the just by faith shall live*[3]. 11.

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[2] *Cursed,* &c.] See Deut. xxvii. 26. The apostle's mind was possessed with the idea that no one could be justified, or obtain the favour of God by claim of right, as having fulfilled the law; because no one had, in every particular, fulfilled its injunctions, and the law made no provision for penitents. He treats of this argument at large in the first three chapters of the epistle to the Romans.

[3] *The just by faith shall live.*] This is a quotation from Hab. ii. 4, where it is translated by Archbishop Newcome, "the just shall live by his faith:" though he acknowledges that there is an ambiguity in the original, as well as in the passages where it is cited by the apostle. "The meaning of the prophet is," says the learned prelate, "The good, or the righteous man, who believes in my prophets, and obeys their directions, shall live at

Ch. III. Ver. 12. *Now the law is not of faith, but* saith, *He who performeth these* things *shall live by them*[1].

The prophets concur with the Mosaic writings in predicting that the time would come when faith alone, exclusive of ritual performances, should be made the condition of participation in the blessings of the covenant. Such is the language of the prophet Habakkuk. Not he who is perfect in obedience, but he who is faithful and sincere, shall escape with life. But the unrelenting language of the law is, He, and he only, who performs all duties, without any exception, may claim a right to safety and impunity.

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the time of the Babylonish invasion. See Jer. xxi. 9, xxxviii. 2, 17, 18. In the New Testament the words are accommodated."

Archbishop Secker observes, that "the English word *faith* is only used here, and Deut. xxxii. 20, in all the Old Testament. And the Hebrew word denotes many times an attribute of God, but never a quality in man, except 1 Sam. xxvi. 23, where it means *fidelity*; Prov. xxviii. 20, *a man of truth*; and Deut. xxxii. 20, *there is no truth in them*. But it never means *faith*, or credit given to testimony. It may be translated here, *by his faithfulness*." See Newcome on the Minor Prophets, Appendix, p. 240.

Upon the whole, it is very evident that the apostle only uses the text by way of accommodation; the words suiting his purpose, he cites them without any regard to their original connexion or primary signification. And this is one instance among many where the doctrine of the apostle is true and of divine authority, though the argument which he alleges in support of it seems to be infirm and irrelevant, and to amount to nothing more than a mere verbal coincidence. See Rom. i. 17; Heb. x. 38.

[1] *He who performeth*, &c.] See Lev. xviii. 5: *Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgements, which if a man do, he shall live in them. I am the Lord.*

10. The apostle further declares, that the time referred to by the prophets must be the advent of Christ, who by his death has superseded the old dispensation, and introduced the new, ver. 13, 14. Ch. III. Ver. 13.

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, having been made a curse for us[2], *(for it is written, Cursed* is *every one who hangeth on a tree,) that the blessing of Abraham*[3] *might come* 13. 14.

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[2] *Having been made a curse for us.*] The apostle immediately explains what he means by Christ being made a curse; namely, that he was crucified, because crucifixion was a kind of death which the law pronounces accursed; Deut. xxi. 23, *he that is hanged is accursed of God.* It was a death which the law inflicted upon outlaws and the worst of criminals. The apostle having thus explained his meaning, it is evident that when it is said that Christ was made a curse, he could not mean to say that Christ bore the wrath and curse of God for the sins of the elect, as some have strangely taught. See Beza *in loc.*

He was made a curse for us: that is, for our benefit. He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law. How? By ratifying with his blood that new covenant, by which faith is made the condition of justification, which supersedes the old covenant, the law of Moses and its condemning sentence. This is the doctrine which pervades all the apostle's writings, as every unprejudiced reader must perceive, who is well acquainted with them.

"In this sense," (says Dr. Chandler in his excellent note upon this passage,) "the innocent Jesus was made a curse by God, as his heavenly Father permitted him to die that ignominious death which the law of Moses pronounced accursed, and which was inflicted only on the vilest and most accursed malefactors. But how are we delivered from the curse of the law by Christ's being made a curse, or dying an accursed death? Why, plainly thus: As he hereby put an end to the obligation of the Jewish law, which pronounced a curse on every one who did not in all things continue to observe it, by introducing and establishing a better covenant into the world, even that covenant which God made with Abraham, of which this was the principal article, that faith should be imputed to him for righteousness."

[3] *The blessing of Abraham*] "was evidently his justification

Ch. III. Ver. 14. *unto the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, that we through faith might receive the spirit promised*[1].

Christ has delivered us from the curse of the law, by delivering us from the obligation to obey it. And this he has done by being himself, if I may so express it, made a curse for us; or, in other words, by being put to death upon the cross, a death which the law pronounces accursed. And Christ delivers us by his death, because that event is the ratification of the new dispensation, which supersedes the dispensation of rites and ceremonies, and which abrogates the law and its condemning power. And thus he introduces that new covenant which was the object of the divine promise to Abraham, the gracious purport of which is to communicate to believing Gentiles all its invaluable promises and blessings, upon condition of faith alone, exclusive of all regard to the ceremonial law.

11. The apostle argues that, upon principles of common equity, the law of Moses could not vacate

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and acceptance with God through faith: this God himself imputed to him for righteousness, and signally rewarded and blessed him on account of it. And therefore the coming of Abraham's blessing upon the Gentiles was their being justified and accepted of God upon the same principle of faith as he was." Chandler.

[1] *The spirit promised.*] Gr. "the promise of the spirit," or, "the promised spirit." See Rosenmuller; who rightly interprets the phrase, "*dona spiritus sancti, omnibus Christianis communia.*" The word spirit is here used in the same sense as in ver. 2 and 3, for the gospel and its blessings, which are common to all who believe; and not for supernatural gifts and powers, which were necessarily limited to a small number.

the promise which had been made to Abraham and to his spiritual posterity long before, ver. 15—18. Ch. III.

Brethren, I reason upon common principles[2]. *No one cancelleth or altereth*[3] *a covenant* which hath been *ratified, though it be only between man and man*[4]. Ver. 15.

I will now show you, upon principles of common equity, that it is impossible that the ceremonial law should be obligatory upon Gentile believers in Christ. You well know, that among men a covenant, when it is once solemnly ratified, cannot be abrogated or changed; and no new conditions can be added to it without the consent of both the contracting parties.

Now the promises were made to Abraham and his offspring[5]. The promise *saith not, And to* 16.

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[2] *I reason, &c.*] Literally, "I speak according to man. I am speaking of a common custom." Wakefield.

[3] *Altereth.*] επιδιατασσεται. See Newcome and Chandler. "*Insuper novas et contrarias conditiones addit.*" Schleusner.

[4] *Only between man and man.*] "ὁμως ανθρωπε though it be but a man's covenant." Newcome.

[5] *To Abraham and his offspring.*] It is difficult to make out, and still more to vindicate, the apostle's reasoning. This, however, does not at all affect his doctrine, that the Gentiles should be admitted to the privileges of the gospel, without submitting to the yoke of the law; a doctrine which he was taught by revelation, and which he confirmed by miracle. He is also right in arguing from the case of Abraham, that as this patriarch was justified by faith, it was in strict analogy that believers under the gospel should be justified in the same way. But how far the apostle's argument holds good in detail may be doubted. The steps of his proof are the following: 1. God promises to Abraham and his offspring, that all nations shall be blessed in him, *i. e.* should be justified as he was, see ver. 8, 9. 2. This promise being made to Abraham's offspring in the singular, and not in the plural number, it is thereby limited to one class only

Ch. III. Ver. 16. *thine offsprings, as concerning many; but To thine offspring, as concerning one; which* person *is Christ.*

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of the descendants of Abraham, ver. 16. 3. This class, to which the promise is limited, consists of believers in Christ, who are by faith sons of Abraham, ver. 6; and who, together, constitute Christ's mystical body, ver. 28. See Locke. 4. This promise, so made to Abraham's spiritual offspring, could not be vacated by the Mosaic law, which was not given till upwards of four hundred years afterwards, and to which the subjects of the promise were not parties, ver. 17. 5. Therefore God is by irrevocable promise bound to justify believing Gentiles; that is, to admit them to the privileges of the gospel, without subjecting them to the yoke of the law. The principal objections to this argument are: 1.) The limitation of the promise, which seems indefinitely to express the great benefits which mankind would ultimately enjoy from the posterity of Abraham, *i. e.* from the Messiah, see Acts iii. 25, to the circumstance of emancipation from the ceremonial law: and 2.) The extraordinary method by which he proves that Christ or believers are the offspring to which the promise is limited; it being notorious that the original word, in the singular number, is commonly used to express all the descendants of a common ancestor.

Archbishop Newcome suspects that this sentence is a marginal note inserted into the text. St. Jerom says that St. Paul made use of a false argument, which, though it might do well enough with the stupid Galatians, yet would not be approved by any wise or learned men. And Le Clerc says it is an allegorical kind of argument, which the apostle made use of for the conviction of the Jews, who were used to such methods of reasoning. Dr. Chandler thinks these suppositions injurious to Paul's character; and endeavours to explain and justify his reasoning, by observing, "that after God made the promise to Abraham, he limited the blessing to his posterity by Isaac; for though he promises to make Ishmael a great nation, *because he is thy seed*, yet he restricts the covenant to the descendants of Isaac: *in Isaac shall thy seed be called*, Gen. xxi. 12, 13. Therefore the promise, *in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed*, could refer to no other of the *seeds* or *sons* of Abraham but Isaac only. So that the apostle makes out that this promise relates to a single person, or son of Abraham, exclusive of all his other posterity."

N. B. Mr. Wakefield, with the Syriac, Coptic, and Æthiopic translators, reads σοις σπερμασι, the offsprings.

It was promised to Abraham that he should be justified by faith; and to believers, his spiritual offspring (ver. 6), that they should be blessed in him, or like him; that is, should be justified by faith only (ver. 8, 9). And, if I may be permitted to use a verbal argument in the case, you may observe that the word offspring, in connexion with the promise, always occurs in the singular and not in the plural number; which may be understood as signifying that only one class of Abraham's posterity is entitled to the blessing. The promise, therefore, must be limited to his spiritual descendants, the heirs of Abraham's faith, the great body of believers consisting of Jews and Gentiles, of which Christ is the head; to the entire exclusion of the patriarch's natural descendants, as long as they rely for justification upon the ceremonial law. Ch. III. Ver. 16.

And I say this, that the covenant which had been previously ratified by God concerning Christ[1], *the law, which was given four hundred and thirty years afterwards*[2], *could not cancel, so as to make* 17.

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[1] *Concerning Christ.*] These words are omitted in the Alexandrine and Ephrem manuscripts, and in the Æthiopic, Vulgate, and other versions. See Griesbach and Wakefield. *Concerning Christ: "pertinens ad Christum."* Grotius. See Chandler.

[2] *Four hundred and thirty years afterwards.*] The first promise was made to Abraham when he was 75 years old, Gen. xii. 3, 4; from this date to the birth of Isaac was 25 years, Gen. xxi. 5; Isaac was 60 when Jacob was born, Gen. xxv. 26; Jacob went into Egypt at 130, Gen. xlvii. 9; and the Israelites sojourned there, according to the Septuagint, 215 years: which completes the number. See Whitby and Doddridge.

Ch. III. Ver. 18. *void the promise. For if the inheritance*[1] be *by law*, it is *no more by promise*; *whereas God freely gave* it *to Abraham by promise.*

No covenant, as I have just observed, can be cancelled without the consent of both the contracting parties; nor can a promise be revoked but with the permission of the promisee. I conclude, therefore, with confidence, that the first covenant which God had made with Abraham, and with his spiritual offspring, could not possibly be vacated by another covenant which he made with another party many centuries afterwards, so as to change the terms of the original agreement for conditions less favourable, and that without the consent of the parties concerned. Such conduct would be no less than flagrant injustice, and a palpable violation of a previous promise, which cannot, therefore, be imputed to God. It is in vain to plead that the promised blessing may be imparted upon both conditions; these conditions are absolutely incompatible with each other. If men are justified by law, they are not justified by faith; if the blessing is obtained by faith, it is not acquired by law. But it is evident, that to Abraham and to his believing posterity it was promised freely as the reward of faith, exclusive of the ceremonial law; and from this promise God cannot and will not recede.

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[1] *Inheritance,*] *i. e.* says Dr. Chandler, the blessedness entailed on Abraham and his seed, of being justified by faith. It comes to them by descent and birthright.

12. Nevertheless the law was not without its use, Ch. III.
though it did not supersede the previous promise,
ver. 19, 20.

To *what* purpose, *then,* served *the law? It was* Ver. 19.
added because of transgressions[2]*; being*
administered by messengers[3] *under the direction of a*
mediator, till that offspring should come to whom the
promise belonged. But this mediator was not a 20.
mediator for one of the parties, *and God is* but
one of the two[4].

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[2] *Because of transgressions.*] The expression is very elliptical, and must be explained by comparing it with other passages in the apostle's writings. The law declared the nature of sin; passed sentence of death upon every sin; it showed no mercy, and drove men to despair. In this way it guarded man against the commission of sin, and made a merciful dispensation more welcome. See Gal. iii. 23—25; Rom. vii. 7, &c., iii. 20, iv. 15, v. 20.

[3] *Administered by messengers.*] διαταγεις, "through the ministry of angels." Wakefield.—"διατασω *respondet Latino* constituere, *et ita latè patet, ut de quovis, sive propria sive alicna auctoritate aliquid præcipiente, jubente, mandante, accurante, usurpetur.* 1 Cor. xi. 34." Schleusner. I have given to this passage the sense which appears to me most natural and intelligible. Of the existence and ministry of angels we know nothing; nor does it concern us to know any thing. But that the law was communicated to Israel by Moses, as the medium of divine communications; and that the observation of it was enforced from age to age by a succession of prophets or divine messengers, till the coming of Christ, is a fact perfectly intelligible, and much to the apostle's purpose. That the word αγγελος will bear this sense, it would be superfluous to prove; and there can be little doubt that it is used in the same sense through the first chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. See Mr. Wakefield's translation.

[4] *God is* but *one* of the two.] This is the reading of the Æthiopic, and adopted by Wakefield. This sense of the passage makes it very pertinent to the apostle's purpose, so that there is no occasion, with Michaelis and Newcome, to consider this

Ch. III. Ver. 20.

Now, if any one should be inclined to ask What is the use of the law, if it does not justify; and if the observation of its ceremonial precepts is not necessary to acceptance with God? I answer briefly, that the principal use of the law was, by its strict and holy precepts, and by the irrevocable sentence of condemnation which it passes upon every offence, to convince those who were under its jurisdiction of their guilt and danger, and to render a more merciful dispensation welcome. This ceremonial and moral law, which was first communicated to the Israelites by the instrumentality of Moses, was confirmed and administered from generation to generation, by a succession of priests and prophets; till it was eventually superseded by the introduction of the new dispensation; under which, agreeably to the divine promise, all who believe are to be justified by faith, that is, they are to be admitted to all the blessings of the gospel, without regard to the ceremonial law. And here, in confirmation of my preceding argument, I would remind you, that the covenant, of which Moses was the mediator, could not vacate the covenant made with Abraham. For the parties in the Mosaic covenant were God and the children of Israel; whereas the parties in the former covenant were God and believers; and for the latter of these contracting parties Moses had no authority to act, and consequently they are not

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verse as a marginal gloss. "The Æthiopic translator has *Dominus unus est* duorum, interpreting, as I suppose." Newcome. The apostle's brevity creates obscurity.

bound by the contract of which he was, if I may so express it, the negotiator. Ch. III. Ver. 20.

13. The law, in its place, was so far from being hostile to the divine promise, that it was even subservient to the introduction of the new and better dispensation, ver. 21—24.

Is the law, then, contrary to the promises of God? Far from it. If, indeed, a law had been given which could have conferred life, certainly justification would have been by that law[1]. 21. *But the scripture hath included all under sin*[2], 22. *so that the promise of* justification *by faith*[3] *is extended*[4] *to believers* only.

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[1] *Justification would have been by that law.*] "The apostle argues, that if such a law had been given to the Jews as could have secured justification, then righteousness would have been by the law; and thus the promise of God would have been of no effect, which expressly declared that acceptance and pardon should be the consequence of true faith." Chandler.

[2] *Included all under sin.*] "τα παντα, *all things, i. e.* all men." Locke. "The apostle," says Dr. Chandler, "uses the most general expression that can be, that the Jews might not think themselves excepted from the common charge."

[3] *By faith.*] The received text adds the words *of Jesus Christ*, which are omitted in the Æthiopic and by Mr. Wakefield; and which are not necessary to the sense.

[4] *Is extended.*] ινα δοθη, *is given.* ινα does not always introduce the final cause, but is sometimes used to express an inference only. So ινα πληρωθη does not always signify that it *might be* fulfilled, but that by such an event such a prophecy *was actually* fulfilled. And here the apostle does not mean to say, that the scriptures represent men as sinners, *in order* to their being justified by faith; but that, in consequence of all being sinners, the claim of law is wholly excluded, and justification can only be obtained by faith, agreeably to the divine promise. "*Ut felicitas promissa intelligeretur dari per doctrinam Jesu Christi*

Ch. III. Ver. 22.

Some may be disposed to ask, Whether this state of the case is not in fact setting up two dispensations in opposition to each other; one of which justifies by faith, and the other by works? But I can assure such objectors, that there is no contrariety in the divine dispensations. They are all harmonious and consistent with each other. If, indeed, the Mosaic law had been such that its terms might have been easily fulfilled, and its blessings easily attained, this would have been a different mode of justification; and law and promise would have been at variance with each other. But, in fact, the conditions of the Mosaic covenant are so strict, and its condemning sentence is so severe and irreversible, that none ever were or could be justified by it; nor could any ever lay claim to life upon the ground of right and of perfect obedience. Accordingly, it is evident to every one who reads the Jewish scriptures, that all men, Jew and Gentile without exception, are in a state of condemnation. So that there is no hope for any but for those who take the benefit of the promise; and all who are justified

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credentibus. ἵνα δοθῇ, logice: *ut intelligamus, perspiciamus.*" Rosenmuller. Dr. Macknight says, "that though ἵνα commonly denotes the end for which the thing is done, it often signifies the effect or consequence of an action simply, without expressing the intention of the agent; and therefore, in such cases, it ought to be translated *so, so as,* Luke ix. 45; Rom. v. 20; 1 Cor. xiv. 13; Gal. v. 17; Rom. xi. 11." *Prel. Ess.* No. 4.—"The scriptures of the Old Testament represent all mankind, Jews and Gentiles, to be in a state of sin and guilt, and set forth the Messiah promised to Abraham as the only Saviour by whom their pardon and salvation is to be obtained." Pyle.

obtain this favour by faith alone, without any claim from law. Ch. III.

Moreover, before this faith came, we were kept in custody[1] *under the law, confined together until faith*[2] *should be revealed. So that the law was our conductor*[3] *to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.* Ver. 23. 24.

And truly those of us who lived under the law were in a state of very severe pupillage, which might well render the liberal and merciful spirit of the gospel acceptable and welcome. We were like children confined together in a school, under the tuition of a very harsh and severe master, looking and longing for the coming of the time when we should be set at liberty, and be at our own disposal. The gospel dispensation is that free and happy state which was the object of our earnest desire and joyful anticipation. And the severe discipline which we endured under our former rigid tutor the law,

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[1] *Kept in custody under the law.*] "The word signifies to be kept in custody or durance. The Jews were in the condition of children not arrived to years of maturity, and kept in custody under the discipline of the law, that chastised them for every offence, and rigorously exacted punishment without hope of pardon." Chandler.

[2] *Faith should be revealed.*] *i. e.* the dispensation of faith. "The thing promised in this chapter, sometimes called *blessing*, ver. 9, 14; sometimes *inheritance*, ver. 18; sometimes *justification*, ver. 11, 24; sometimes *righteousness*, ver. 21; and sometimes *life*, ver. 11, 21." Locke.

[3] *Conductor.*] In the original, *pædagogue*, a "conductor *qui puerum in ludum ducebat et reducebat.* It was a name given likewise to the servant who taught the children letters and superintended their behaviour. They were generally persons of rigid manners." Newcome, Macknight.

Ch. III. Ver. 24. has taught us the unspeakable value of the privileges of the gospel.

14. Believers are released from the restrictions of the law, as children when declared of age, from the authority of a guardian, ver. 25, 26.

25. *But faith being come, we are no longer under a*
26. *conductor: for ye are all the* acknowledged *sons of God, by faith in Christ Jesus.*

While law retained its authority, we remained in a state of childhood and pupillage, subject to severe discipline and restraint; but the new dispensation having superseded the Mosaic law, these rigours have ceased: and law, having performed his office, resigns his charge. You, who believe in Christ, are declared of age; you are taken from school, you are delivered from the tyranny of law, and are owned and treated as children of God, living at liberty in your father's house.

15. Believers are free from the yoke of the law, inasmuch as in a body they form one mystical person; which is that very offspring of Abraham to whom the promise is made, ver. 27—29.

27. *Moreover, as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ* [1].

[1] *Have put on Christ.*] This is a very bold, not to say a very harsh figure; but it is a very familiar one to the mind of the apostle, and very necessary to be kept in view by all who are desirous thoroughly to understand his writings. All who by baptism have made a public profession of faith in the gospel have "put on Christ:" so that, as Mr. Locke justly explains the

Let me call your attention to another consideration. By being baptized into the name of Christ, you publicly avow yourselves to be the disciples of Christ. And as such you are, if I may so express it, clothed with Christ; so that you lose as it were your separate personality, and become one with him: you constitute a part of that great body of which he is the head. Ch. III. Ver. 27.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye all are one person[2] *in Christ Jesus. But if ye* 28. 29.

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phrase, "to God now looking upon them there appears nothing but Christ; they are, as it were, covered all over with him, as a man is with the clothes he has put on; and hence he says in the next verse, they are all one in Christ Jesus, as if there were but that one person." The apostle here, and in many other passages of his writings, considers the great body of believers as constituting one mystical person, of which Christ is the head. It is a favourite comparison with him, to which he often alludes, and upon which he loves to dilate. See Rom. xii. 4, 5; 1 Cor. xii. 12—27; Eph. i. 23, v. 29—31. It may however be proper to observe, that this symbolical and highly figurative mode of expression gives no countenance to the modern and extravagant doctrine of the sinner being clothed with the imputed righteousness of Christ, in order to his justification: a notion than which nothing can be more foreign to the apostle's mind, or more inconsistent with reason and with Christianity; and which indeed never occurred to any one's imagination till many centuries after the mission and ministry of the apostles had been concluded.

[2] *Ye all are one* person.] All believers make one person, and that person is the true and sole offspring of Abraham, to whom the promise was made, which the law, delivered long afterwards, could not disannull: a promise which never has been repealed, and which, without the consent of the promisee, could not in equity be made void. "Under the dispensation of the gospel (as Dr. Chandler expounds the text), there is no distinction of nation, or condition, or sex: Jews and Gentiles, bond and free, male and female, are all considered as one person in Christ." It may be observed here, that the apostle expressly

Ch. III. Ver. 29. *are one* person *in Christ Jesus*[1], *then are ye the offspring of Abraham, and heirs in virtue of the promise.*

Bold as the figure may be, I will pursue it still further. The gospel of Jesus is offered to all persons of all ranks and of all countries, and some of all descriptions have embraced it. But when they become believers, all these distinctions cease: Jew and Gentile, high and low, rich and poor, male and female, all are united in Christ, all become portions of his mystical body; all are so knit and blended together that they constitute only one person. That person is Christ mystical; and this symbolical person is the true offspring of Abraham, that one descendant to whom the promise was made, and by virtue of that promise they are entitled to the character of sons of God, and to a share in that inheritance which was promised to their spiritual ancestor, namely, that he and his descendants should partake of the blessing in consequence of faith only, without being subjected to the yoke of the ceremonial law.

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speaks of all believers as constituting one person, but no one is so weak as to understand this declaration in a literal sense. How unreasonable then is it to interpret a similar phraseology literally when applied to Jesus and his heavenly Father! See John x. 30. The union of Jesus with the Father is the same as the union of all his disciples with him, with God, and with each other: a union, not of nature, but of will and purpose, a mutual co-operation in promoting the cause of truth and virtue. See John xvii. 21, 22.

[1] *But if ye are*, &c.] εἷς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ· this is the reading of the Clermont and Corbey manuscripts, and is approved by Mr. Locke as most suitable to the apostle's argument.

16. In the prosecution of his argument the apostle further pleads, that under the legal dispensation the heirs of the promise were not only kept under restraint as children, but were treated with harshness as slaves, from which servitude they are redeemed by Christ, ch. iv. 1—5. Ch. IV.

Now I say that *the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a slave*[2], *though he be proprietor of all: but is under guardians and stewards*[3] *until the time appointed by the father. So likewise we, when we were children, were in bondage under the rudiments of this world*[4]. Ver. 1. 2. 3.

I am speaking now, my friends, of the great body of those who were interested in the covenant which God made with Abraham, from the time of that

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[2] *Slave:*] "so (says Mr. Locke) δουλος signifies; and St. Paul's sense will be lost to one who by *servant* understands not one in a state of bondage." The apostle, speaking of all the covenanted descendants of Abraham as one person, represents this person as in a state of minority, and consequent servitude under the tuition of the law; and pursues this allegory into detail.

[3] *Guardians and stewards.*] "επιτροπος is one who is both a guardian of the person and estate, and an instructor: οικονομος is a person who has the care of the estate." Chandler.

[4] *Under the rudiments of this world.*] The rites and ceremonies of the law are called by the apostle rudiments of this world. See Col. ii. 8, 20. These are called rudiments or elements, because the law was a sort of preparatory school for the gospel: see ch. iii. 24. And the Mosaic dispensation is here and elsewhere called the world, see Gal. vi. 14, Col. ii. 20, probably because its precepts and sanctions related chiefly to worldly objects. See Locke; and Chandler, who supposes there is an allusion to the pomp of the temple service, as resembling that of the heathen mythology. The law was upon the whole a burthensome service; and therefore the Jews under it are represented as in bondage, like an heir while in a state of pupillage.

Ch. IV. Ver. 3. eminent patriarch to the present day: all were heirs of the promise, and entitled, in due time, to the possession of this fair inheritance. But those who lived under the law were in the state of children under age; and you know that in this situation a child, though he be heir to a very large estate, is in no better condition than a slave, that he is no more at his own disposal, and has no more power over his property than the meanest servant; but that both his person and his property are under the sole direction and management of those whom his father has appointed to be his guardians and tutors, and the stewards and managers of his estate, till the time comes when by the will of his father, or by the customs and laws of his country, he is declared of age; at which time he is immediately exempted from all controul, he enjoys his liberty, and takes possession of his property. Exactly so, the posterity of Abraham under the former dispensation, though heirs of the promise, were heirs in a state of pupillage; in bondage to that severe guardian the law, subjected to a harsh discipline, and required to learn a hard lesson; destitute of liberty, and compelled to perform a task of rites and ceremonies which constituted the essentials of a dispensation resembling, in the pomp of its external form, the rituals of heathen nations; and which only entailed temporal blessings.

4. *But when the full time*[1] *was come, God sent forth*

[1] *The full time.*] These words refer to ver. 2, and signify the

his son, born of a woman[2], (*born under* the *law*[3], *that he might redeem*[4] *those* who were *under* the *law*,) *that we might receive the adoption of sons*[5]. Ch. IV. Ver. 5.

This state of subjection and servitude was however intended to continue only for a limited time; and when that time expired, which had been wisely fixed in the unsearchable counsels of heaven, God, faithful to his promise, gave an express commission to a person, chosen for this purpose out of the human race; and who, on account of the distinguished honour conferred upon him, is called the first-born son of God, to declare that the season of minority

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time "when the heir is declared of age and becomes *sui juris*, and takes the estate into his own hands." Chandler.

[2] *Born of a woman.*] There is no reason to imagine a reference here to the supposed miraculous conception of Jesus Christ; for the expression, *born of a woman*, is a common periphrasis to express a human being. See Job xiv. 1, xv. 14, xxv. 4; Matt. xi. 11; Luke vii. 28. With Wakefield, Newcome, and others, I translate γενομενον, *born*, in preference to *made*. Some copies read γεννωμενον.

[3] *Born under* the *law*, &c.] This clause I include in a parenthesis, with Castellio and Bengelius. See Bowyer.

[4] *That he might redeem*, &c.] "When persons are freed from slavery, they are properly said to be redeemed. The law of Moses was a yoke upon the necks of the Jews. Now Christ came to redeem them from it, by declaring them of full age, and that the time was come for their being put into possession of the promised inheritance." Chandler.

The apostle is here speaking, not of the Jews only, though they are particularly alluded to in this parenthesis, but of all the spiritual posterity of Abraham collectively, the people of God in all ages and nations, under different dispensations of law and gospel. *We* all, whether Jews or Gentiles, under the gospel dispensation, are declared of age, and are acknowledged as sons. See Macknight.

[5] *The adoption of sons.*] "that we who believe might be put out of the state of bondage into that of sons." Locke.

Ch. IV. Ver. 5. and pupillage is at an end, and that all who receive his message are now released from the stern guardianship of the law, are acknowledged as sons of God, and are admitted to the privileges and the freedom of heirs who are declared of age and put into possession of their inheritance. And to the end that those who were before in immediate subjection to the law might learn that even they are released from its burdensome yoke, this great deliverer was selected from the Jewish nation; and having himself lived in subjection to the law, he by his death put an end to the legal dispensation, introducing and ratifying a new and better covenant. So that Jews and Gentiles are now alike free from the tyranny of the law, and are equally entitled by faith to the privileges of the gospel.

17. The apostle concludes his argument by referring to that filial spirit which the gospel produces in the heart, as an incontestable proof of the truth of his doctrine, ver. 6, 7.

6. *Now*, to prove *that ye are sons* [1], *God hath sent forth the spirit of his son* [2] *into our hearts, crying*

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[1] To prove *that ye are sons.*] "as the evidence and demonstration that ye are thus constituted sons of God." Chandler.—"to show that ye are sons." Wakefield.

[2] *God hath sent forth the spirit of his son.*] "By the Spirit," says Dr. Chandler, "is here unquestionably meant the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit which were given in confirmation of the truth of the Christian religion, and as an immediate token from God of the acceptance of all who believed in Christ, and their being constituted through him heirs of eternal life."—"The same argument," says Mr. Locke, "of proving their sonship

out, *Abba! Father*[3]. *So then, thou art no longer a slave, but a son*[4]: *and if a son, then an heir of God, through Christ.* Ch. IV. Ver. 7.

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from having the spirit, St. Paul uses to the Romans, Rom. viii. 16. And he that will read 2 Cor. iv. 17 to v. 6, and Eph. i. 11—14, will find, that the *spirit* is looked on as the seal and assurance of the inheritance of life to those who have received the adoption of sons."

It cannot be doubted that the gifts of the holy spirit were universally regarded as undeniable proofs that those who were favoured with them were in covenant with God, his people, his sons, and heirs of the promise: nevertheless, the number of those who were favoured with these gifts must have been comparatively small. But the spirit of his son, of which the apostle here speaks, he mentions as an universal quality, common to all believers. This, therefore, I conceive to be that filial spirit and disposition which the gospel produces in the hearts of those who practically believe; and which teach them to regard the Supreme Being in the character of a Father, benefactor, and friend, and to hold communion with him as such. This spirit, so opposite to that spirit of terror and alarm which was the natural effect of the law, might justly be considered as an irresistible proof of the divine authority of the gospel, and is with great propriety introduced by the apostle as the last and most substantial and affecting proof of the divinity of his doctrine. See the exposition of Rom. viii. 26, 27. The expression "God hath sent forth the spirit," does not necessarily imply any supernatural interposition to produce a change in the heart. God is said to do that which he accomplishes by second causes; and if the principles of the gospel cordially received produce a filial spirit in the heart, God may be said to have sent forth his spirit for that purpose.—"That Christians are the genuine sons of God," says Dr. Priestley, "the apostle proves by their having the spirit or dispositions of his sons, which they show by addressing him as their Father, which slaves would not do." *Our hearts*, is the reading of the best copies: the received text reads, *your*.

[3] *Abba! Father.*] Dr. Doddridge mentions, that "the learned Selden has brought a very pertinent quotation from the Babylonian Gemara to prove that it was not allowed to slaves to use the title of *Abba* in addressing the master of the family to which they belonged, or the correspondent title of *Imma*, or mother, when speaking to the mistress of it."

[4] *No longer a slave.*] He is now of age, no longer in the

Ch. IV. Ver. 7.

To conclude: That I may remove all doubt upon the subject of your acceptance with God by faith in Christ, exclusive of the ceremonial law, I must again appeal to those miraculous powers which I exercised among you, to those spiritual gifts which I imparted to you, and which you possessed long before you thought of subjecting yourselves to the yoke of Moses, when you had heard of no conditions of acceptance but those of faith in Christ. These precious gifts, which Jesus himself possessed, which he is authorized to bestow, and which God by him has imparted to us, are substantial indisputable proofs that we are accepted by him upon the condition of faith only; and that upon this ground he acknowledges us as his children, and permits us all, whether Jews or Gentiles, to address him under the endearing character of a Father. Let every one of you therefore be assured, that being a believer in Christ, he is no longer a pupil in his minority, a slave to a harsh pedagogue, but an acknowledged son of God, an heir at age, entitled to receive the promised inheritance, to be blessed with believing Abraham, to be accepted of God by faith alone, without the works of the law; which has now no more power over the disciple of Christ than a guardian possesses over a pupil who is declared of age and released from his wardship. For this free and happy state

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condition of a pupil or a ward, subject like a slave to the controul of another. The gifts of the spirit, and the filial spirit of the gospel, prove that he is a son, an heir, and in possession of the inheritance. See Rom. viii. 14—17.

you are indebted to the mercy and faithfulness of God revealed to us by Jesus Christ; and when the new and encouraging views of the divine character which the Christian doctrine imparts, the hope of mercy which it inspires, and the glorious prospects of immortality which it opens to view, produce their natural effects upon the heart, which they do in all true believers, and I trust in yours, exciting supreme love to God as a father and a friend, and entire devotedness to his will, a spirit so opposite to the servile spirit of the law, this affectionate filial spirit is itself the best possible proof that you are in the noblest sense sons of God, and heirs of the promised inheritance. Ch. IV. Ver. 7.

SECTION II.

THE APOSTLE expostulates with the Galatians concerning the unreasonableness of their apostasy from the simplicity of the gospel, and of the alienation of their affection from himself. Ch. iv. 8—20.

1. The apostle warns them, that though ignorance might be an apology for the idolatries of their heathen state, they could avail themselves of no such excuse for their present attachment to judaical rites, ver. 8—11.

At that time indeed, when ye knew not God, ye 8.

Ch. IV. Ver. 9. *were in bondage to those who by nature are not gods; but now, after ye have known God, or rather have been known by God*[1], *how* is it that *ye turn back again to the weak and poor elements*[2], *to which ye desire again to be in bondage as heretofore*[3]?

In your heathen state, you had no knowledge of God, of his attributes, his government, or his will, nor of the nature of that worship which would be most acceptable to him: no wonder you were then the votaries of false gods, the besotted worshipers of dumb idols, the abject slaves of superstition and folly. But, now that you have been taught by the Christian religion to form just and honourable conceptions of God, and of his government and of the spiritual worship and service which he requires, and since you have by the gift of his spirit been acknowledged by him as his genuine sons, and invested

[1] *Ye have known God, or rather have been known by God.*] The apostle in his usual manner takes up his words in a different sense: to *know God*, is to form just conceptions of the object of worship, such as the gospel inspires; to *be known by God*, is to be chosen and approved by him. Amos iii. 2; 1 Cor. viii. 3. See Locke.

[2] *Weak and poor elements.*] "The law was weak because it could not deliver men from bondage and death, Rom. viii. 1—3: it is called poor, because it kept men in the poor state of pupils from the full possession of the inheritance, ver. 1—3." Locke.

[3] *Again as heretofore.*] "παλιν, *again*, cannot here refer to στοιχεια, *elements*, which the Galatians had never been under hitherto; but to bondage, which he tells them they had been in to false gods, ver. 8." Locke. See also Wakefield. Macknight renders ανωθεν *from the first: q. d.* "ever since your conversion." Newcome observes, from Wetstein, that παλιν ανωθεν is a common pleonasm.

with peculiar privileges, what pretence can there be for you to have recourse to the observation of mean and puerile ceremonies to recommend you to the divine regard? What could induce you, after you had obtained your freedom from heathen superstition, to enslave yourselves again to the burthensome ceremonies of the Jewish law; which, whatever important purpose they might once answer, are now superseded, and are of no kind of use to you whatever? Ch. IV. Ver. 9.

How is it [4] that *ye observe days, and months, and times, and years? I am afraid concerning you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.* 10. 11.

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[4] How is it, &c.] *q. d.* πως ἡμερας κ. τ λ. "Why are ye turning back again, and are observing days," &c. Wakefield. Dr. Chandler also reads it as an interrogation: "Do ye observe days and months?" &c. He adds, "by *days* he unquestionably means their weekly sabbaths and festivals: by *months*, the festivals of the new moons; by *times*, their annual fasts and festivals; and by *years*, their sabbatical and jubilee years." Observe here, that it is because of their strict observation of these sabbatical seasons, and the great stress laid upon them, that the apostle expresses his fears lest he had bestowed upon them labour in vain. He never gives the least hint that a Christian sabbath had been substituted in the room of the Jewish sabbath which was to be observed with equal strictness; nor does he ever in any of his epistles express his disapprobation of what is called *sabbath-breaking*, or warn his readers against it. This surely must have been a very great omission, if the apostle had entertained the same ideas of the importance of sabbatizing which are inculcated by some modern Christians, who represent what they are pleased to call the *profanation of the sabbath*, as one of the greatest of crimes, which deserves the cognizance even of the civil magistrate. The plain doctrine of the New Testament is, that all sabbatical institutions without exception are completely abolished: but that seasons of religious worship should be regularly observed, and in the primitive church one of these seasons

Ch. IV. Ver. 11. How comes it to pass that you, who have been so plainly taught that the spiritual and liberal genius of the Christian religion makes no distinction of days, but expressly teaches that all times are equally acceptable to God, and that the whole of every day is to be employed in his service, can so easily adopt the Jewish distinction of holy and unholy days? How is it that you can lay any stress upon such matters, or imagine that you can recommend yourselves to God by a rigid observation of sabbath-days and new moons, and annual festivals or fasts, and sabbatical years? All these distinctions were wisely appointed to the Jews to keep them separate from other nations; but under the Christian dispensation, which embraces all mankind, these and all other ceremonial distinctions are abolished. Indeed, my brethren, this servile sabbatical spirit, so widely different from the free and filial spirit of the gospel, excites in my breast the most painful apprehensions lest my labours among you should have been unavailing to your conversion to pure and practical Christianity.

2. In order to recover their alienated affections, he pleads with them their former kindness, which he had done nothing to forfeit, ver. 12—16.

12. *Brethren, I beseech you, be what I* am; *for I*

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was the first day of the week. This was universally celebrated as a religious festival, in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ. See Evanson and Priestley on the sabbatical observation of the Lord's day.

once was *what ye* now are[1]. *Ye have not wronged me in any thing*[2]. Ch. IV. Ver. 12.

My dear brethren in Christ, for as such I will still address you, and believe you to be such, notwithstanding all my suspicions and fears concerning you, I earnestly entreat you to follow my example. I was once as zealous an advocate for Jewish rites and ceremonies as you now are; and even held them to be essential to the divine favour. But I now see my error. I am instructed in the true nature of Christian liberty. I am convinced that rites and ceremonies are of no use; that the law of Christ requires nothing as essential to an interest in its blessings, but love to God and benevolence to man: that nothing will be of any avail but a good heart and a virtuous life. Let me prevail upon you, my friends, to adopt the same just and generous latitude of principle. You will feel yourselves better and hap-

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[1] *For I* once was *what ye* now are.] "*Fui aliquando qualis vos nunc estis.*" Vatablus. See also Clarius; and Doddridge, who expounds the words thus: "*I was as ye are*, as much bigoted to the Mosaic ritual and pharisaic traditions, as any of you all can be." See Rom. ix. 3, Wakefield's Translation. This sense of the passage appears to me greatly preferable to that of Grotius and Locke, whose interpretation is, "I beseech you, brethren, let you and I be as if we were all one;" which is adopted by most modern interpreters, though Dr. Whitby acknowledges that the former is the sense in which it was understood by the fathers. Dr. Chandler's interpretation is peculiar: "*Be ye as myself*, dear and beloved as my own person, *because I was as yourselves*, I was once as much esteemed and beloved as your own persons."

[2] *Ye have not wronged me in any thing.*] Mr. Wakefield, upon the authority of the Æthiopic version, omits this, which he calls a strange clause; but the omission is not supported by any manuscript.

Ch. IV. Ver. 12. pier for it. You now, indeed, regard me with a degree of coldness and suspicion very different from your former kind and fervent affection. But I know the cause, and I forgive it. You have done me no wrong; nor is the seeming asperity of my language the effect of resentment or revenge: it is the dictate of genuine friendship.

13. *Now ye know that, under bodily infirmity*[1], *I*
14. *preached the gospel to you at first; and my personal affliction ye did not despise, nor disdainfully reject* me for it[2]; *but ye received me as a messenger of God*[3], even *as Christ Jesus.*

I shall never forget the kindness with which you

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[1] *Under bodily infirmity.*] Literally, *through* or *in* (δια, see Macknight) *weakness of the flesh:* this he calls in the next verse a personal affliction; literally, *my trial in my flesh.* Dr. Hammond supposes that the apostle alludes to the persecutions which he underwent; but this could be no ground for contempt or scorn. There can be little doubt that he alludes to some bodily infirmity; perhaps to some paralytic affection, which, 2 Cor. xii. 7, he calls a thorn in the flesh; and which was probably a considerable disadvantage to him as a public speaker. Mr. Locke justly observes, that "this is an instance of that unavoidable obscurity of some passages in epistolary writings, without any fault in the author. For some things necessary to the understanding of what is writ are usually of course, and justly omitted, because already known to him the letter is writ to."

[2] *Disdainfully reject* me for it.] εξεπτυσατε. See Wakefield. Literally, "*ye did not spit me out.*" Wakefield.

[3] *A messenger of God.*] αγγελον Θεϑ. See Wakefield; *q. d.* "you received me as you would have received an acknowledged prophet of God; nay, as you would have received Jesus Christ himself, the greatest of all the prophets." It is needless to cite authorities to prove that the word αγγελος, in its primary sense, signifies a messenger, and not a celestial spirit. And it is sufficiently obvious that this text gives no countenance to the popular doctrine that Jesus Christ is in his nature superior to the angels in heaven.

first received me. You recollect, my friends, the bodily infirmity under which I then laboured; how great an impediment it was to me as a public speaker; what an awkwardness it occasioned in my manner of address. Yet you neither despised nor insulted me upon that account: nor did you contemptuously reject my mission and ministry. Far from it. I well remember the avidity with which you listened to my instructions. Impressed with the proofs which I exhibited of my divine commission, you received me as a messenger of God; nor could you have shown greater attention and respect to Jesus Christ himself, had he appeared to preach the gospel to you in person. Ch. IV. Ver. 14.

15. *What were, then, your benedictions*[4]*! For I bear you witness, that had* it been *possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes and have given them to me.*

How thankful you were for my instructions! How kindly you spake of me and to me! You thought you never could do enough to show your affection and your gratitude. I never can forget your kind

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[4] *What were, then, your benedictions!*] τις ην ὁ μακαρισμος ὑμων; "What benedictions did you then pour out upon me! The context makes this sense of the words so necessary and visible, that it is to be wondered how any one could overlook it." Locke. "*What was, then, your happiness!* How great your satisfaction!" Chandler; who adds, "With what address he puts them in mind of their former affection to him, every man must see who reads the next words." Macknight says that "Locke's interpretation is unusual; and the word is used to denote 'blessedness' in other passages of the apostle's writings." Rom. iv. 6, 9.

Ch. IV. Ver. 15. attachment. There was no sacrifice which you would not readily have made to serve me.

16. *Am I, then, become your enemy*, by *continuing*[1] *to tell you the truth?*

What can be the reason of this extraordinary change? How can I account for the coldness, the unkindness, which I now experience from you? Is my constancy the cause of your change? I taught you the truth, and thereby I gained your attention and your love. I still continue to teach the same important truth; and is this the occasion of your present dislike? Can the same cause produce effects so directly opposite to each other?

3. The apostle charges his opponents with a desire to make a breach between the Galatians and himself, in which he hopes they will not succeed, though he is not wholly free from some painful suspicions, ver. 17—20.

17. *They zealously affect you, not with a good design*[2]*; yea, they desire to exclude you*[3]*, that ye may zealously affect them.*

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[1] By *continuing to tell you the truth?*] αληθευων. See Locke. "by dealing truly with you?" Wakefield. "Am I now become your enemy, only because I warn you against corrupting or forsaking that very gospel, and exhort you to adhere to the truth and purity of it? How severely, and yet how softly, doth he reproach them for their fickleness and inconstancy! How strong is the reproof which is thus drawn from arguments of love!" Chandler.

[2] *Not with a good design.*] ϐ καλως· "Their zeal for you is not for your good." Wakefield. "It is not with a good design, nor by lawful arts and methods, that they thus endeavour to inveigle your affections: it is not by endeavouring to promote

My opponents pretend to have a great affection for you, and to be very solicitous to make you Christians of the highest order: but they are not influenced by right motives; nor do they proceed in a right method when they expect to accomplish their design by subjecting you to the yoke of the law. In fact, they desire to exclude you from the privileges of the gospel, and to cut you off from all communication with me, that so you may be entirely devoted to them, and may submit in every thing to their direction. Ch. IV. Ver. 17.

But it is *honourable to be at all times zealously affected to* that which is *good*[4]; *and not only when I am present with you, my dear children*[5], *of whom I labour in birth again, till Christ be formed in you.* 18. 19.

But surely, my dear children in the gospel, you, of whose conversion to the faith I was the happy and the honoured instrument; and for whose restoration to the genuine principles and spirit of

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your salvation, or preaching the truth of the gospel of Christ." Chandler. "Ζηλεν *aliquem dicitur qui valde ab eo amari affectat. Amorem vestrum captant non honestè. Sermo est de falsis illis doctoribus de quibus hacienus locutus erat; quibus autem artibus illi usi fuerint, non constat.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *To exclude you.*] "They would exclude you from the privileges of Christians, or from my affections." Newcome. Some copies read ἡμας, us: *q. d.* they would exclude me from your affection. See Locke. Beza.

[4] *To* that which is *good.*] εν καλῳ. "towards a-good man." Locke. So Wakefield. This is, no doubt, the apostle's meaning; but the expression is purposely left ambiguous.

[5] *My dear children.*] With Beza, Bos, Bengel, and others, I connect these words with verse 18. See Bowyer.

Ch. IV. Ver. 19. Christianity I am at present most tenderly solicitous, and feel a truly parental anxiety, you cannot but see and acknowledge that it is right and creditable that you should be at all times equally well affected to what is excellent, either in principles or persons; and not expose yourselves to the suspicion of fickleness and caprice. If you had a well-founded attachment to me and to my doctrine while I was present with you, you ought not, without reason, to have deserted both, after I had left you to prosecute the further purposes of my mission.

20. *But I wish to be present with you now, and to change my language*[1]*; for I am in doubt concerning you.*

I have not, indeed, much hope that what I write will produce all the effect which I desire; and therefore I wish that I might be permitted, even now, to make you a visit. A personal interview would set all right; and nothing would afford me greater satisfaction than to exchange the language of suspicion and censure for that of commendation.

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[1] *Change my language.*] "φωνη signifies not only the voice, but the thing spoken; he should be glad to be present, and to converse with them personally, instead of writing to them at a distance; because then he could be more fully informed of their true state, and better able to know how to order his discourse to them." Chandler.

SECTION III.

THE APOSTLE, by a figurative application of the history of the descendants of Abraham, by Sarah and Hagar, illustrates the opposite genius and tendency of the two dispensations of the law and the gospel. Ch. iv. 21—v. 1. Ch. IV.

1. He briefly touches upon the circumstances of the history from which his illustration is taken, ver. 21—23.

Tell me, ye who desire to be under the *law, do ye not hear the law*[a] *?* Ver. 21.

Many of you are strangely attached to the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic institution. Allow me to ask you, Do you really understand the law of Moses? Are you apprized of its nature and tendency? Are you willing to learn from the pentateuch itself the distinction, and even the opposition, which subsists between the old dispensation and the

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[a] *Do ye not hear the law?*] "The law is sometimes used for the books of the Old Testament in general. See John x. 34." Newcome. This account is taken from the book of Genesis, ch. xvi. 15, xxi. 1. The pentateuch is usually called the law, as distinguished from the prophets and the hagiography. "ακουειν, *intelligere*, 1 Cor. xiv. 2. *Libri sacri, inquit Paulus, vobis noti sunt. Facile igitur intelligetis, quæ ex iis nunc proferam. Noluit autem nunc ex libris sacris argumenta petere, sed illustrare rem quam tractabat, ad oblectandum, ut tarditatem excitaret.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. IV. Ver. 21. new? If you are desirous of instruction, I will put the case in such a form that you cannot fail to understand it, and to be impressed by it.

22. *For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, one by a bond-woman, and another by a free-wo-*
23. *man. Now the* son *of the bond-woman was born after the usual manner*[1]*; but the* son *of the free-*woman *in consequence of the promise*[2].

The sacred historian relates, that the patriarch Abraham, when advanced in years, had two sons: the elder of whom, Ishmael, was the son of a concubine, a female slave, in the circumstances of whose birth nothing extraordinary occurred. The younger, Isaac, was the son of Sarah, a free-woman, the patriarch's lawful wife; the child of a divine promise, born in a supernatural way, when both his parents were very far advanced in years.

2. The apostle illustrates the different genius and spirit of the two dispensations, from the incidents

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[1] *After the usual manner.*] So Wakefield. κατα σαρκα, "according to the flesh." "according to the course of nature." Worsley.

[2] *In consequence of the promise.*] So Wakefield. δια της επαγγελιας, *through the promise.* "by *virtue* of the promise." Locke, Chandler.

"There is so great boldness," says Dr. Priestley, "in the apostle's allegorizing of the history of Sarah and Hagar, that it cannot be supposed that he really thought that it was originally intended to be applied as he does it. But he made choice of this portion of scripture, in order to express his own idea of the different states of the judaizing Christians, and the Gentile converts: the former as in a state of bondage, the latter as free."

which occur in the history of Abraham's two sons, Ch. IV. ver. 24—30.

1.) One of these sons was born under the condition of servitude, and the other of liberty, ver. 24—26.

Which circumstances *may be allegorized*[3]. Ver. 24.

The historian relates a plain matter of fact; but the narrative contains incidents which, in a figurative application, so happily illustrate the subject upon which I am now treating, that I shall take the liberty of accommodating them to it, as though they had been written for that express purpose.

For these women *are two covenants*[4]*: the one* —24.

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[3] *May be allegorized.*] ἀ τινα εστιν αλληγορουμενα. See Doddridge and Chandler. "are spoken by me allegorically." Newcome; who suspects the words to be a marginal note. They are not in the Æthiopic. "which things have a further meaning." Wakefield. It is plain that the apostle does not mean to represent the history as an allegory; or to insinuate that it was intended by the writer to contain any mystical signification. He only applies the circumstances of the history to the illustration of the subject in hand.

Mr. Peirce *of Exeter*, in his dissertation upon the text, translates these words "*which things are allegorized:* and his (*the apostle's*) meaning is, that the prophet Isaiah, whose words he cites, ver. 27, has from this history borrowed the terms, wherein he hath expressed himself in a very fine and noble allegory. This rendering is exactly grammatical, and sets the apostle's discourse in a different light; and offers nothing but what is familiar in all languages, and in all authors."

[4] *These* women *are two covenants.*] Griesbach drops the article before δυο. Bishop Pearce's emendation of the text in his *Epistolæ Duæ*, Opp. ver. 2, p. 464, is, to say the least, very ingenious, and by some may be preferred.

1.) For δελευει δε he reads δελευει γαρ, ver. 25, upon the best authorities. 2.) For το γαρ Αγαρ he reads το δε γαρ· δε is inserted and Αγαρ is wanting in many copies. See Griesbach. 3.) The word νυν is omitted before Ιερουσαλημ in the

Ch. IV. *from Mount Sinai, bearing children to bondage,*
Ver. 25. *which is Hagar, (now this Sinai is a mountain in*
Arabia,) who answereth to the Jerusalem now ex-
26. isting, *for she is in bondage with her children; but*
the upper Jerusalem is the free-woman, who is our
mother.

Arabic and Syriac versions; and is suspected by the bishop to have been inserted by some officious scribe to correspond with ανω in the following verse. 4.) By conjecture he substitutes απο for ανω, ver. 26; which is a very small alteration, as the ancients commonly wrote ο for ω. And this slight change makes the two verses exactly correspond with each other; and the parallelism holds in all its parts. The following is the bishop's translation of the three verses:

"*Hæc enim sunt duo fœdera: unum quidem a monte Sina ad servitutem generans, quod est Agar* (*hic enim* (sc. mons) *Sina mons est in Arabia, et conjunctus est Hierosolymæ*); *servit enim cum filiis suis. Hoc autem* (sc. fœdus) *ab Hierosolymâ est libera* (sc. Sara), *quæ est mater omnium nostrûm.*"

For these are two covenants: one from mount Sinai bearing children to bondage, which is Hagar (now this Sinai is a mountain in Arabia, which joins to Jerusalem); for she is in bondage with her children. But the other from Jerusalem is the free-woman, which is the mother of us all, or, *our mother*. See Griesbach; who drops παντων. The bishop, who renders συ-στοιχει *conjunctus est*, according to the Vulgate and Arabic, has no doubt of the 25th verse being a marginal gloss.

Upon Bishop Pearce's statement, Mr. Peirce observes, "that the bishop has given a very unusual, if not unauthorized sense to the verb συ-στοιχει, and that there is no authority but the Arabic for leaving out the word νυν. Upon which ground, a friend of Mr. Peirce has proposed the following improvement upon the bishop's version:

"The one covenant, from mount Sinai, bearing children to bondage, is Hagar, (for this mount Sinai is in Arabia, and answereth, *in one part of the allegory*, to the *city*, now *called* Jerusalem, *in the other*,) for she is in bondage with her children. But the other *covenant*, from Jerusalem, is the free-*woman*, *Sarah*, who is the mother of us all," or, our mother, *i. e.* of us Gentiles, who are, therefore, free-born, and children of the promise.

In the parallel which I propose to draw, in order to illustrate the genius of the different dispensations, the two women stand for the two covenants, the Mosaic and the Christian. Hagar, the bond-woman, represents the Mosaic institution, delivered in solemn pomp by God himself to the children of Israel, from mount Sinai in Arabia. And, as the son of Hagar was born a slave, so all the children of the Sinai covenant, that is, all the Jewish people, and all who regard the temple at Jerusalem as the only authorized edifice for the peculiar solemnities of divine worship, are now, and ever have been, in a state of servitude; tied down to certain prescribed rites and ceremonies, some of which were painful, some expensive, and some inconvenient; and which, in themselves, were of no moral use. But, on the other hand, Sarah, the lawful wife of Abraham, the free-woman, represents the new covenant, which descended from above; and which is the charter of that holy and happy community which is justly called the new and heavenly Jerusalem [1]. All her

Ch. IV. Ver. 26.

[1] *The heavenly Jerusalem,*] or, according to the ingenious, and perhaps correct, suggestion of Bishop Pearce, the paraphrase would stand thus: "But Sarah, the free-woman, the lawful wife of Abraham, represents the other covenant, which was lately promulgated from the city of Jerusalem, where Jesus opened his gracious commission; where he lived and taught, and wrought miracles, and suffered death upon the cross, and rose again, and ascended to the right hand of God. Where he commissioned his apostles to teach his gospel to all nations, and endowed them with the gifts of the holy spirit, to confirm their doctrine. All her children are freeborn," &c.

Upon the whole, I prefer the simplicity of Bishop Pearce's interpretation; though Dr. Chandler's illustration of the common interpretation of the allegory is very beautiful.

"By

Ch. IV. Ver. 26. children are born free, and are entitled to all the privileges of their high descent. They breathe the spirit of liberty, and are under no subjection to those servile conditions, to those harsh and degrading restraints to which the sons of the bond-woman were exposed. Now we, my friends, are these very persons: children of the free-woman; we are free-born, and, as believers in Christ, we are at liberty from all the restraints and burdens of the ceremonial law; and are the approved citizens of this new and glorious community.

2.) The analogy applies to the relative numbers of their respective descendants, ver. 27, 28.

27. *Moreover*[1], *it is written*[2], *Rejoice, thou barren,*

"By the heavenly Jerusalem," says this learned and eloquent writer, "the apostle means the Christian church; which is a regular or well-ordered city or community, expressly called, Heb. xii. 22, *Mount Sion*, the *city of the living* God, the *heavenly Jerusalem*; the inhabitants or members of which are, the *innumerable company of angels*, the *general assembly of the first-born*, and the *spirits of just men made perfect*. The great Lord and Governor of which is *God, the judge of all*. The great *Mediator*, who formed this city, and established this commonwealth, and introduces that *covenant* which contains the charter of its privileges, and the laws of its government, and who rules and governs under God, is the blessed *Jesus*. Upon which account the Christian church is very beautifully denoted by the heavenly Jerusalem, as a city which hath the immediate symbols of the divine presence, and is the place of God's residence, by his holy spirit. It is his favourite city, under his peculiar protection and government."

For the proper explanation of these phrases in the epistle to the Hebrews, see the paraphrase and notes upon the text in that epistle.

[1] *Moreover.*] γαρ is not here an illative particle, but introduces a collateral observation. The apostle having pointed out

who bearest not; break forth and shout, thou who travailest not in birth, for many more are the children of the desolate than of her that hath an husband. Now we, brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. Ch. IV. Ver. 27.

While I am writing, another circumstance of re-

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the principal circumstances of the parallel, namely, servitude and liberty, other incidental circumstances of resemblance occur to him as he is writing, which he here notices.

[3] *It is written.*] The text cited is Isaiah liv. 1; which is thus translated by Bishop Lowth: "Shout for joy, O thou barren, that didst not bear. Break forth into joyful shouting, and exult, thou that didst not travail; for more are the children of the desolate than of the married woman, saith Jehovah." "The church of God," says the bishop, "under the Old Testament, confined within the narrow bounds of the Jewish nation, and still more so in respect of the small number of true believers; and which sometimes seemed to be deserted of God, her husband, is the barren woman that did not bear, and was desolate: she is exhorted to rejoice, and to express her joy in the strongest manner, on the reconciliation of her husband, ver. 6; and on the accession of the Gentiles to her family. The converted Gentiles are all along considered by the prophet as a new accession of adopted children, admitted into the original church of God, and united with it. See ch. xlix. 20, 21."

Mr. Peirce considers this text, which the apostle cites from the prophet Isaiah, as containing the allegory to which he alludes, and which he here pursues. And, in order to this, Mr. P. takes much pains to show that the females alluded to by the prophet are Sarah and Hagar. "*Rejoice, thou barren, &c., q.d.* How earnestly was Sarah desirous of being a mother! and how did she rejoice and triumph when she had a son! *For the desolate hath many more children than she that hath a husband:* She that was, with respect to having children, as if she had no husband, Abraham being superannuated, and herself being past age, hath many more children, &c. See Rom. iv. 19; Heb. xi. 11, 12. Hence she is spoken of as desolate, as having, in a manner, no husband. Hagar, though a bond-woman, was Abraham's wife, Gen. xvi. 3, and there being nothing supernatural in the birth of Ishmael, she is said to have a husband. In short, therefore, the thing allegorized by the prophet is this:

Ch. IV. Ver. 28. semblance occurs strongly to my mind; which is, indeed, most encouraging and worthy of being mentioned. The posterity of Abraham by Ishmael were, agreeably to the divine promise, very numerous and powerful; and this long before the descendants of Isaac made any figure in the world, or had a place among the nations: but in the end, the promise to the patriarch was completely fulfilled; and the posterity of Sarah, though she was childless many years after the birth of Ishmael, and utterly despaired of having a son, greatly exceeded, both in numbers and in renown, the posterity of the bond-woman. Such shall be the final state of the Christian community, compared with that of Moses. To this the prophet alludes when he calls upon the desolate and childless woman to rejoice and exult; for that in due time she shall be blessed with an offspring more numerous and prosperous than that of her who was married, and who first vaunted of a family. We, my brethren, who believe in Christ, are the promised posterity here alluded to; and though our numbers are at present few, and apparently inconsiderable, be assured that, in due season,

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that Sarah, who had been so long barren, did at last, by virtue of the promise of God, and his extraordinary blessing, bear a child to superannuated Abraham, contrary to the course of nature, and became the mother of a more numerous posterity than Hagar was, who had a child by him according to the course of nature."

Mr. Peirce further contends, that this prophecy properly applies to the accession of the Gentiles to the church, and consequently that the apostle "has explained this passage according to its original intent and design."

the divine promise will be amply and gloriously fulfilled, and the number of those who will be eventually admitted to share in the blessings and privileges of the gospel will greatly exceed that of the Jewish church in its most extended and prosperous state. Ch. IV. Ver. 28.

3.) The parallel holds still further, in respect to the unworthy treatment of the son of the free woman by the son of the slave, ver. 29.

But as then, he that was born according to the flesh[1] *persecuted him*[2] that was born *according to the spirit, even so* it is *now.* 29.

And, to pursue the allegory a little further, the history relates, Gen. xxi. 9, that Ishmael the son of Hagar, who was an insolent and haughty youth, and who, valuing himself upon being the first-born, expected no doubt the greatest share in his father's affection, and the largest portion of his wealth, treated with scorn the infant Isaac, the child of the free wo-

[1] *According to the flesh.*] κατα σαρκα, in the natural way. κατα πνευμα, in a supernatural way, and by virtue of a divine promise, see ver. 23.

[2] *Persecuted.*] See Gen. xxi. 9. "The history tells us that he laughed at, derided, and mocked him to scorn, which is real persecution; probably through pride, and the conceit of his being Abraham's eldest son and heir." Chandler. "Hence we may learn," says Mr. Peirce, in his note on the passage, "that men may be guilty of persecuting, in the apostle's apprehension, without practising any open force and violence, when they treat others scornfully and abusively. Nor is it hard for men to be really persecutors, when they little imagine they are so; as no doubt the Jews in the apostle's time little thought they were chargeable with such a crime, when they used violence, but supposed they were doing God service."

Ch. IV. Ver. 29. man, the heir of promise, as the feeble offspring of decrepit age: so do the unbelieving Jews, the parties in the first covenant, now treat their younger brethren the believers in Christ, the free-born sons of God, and the true heirs of the promises; whom they regard with malignity and envy, and by every means of insult and injury are endeavouring to crush in its infancy the new and the chosen generation.

4.) The apostle closes the parallel with insinuating that the fate of the Jews will resemble that of the son of the bond-woman, ver. 30.

30. *But what saith the scripture*[1]*?* "*Cast out this bond-woman and her son; for the son of this bond-woman shall not share the inheritance with the son of the free*-woman."

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[1] *What saith the scripture?*] *i. e.* what saith the history? See Gen. xxi. 10, 13. The apostle could not mean to insinuate that Sarah was inspired when she formed the cruel resolution of turning Hagar and Ishmael out of doors; though for wise reasons God permitted the event to take place, and promised Abraham to protect both the mother and the child. The apostle touches with great delicacy upon the rejection of the Jews, and leaves his reader to draw his own conclusion from the fact which he states. Dr. Newcome observes, that "it is probable that St. Paul thus adapted a part of the Mosaic history to his purpose, not only because it was conformable to the manner of teaching among the Jews, but that he might convey to his countrymen harsh truths indirectly and with address."

"Such arguing, or such a comparing of things as this," says Peirce, "is always reckoned allowable; nor does any one imagine that he who uses it esteems the thing from which the argument is drawn to have been any prediction or type of that which is inferred from it; but it is only a reasoning from the like causes in different cases, which is certainly strong and convincing."

With reluctance I point out a fourth particular of resemblance, in which it is to be feared that the analogy will too closely apply. For, look into the sacred history, and what do you find to be the issue of the story? (Gen. xxi. 10, 12.) The mother of the free-born child, resenting the insult offered to her infant and herself, insists upon the banishment of the slave and her son as a punishment for his insolence: and this sentence, however cruel and unjustifiable in the party who pronounced it, is for wise reasons confirmed by God, who consoled the reluctant father by the promise of protection to his exiled offspring. But the decree was ratified and executed in its utmost rigour: the son of the bondwoman shall be rejected, and shall have no participation whatever in the privileges of the child of promise. How far this declaration applies to the present state of my unhappy and deluded countrymen, I must leave to your own reflections; it is a subject upon which it is too painful for me to insist. Ch. IV. Ver. 30.

3. The apostle concludes with an exhortation to believers to adhere to the liberty into which they have been introduced by Christ, ver. 31, ch. v. ver. 1.

So then, brethren[2], *we are not children of the* 31.

[2] *So then, brethren.*] I agree with Locke, Peirce, Bowyer, Doddridge, Newcome, and other critics, in joining the first verse of the fifth chapter with the last of the fourth. It is the conclusion drawn from the preceding premises. The apostle by his allegory had been illustrating and establishing the proposition, that Christians are the free-born sons of God: he now exhorts them stedfastly to adhere to their Christian liberty.

Ch. V. Ver. 1. *bond-woman, but of the free*-woman: *continue stedfast, therefore, in the liberty with which Christ hath made us free*[1], *and do not* by going *backwards*[2] *encumber yourselves with a yoke of bondage*[3].

By our conversion to the Christian religion we are regenerated, we are free-born, heirs of liberty and not of servitude; we are children of the promise, subject to no servile restraint or servile terror: filial obedience flowing from filial love is the only law which we are required to obey, and we are heirs of an everlasting inheritance. For this liberty we are indebted to Jesus, our Master and elder brother; who has published and sealed the charter of our freedom, and has admitted us into that free and happy community of which he is the head. Learn, therefore, the value of your privileges: hold fast your Christian liberty: let no one bring you into bondage. Submit to no human impositions inconsistent with the authority of Christ: do not voluntarily enslave yourselves: make no addition to the

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[1] *With which Christ hath made us free.*] The gospel which Jesus published is the charter of our liberties, and by the profession of Christianity we are admitted into the freedom of that community of which he is the head.

[2] By going *backwards.*] "παλιν is used for *retrorsum*, and perhaps that may better suit this place and Gal. iv. 9, and so the meaning here will be, 'Don't by going backwards entangle yourselves with a yoke of bondage.'" Peirce. "Be not again put under the yoke of servitude." Newcome. "Fasten not yourselves in a yoke of slavery." Wakefield; who with the Syriac and Coptic omits παλιν.

[3] *Encumber yourselves.*] "The original word ενεχεσθε signifies to be bound or held under a yoke," &c. Chandler.

institutes of Christ: cherish a filial and a liberal spirit; and let your religious homage be that of love and not of terror. Ch. v. Ver. 1.

SECTION IV.

THE APOSTLE solemnly warns the Galatians, that a voluntary subjection to the ceremonial law excludes a man from the privileges of the gospel; he condemns the Judaizing teacher, and clears his own character from the imputation of preaching up the universal obligation of legal rites. Ch. v. 2—12.

1. The apostle insists, that voluntary submission to circumcision is a virtual obligation to yield subjection to the law, and a renunciation of the privileges of the gospel, ver. 2—4.

Behold, I Paul[4] *declare to you, that if ye submit to circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing*[5]. 2.

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[4] *I Paul.*] *q. d.* "who am an apostle of Christ by the special designation of God." Chandler.—"who am falsely reported to preach up circumcision in other places." Locke: which is the more probable interpretation.

[5] *Christ will profit you nothing.*] The apostle could not mean to say, that submission to the rite of circumcision would exclude men from salvation and future happiness: he must therefore be understood as speaking of a title to external privileges only. Circumcision was initiation into the Jewish covenant; to the blessings of which they would be entitled if they kept the law without any deviation. Faith was the initiation into the Christian covenant, and the title to its privileges. But they who sub-

Ch. V. Ver. 2. You are free-born, you are entitled to all the privileges of children by faith in Christ; you are in want of nothing which those who lived under the Mosaic ritual could claim. Maintain firmly your invaluable rights. Beware of giving way in the first instance; for I myself, I who am represented as preaching one doctrine at one place, and another at another; I, the depreciated and calumniated Paul, do most solemnly and explicitly assure you, that if you submit to circumcision, your profession of Christianity will be of no use to you at all.

3. *Yea, I testify again*[1] *to every one who submits to circumcision, that he is bound to perform the whole law.*

As an apostle of Christ, qualified and authorized to determine the case, I give it as my decided judgement, that every one who voluntarily submits to circumcision voluntarily binds himself to observe the whole law: his conduct will admit of no other in-

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mitted to circumcision, thereby virtually declared that they preferred the legal mode to the evangelical mode of obtaining covenant privileges: *i. e.* they renounced the gracious scheme of the gospel for the rigours of the law, and they must take the consequence; they must punctually fulfill the law, or they forfeit the blessings, the privileges of the community of the children of God.

[1] *I testify again*, &c.] The apostle repeats the sentiment, with some variation of phrase to increase the impression. See Newcome. Some of the most ancient copies omit παλιν. See Griesbach. Perhaps this is preferable: *q. d.* Christ is of no use; and, what is more, you are bound to keep the whole law, or your circumcision will do you no good. Or, the third verse is an amplification of the second: *q. d.* Christ is of no use. Why? Because you bind yourselves to keep the law, from which Christ would have set you free.

terpretation. Symbolical actions have no meaning, if they do not teach that whoever consents to be initiated into any society, or profession, does virtually oblige himself to submit to all the rules and engagements of that profession: so that you not only forfeit all your Christian privileges, but you incur obligations which it is impossible to fulfill. Christ would have set you free: but you reject his offer. Ch. V. Ver. 3.

Ye who seek *to be justified*[2] *by the law have renounced Christ*[3]; *ye have fallen from* the dispensation of *grace*[4]. 4.

You cannot be both Jews and Christians: if you seek divine favour by the ceremonies of the law, you renounce your claim to it upon the ground of faith. If you choose justification by obedience to a ritual, you virtually and absolutely decline all claim to it by a method which releases you from ritual obliga-

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[2] *Ye who* seek *to be justified.*] δικαιεσθε, *who are justified.* See Newcome.

[3] *Ye have renounced Christ.*] κατηργηθητε απο τυ Χριστυ, *ye are abolished from Christ,* wholly separated from him, as a woman from her husband by his death. Rom. vii. 2; 2 Tim. i. 10; 1 Cor. xv. 24—26. "κατ. απο τινος, *is dicitur qui immunis, liber est ab aliqua re, non amplius rem cum aliquo habet.*" Schleusner. See Chandler.—"ye have done with Christ." Wakefield. —"Καταργειν denotat *vim, pretium, auctoritatem rei detrahere,* deinde etiam, *cessare facere. Hinc* κατ. απο τινος, *alienum esse ab aliquo, nihil amplius rei cum eo habere.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *Fallen from grace.*] "from the covenant of grace." Locke. Χαρις is here, as often elsewhere, put for the gospel dispensation, which is a dispensation of mercy. John i. 16, 17. They had fallen from grace, not as excluding themselves from eternal life, but as renouncing the gospel for the Jewish dispensation, and preferring the mode of justification by ceremonial institutions to justification by faith.

Ch. V. Ver. 4.

tion. If you rely upon the law, you have done with the gospel: it is of no more use to you than if it had never existed. You have forsaken the gentle yoke of Christ, and have subjected yourselves to the heavy and insupportable burden of the law. You have passed the sentence of exclusion upon yourselves, and you must abide by the consequences.

2. The apostle declares, that the true disciples of Christ entertain no hope but what is founded upon an operative faith, ver. 5, 6.

5. *For we*[1], *by the spirit*[2], *expect from faith that justification which is the object of* our *hope*[3].

I do not speak lightly upon this subject; for, whatever you may have heard to the contrary, I persist in assuring you that I myself, and all who listen to my instructions, all in every place who are true and consistent believers in Christ, have learned from the gospel to depend upon faith alone, a sincere practical faith exclusive of all ceremonial institutes, for that acceptance with God, here and hereafter, which is the great object of our desire and hope.

6. *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avail-*

[1] *For we.*] The apostle himself, and all consistent believers together with him. See Locke.

[2] *By the spirit.*] *i. e.* being so taught by the gospel dispensation; which is here called the *spirit*. See ch. iii. 3, 5. Newcome, Locke.

[3] *Justification which is the object of* our *hope.*] Literally, "the hope of justification."—"We who follow the truth of the gospel and the doctrine of the spirit of God, have no other hope of justification but by faith in Christ." Locke.

eth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which operates by love[4]. Ch. V. Ver. 6.

To sum up all in a few words: The truth of the case is, that to a believer in Christ it is a matter of no consequence whether antecedently to his conversion he was a Jew or a heathen. All that is now required of him is, to believe in the divine mission of Christ, and to live in the habitual exercise of love to God and benevolence to man. A lively operative faith is the essential and the only condition of securing an interest in the privileges and the promises of the gospel.

3. The apostle expostulates with the Galatians on their declension from the truth, and clears himself from the suspicion of having been the occasion of their error, ver. 7, 8.

Ye were running well: who has intercepted you[5], 7.
that ye should not continue to obey the truth? This 8.

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[4] *Faith which operates by love.*] *q. d.* Under the new dispensation ceremonies are nothing, practical faith is every thing. See ch. vi. δι' αγαπης ενεργουμενη, "rendered effectual or made operative by love; which shows itself to be a living active principle, by producing the fruit of obedience. *q. d.* Under the gospel, faith is all in all; even that firm belief of the Christian religion which influences to, and produces, a sincere love of God and our neighbour." Chandler.

[5] *Who has intercepted you.*] ενεκοψε· this is the reading of the best copies. See Griesbach. εγκοπτω, εμποδιζω. Hesychius, Phavorinus. "metaphorice, *interpello, impedio.*" Schleusner.—"It is an Olympic expression, answerable to ετρεχετε, and properly signifies coming across the course while another is running in it, in such a manner as to jostle and throw him out of the way." Doddridge.

Ch. V. Ver. 8. *persuasion*[1] *doth not come from him who called you*[2].

When I left Galatia you were advancing in your Christian course with speed and vigour: you understood the principles of the Christian doctrine, and you adorned them by your practice: you valued your Christian liberty, and exulted in your freedom. How came this unhappy change to take place? What busy intruder has thrust you out of your way, and given you a bias contrary to truth? Your first instructor in the principles of Christianity is not responsible for this obliquity of conduct. I set you in the right way; it is some evil-minded person who has since perverted your steps, and turned you astray.

4. The apostle warns them against the progressive tendency of error, and expresses his hope that the Galatians will animadvert with due severity upon the corrupter of their faith and the disturber of their peace, ver. 9, 10.

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[1] *This persuasion.*] ἡ πεισμονη, an allusion in St. Paul's manner to the preceding word πειθεσθαι. *q. d.* that ye should not obey the truth. This obedience, which you now pay to the law, cometh not from him who called you. See Locke. N.B. The clause τῃ αληθειᾳ μη πειθεσθαι was wanting in some of Jerome's copies, and in the Syriac, and is supposed to have been introduced from ch. iii. 1; where, however, it is wanting in the best copies. See Bowyer; and Griesbach, who also marks it as wanting in Chrysostom.

[2] *Him who called you.*] Meaning himself: see ch. i. 6. "The apostle argues thus: You were going on well in the liberty of the gospel: who stopped you? I, you may be sure, had no hand in it; I, you know, called you to liberty, and not to subjection to the law, and therefore you can by no means suppose that I should preach of circumcision." Locke.

A little leaven leaveneth the whole mass[3]. Ch. V. Ver. 9.

Erroneous principles admitted and encouraged will gradually spread, and will diffuse their influence through the whole society; and though there may be but few at present who embrace or propagate them, yet if proper methods are not taken to check their progress, their abettors will increase, and the whole church will gradually be infected by them.

But I have confidence in you through the Lord[4], *that ye will not think differently* from me; *but he who troubleth you shall bear* his *judgement*[5], *whosoever he be.* 10.

Notwithstanding the success which erroneous doctrines have met with among you, and the

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[3] *A little leaven*, &c.] Mr. Locke infers from this and the next verse, that all this disorder arose from one man. "A few seducers may corrupt all." Newcome. See 1 Cor. v. 6.

[4] *Confidence in you through the Lord.*] εν Κυριῳ. "the utmost confidence in you." Wakefield. He translates the next clause, "that ye will not alter your minds."—"I have confidence in you, that by the help of the Lord you will all be of this same mind with me; you will beware of this leaven, so as not to be put into a ferment, nor shaken in your liberty, which you ought to stand fast in; and to secure it, I doubt not, such confidence I have in you, will with one accord cast out him that troubles you. For, as for me, you may be sure I am not for circumcision, in that the Jews continue to persecute me. This is evidently his meaning, though not spoken out, but managed warily, with a very skilful and moving insinuation: for, as he says of himself, ch. iv. 20, he knew not at that distance what temper they were in." Locke.

[5] *Shall bear* his *judgement.*] "Such judgement might be censure, excommunication, or the infliction of some bodily disease. It might be future punishment also, the case of impenitence being supposed." Newcome. Mr. Locke understands κριμα as signifying expulsion by church censure, as in the case of the Corinthian fornicator.

Ch. V. Ver. 10. anxiety which I suffer on your account, my hopes still prevail over my apprehensions; and I entertain a sanguine expectation that you are so well founded in the principles of the Christian religion, that you will still adhere faithfully to the doctrine which you learned from me; and, as a proof of it, that you will pass a proper censure upon that seducing teacher who would pervert your faith and disturb your peace, whatever his rank, his abilities, or his influence may be.

5. The apostle appeals to his persecutions as proofs of the consistency of his doctrines, and insists upon the exclusion of the disturbers of their peace from their society, ver. 11, 12.

11. *But as for me, brethren, if I still preach circumcision*[1], *why do I still suffer persecution? the*
12. *scandal of the cross would then be abolished. I wish that they might even be cut off*[2] *who trouble you.*

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[1] *If I still,* &c.] A plain intimation that he had been misrepresented to the Galatians as having insisted upon the obligation of the law in other places, though he had held different language there. His persecutions demonstrated the falsehood of this calumny; for they were instigated by the Jews, and chiefly for this reason, that he boldly maintained the liberty of the converted Gentiles from the yoke of the law.

[2] *I wish that they might even be cut off.*] Οφελον και αποκοψονται. The apostle, ver. 10, had expressed his expectation that the false teacher should bear the merited punishment: he here speaks out and explains what that punishment is, viz. exclusion from the communion of the church. The construction of the original has divided the critics. Le Clerc contends that οφελον is never joined with a future tense, nor is the particle και ever interposed. He reads οφελον as if it were ωφειλον, and

I am represented as an advocate for the imposition of the Mosaic ritual; but of this calumny the persecutions which I endure are an ample and public refutation. My chief persecutors are my own countrymen; and the principal ground of their en- Ch. V. Ver. 12.

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renders the clause, "they ought to be cut off, and they shall be cut off." See Cler. Annot. and Bowyer. Bengelius and others put οφελον by itself, and read the preceding clause with an interrogation: "Is, then, the scandal of the cross taken away? I wish it were. And they shall be cut off that trouble you."

"οφελον, *proprie aoristus secundus est verbi* οφειλω, debeo: *sed sumitur etiam adverbialiter et denotat* utinam: *et est adverbium optandi quod construitur mox cum indicativo, (qui tamen non ab* οφελον *pendere videtur, sed a subintellecta particula* ει, *vel* ειθε, *quæ cum* οφελον *sæpe conjuncta reperitur: Vide* Alex. Job. xiv. 13, *et* xxx. 24,) *mox cum optativo.* 1 Cor. iv. 8; 2 Cor. xi. 1; Gal. v. 12. Αποκοπτω, *ambiguitate quadam laborat locus* Gal. v. 12, *ubi de doctoribus judaizantibus inter primos Christianos sermo est, et Paulus optat* οφελον κ. τ. λ. h. e. *e vulgari opinione, ut seipsos sejungerent a cœtu Christianorum doctores cœtum Christianorum turbantes: quæ explicatio nec ab usu loquendi abhorret, nec a contexta oratione aliena est. Nec tamen plane improbanda est sententia, Chrysostomi, Theodoreti, Theophylacti, et Augustini, quam inter recentiores maximè Grotius et Raphelius amplexi sunt, ex qua locus ita reddendus est:* Per me, si velint, non modo circumcidant se, sed adeo genitalia sibi exsecent. *Qui quidem sensus melius et contextui ipsi, et linguæ Græcæ consentire, affectui adeo Pauli contra doctores judaizantes, convenire videtur. Hesych.* αποκοπος, ευνεχος." Schleusner. "I wish that they who are unsettling you may lament it." Wakefield. "*even cut off,* by the judgement of God; he inflicting diseases to the destruction of the body and the salvation of the soul. 1 Cor. v. 5. For the Greek, see Bowyer 4to, where Kuster *De Verbo Medio* is quoted, to show that the future of the middle voice signifies passively. St. Paul uses οφελον with an indicative mood, 1 Cor. iv. 8, and 2 Cor. xi. 1." Newcome. "I wish that they may be cut off (*from communion,* see ver. 10, note,) who trouble you about this matter: and they shall be cut off." Locke. I am unwilling to suppose that the apostle could wish his opponents any bodily harm; I cannot doubt, therefore, that Mr. Locke gives his true meaning.

Ch. V. Ver. 12. mity is the doctrine which I every where teach and inculcate, that the converted Gentile is exempted from the yoke of the law. But if I insisted on their submission to the Mosaic ritual, the chief cause of offence would be removed, and the zealots for the law would be in a degree reconciled to the progress of the gospel. Let the inventors and propagators of these injurious calumnies take the shame which they deserve; and let the disturbers of your peace be cut off from Christian communion. They ought to be excluded from the church, as the perverters of its doctrine and the bane of its peace: and they shall be excluded. Christianity herself disowns them, and the true disciples of Christ will hold no intercourse with them.

PART THE THIRD.

THE APOSTLE, NOW PROCEEDING TO THE PRACTICAL PART OF THE EPISTLE, EARNESTLY DISSUADES THE GALATIANS FROM THOSE VICES WHICH WERE TOO PREVALENT BOTH AMONG JEWS AND HEATHEN; AND EXHORT THEM TO LIVE IN THE HABITUAL AND UNIFORM PRACTICE OF CHRISTIAN VIRTUE, AS THE ONLY MEANS OF ESCAPING FUTURE CONDEMNATION, AND OF SECURING THE BLESSINGS PROMISED BY THE GOSPEL. Gal. v. 13—vi. 10. Ch. V.

SECTION I.

THE APOSTLE recommends mutual affection, and contrasts the spirit of Judaism and heathenism with the spirit of Christianity. Ch. v. 13—26.

1. Christians, though at liberty from ceremonial restraints, ought to regard themselves as bound to each other by the ties of mutual sympathy and affection, ver. 13—15.

For ye, brethren[1], *have been invited to liberty.* Ver. 13.

[1] *For ye, brethren.*] "I wish they were cut off; *for*, brethren, such are enslavers of you who have been called," &c. Newcome. *Ye have been invited:* i. e. by me who received my commission for this purpose from Christ himself. See ver. 8, and ch. i. 6.

Ch. V. Ver. 13. *Only* abuse *not liberty as an occasion to the flesh*[1], *but in love be servants*[2] *one to another.*

You will consult your own advantage and the peace of the church, if you exclude from communion with you those who would enslave you to the yoke of the law. For indeed, my brethren, you were invited by me, who derived my authority for this purpose from Christ himself, into a state of absolute freedom from the yoke of ceremonies:

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[1] *An occasion to the flesh.*] The words *flesh* and *spirit* have various significations in the apostle's writings; and that they are sometimes used in the sense of the tendencies to vice or to virtue in man, in which sense they are understood by most interpreters in this passage, cannot be denied. It appears to me however most agreeable to the apostle's design, and to the scope of his argument, to understand the word *spirit* in this connexion as expressive of the gospel, and of the state into which men were brought in consequence of their conversion to the Christian religion; and the word *flesh*, in opposition to *spirit*, as expressive of an unconverted state, whether of heathenism or Judaism, including under the latter pharisaism, or a superstitious attachment to traditionary rites. See ch. iii. 3. The tendency of both these states was to deprave the character, that of heathenism by vicious indulgence, and of Judaism by pride or despair. This idea he pursues at large, Rom. vi. vii. The vices thus generated he calls the works of the flesh, whether they consisted in intemperate pleasure, or in unreasonable affections of the mind; and this consideration easily explains what some expositors have regarded as a difficulty, namely, how it comes to pass that hatred, envy, contention, and heresy, are enumerated amongst the works of the flesh. See Chandler. In this sense liberty might be said to be abused as an occasion to the flesh, if, by conceiving themselves at liberty from moral restraint, they allowed themselves in the vicious habits and practices of their unconverted state.

[2] *Be servants.*] δουλευετε· "though by the gospel they are called to a state of liberty from the law, they were still as much bound, and subjected to their brethren in all the offices and duties of love and good will, as if in that respect they were their vassals and bondmen." Locke.

emancipated from heathen idolatry, you were and are under no obligation to submit to Jewish rites. Yet let me caution you not to mistake the nature of that freedom which you enjoy. You are not released from the moral law. You are not at liberty to indulge those licentious passions which heathenism encourages, nor to cherish that contracted and malignant spirit which distinguishes the pharisaic Jews. You are still subject to the law of love, and you are bound by the generous spirit of Christianity to exert yourselves to the utmost extent of your powers to promote the happiness of all around you, as if you were actually in bonds of servitude to each other. Ch. V. Ver. 13.

For the whole law is fulfilled in one precept, even *in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another*[3], *take heed that ye be not consumed by each other.* 14. 15.

In lieu of all ceremonial rites the Christian law prescribes one grand paramount maxim, that of doing good; of doing to others as you could reasonably desire that in an exchange of circumstances they would do to you. Observe this one precept, and be assured that you obey every law with which under the new dispensation you have any concern.

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[3] *Bite and devour one another.*] "The words are used metaphorically (as they are by the best authors), to signify the contention, slander, backbiting and censuring, which arose from the differences between the Jewish and Gentile converts. Such a conduct was not only contrary to the Christian spirit and character, but the most likely method to prejudice themselves, and to destroy the church of Christ among them." Chandler.

Ch. V. Ver. 15. But if, instead of loving, you hate one another, and, like wild beasts, snarl at and bite and worry each other, there is great reason to fear that you will be accessary to each others ruin; and be assured that no zeal for legal impositions, no superstitious adherence to burdensome institutions, will compensate for a temper and conduct so opposite to the spirit of the gospel.

2. The apostle strongly urges the Galatians to adhere firmly to the doctrine and spirit of the gospel, in opposition to the principles and practices of an unchristianized state, and assures them that by so doing they will be perfectly safe from condemnation, ver. 16—18.

16. *Now I say, Walk by the spirit, and by no means fulfill*[1] *the desire of the flesh*[2].

I strictly charge you to act up to the precepts and

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[1] *By no means fulfill.*] ε μη τελεσητε, to be understood imperatively, not as in the common translation, *ye shall not fulfill*. See Locke, Wakefield, Newcome, &c. ε μη, a double negative: q. d. *by no means, on no account whatsoever.*

[2] *Spirit—flesh.*] "Flesh in the gospel language is that principle which inclines and carries men to ill. Spirit is that principle which dictates what is right, and inclines to good. See Rom. vii. 17, &c." Locke.—"By *the spirit* the apostle means the reasonable principle or soul in every man, which God has given us to correct and govern the motions and tendencies of our fleshly appetites and passions. The *flesh*, the contrary principle in man, enticing men to such actions as their reason and conscience condemn." Chandler. Notwithstanding these great authorities, I am inclined to believe that the apostle by *spirit* means the state of believers under the gospel dispensation; and by *flesh*, the state in which they were antecedent to conversion, whether of heathenism or Judaism. See ver. 13, note.

to the spirit of the gospel, and carefully abstain from the vices of unbelievers, whether Jews or heathen. Ch. V.

For the flesh hath desires contrary to the spirit, and the spirit contrary to the flesh; and these oppose each other, so that ye do not the things that ye would[3]. Ver. 17.

The tendency of your former state of heathen idolatry, as well as of that state of bondage to pharisaic Judaism, into which your false teachers are now desirous to seduce you, is to betray you into gross and fatal immoralities; while that of the gospel is to inspire you with the love of purity and goodness. These states are therefore inconsistent with each other: so that, if you submit to Judaism in the expectation of attaining greater eminence in virtue, you will be miserably disappointed, and the severity of the law will first drive you to despair, and then plunge you into vice and ruin.

But if ye be led by the spirit[4], *ye are not under the law.* 18.

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[3] *Ye do not the things that ye would.*] Mr. Locke observes, that ours is the only translation which renders it *cannot: q. d.* You imagine that by submitting to the yoke of the law you will attain greater pre-eminence in virtue. In this you will be disappointed; for the spirit of the law will counteract that of the gospel. Locke, Chandler, Newcome, &c. understand the text as parallel to Rom. vii. 19. *q. d.* often ye do not practise what your mind approves.

[4] *If ye be led by the spirit:*] *i. e.* says Locke, "if you give yourselves up to the conduct of the gospel." He observes in the note, "that it was natural for the apostle, having more than once mentioned the spirit, to continue the same word, though somewhat varied in the sense;" and he proceeds to show that the law and gospel are opposed by the apostle under the titles of 'flesh' and 'spirit.' 2 Cor. iii. 6, 8; Rom. vii. 5; Gal. iii. 3. But

Ch. V. Ver. 18. If you are governed by the principles and the spirit of the gospel, you are no longer subject to the condemning sentence of the law, and the hope of mercy will be a continual motive to filial and cheerful obedience.

3. The apostle exposes and condemns the vices which were allowed and practised by the unchristianized world, ver. 19—21.

19. *Now the works of the flesh are evident. They are adultery*[1], *fornication, impurity, lasciviousness,*
20. *idolatry*[2], *sorcery*[3], *enmities, strifes, emulations, animosities, quarrels, party divisions*[4], *separa-*
21. *tions*[5], *envyings, murthers, drunkenness, revel-*

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though it cannot be denied that the apostle does sometimes take up his words in a sense different from that in which he had used them before, yet it ought always to be presumed that he continues to use his words in the same sense, except where the contrary is evident; which does not appear to be the case in this context. And therefore, as it is clear that the word 'spirit' is here used for the gospel, it ought to be taken in the same sense throughout the whole paragraph; and 'flesh,' which is put in opposition to it, must signify the unchristianized state, whether Jewish or heathen.

[1] *Adultery.*] μοιχεια is wanting in the Alexandrine and Ephrem manuscripts, and in most of the ancient versions. See Griesbach.

[2] *Idolatry.*] "with its impure attendant rites. See 1 Pet. iv. 3." Newcome.

[3] *Sorcery.*] φαρμακειαι· the word signifies *poisonings*, or incantations and magic arts by means of *poisonous drugs* and ointments with which impostors were accustomed to delude the credulous and superstitious. See Chandler and Macknight.

[4] *Party divisions.*] διχοστασιαι *schisms*, which do not proceed to separation. See Doddridge and Chandler.

[5] *Separations.*] αἱρεσεις. Literally, *heresies*. The apostle's meaning seems to be separations, and the dissolution of socie-

lings[6], *and such-like; concerning which I now forewarn you, as indeed I have told* you *before, that they who practise such* things *will not inherit the kingdom of God.* Ch. V. Ver. 21.

You well know, my brethren, the vices which are openly practised by the unchristianized and unconverted world; who are strangers to the sublime principles and to the salutary restraints of the gospel. They allow themselves in the most licentious practices. They degrade themselves by the most stupid and contemptible idolatries. They pretend to curious arts, and the skill which they possess they employ to the most pernicious purposes. They disturb the peace of society by their mutual jealousies, animosities, contentions, and divisions. They carry their hatred and malice to such an extent, that they often hesitate not to take away the life of the unfortunate object of their envy, malignity, and revenge. Drunkenness, gluttony, and every species of riot is common amongst them. With regard to such characters, I now declare, as I formerly assured you while I exercised my ministry among you, that,

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ties in consequence of quarrels and factions. There is no reference to theological disputes, or to heresies in the ecclesiastical sense of the word; for the apostle is detailing the vices of the unchristianized world. Dr. Chandler has introduced here a long and judicious note upon the meaning of the word heresy as used in scripture; but, for the reason above assigned, it is irrelevant to the occasion and the subject.

[6] *Revellings.*] κωμοι "were, amongst the Greeks, disorderly spending of the night in feasting, with a licentious indulging to wine, music, dancing, &c." Locke. See Rom. xiii. 13; 1 Pet. iv. 3.

Ch. V. Ver. 21. let them make what pretensions they will of strict conformity to ceremonial institutions, they are not, and while they continue in these practices they never can be, the genuine children of God, and heirs of the privileges of his kingdom. Ceremonial institutions, however rigorous, however regular, will never be accepted as a substitute for moral duties.

4. The apostle represents the opposite tendency of the principles and of the spirit of the gospel, ver. 22, 23.

22. *But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace,*
23. *long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance: against such* things[1] *there is no law.*

The principles of the gospel, when thoroughly understood, and carried into practical effect, will produce love to God and benevolence to man, habitual cheerfulness of mind, an earnest desire and endeavour to live in peace with all men, unwilling-

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[1] *Against such* things.] "*Non admodum probandam reor quorundum anxiam diligentiam, qui in hujusmodi catalogis solent et numero laborare, et in distinguendis singulis superstitiose torqueri: cum probabile sit Paulum congeriem quandam malorum et bonorum produxisse, quæ ferè consequi solent: non quod hæc sola sint, sed quod in his sit summa.*" Erasmus. Hence, adds Dr. Newcome, after having made this quotation, "we may account for the addition of ἀγνεια in some manuscripts and versions, ver. 23; and perhaps for that of μοιχεια, ver. 19. Against such like dispositions and actions there is no prohibiting or condemning law; no stern law like that of Moses, 1 Tim. i. 9." "Tales lege non damnantur. *Est meiosis. Tantum abest, ut iis legis Mosaicæ, terrores sint metuendi, ut potius Deo sint grati, et accepti, licet non circumcisi.*" Rosenmuller.

ness to resent injuries received, a mild and gentle carriage in all the intercourses of society; habitual, active, disinterested benevolence; faithfulness in the performance of promises and the execution of trusts, and uniform integrity in all transactions of business; mildness in administering reproof, and resolute government of the appetites and passions. There can be no law to punish men who live in the practice of these virtues. And they who thus adorn their profession, need be under no anxiety lest they should incur the divine displeasure by declining to connect the rites of Judaism with the precepts of Christianity. Ch. V. Ver. 23.

5. The disciples of Christ, having entered upon a new life, are bound to renounce the principles and vices of their former condition, ver. 24—26.

Now they who are Christ's[2] *have crucified the flesh, with* its *passions and desires.* 24.

What I have before said of myself, individually, may justly be applied to all who believe in Christ, and who profess to be his disciples. They, like him, have died and been raised to life again. Their former idolatrous or pharisaic selves are crucified; and

[2] *Who are Christ's.*] "who belong to Christ, and are his members." Locke. The apostle seems to allude to ch. ii. 20. It is a familiar comparison with the apostle. The believer, in his converted state, resembles a person in a former state of existence; by conversion he becomes crucified to it; by the gospel he is raised, like Christ, to a new life; and he is, therefore, bound to regulate his conduct by the laws of his new state of existence. See this thought pursued at large, Rom. vii. A strong presumption that these epistles had the same author.

Ch. V. Ver. 24. all the evil principles, all the criminal habits and affections, all the gross prejudices and the vicious practices of their former state are condemned to death, never to appear again.

25. *Seeing that we live by the spirit*[1], *let us also*
26. *walk by the spirit. Let us not be vain-glorious*[2], *provoking one another, envying one another.*

Crucified like Christ to our former state, like him we are also raised to a new life. This great change is produced in us by the spiritual dispensation of the gospel; by the profession of which we are introduced into a new state of existence at present, and raised to the hope of eternal life hereafter. But, since this privilege is the gift of the gospel, let our conduct be governed by the maxims and spirit of the gospel; and not by the principles of our former unregenerate and unholy state. Let our characters be adorned with Christian virtue. And particularly, let us cherish a humble, gentle, and disinterested

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[1] *We live by the spirit.*] The gospel introduces us into a new life; it raises us from the dead; it behoves us, therefore, to adhere to it as a rule of life. "As Christians, as new men, we live by that spirit which raises us from the death of sin." Newcome. Observe throughout, the word 'spirit' is used to signify the gospel dispensation. This shows the true meaning of the word 'flesh,' which is used in opposition to it.

[2] *Vain-glorious.*] "like your ambitious leader." Newcome. —"nor provoke one another by insolent boasts of our Christian liberty, or by censuring others for the use of it; nor envy one another on account of any superior advantages and abilities with which the providence of God may have favoured us." Chandler. "Whether the vain-glory and envying here were about their spiritual gifts, a fault which the Corinthians were guilty of, or upon any other occasion, I shall not curiously examine." Locke.

spirit; let us entertain a just sense of our own imperfections, not thinking too highly of our own attainments, nor too meanly and contemptuously of those of others. But while, in our respective spheres of service, we are faithful and diligent in the performance of our own duty, let us not repine, but rejoice, if any of our fellow-labourers are honoured with superior talents, and crowned with more abundant success. Ch. V. Ver. 26.

SECTION II.

THE APOSTLE recommends gentleness in reproof; humility, liberality to Christian instructors, and perseverance in doing good. Ch. vi. 1—10. Ch. VI.

1. The apostle recommends prudence and gentleness in administering reproof; sympathy, humility, and self-examination, ver. 1—5.

Brethren, if a man be overtaken[3] *by any fault,* Ver. 1.

[3] *If a man be overtaken.*] *q. d.* if a man be carried away before he is aware. εαν και προληφθη· "if a man by frailty or surprise fall into a fault." Locke. "It expresses surprise by which a person might be drawn into sin without any deliberate design." Chandler. "if a man be even *discovered* in any offence." Newcome. "*Si quis invitus et improviso abreptus fuerit vitio quodam. Vide Elsner et Kypke. Sed vertunt alii interpretes sic: etiamsi quis deliquisse deprehendatur.*" Schleusner. This latter sense is adopted by Grotius. Griesbach joins the last verse of the preceding chapter to this: *q. d.* Let us not insult over each others frailties and offences, but rather endeavour to rectify what is amiss in ourselves and others.

Ch. VI. Ver. 1. *do ye who are spiritual*[1], *restore*[2] *such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself*[3], *lest thou also be tempted*[4].

My Christian brethren, instead of envying the superior attainments of others; instead of tempting each other to what is wrong; instead of enjoying an ungenerous triumph if a person, supposed to be eminent for prudence and piety, should disgrace his character by unbecoming conduct; our profession inculcates, and it behoves us to exercise, a very different spirit. If, indeed, it should ever happen, as, from human frailty, it undoubtedly may, that a person professing Christianity, through the influence of former habits, or by sudden temptation, should be surprised into sin, let those who are eminent for gifts and virtues, and for their rank and station in

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[1] *Ye who are spiritual.*] πνευματικοι. "who are eminent in the church for knowledge, practice, and gifts. 1 Cor. iii. 1, xii. 1." Locke; which is the general opinion of the expositors. I am rather inclined, with Dr. Whitby, to understand it as principally referring to those who were instructors of the church, and who were qualified for this office by spiritual gifts. Dr. Chandler interprets, "you, in whom reason and religion are stronger principles, &c. *A spiritual man* in the New Testament, is either one who is endued with the gifts of the spirit, or one who is spiritually-minded."

[2] *Restore such an one.*] καταρτιζετε. "*restituo rem in suum locum aut statum, restauro quod ruptum et dissolutum est.*" Schleusner. *To set a limb that is out of joint.* "It properly signifies to reduce and recover every thing to its original state of perfection." Chandler. See 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

[3] *Considering thyself.*] Jerome and Le Clerc note this change of person as a solecism. Blackwall and Doddridge remark it as a beauty. See Erasmus *in loc.*

[4] *Be tempted.*] πειρασθης. "be overtaken." Wakefield; who argues that it signifies the same as λημφθης.

the church, take the case in hand; and let them endeavour to bring the offender to penitence and reformation. Let not the disjointed limb be roughly handled, or, immediately cut off; but rather, by patience and prudence, let it be gently restored to its place, where it may again, in due time, become ornamental and useful to the body. For consider, my friends, that the very best men are frail; and none can say how soon his own virtue may be exposed to a severe trial. Let him, then, conduct himself to an offending brother in the same manner in which, in similar circumstances, he should himself think it right to be treated by others. Ch. VI. Ver. 1.

Bear ye one another's burdens[5], *and thus ye will fulfill the law of Christ*[6]. 2.

In the progress of life, and in the profession of the Christian faith, we all have our trials; and often to the full extent of our ability to bear them: every one knows his own burden, and finds it heavy enough: we need not to have it increased by any unnecessary addition to the load. And yet, my brethren, such is the strange propensity of some among you, that they are eager to impose upon you

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[5] *Bear one another's burdens.*] "Bear with one another's infirmities. 1 Thess. v. 14; Rom. xv. 1." Locke, Newcome.

[6] *Ye will fulfill*, &c.] αναπληρωσετε, in the future tense, is the reading of most of the ancient versions, and is adopted by Mr. Wakefield. "As some were so very zealous for the law of Moses, St. Paul here puts them in mind of a law which they were under, and obliged to observe, the law of Christ. And he shows them how to do it, viz. by bearing one another's burdens, and not by increasing their burdens by the observances of the Levitical law." Locke.

Ch. VI. Ver. 2. the burden of the law of Moses, encumbered with their own pharisaic rites, the burden of its impositions, and the burden of its curse; a weight which is sufficient to press you down to the pit of destruction. But the gospel which you profess breathes a very different spirit. Bear one another's burdens, and do not add to them. Sympathize in each other's sufferings; comfort one another under trouble; relieve distress where it is in your power, and encourage the feeble-minded. These, my brethren, are the requisitions of the mild dispensation under which you live. If you comply with them, if you obey this easy, this reasonable, this lovely rule of life, you manifest your allegiance to Christ, and fully approve yourselves the faithful subjects of his heavenly kingdom, entitled to all the privileges and immunities of his auspicious reign.

3. *For, if any man*[1] *conceiteth* that *he is something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.*

Let me add, that if there should happen to be any person among you, my brethren, who, despising the pure and simple precepts of Jesus, should think highly of himself, because of his attachment to the ritual law; should exhibit himself as a model of imitation, and as a standard of truth; and should be loud in his censures of those who do not yield implicit deference to his authority; and if, after all,

[1] *If any man.*] There seems to be an evident allusion to the judaizing teacher, though the proposition is expressed generally. Indeed, Mr. Wakefield's translation fixes it directly upon him: "Now if a certain person think himself to be something, he deceiveth his own heart, for he is nothing."

it should appear upon examination that such a person has no foundation upon which to build his presumptuous claims, let that man know that he will find himself, in the issue, most egregiously deceived, and that his folly and his vanity will terminate in his own disgrace. Ch. VI. Ver. 3.

But let every man try[2] *his own work, and then he will have* reason *to glory on his own account, and not on that of another*[3]. *For every man must bear his own burden*[4]. 4. 5.

Instead of meddling with and censuring others, let every man examine himself, let him inquire se-

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[2] *Try.*] "by the test of the evangelical law; and then he will have matter of glorying in his personal obedience, and not in causing others to judaize." Newcome.

[3] *Not on that of another.*] "See ver. 13; the apostle in both places means the same thing; viz. glorying in another, in having brought him to circumcision, and other ritual observances of the Mosaic law." Locke. Wakefield reads ἑταίρου, "then he will keep his boasting to himself, and not boast against his neighbour."

[4] *His own burden.*] *i. e.* of his own faults. See ver. 2. "Thus," says Mr. Locke, "St. Paul seems to me to discourse in this section: Brethren, there be some among you that would bring others under the ritual observances of the Mosaical law, a yoke which was too heavy for us and our fathers to bear. They would do much better to ease the burdens of the weak; this is suitable to the law of Christ, which they are under, and which they ought strictly to obey. If they think that, because of their spiritual gifts, they have power to prescribe in such matters, I tell them that they have not, and that they deceive themselves. Let them rather take care of their own particular actions, that they be right, and such as they ought to be. This will give them matter of glorying in themselves, and not vainly in others, as they do when they prevail with them to be circumcised. For every man shall be answerable for his own actions. Let the reader judge (continues this admirable expositor) whether this does not seem to be St. Paul's view here, and suit with his way of writing."

Ch. VI. Ver. 5. riously and impartially into his own character and conduct; let him consider how they correspond with the spirit of the gospel; let him reform what is amiss, and improve what is imperfect. By these means he will acquire true satisfaction and peace of mind, and will have reason to rejoice on his own account, in his own character and hopes; nor will he then be inclined to boast of a fancied superiority to his brethren, and much less in his attempts to bring them over to his own opinion and party, and to subject them to the tyranny of the law. For all this will be of little avail in the great day when men will be judged according to their works, and to their real character, and not according to the estimation in which they have been held by themselves or others. In that day, every one must be responsible for his own errors and offences; and they who have been severe in their censures of others will then need, but will seek in vain for, that mercy which they have so unrighteously withheld. Nor will their professed subjection to the law of Moses, nor all their zeal in making proselytes, be of any avail.

2. The apostle urges the Galatians to make a competent provision for the teachers of religion, and to persevere in the practice of virtue and benevolence, ver. 6—10.

6. *Now let him who is instructed in the word, communicate in all good things*[1] *to him that instructeth.*

[1] *Communicate in all good things.*] "make the teacher thereof

Let those who are taught the important truths of the Christian revelation be liberal to their pious and faithful instructors; and cheerfully contribute what may be necessary for their support and comfort. It is but reasonable that they should have a suitable compensation for their time and labour; and it is the appointment of Christ that the teachers of his religion should be maintained by those who derive benefit from their instruction. Ch. VI. Ver. 6.

Be not deceived[2]*: God is not deluded; for whatsoever a man soweth, that he will also reap.* 7.

Do not excuse yourselves by frivolous pretences from the discharge of this duty. It is required by God. And though the persons who are immediately

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a partaker in all his good things." Wakefield. "The exhortation," says Dr. Chandler, "is founded upon this rule of equity and gratitude, that benefits conferred deserve suitable returns." He adds, that "we may observe that the maintenance of the preachers of the gospel was, in the primitive church, by the voluntary contributions of the Christian people; and that the divine right of tythes was a doctrine much later than the times of the apostles." See Phil. iv. 15; 1 Cor. ix. 11. "If this was their duty," says Dr. Whitby, "towards such teachers as had no need of books or study to fit themselves for the work, they being enabled for it by immediate assistance and gifts of the Holy Ghost; how much more towards them who spend much time and money to fit themselves for that work, and must be still employed in studying and reading to make themselves such workmen as need not to be ashamed!"

[2] *Be not deceived*, &c.] "The apostle here, with great propriety and force, exposes the evasions some would make use of to excuse themselves from acts of liberality; by which, however they might impose upon others, they would egregiously deceive themselves, as every circumstance lies open to an all-seeing God, and they assuredly should reap according as they sowed; a metaphor which he employs elsewhere to excite liberality, 2 Cor. ix. 6." Doddridge.

Ch. VI. Ver. 7. aggrieved may not be able either to reply to your sophistry, or to redress their own wrongs, God is the impartial judge between you and them. None of your vain pretences can impose upon him; nor will it be possible for you to elude his retributive justice. Proportioned to your seed-time will be your future harvest. To the bountiful and kind, bounty and kindness shall be abundantly exercised; but to the penurious and the niggardly, the recompense will be correspondent to their deeds.

8. *For he who soweth on the flesh*[1], *from the flesh will reap destruction; but he who soweth on the spirit, will from the spirit reap everlasting life*[2].

The produce will naturally partake of the qualities of the soil upon which it grows. A bad soil will corrupt the good seed, which a rich and fertile soil would invigorate and cherish. He who professes the

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[1] *He who soweth on the flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction.*] So Mr. Wakefield. The flesh and the spirit are the soil upon which the seed is sown, and corresponding to the soil will be the produce. A bad soil will corrupt the best seed, and destroy the most vigorous plant. A good soil will nourish and invigorate the seed, and produce an abundant crop. The *flesh*, agreeably to the sense in which the word has been before used, is the heathen, unchristianized state, the produce of which is weeds and unwholesome plants. He that soweth on the flesh is the man who professes faith in the Christian religion, but whose heart is unconverted; the fruit which he will bear will be putrid and worthless. He that soweth on the spirit is the cordial and practical believer in the gospel; who bringeth forth fruit to holiness, the end of which is everlasting life. To sow upon the spirit is to receive the truths of the Christian religion in a good heart.

[2] *Everlasting life.*] "The apostle makes use of the terms *corruption* and *life*, in correspondence to the nature of those principles of *flesh* and *spirit*; the flesh being liable to corruption, and spirit or breath being the principle of life." Priestley.

Christian religion, while he is in his heart a heathen, will naturally practise those vices of a heathen state which will terminate in ruin. But he whose heart is upright and pure, and whose profession is sincere, will abound in those fruits of virtue and piety, and in those acts of liberality and beneficence, which are the surest pledge of everlasting happiness. Ch. VI. Ver. 8.

And let us not grow weary of doing well, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. 9.

Let us then faithfully and resolutely persevere in the practice of duty, though it may sometimes require great labour, and patience, and self-denial; though we derive no immediate advantage from it; and though our spirits are at times depressed and discouraged at the little good which we appear to do. If we hold out to the end, we shall succeed. We are scattering the good seed upon a soil apparently rough and barren. But in due time it will take root and spring up, and reward our anxiety and toil with an abundant harvest. The labourer at least shall not lose his own reward. But in order to this, it is necessary that we should not relax in our virtuous exertions, much less fold our hands, and sit down in despair.

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men[3], *but especially to those who are of the household of faith.* 10.

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[3] *Do good unto all* men.] "How generous the spirit which Christianity inspires! None that need our assistance are to be excluded from it, when it is in our power to give it. And yet how wise and just is the limitation here fixed by the apostle!

Ch. VI. Ver. 10.

To conclude: Let us ever cultivate a benevolent, disinterested, and liberal spirit. Let our good wishes extend to all mankind; and, as far as opportunity offers, let us contribute to the happiness of all, without distinction, and without excluding those who may differ most widely from us in principles and profession: no, nor yet our enemies and persecutors, if it should be in our power to help them. But as the exercise of benevolence is necessarily restricted, let us be most kind to those with whom we are most intimately connected, and who may be most benefited by our exertions; particularly to our fellow-Christians, who are brethren of the same family, heirs of the same glorious hopes, and who are exposed to the same difficulties, trials, and dangers, with ourselves; who are therefore entitled to a peculiar share in our sympathy and affection, and to whom our good offices may often prove of essential service.

Nature teaches men to provide in the first place for their household and family; and reason instructs them to regard the most worthy objects of charity in their first and largest distributions. And both these reasons concur to direct the Christian to do good, especially to the household of faith." Chandler.

CONCLUSION.

THE APOSTLE closes his epistle with a severe animadversion upon the judaizing teachers, with a solemn declaration of the liberty of Gentile Christians, with an earnest profession of his own sincerity, and with the apostolical benediction. Ch. vi. 11—18. Ch. VI.

1. He calls their attention to the circumstance of his having written the whole letter himself, ver. 11.

See in what large characters[1] *I have written to you with my own hand.* Ver. 11.

As I have been greatly calumniated by my opponents, and charged with duplicity of conduct, it might possibly be alleged, if I had employed an amanuensis as usual, that my signature was forged, or that the letter did not express my real sentiments.

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[1] *In what large characters.*] πηλικοις γραμμασι· this expression is usually understood of the length of the letter; but Dr. Whitby observes, that St. Paul uses the word επιστολαι seventeen times, but never the word γραμματα, when he speaks of his epistles; also that the Greek scholiast conceives that the expression refers to the largeness and inelegancy of the characters in which it was written. The apostle probably chose to write this whole epistle himself, to give testimony under his own hand and seal to the importance of his doctrine and the consistency of his character; and to preclude the possibility of the pretext that the letter was forged. He probably wrote the Greek characters ill and with difficulty, which might be the reason why he commonly employed an amanuensis. See Doddridge.

Ch. VI. Ver. 11. To preclude every objection of this kind, I have written the whole epistle myself, that my own handwriting may bear testimony to the doctrine which I teach. And that it is my hand-writing you may easily perceive from the large and ill-shaped characters in which the letter is written, which discover the writer to be one not much used to writing Greek.

2. The apostle directly charges the judaizing teachers with acting from sinister and selfish motives, ver. 12, 13.

12. *All those*[1] *who are desirous of making a specious appearance*[2] *in* the *flesh* would *constrain you to be circumcised, only that they may not be persecuted*[3]
13. *for the cross of Christ. For they who are circumcised do not themselves keep the law*[4]*, but they de-*

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[1] *All those.*] ὁσοι, "as many as."

[2] *A specious appearance.*] ευπροσωπησαι· "the word properly signifies, to be handsome and lovely: hence it is used to signify any thing that recommends itself by its specious appearance. This was the case of these judaizing teachers: they made it their study to keep fair with the Jews εν σαρκι, *by means of the flesh*; not only by boasting of their own circumcision, but that they had pressed the necessity of circumcision upon others." Chandler. εν σαρκι, "in the ritual observances of the law; which, Heb. ix. 10, are called δικαιωματα σαρκος." Locke.

[3] *That they may not be persecuted.*] Dr. Whitby observes from Jerom, "that Augustus, Tiberius, and Caius Cæsar, had made laws that the Jews dispersed through the whole Roman empire should live according to their own laws and ceremonies: whosoever, therefore, was circumcised, though he believed in Christ, was by the Gentiles deemed a Jew; but they who had not this token were persecuted both by Jews and Gentiles."

[4] *Do not keep the law.*] "For how, saith Theodoret, could they in Galatia regularly observe the Jewish feasts, or offer sacrifice, or cleanse themselves from their defilements by touching

sire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh[5]. Ch. VI. Ver. 13.

When these zealots urge you to submit to the yoke of the Mosaic institute, they profess great zeal for your interest, and pretend that obedience to the ceremonial law will be of the greatest advantage to you. But the truth is, they are only pursuing their own selfish purposes. They desire to pass themselves off as Jews, and so to escape persecution; as the Jewish religion is tolerated through the Roman empire. They wish, therefore, to conciliate the minds of the Jews by representing you to them as proselytes to their law, whereas they are themselves convinced that the law is of no use; and while they are persuading, and even compelling you, by their imperious language, to conform rigidly to it as a matter of indispensable obligation, they themselves make no scruple of violating the Mosaic precepts, and they screen themselves from censure by boasting of their zeal and their success in your conversion to Judaism.

3. The apostle boasts in emancipation from the Jewish law by the death of Christ; and declares that a practical faith in the gospel is of itself quite

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any thing that was unclean?" Whitby. But the apostle no doubt means to insinuate, that those zealots who bound the yoke of the law upon others were themselves very negligent in observing its precepts. See Matt. xxiii. 4, 5.

[5] *May glory in your flesh.*] "might boast of this among the Jews, that they promoted circumcision even among the Gentiles, and by that pretence might avoid persecution." Whitby.

Ch. VI. sufficient to entitle a believer to mercy and peace, ver. 14—16.

Ver. 14. *But far be it that I should glory*[1] *except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world*[2].

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[1] *Far be it that I should glory,* &c.] μη γενοιτο. See Newcome and Wakefield.—"glorying in the cross of Christ, is opposed to the judaizers' glorying in circumcision: it is glorying in the plain unmixed doctrine of justification by a crucified saviour." Chandler.

[2] *The world is crucified,* &c.] "by means of which doctrine the world was of no more account to him, he valued the applauses of men, and the riches and pleasures of the world, no more than a dead body hanging upon a cross; and by means of which he was crucified to the world, of no more esteem with worldly men than that loathsome and wretched spectacle." Chandler.—"I view the world as little impressed by all its charms, as a spectator would be by any thing which had been graceful in the countenance of a crucified person, when he beholds it blackened in the agonies of death; and am no more affected by the objects around me, than one that is expiring would be struck with any of those prospects which his dying eyes might view from the cross on which he was suspended." Doddridge. Mr. Locke, Archbishop Newcome, and most other expositors, understand the words in a similar sense. With deference, however, to these great authorities, I am inclined to agree with those critics who understand κοσμος in this connexion to signify the Jewish dispensation, as it unquestionably does Gal. iv. 3, and Col. ii. 8, 20.—"*Nulla amplius Judæorum et religionis Mosaicæ mecum est conjunctio.*" Schleusner.—"*Propter Christum, inquit, illa judaica vanitas, cum suis commodis, mihi crucifixa est, non me movet vel allicit; repudio eam.*" Rosenmuller. But as it is certain that the apostle was not released, and did not regard himself as personally released, from his subjection to the ceremonial law, it seems most reasonable to understand him as speaking in the name and under the character of a converted Gentile. In the same lax sense he uses the first person singular in Rom. vii. See Locke's preface, p. vi. Still, however, though to avoid giving offence the apostle submitted to the rites of the law, he was dead to all dependence upon it, or expectations from it.

May I never boast of that in which these hypocrites place their glory, in making proselytes to the Jewish ritual. Nor, indeed, may I ever value myself upon any thing else but upon being a faithful and unwearied preacher of the true doctrine of my master Jesus, the illustrious person in whom all the purposes of the law were fulfilled, and by whose public death upon the cross a new dispensation is introduced and ratified, and the former covenant is so completely superseded and abolished, that it may be considered by all converts to Christianity as absolutely dead; and believers in Jesus, even those who were formerly Jews, may be regarded as persons who are in a sense dead to their former connexions and obligations, and as having entered upon a new and better state of existence. Ch. VI. Ver. 14.

For in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision any thing[3] *nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.* 15.

To say the truth, to those who believe that Jesus is the Christ, no rites or ceremonies are of any use. It matters little whether they were originally Jews or heathen; they are by faith born into this new world which God has created: In other words, they thus become members of the visible church; and being separated from the mass of the unbelieving world, they are entitled to the privileges of the pro-

[3] *Is any thing.*] The best copies for ισχυει, *availeth*, read εστι, *is*. See ch. v. 6. A "new creation" is the introduction into a new state of things by faith in Christ; by which believers, whether Jews or heathen, are brought into covenant with God. It is parallel to ch. v. 6, "faith which worketh by love." See 1 Cor. vii. 19; Eph. ii. 10.

Ch. VI. Ver. 15. fessing people of God. It is not circumcision, it is a new creation, and a new life, which now entitles them to be registered as children of God.

16. *And as many as shall walk according to this rule, peace and mercy* will be *upon them*[1], *even upon the Israel of God.*

If they who are thus by faith introduced into a new and privileged state have wisdom to make a proper use of their privileges, and to govern their temper and conduct by the rules of their profession, and the precepts of Christ, they shall most assuredly obtain all the invaluable blessings which the gospel promises, forgiveness of sins, peace here, and happiness hereafter. For these persons, whether they were originally Jews or Gentiles, whether they use ceremonies or neglect them altogether, are the true Israel of God, the genuine offspring of Abraham, heirs of the promises, and the worthy objects of divine complacency and benevolence.

4. The apostle solemnly professes his own devotedness to the service of Christ, ver. 17.

17. *Henceforth let no man give me trouble*[2], *for I bear in my person the marks of the Lord Jesus*[3].

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[1] Will be *upon them.*] "peace and mercy shall be upon them, they being that Israel which are truly the people of God." Locke. See also Chandler. "will be upon them." Wakefield. Newcome and others translate the words as expressing a kind wish: Peace *be* upon them.

[2] *Let no man,* &c.] "by questioning my character and mission." Chandler.

[3] *The marks,* &c.] "στιγμα properly signifies a mark that was imprinted on the hands of the soldiers when they were en-

For the future, let no one doubt of my attachment to the Christian doctrine and to the principles of Christian liberty: nor let any one presume to charge me with duplicity of conduct, and to add to my persecutions by calumniating my character. I carry in my person the marks of subjection to a master, and devotedness to a chief: not indeed to Moses and his law, but to Jesus, whom I am proud to acknowledge as my leader: and of my fidelity and attachment to him and to his cause, those numerous scars which I carry about with me, and which are the indelible effects of my sufferings for his sake, are ample and incontestable proofs. Ch. VI. Ver. 17.

5. The epistle closes with the apostolical benediction, ver. 18.

The favour of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren[4]. *Amen.* 18.

My Christian brethren, for as such I will still regard you, and by this endearing appellation will continue to address you; for, notwithstanding the

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listed and had their names entered into the military roll: this mark was commonly the emperor's name. Thus our apostle had those marks imprinted upon him, either by his sufferings for Christ, or, through the number and greatness of the revelations he had received from him, as made it abundantly appear under what general he was enlisted." Chandler.

[4] *With your spirit.*] "that is, *with you:* in other epistles it is μεθ' ὑμων, 1 Cor. xvi. 23; or μετα παντων ὑμων, Rom. xvi. 24; 2 Cor. xiii. 13; Phil. iv. 23." Whitby. The postscript which affirms this epistle to have been written from Rome is not found in the Alexandrine, Ephrem, Clermont, or other of the most ancient and approved manuscripts, and is undoubtedly a mistake.

Ch. VI. Ver. 18. freedom and even the severity of language which I may have used in the course of this epistle, I still entertain a kind affection for you: and as the best proof of my regard, I conclude, my dear brethren, with expressing my earnest wish that our common Master Jesus Christ may behold you with complacency, and that the invaluable blessings of his gospel in all their purity and freedom may long remain among you. Amen.

THE EPISTLE

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

THE EPHESIANS.

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

THE EPISTLE entitled TO THE EPHESIANS was written by the apostle Paul about the year 62, while he was a prisoner at Rome; and was sent at the same time with the epistles to the Colossians, and to Philemon, and by the same messengers, Tychicus and Onesimus: ch. vi. 21.[1]

[1] "There is," says Dr. Priestley, "a peculiar dignity and sublimity in this epistle, as well as the strongest marks of the most earnest affection to those to whom he writes; and the same has been observed of all the epistles which he wrote from Rome. He probably knew that he was near the close of his life; of a long and laborious warfare, as it may be called, in the cause of Christianity, of the great value of which he was fully sensible: he therefore writes with that energy with which a man may be supposed to give his last admonitions to those he loves, respecting their most important interests."

It is one of those epistles the genuineness of which was never disputed by the ancients, who were best qualified to decide upon the subject, and who took great pains to gain information. And the train of thought, the style of argumentation, the structure of the sentences, the peculiarity of phrase, and the allusions to facts, constitute a strong body of presumptive evidence that the epistle is justly ascribed to the apostle Paul as its author.

Nevertheless, there is great reason to believe that this epistle was not addressed by the apostle to the church at Ephesus. In all the epistles which are inscribed to churches which Paul had himself planted, and where he had for some time resided, there are frequent allusions to the visit he had made to them, and to memorable events and circumstances which had occurred during his residence among them. This is evident in the epistles to the Thessalonians, the Galatians, the Philippians, and the Corinthians. But though the apostle had visited Ephesus twice at least (Acts xviii. 19, xix. 1); though, in his second visit, he had passed the greater part of three years amongst them (Acts xx. 31); though he had been exposed to great danger in that city, in consequence of the uproar excited by Demetrius (Acts xix. 30), to which, in other epistles, he is supposed to allude with great emphasis and feeling (1 Cor. xv. 32, 2 Cor. i. 8); and though he had taken so affectionate a farewell of the elders of Ephesus at Miletus in his last journey to Jerusalem (Acts xx. 17); yet of all this he takes no notice at all through

the whole of the epistle, but writes in general terms, as if he were addressing believers who were almost, if not altogether, strangers to his person. It is observable that in one place (Eph. i. 15) he speaks of *his* having *heard* of *their* faith and love; and in another (ch. iii. 2) he makes the supposition that *they* had *heard* of *his* divine commission to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. No evidence could more decisively prove that he was not at that time addressing a body of Christians with whom he had been for years in the habits of familiar intercourse.

It is plain from a passage in the epistle to the Colossians (Col. iv. 16), that the apostle had written a letter to the church of Laodicea. It also appears from the same epistle (ch. ii. 1), that he had never visited that church in person. And as he requires that the epistle to the Colossians should be read to the Laodiceans, and that of the Laodiceans to the Colossians, it is highly probable that this is the epistle which was originally addressed to the Laodiceans. For the two epistles were written at the same time, were sent by the same messengers, they treat on the same subject, and were composed in the same style; so that they mutually illustrate each other, and serve as a useful commentary upon each other; and, indeed, one can hardly be understood without the other. And as the subject in both is discussed in a rhetorical declamatory style, it is very probable that the apostle might wish that both the letters might be read by the same persons, that so the subject might be the better understood. In

all the manuscripts now extant the epistle is inscribed to the Ephesians; but some copies in possession of Basil, an ecclesiastical writer of the fourth century [1], wanted the word Ephesus, as if the transcriber had been uncertain to what church the epistle was addressed, or had considered it as intended for a general circular letter. And Marcion, a learned Christian in the second century, who was stigmatized as a heretic by those who assumed the title of orthodox, says that the epistle was inscribed to the Laodiceans; which is probably the fact [2].

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[1] Basil, speaking of this epistle, says, "and writing to the Ephesians as truly united to him through knowledge, he called them, in a peculiar sense, *such who are*, saying τοις ἁγιοις τοις ουσι, to *the saints who are, and the faithful in Christ Jesus*. For so those before us have transmitted it, and we have found it in ancient copies." Hence Mill and others have inferred that the words εν Εφεσῳ were wanting in Basil's copies; L'Enfant, Lardner, and others, deny this conclusion; but Paley, with his usual correctness of judgement, remarks, "that the passage must be considered as Basil's fanciful way of explaining what was really a corrupt and defective reading; for I do not believe it possible that the author of the epistle could have originally written ἁγιοις τοις ουσι, without any name of place to follow it."

From this omission, Archbishop Usher conjectures that this epistle might be intended as a circular epistle to any of the churches of the Lesser Asia, whose name might be occasionally inserted to fill up the blank. Usser. *Ann.* A.D. 64. See Doddridge's *Introduction*. Bengelius and Haenlein adopt Usher's hypothesis. See Rosenmuller, *Introd. ad Eph.*; who himself adheres to the common opinion, together with Locke, Whitby, Lardner, Chandler, Doddridge, Newcome, Macknight, Priestley, &c.

[2] Grotius argues, from the testimony of Marcion, that this epistle was inscribed to the Laodiceans; for, however erroneous his doctrine, or however faulty his character might be, his testimony was admissible to a fact which had no connexion with his errors. "*Marcio hanc epistolam vocat ad Laodicenses, ex fide, ut credibile est, Ecclesiæ Laodicensis. Nam cur in ea re*

To account for the early and prevailing error in the address of the epistle, it has been ingeniously, and not improbably, conjectured, that Tychicus, who was intrusted with the epistle, passing through Ephesus in his way to Laodicea, permitted the Ephesians to read and to take a copy of the epistle to the Laodiceans, leaving out the name of the city to which it was directed; and that other churches, transcribing from the copy at Ephesus, which was probably more known than that at Laodicea, erroneously apprehended that the epistle was originally addressed to the Ephesian church [3].

The objections urged by the late learned and acute Edward Evanson against the genuineness of this epistle are of great force, upon the supposition that the epistle was inscribed to the Ephesians, but

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mentiretur nihil erat causæ." This he supposes to be the epistle to which Paul refers Col. iv. 16. Benson and Paley argue strongly in favour of the same hypothesis; also Mill, Vitringa, and Wetstein.

[3] "Whoever (says Dr. Paley) inspects the map of Asia Minor will see that a person proceeding from Rome to Laodicea, would probably land at Ephesus, as the nearest frequented sea-port in that direction. Might not Tychicus then, in passing through Ephesus, communicate to the Christians of that place the letter with which he was charged? And might not copies of that letter be multiplied and preserved at Ephesus? Might not some of the copies drop the words of designation, εν τῃ Λαοδικεια, which it was of no consequence to an Ephesian to retain? Might not copies of the letter come out into the Christian church at large from Ephesus? and might not this give occasion to the belief that the letter was written to that church? And lastly, might not this belief produce the error which we suppose to have crept into the inscription?" *Horæ Paulin. Ephes.* No. 4.

are of no validity if the epistle was written to the church at Laodicea [1].

Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles; and it was in the faithful discharge of this honourable mission that he had been attacked with savage fury by a Jewish mob, and, after having been confined for two years as a prisoner in Judea, had been sent to Rome, and had continued there in bonds two years longer. Of this subject his heart was full; and his main design in this epistle, and in that to the Colossians, is to express his gratitude to God for his great goodness in admitting Gentiles to equal privileges with Jews in the Christian community; and his admiration and delight, that he, who was once an ignorant, bigoted, persecuting pharisee, should be singled out as the apostle of this gracious dispensation. This is a circumstance which ought to be continually kept in view in reading the epistles that are dated from Rome, and particularly this to the Ephesians. To modern Christians it appears so natural and reasonable, that the benevolent parent of mankind should be impartial in his dispensations towards all his rational offspring, and they are so entirely unaccustomed to national distinctions and preferences, that they hardly know how to make sufficient allowance for those who were placed in dif-

[1] See Evanson's *Dissonance*, ed. 2, p. 312. The learned writer denies that there is any evidence that this epistle was inscribed to the church at Laodicea. There is indeed no direct evidence, but the supposition is at least plausible.

ferent circumstances; and the rapturous language of the apostle upon this subject is apt to appear unnatural, affected, and insipid. This objection, however, will vanish, if the reader will keep in mind the history and character of the apostle, and the peculiar circumstances under which these epistles were written.

Born a Jew, educated a pharisee of the sternest *caste*, holding all the heathen of every rank, and even the Jewish *populace* themselves, in sovereign contempt, and execration, a hater of the Christian name, and a savage persecutor of the Christian faith, it might well be matter of astonishment and gratitude, that God, in his free and sovereign mercy, should have vouchsafed to step out of his usual course, to arrest such an one in his mad career, to humble him who was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, and the very chief of sinners, at the feet of that Jesus whom he had insulted and persecuted, and to subdue him to the Christian faith, by the personal appearance of Christ to him for this purpose on the road to Damascus.

But that one who had been so bitter an enemy, so malignant a persecutor, should not only be converted to the faith, but that he should be appointed a teacher of the Christian doctrine; that he should be invested with the authority and credentials of an apostle, in no respect inferior to the very chief of that venerable body; that he should be honoured with a special commission to the Gentiles; that it

should be one principal object of this mission, to proclaim liberty to the Gentile believer, and to offer him all the privileges of the gospel, accompanied with entire exemption from the yoke of the law; and finally, that he at this very time should be a sufferer and a prisoner, for this reason only and for no other, because he had preached the gospel in this liberal form to the Gentiles: all these considerations rushing at once into the apostle's mind, overwhelmed him with astonishment, delight, and gratitude. He labours for language to express what his heart so intensely feels. And while he abounds in the loftiest expressions of admiration and thankfulness for the great mercy of God to the Gentile world, in inviting them to the privileges of the gospel, unshackled with the rigours of the law; and to himself in particular, in employing him as the missionary for this gracious purpose; he at the same time earnestly presses upon those to whom he writes, that they would firmly adhere to the pure uncorrupted doctrine which he had taught them; and urges them not to regard his own sufferings as any objection either to his mission or to his doctrine; for that these were so far from being to himself a cause of uneasiness and regret, or, a reproach to the cause which he espoused, that he accounted the chain he wore as his ornament and glory, as the sure pledge of a triumphant remuneration at the day of Christ's appearance; and even as a corroborative evidence of the authenticity of his mission.

If the reader, therefore, will take into consideration this peculiar state of the apostle's mind, the rapturous and glowing language of the epistles which are dated from Rome, far from being inflated and overstrained, will appear to be the natural and appropriate expressions of the apostle's ardent and energetic feelings.

And these considerations will account in a satisfactory manner for the manifest difference between the style of the epistles which were dictated at Rome by Paul the PRISONER, and the other letters of the same apostle. In the former he gives vent to his intense and exalted feelings in a sort of rhapsodical declamation, under a strong impression that he approached the termination of his arduous but glorious course; while in the latter, he usually adopts the calmer language of reasoning and persuasion: not indeed without some occasional bursts of natural and strong eloquence. So that this diversity of style in epistles written under circumstances so very different, which to some has appeared in the light of an objection to the epistles sent from Rome, is in fact a presumptive argument in favour of their authenticity.

THIS EPISTLE, like the rest of those which the apostle indited, is partly *Doctrinal* and partly *Practical*. The *Doctrinal* part is contained in the first three chapters, and the *Practical* in the last three. —In the *Doctrinal* part, the apostle,

I. After the usual *Introduction,* expresses his gratitude to God for the *privileges* of which the Gentiles equally with the Jews are made to participate through Christ, in consequence of their eternal predestination to it by the pure infinite mercy of God. Ch. i. 1—14.

II. The apostle prays that his Christian friends may be duly sensible of that great *exertion of divine power* which was exhibited in elevating them to the hope of the gospel; a power analogous to that by which Christ was raised from the dead, and advanced to heaven; an exertion prompted by boundless, unmerited goodness; and the design of which was to raise them to a state of dignity, virtue, and happiness. Ch. i. 15—ii. 10.

III. In order to impress upon their hearts a just sense of the value of their privileges, the apostle reminds his Christian friends of the great *disadvantages of their former Gentile state,* from which they are delivered by the death of Christ, in consequence of which, they are now incorporated with the chosen people of God. Ch. ii. 11—22.

IV. The apostle, meaning to enter upon the practical part of the epistle, incidentally mentions his own situation as a *prisoner* for having preached the gospel to the Gentiles. And in order to obviate any discouragement which might arise from this circumstance, he introduces a digression, in which he reminds them of the revelation which had been made concerning the admission of the Gentiles into

the new covenant; he dwells with rapture upon the great honour conferred upon himself as an apostle of this new and gracious dispensation; he hints at the powerful evidence which accompanied the preaching of the gospel; he exhorts them not to be disheartened at his sufferings in the cause, which were indeed a confirmation of his testimony; he prays for their establishment in the faith; and concludes this part of the epistle with a suitable doxology. Ch. iii. *throughout.*

Entering now upon the *Practical* part of the epistle, the apostle

1. Exhorts to the practice of various *personal* and *social* virtues. Ch. iv. 1—v. 21.

2. He insists upon the *relative* duties. Ch. iv. 22—v. 9.

3. He recommends resolute *opposition* to whatever would alienate their regards from the Christian faith. Ch. v. 10—20.

4. He concludes the epistle with a *salutation* and *benediction.* Ch. v. 21—24.

The language of this epistle is, as I have already observed, in many places highly figurative and rhetorical. It cannot be understood without much attention; but the true explanation of it will serve as a key to the solution of some obscure phrases, the misinterpretation of which has laid a foundation for many of those popular errors by which the Christian doctrine has been corrupted and debased.

I shall conclude with the words of Grotius: "*Paulus jam vetus in apostolico munere, et ob evangelium Romæ vinctus, ostendit quanta sit vis evangelii præ doctrinis omnibus: quomodo omnia Dei consilia ab omni ævo eo tetenderint; quam admiranda sit in eo Dei efficacia: rerum sublimitatem adæquans verbis sublimioribus, quam ulla unquam habuit lingua humana.*"

THE
EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

PART THE FIRST.

THE APOSTLE TREATS OF THE PRIVILEGES OF GENTILE CONVERTS, AND ENDEAVOURS TO IMPRESS UPON THE HEARTS OF HIS READERS A JUST SENSE OF THEIR INESTIMABLE VALUE, AND OF THE OBLIGATION THEY ARE UNDER TO DIVINE MERCY. Ch. i.—iii. Ch. I.

SECTION I.

THE APOSTLE, after a suitable introduction, expresses his gratitude to God for his great goodness in the admission of Jews and Gentiles without distinction to the privileges of the Christian church. Ch. i. 1—14.

1. THE apostle opens the epistle with a suitable Introduction and Salutation, ver. 1, 2.

PAUL, by the will of God[1] *an apostle of Jesus* Ver. 1.

[1] *Paul, by the will of God.*] Dr. Chandler observes, that "the

Ch. I. Ver. 2. *Christ, to the saints*[1] *who are at Ephesus*[2], *even the believers*[3] *in Christ Jesus, favour* be *to you and peace from God our Father, and* from our *Lord Jesus Christ*[4].

This letter comes from Paul, who by the merciful interposition of God was converted to the Christian faith, and invested with the high and honourable commission of preaching the gospel of Jesus, and of being a chosen witness to his resurrection from the dead. And it is addressed to those persons at

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apostle asserts his divine mission and character at the beginning of his letter, that the doctrine he delivered in it might carry the greater authority and weight."

[1] *Saints,*] that is, holy persons, separated by their profession of Christianity from the rest of mankind, like the Jews, without any respect to moral character. 1 Cor. i. 2; Rom. i. 2; Exod. xix. 6, &c. See Locke and Chandler.

[2] *At Ephesus.*] This reading is supported by all the copies and versions now extant; though, for the reasons assigned in the Introduction, it is probably a mistake. Basil's manuscripts omitted the word, and Marcion read Laodicea. See Griesbach *in loc.*

[3] *Believers.*] πιστοις, *faithful.* Mr. Locke observes that "this word is found in the introductions to the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians, but to no other epistles of Paul; and he understands it of those "who stood firm to Christ: which he (the apostle) did not count them to do who made an observance of Jewish rites a requisite part of the Christian religion."

[4] *From God our Father, and* from our *Lord Jesus Christ.*] "You see," says Dr. Priestley, "how the apostle constantly distinguishes God from Christ. Indeed there is no passage in the New Testament in which Christ is so much as called God, though in an inferior sense. Could the apostle have foreseen how strangely the Christian doctrine would have been corrupted in this respect, he might have taken more effectual methods to prevent it: but considering that he had not, and without a particular revelation could not have had, the least suspicion of any such thing, nothing could be better calculated to guard against it than the manner in which he has uniformly expressed himself on this subject."

Ephesus and elsewhere, who by their public profession of Christianity have separated themselves from the unbelieving world, and especially to those who faithfully adhere to the purity and to the liberty of the gospel, without blending Jewish rites with Christian doctrine. And my first wish for you all is, that you may enjoy that peace which flows from a faithful profession of the gospel, which is the free gift of our heavenly Father, communicated to us by our honoured Master Jesus, whom we receive and acknowledge as the promised Messiah. Ch. I. Ver. 2.

2. The apostle gives thanks to God for the conversion of the Gentiles to the Christian faith, ver. 3, 4.

Blessed be *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us*[5] *with every spiritual blessing*[6] *in heavenly* places[7] *in Christ*[8], 3.

[5] *Who hath blessed us.*] Mr. Locke has taken great pains, in a note upon this text, to show that by the expressions *we* and *us* in this chapter the apostle means converted Gentiles in general, with whom St. Paul frequently joins himself. Rom. v. 1—11; Eph. i. 11, iii. 6. See also Chandler, Macknight, and Newcome.

[6] *Every spiritual blessing:*] "*i. e.* the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, and the invaluable benefits of redemption." Chandler.—"every blessing, so as not to need any assistance from the law." Locke.

[7] *Heavenly* places:] *i. e.* the Christian church; which is now what the Jewish church formerly was, the chosen and peculiar community of God. See Eph. ii. 6, and Mr. Locke's note on Eph. i. 10. See also Dr. Chandler's note upon the text, and Dr. Macknight.—*In heavenly things.* Newcome: "in matters relating to heaven and leading us there."

[8] *In Christ:*] *i. e.* Christian, or belonging to Christ. Rom. xvi. 7, *q. d.* in the Christian church as distinguished from the Jewish. Or, who hath blessed us, *by* or *through* Christ, with

Ch. I. Ver. 4. *according as he chose*[1] *us in him before the foundation of the world*[2], *that we might be holy*[3] *and spotless before him*[4].

Join with me, my brethren, in thankful acknowledgements to that holy and benevolent Being, whom our Master Jesus has taught us to regard as his and our God and Father, by whom he was ap-

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every spiritual blessing. "εν Χριστῳ· per Christum, *ejusque salutarem doctrinam.*" Rosenmuller.

[1] *He chose us.*] As the Jews were formerly the chosen people of God, whom he selected from the mass of mankind to the possession of peculiar privileges (see Ps. cv. 6), so now believers in Christ are elected in the same manner and in the same sense. This by no means implies an arbitrary election of a few individuals to eternal life. See Chandler.—"chose the body of the Gentiles *in Christ*, to become disciples of Christ." Newcome.

[2] *Foundation of the world.*] "of the Jewish state." Wakefield. "before the law was, even before the foundation of the world." Locke. Dr. Chandler observes that the word καταβολη is used for the beginning of any thing, and that the phrase signifies, *before the world began;* and he supposes the apostle meant to humble the pride of the Jews, who boasted that the world was created for their sakes. "We here see," says Dr. Priestley, "how familiar it is with the sacred writers to speak of things being done before the world was, when it was only in the divine councils that they should be done: Christians could not be chosen before they were Christians. In like manner Christ is said to have glory with God before the world was; when the meaning is, that this glory was designed for him, as these honours were designed for all Christians, before either Christ or Christians had any existence."

[3] *Holy.*] ἁγιοι. "Saints," says Mr. Locke, "in St. Paul's epistles, is known to signify Christians, who are now the people of God." "Αμωμοι, innocentes, sine vitio: *quemadmodum in vetere lege arietes et boves qui Deo offerebantur.* Lev. i. 3, iii. 6." Grotius, Rosenmuller.

Before him.] With Griesbach and Wakefield I finish the sentence with αυτῳ, "before him;" and join εν αγαπῃ, "in love," to the next period.

pointed to his honourable office, and from whom he derived all his powers and qualifications for the work. To his God and ours let us give thanks, that he has in consequence of our profession of Christianity admitted us, though Gentiles, into the community of his peculiar people, and has liberally imparted to us all the privileges of the new and spiritual dispensation, without annexing any burdensome conditions. And be it known to you for your comfort and satisfaction, that this extraordinary and unhoped for blessing is not the consequence of any change in the divine councils, but from the very beginning of time he purposed to select those of the human race who would believe in Jesus, and to separate them from the unbelieving world, that, being possessed of the best means of moral improvement, they might excell all others in the practice of virtue. Ch. I. Ver. 4.

3. This great blessing was the result of his eternal love, and communicated by Jesus; whose death was the seal of our forgiveness, ver. 5—7.

Having long ago[5] *in* his *love appointed us his adopted sons*[6] *through Jesus Christ*[7], *according* 5.

[5] *Having long ago.*] προορισας. Wakefield. "The word," says Dr. Chandler, "properly signifies *to determine, appoint*, or *decree* any thing beforehand; and when applied to God in the case before us, it denotes his everlasting purpose, or his fixed resolution and decree before the creation of the world, to receive the believing Gentiles without circumcision into the privileges of his church and people."

[6] *Adopted sons.*] Wakefield. υιοθεσιαν. Gr. "to the adoption of sons." To the Jews as a nation pertained the adoption, Rom. ix. 4, Exod. iv. 22: that is, they were favoured with pri-

Ch. 1. Ver. 6. *to the good pleasure of his will*[1], *to the praise of his glorious kindness, with which he graciously favoured*[2] *us through that beloved* son, *in whom we have deliverance, through his blood*[3]: even *forgive-*

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vileges beyond all other nations, as the first-born is preferred amongst the other children. Thus the Gentiles are now appointed to the adoption of sons, being invited by the gospel to nobler privileges than the Jews were ever favoured with. See Chandler and Locke.

[7] *Through Jesus Christ.*] διὰ· that is, by the mission and doctrine of Christ; who was authorized to publish the joyful tidings, and to impart the glorious privileges.

[1] *According to the good pleasure of his will.*] εὐδοκιαν τῦ θελήματος. It was the free unmerited gift of God to the Jews to receive and acknowledge them as his people; and the communication of the blessings of the gospel to the Gentiles in consequence of believing, is equally the effect of free, unsolicited, and unmerited kindness. See Locke.

[2] *Graciously favoured.*] ἐχαριτωσεν. Dr. Chandler observes, that "this word is not used by profane authors. It occurs Luke i. 28, 30, where it is properly rendered, *thou art highly favoured;* and the true rendering of it in this passage is not as we have translated it, "made us accepted," but "highly favoured us." So also Mr. Wakefield.

[3] *Deliverance, through his blood.*] απολυτρωσιν. "The word (says Dr. Chandler) signifies deliverance from any thing. Luke xxi. 28; Rom. viii. 23; Heb. xi. 35." *By the blood of Christ:* that is, by means of his death. "Christ by dying," says Dr. Chandler, "annulled that law which pronounced accursed every one who did not continue in all things written in it to do them. Gal. iii. 17; Eph. ii. 16, 17." "The manner of speaking that some have allowed themselves (continues this learned and masterly expositor), from this representation of Christ's death by his blood, viz. that a drop of Christ's blood was sufficient for the redemption of the whole world, is a very crude and unjustifiable expression, that hath nothing in reason or scripture to support it; for the great stress which scripture lays, is constantly upon the death of Christ, and not upon any shedding of his blood which implies less than his actually dying. Not to add, that his death would have been a very needless expense, could the deathless shedding of a drop, or the greatest part of his blood, have as effectually answered the purposes of God's

ness of our *offences*[4], *according to the riches of his kindness.* Ch. I. Ver. 7.

I repeat it again, that from pure benevolence, without any foreign consideration whatever, prompted solely by infinite love, our heavenly Father long ago marked us Gentiles out as persons who, by the mission and ministry of Jesus and his apostles, were to be invited and received into his family, upon equal terms with his ancient people, to be acknowledged by him as his children, and to be provided with a suitable inheritance. This is a privilege and a blessing so far beyond all that could have been imagined or expected by poor ignorant idolatrous heathen, that it may justly be called a glorious display of divine loving-kindness which demands our highest gratitude and praise. And the manner in which this

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grace; and they who by such kind of expressions think to honour Christ, should take care that they do not impeach the wisdom and goodness of God the Father." The blood of Christ is the blood of the new covenant, 1 Cor. xi. 25; *i. e.* by which the new covenant is ratified. It is into the participation of the blessings of this covenant that believers are introduced; and in this sense they obtain redemption by or through the blood of Christ.

[4] *Forgiveness of offences.*] "The forgiveness of sins here spoken of," says Dr. Chandler, "is not the eternal justification of sinners from all the sins they are or can be guilty of during the whole course of their lives, but strictly and precisely this, Their being justified and delivered from all the sins of their Gentile state, and so reconciled to God as to become his people, and put into a capacity of final and eternal salvation." Gentiles, as such, being out of covenant, are *sinners.* Believers are in a corresponding sense *holy, reconciled,* and *adopted.* Forgiveness of sins, therefore, in this connexion, is admission to the privileges of the gospel: it is the translation from an unholy to a holy state.

Ch. I. Ver. 7. blessing is conferred enhances, if possible, its intrinsic value. The gracious message was first announced by Jesus Christ, who, in consideration of the honourable office to which he was appointed, was publicly declared to be the beloved Son of God, in whom he was well pleased; and who, in obedience to his Father's will, suffered death, in order to ratify the new covenant by which we, being delivered from the disadvantages and miseries of our heathen state, are admitted to the privileges and hopes of the sons of God. Such are the riches, and such the unsolicited and abounding freedom of the divine mercy to a numerous class of mankind, who seemed to be abandoned to hopeless ignorance, and vice, and ruin.

4. The apostle celebrates the goodness of God in communicating to believers the knowledge of the new dispensation, which was before an impenetrable mystery, ver. 8—10.

8. *Which he made to overflow on us*[1], *in all wis-*
9. *dom and understanding*[2], *by making known to us*

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[1] *He made to overflow.*] See Knatchbull, Wakefield, Macknight. "*Quam liberalissime nobis exhibuit.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *In all wisdom and understanding.*] *q. d.* which riches of his grace he exhibited abundantly to us who believe, by a great increase of wisdom and understanding—which increase of wisdom was effected by making known (γνωρισας) to us the mystery, &c.: compare Col. i. 9. "I cease not to pray—that ye may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding." Newcome's Translation. Mr. Locke also refers to Col. i. 28, ii. 2, 3, as parallel passages, which plainly show "that the apostle means by wisdom and understanding, a comprehen-

that mystery[3] *of his gracious will*[4], *(which he had long before purposed in himself,) concerning*[5] *the dispensation of the fulness of times*[6], *that he would reunite*[7] *all things, both in the heavens and upon earth*[8], *under one head in Christ.* Ch. I. Ver. 9. 10.

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sion of the revealed will of God in the gospel, and particularly of the mystery of God's purpose of calling the Gentiles." Dr. Chandler also approves of this interpretation, though he acknowledges that the words will bear a very good sense if understood of the wisdom of God in the gospel dispensation.

[3] *Mystery.*] The secret purposes of his counsel with respect to the call of the Gentiles; "which," says Dr. Chandler, "is the usual sense of the word mystery in the New Testament." He supposes an allusion to the idolatrous mysteries of Diana, whose temple and worship at Ephesus were celebrated all over the world. Mr. Locke remarks that the purpose of God in the call of the Gentiles is called a mystery five times in this epistle, and four times in the epistle to the Colossians; and he thinks that the design of the apostle is to keep the Gentiles from attending to those Jews who would persuade them to submit to the yoke of the law, by assuring the Ephesians and Colossians that the Jews knew nothing of the divine purpose, which had been revealed to him with the express view of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles.

[4] *His gracious will.*] τϑ θεληματος αὐτϑ, κατα την ευδοκιαν αὐτϑ· literally, *of his will, according to his good pleasure.* The phrase is exactly parallel to ver. 5; κατα την ευδοκιαν τϑ θεληματος αὐτϑ.

[5] *Concerning.*] εις. See Newcome. "*at* the dispensation." Chandler.

[6] *The dispensation of the fulness of times.*] "the gospel covenant." Gal. iv. 4. Macknight rightly interprets it, "of the dispensation in which all former dispensations terminated, and which was erected when the time fixed for it was fully come."

[7] *Would reunite.*] ανακεφαλαιωσασϑαι "properly signifies," says Locke, "to recapitulate." Dr. Chandler renders the word *to comprehend, sum up,* or *collect* under one head in Christ, *i. e.* to unite under Christ as their common head. Archbishop Newcome gives the verb the force of the middle voice; his version is, "that he would gather together to himself in one, all things through Christ." "*Ut nempe omnes creaturæ intelligentes in cœlo et in terra, per Christum in unam societatem adducerentur.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. I. Ver. 10.

For the better understanding of the following paraphrase, it is necessary to observe, that the word *mystery*, in the apostle's writings, expresses not some obscure and unintelligible doctrine that is still imperfectly made known, but a truth or fact which, having been unknown in former ages, is now distinctly revealed. And in this epistle, as well as in that to the Colossians, in which the word frequently occurs, it uniformly signifies the call of the Gentiles, which, though it was always intended in the eternal purpose of God, had not been clearly revealed to the Jews.

It is also of great importance to the right under-

[8] *Heavens and earth.*] Whitby, Chandler, and the generality of expositors, understand 'things in the heavens and things on earth' to mean 'angels in heaven and believers on earth, whether Jews or Gentiles.' See Newcome; who refers to John vi. 37, 39, for an instance where the neuter is used for the masculine. Mr. Locke and Dr. Macknight understand the expression of 'Jews and Gentiles,' which seems to be the true sense of the phrase. Mr. Locke has an excellent note upon the text, which he closes with modestly observing, "However, this interpretation I am not positive in, but offer it as matter of inquiry to such who think an impartial search into the true meaning of the sacred scriptures the best employment of all the time they have." "τα εν ϐρανοις *diversè explicatur. Multi intelligunt de dæmonibus, vel de mortuorum hominum animabus, alii* de Judæis. *Koppe* τα εν ϐρανοις και τα επι της γης, *putat esse periphrasin* universi, *ut* h. l. *intelligantur* omnes omnino homines sine discrimine gentis, *Judæi et Barbari.*" Rosenmuller; who, however, himself, prefers the interpretation 'angels and men.' Perhaps the sense of this intricate period may be thus expressed:

'Which riches of his goodness he has abundantly exhibited to us, having enriched our understanding with a clear knowledge of that mystery which was the object of his gracious and eternal purpose, and which relates to that dispensation which has now, at the fulness of time, taken place: namely, that he would reunite under one head, even Jesus Christ, all descriptions of mankind, whether Jews or Gentiles.'

standing of the epistle, to be apprized that the expressions 'heaven' and 'earth' are used in a figurative sense, and signify nothing more than 'Jew' and 'Gentile,' the persons who *are*, and they who *are not*, in a state of privilege and covenant with God. This sense of the words was not unusual amongst the Jews. The prophet Daniel calls the Jewish nation 'heaven,' Dan. viii. 10; and our Lord, (Luke xxi. 26,) by 'the powers of heaven' means 'the great men of the Jewish state.' Also Capernaum, by its privileges, is said to be exalted to heaven, Matt. xi. For this interpretation we are indebted to that excellent expositor, Mr. Locke; and it is unquestionably the true key to the interpretation of many difficult passages, the misunderstanding of which has greatly misled the Christian world, and given occasion to many strange conceits concerning the laws and state of the angelic powers, which, if true, are of no use; and would therefore never be made the subject of divine communication. That the apostle expresses himself in this figurative manner, may easily be accounted for by his unwillingness to give offence to his countrymen, and by the delicacy which he always observes in mentioning a subject so painful to himself, and so offensive to them, as the conversion of the heathen, and the rejection of God's ancient people. The following exposition, therefore, may perhaps convey the true meaning of the apostle's language.

Ch. I. Ver. 10.

God has abundantly manifested those riches of

Ch. I. Ver. 10. his goodness to us Gentile believers, by revealing to our minds a doctrine which is to us the excellency of wisdom; far surpassing all the boasted philosophy of the schools. This he has done by unfolding to us that mysterious purpose which had hitherto been concealed under an impenetrable veil; that purpose which was formed from eternal ages in the councils of infinite benevolence, and which relates to a dispensation which, after the revolution of the destined number of ages, is now at its proper season introduced into the world. Of which new and glorious dispensation this is the gracious purport and tenor: That Gentiles as well as Jews are admitted, upon equal terms, into the kingdom of the Messiah; that they shall be collected into one body under Christ; that all shall enjoy equal privilege and equal favour; and that all invidious distinctions shall for ever cease.

5. Of this mercy the Jews were the first partakers; the invitation of the gospel having been first addressed to them, ver. 11, 12.

11. *In him*[1], *by whom also we*[2] *were invited*[3], (*hav-*

[1] *In him.*] Dr. Chandler observes that "these words are very injudiciously made, in our version, the end of the tenth verse; whereas they ought to be the beginning of the eleventh, being in strict connexion with it."

[2] *By whom also.*] *q. d.* "We are united in him by whom, &c." The change of persons in ver. 11 and 13 makes it probable that the apostle is here speaking of the believing Jews, especially if the phrase 'things in heaven and things on earth,' ver. 10, is to be interpreted of Jews and Gentiles. Mr Locke's objection, that the Jews are never represented as without hope,

ing been predestinated according to the purpose of him who performeth all things according to the determination of his own will[4],) *that we who first hoped in Christ*[5] *might be to the praise of his glory*[6].

Ch. I. Ver. 11. 12.

Though the Gentiles are invited, the Jews, the ancient people of God, are not excluded from the

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seems of little weight, especially as, on the one hand, the expression προηλπικοτας does not necessarily imply that they were before entirely destitute of hope; and on the other, the apostle has taken great pains in the epistle to the Romans, ch. ii. iii., to prove that the Jews, by their immoralities, were reduced to a situation little superior to that of the unconverted heathen; so that every mouth must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God, Rom. iii. 19.

[3] *Were invited.*] εκληθημεν· this is the reading of the Alexandrine, Clermont, Corbey, and other ancient manuscripts of great repute, and of the old Italic and Vulgate versions. It is marked by Griesbach as of good authority; and seems preferable, as being more intelligible, and better suiting the connexion, than εκληρωθημεν, which is the common reading, and which some render 'we have obtained an inheritance,' and others, with Locke and Chandler, 'we are become the lot of his inheritance.' The Ephrem manuscript is mutilated in this passage.

[4] *Determination of his own will.*] See ver. 5, 9. his benevolent will. "*liberrima voluntas: Est in his verbis descriptio Dei omnipotentis, et immutabilis, qui omnia facit pro sua voluntate, nec mutat quod semel voluit.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *Who first hoped.*] προηλπικοτας, *q.d.* who were the first believers in the gospel; to whom it was preached, and by whom it was accepted before it was offered to the Gentiles. Dr. Chandler offers a different, but a very good, interpretation: "The words literally rendered are, *who before hoped in Christ.* And this I think a proper characteristic of the Jews; they had the promises of the Messiah, and therefore hoped in him before the time of his actual appearance." See Rosenmuller. "who have hoped in Christ from the first." Wakefield.

[6] *To the praise of his glory.*] "might praise him for his glorious mercy vouchsafed to us." Chandler. "*ut inserviremus laudi divinæ, qui jam olim expectabamus Messiam.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. I. Ver. 12.

blessings of the gospel. It was an essential part of the plan formed in the eternal councils of infinite wisdom and benevolence, that the privileges of the new covenant should be offered in the first place to the descendants of Abraham. In pursuance of this purpose, Jesus himself, during the whole course of his personal ministry, preached to them only, and even limited the invitations of mercy to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And when he appeared to his apostles after his resurrection, and gave them a commission to preach his gospel, it was accompanied with a strict injunction that they should begin at Jerusalem, and make the first offers of the blessings of the new covenant to their own countrymen. And though it is but too true, that the generality of the Hebrew nation despised and rejected the doctrine of Christ, and hated and persecuted the teachers of it, yet it is also true, that myriads have received the tidings with joy; of which number I have the happiness to be one. And the great design of this mercy exhibited to us was, that we who were the expectants of the promised Messiah, and the first believers in the Christian doctrine, the first whose immortal hopes were founded on the promises and the resurrection of Jesus, might be duly sensible of, and gratefully acknowledge, our distinguished privileges; and that we might, by our conduct, reflect honour upon our Christian profession, and, by our unwearied exertions, might bring many others, both Jews and Gentiles, to the knowledge of the truth.

6. In the same manner the Gentiles had been invited by Christ to the participation of the blessings of the gospel, and had been endowed by him with the holy spirit as an earnest of the future inheritance, ver. 13, 14. Ch. i.

By whom ye also were invited[1], *when ye heard the word of truth, the glad tidings of your salvation; by whom also*[2], *after ye believed, ye were sealed*[3] *with the holy spirit of promise*[4], *which is* Ver. 13. 14.

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[1] *Ye* were invited.] The change of persons shows that the apostle is now speaking of the Gentiles. The construction of the 13th verse is the same with that of the 11th, and therefore, as Locke and Chandler have observed, requires the same word to be supplied: ver. 11, by whom we Jews were invited: ver. 13, by whom ye Gentiles were also *invited*—to the praise of his glory.

[2] *By whom also.*] The same construction continues. by whom we Jews were invited—ver. 13. by whom ye Gentiles were also invited, &c.—and *by whom* ye also, upon believing, were sealed, &c.

[3] *Were sealed.*] The gifts of the spirit, communicated by the imposition of the apostle's hands, to primitive converts upon their profession of faith, authenticated the truth of the Christian doctrine, and marked those who possessed them as the people of God; and in this view they are figuratively represented as God's seal. In the same sense circumcision is represented as the seal of God's covenant with Abraham, Rom. iv. 11. "The use of a seal," says Dr. Chandler, "is for confirmation and certainty, to ascertain and establish any thing written or done, as the act and deed of the person who writes and does it. In this sense the spirit conferred on those who believed is metaphorically called God's seal; because, as it was conferred immediately by God, in confirmation of the doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ, it was a solemn assurance and proof to those who received it that they were accepted of God. Hence among the primitive Christians baptism itself was frequently styled a seal, because this spirit was frequently received immediately after baptism. Under the Old Testament Abraham received circumcision as a seal, Rom. iv. 11; not to make him a righteous person, but as a testimony from God, that he accepted him as

Ch. I. Ver. 14. *the earnest*[1] *of our inheritance, for the redemption of the purchased possession*[2], *to the praise of his glory*[3].

The blessings of the gospel having been first offered to the Jews, the ancient people of God, and having been by them too generally rejected, were,

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such." Macknight says, "In allusion to the custom of merchants who marked their bales or parcels with seals, to distinguish them from the goods of others, Christ is said to have marked the Gentiles as the children of God, by bestowing on them the gifts of the spirit, see Acts xi. 18. It is well known that the servants in the temples of particular gods had marks on their bodies by which they were distinguished." The spirit, therefore, was a seal by which it was manifested to the world that they who possessed it were the chosen people, the sons of God.

[1] *Spirit of promise.*] That is, the spirit promised by the prophets of God to the Jews, and by Christ to his apostles.

[1] *The earnest.*] "αρραβων signifies both an *earnest* and a *pledge*; it is a part of the price paid as a security for the remainder, or it is something of value which is lodged with the creditor to be redeemed when the debt is paid. In both senses it may be figuratively applied to the gift of the holy spirit." Chandler. As the spirit is a *seal* to notify their state and character to others, so it is an *earnest* or *pledge* to assure themselves, and to satisfy their own minds that they are the sons of God; a portion of his inheritance, a part of his family.

[2] *For the redemption of the purchased possession.*] This is the third object of the gift of the spirit: it is, first, a seal, to notify to the world; it is, secondly, an earnest to encourage the believer; thirdly, it is also given for the redemption of the purchased possession. The purchased possession is *the church* which Christ purchased (περιεποιησατο) with his own blood, Acts xx. 28; and believers are called a *purchased people*, 1 Pet. ii. 9. Redemption does not always signify 'paying a ransom,' but 'deliverance from a slavish state.' So God is said to redeem the Israelites from the house of bondage, Deut. vii. 8. The spirit therefore was sent, εις, *for* the redemption of the purchased possession, as it was by the gifts of the spirit, and the miracles wrought by Christ and his apostles, that the Christian doctrine made its way in the world.

"This interpretation (says Mr. Locke, to whom we are

by the command of Christ, offered to you Gentiles: and when the apostles and messengers of Jesus instructed you in the pure doctrine of Christ, and made known to you the joyful tidings of deliverance from ignorance, and vice, and misery, and of a resurrection to everlasting life and happiness, Christ did, by these his chosen servants, invite, and as it were beseech, you to accept the offers of mercy. Happily for you, ye were induced by the evidence proposed, to receive the doctrine, and publicly to profess your faith in Christ, and your subjection to his authority. In consequence of which he vouchsafed to you the promised effusion of his holy spirit, in various miraculous gifts and powers. This spirit he communicated as the *seal* of your adoption, the public and sensible token of your admission into the family of God, and of your title to the character and inheritance of his children. He imparted it also as to yourselves an *earnest* and *pledge* of the divine favour; so that you cannot doubt that you are re- Ch. I. Ver. 14.

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wholly indebted for this admirable solution of a most difficult passage,) best answers Paul's design here, which is, to establish the Ephesians in a settled persuasion that they, and all the other Gentiles who believed in Christ, were as much the people of God, his lot and his inheritance, as the Jews themselves, and equally partakers with them of all the privileges and advantages belonging thereunto, as is visible by the tenour of the second chapter. And this is the use St. Paul mentions of God's setting his seal (2 Tim. ii. 19) to mark them that are his. See also Rev. vii. 3, iv. 1. Those who purchased servants did, as it were, take possession of them by setting their marks on their foreheads."

[3] *To the praise of his glory.*] See ver. 12. The Gentiles are called and sealed, &c., that they, as well as the believing Jews, may celebrate the praises of God for his abundant mercy.

Ch. I. Ver. 14. ceived into his family, while this spirit witnesses to your hearts that you are the children of God.

These gifts of the spirit are the chief instruments which the wisdom of God employs for the redemption and recovery of those from the bondage of idolatry and vice, who are disposed to comply with the invitations of the gospel, and to become members of that holy community which in figurative language are described as redeemed to God, and as purchased by the blood of Christ.

And the great design of your invitation to the privileges of the gospel, of the gifts of the spirit, and your equality of state with God's ancient people, is, that you should unite with them in ascribing praise and glory to your common Father and God for his abundant mercy.

SECTION II.

THE APOSTLE gives thanks to God for the perseverance of his brethren in their Christian profession; and prays continually that they may be duly sensible of the extraordinary manifestation of divine power and mercy in their conversion from heathen idolatry; which, indeed, bore a striking analogy to that by which Jesus was raised from the dead, and exalted to supreme authority in the new and heavenly dispensation. Ch. i. 15—ii. 10.

1. The apostle gives thanks to God continually

for the progress which his brethren make in faith and love; and prays that they may be duly sensible of the value of the Christian dispensation, ver. 15—18. Ch. I.

Wherefore, I also, having heard[1] *of your faith in the Lord Jesus*[2], *and love to all*[3] *the saints,* Ver. 15.
cease not to give thanks for you, making mention 16.
of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord 17.
Jesus Christ[4], *the Father of glory*[5], *may give you*

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[1] *Having heard,* &c.] This is regarded by some as a presumptive argument that the epistle was not written to the Ephesians, with whose faith and love the apostle must have been personally acquainted; but it is properly enough replied that the apostle, having been absent from them five or six years when the epistle was written, might have heard with pleasure of their perseverance in the Christian doctrine, 1 Thess. iii. 4—6; Philem. ver. 4, 5. See Doddridge, Chandler, and Macknight.

[2] *Faith in the Lord Jesus.*] "Hearing of their faith is not his being told that they were Christians, but their continuing in that faith which they were converted to and instructed in; viz. that they became the people of God only by faith in Christ, without submitting to the Mosaical institution." Locke.

[3] *All the saints.*] Mr. Locke observes, "that *all* is here an emphatical word, put in for some particular reason; viz. that they were not by the Judaizers drawn away from their esteem and love of those who did not observe the Jewish rites; which was a proof that they stood firm in the faith and freedom of the gospel." Dr. Chandler agrees in this interpretation.

[4] *God of Jesus Christ.*] See John xx. 17. What plainer proof can there be that Jesus Christ is the creature of God, and not his equal? Dr. Chandler observes, "that it can never in any sense be said of Christ that he is God of the Eternal Father." "Here it is evident," says Dr. Priestley, "that all the illumination the apostle prayed for, was to come from God the Father, who is here called *the God of our Lord Jesus Christ*; the same, no doubt, who was the author of his being, whom he reverently worshiped, and whom he taught his disciples to worship: so far was he from teaching the worship of himself."

[5] *Father of glory.*] "either possessed of eternal unchangeable glory, or the author and bestower of glory, in which sense

Ch. I. Ver. 18. *a spirit of wisdom and revelation to the knowledge of him*[1], *that the eyes of your mind being enlightened*[2], *ye may know what is the hope of this invitation by him*[3], *and what the glorious riches of* that *inheritance*[4] which *he* hath given you *among the saints.*

Having, as I have just observed, been invited by Christ to a participation of the blessings of the gospel, and favoured with the gift of the holy spirit, as the seal and earnest of the promised inheritance, I am anxious that you should duly appreciate your great privileges. And, in the first place, having received the pleasing intelligence of your perseverance

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the word rendered 'Father' is sometimes used. James i. 17." Chandler. "being glorious himself, the fountain from which all glory is derived, and to whom all glory must be given." Locke.

[1] *To the knowledge of him.*] εν επιγνωσει, *in*, &c. Dr. Chandler observes, "that εν is frequently used by the best writers for εις, to denote the end and design of any thing." By 'the spirit of *wisdom and revelation*,' Archbishop Newcome justly remarks, that the apostle means the knowledge of revealed truths, 1 Cor. xiv. 6, 26, 30. *The knowledge of him*, that is, 'of the doctrine of God.'

[2] *Eyes of your mind being enlightened.*] "The Greek is in the accusative absolute." Newcome. The best copies read καρδιας, *heart*, instead of διανοιας, *understanding*; and Griesbach receives it into his text. The meaning is the same. "The expression," says Dr. Chandler, "is certainly explicative of the former words, and should have been rendered, *even enlightened eyes of your understanding*. 'I make mention of you,' says the apostle, 'in my prayers, that God would give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, even enlightened eyes of your understanding; *i. e.* a mind free from prejudice and darkness, that you may clearly apprehend, and pass a true judgement concerning, the great object of your hopes as Christians."

[3] *This invitation by him.*] See Wakefield. της κλησεως αυτου, *of his invitation.*

[4] *The glorious riches of* that *inheritance*, &c.] So Wakefield. Gr. *of his inheritance among the saints.* "that you may see

in the faith in which you have been instructed, notwithstanding opposition and danger; and of your fraternal affection to believers of all denominations, notwithstanding some accidental differences in opinion or practice, and the pains which some who are bigots to the ceremonial law take to pervert your judgement, and to give you an ill opinion of all who are not equally rigid with themselves; for this your firmness of principle, and liberality of spirit, I offer my daily thanksgivings to God, to whose grace and favour all attainments in moral excellence are justly to be ascribed. To these thanksgivings I add fervent prayers to that great Being whom our Master Jesus Christ has taught us to adore as his God and our God; and to venerate as our common Father to whom all glory belongs, and from whom all honour and happiness is derived; of whom I earnestly implore, that he will impart to you that perfect knowledge of revealed truth which will lead you with still greater courage and zeal to profess your faith in the heavenly doctrine: And that your understandings may be so enlightened by the instructions of the go- Ch. I. Ver. 18.

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what an abundant glory it is to the saints, to become his people, and the lot of his inheritance." Locke.

Perhaps the true meaning of this paragraph may be thus briefly expressed:

Having heard of your perseverance in the true faith, and of your love to all believers, without distinction of Jew or Gentile, I thank God on your account. And I also pray that God would enlighten your mind in revealed truths, that you may clearly understand the object of Christian hope, and the unspeakable importance of your admission into the pale of the Christian church, and to the privileges of the people of God.

Ch. I. Ver. 18. spel, and the gifts of the spirit, that you may be fully apprized of the inestimable value of your Christian hope: and may be duly sensible of the high importance of your Christian profession, and of your unspeakable obligation to the mercy of God in thus freely admitting you into the Christian community, and to the glorious privileges of his peculiar people!

2. The apostle further prays that they may be properly apprized of that great display of divine power which had been manifested in their conversion to the faith: an exertion analogous to that by which Christ was raised from the dead, and exalted to be the head of the new and evangelical dispensation, ver. 19, 20.

19. *And what* is *the exceeding*[1] *greatness of his power toward us who believe, corresponding with the energy of his mighty strength*[2] *which he exerted*
20. *in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and*

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[1] *Exceeding greatness of his power.*] "That is," says Dr. Chandler, "that you may be able to form some suitable conception of that amazing infinite power of God which he shall exert in our future resurrection." So Dr. Macknight. Mr. Locke's interpretation appears to me far preferable: "What an exceeding great power he has employed upon us who believe! a power corresponding to that mighty power which he exerted in raising Christ from the dead." This sense is adopted by Archbishop Newcome.

[2] *Energy of his mighty strength.*] Dr. Doddridge observes that the admirable beauty of this passage, and the strong emphasis and force of the expressions in the original, are well set forth by Bishop Pearson (*on the Creed*, p. 519), as scarcely to be paralleled in any author; and superior to what our language can reach. Blackwall's *Sacred Classics*, vol. i. p. 307.

seated him at his own right hand[3] *in the heavenly* places[4]. Ch. I. Ver. 20.

I also earnestly pray, that you may be duly sensible of the extraordinary manifestation of his power which God has been pleased to display in all who sincerely believe, and particularly in subduing their inveterate prejudices, whether Jews or heathen: a power which, when I consider the astonishing effect produced in our conversion to the Christian faith, and in the wonderful change which it has effected in our views, affections, and practice, I can compare to nothing less than to that amazing effort of omnipotence, if I may so express it, by which our Master Jesus Christ was raised from the grave and advanced to the highest dignity and authority in the new and heavenly dispensation; which is as much superior to any that preceded it as heaven to earth.

3. Having mentioned the exaltation of Christ,

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[3] *His own right hand.*] "The right hand is the seat of dignity and honour; and therefore when God the Father is said to have set Christ at his right hand, the meaning is, that he placed him next in dignity to himself." Chandler. *i. e.* as head of the Christian church.

[4] *Heavenly* places:] or, *things*. i. e. in his heavenly kingdom; or, the gospel dispensation. See Matt. iii. 2, xvi. 7; John iii. 2. Mr. Locke says, "The whole drift of this and the following two chapters is to declare the union of Jews and Gentiles into one body under Christ, the head of the heavenly kingdom. And he that sedately compares Eph. ii. 16 with Col. i. 20, in both which places it is evident the apostle speaks of the same thing, viz. God's reconciling both Jews and Gentiles by the cross of Christ, will scarce be able to avoid thinking that 'things in heaven and things on earth' signify the people of the one and the other of these kingdoms."

Ch. I. he expatiates upon this pleasing topic in language borrowed from the Jewish notions of the celestial hierarchy; and represents the dependence of the whole Christian church upon communications from him, to be as entire as that of the body upon the head, ver. 21—23.

Ver. 21. *Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion* [1], *and every name that is named, not*

[1] *Principality*, &c.] These titles are commonly understood to express ranks of angels, and the text is generally interpreted as asserting the dominion of Christ over the angelic world. But if Mr. Locke's interpretation of *heavenly places* in the preceding verse be the true one, then *principalities, powers*, &c. can only signify officers of different ranks and degrees under a divine dispensation, such as prophets, priests, apostles, teachers, &c., to all of whom Christ is in dignity and office far superior, being the head of them all, the chief of all the prophets of God.

"These abstract names are frequently used in the New Testament, according to the style of the eastern languages, for those vested with power and dominion, &c., and that not only here on earth among men, but in heaven among superior beings, and so often are taken to express ranks and degrees of angels; and though they are generally agreed to do so here, yet there is no reason to exclude earthly potentates. Besides, the apostle's chief aim here being to satisfy the Ephesians that they were not to be subjected to the law of Moses, and the government of those who ruled by it, but they were called to be of the kingdom of the Messiah, it is not to be supposed that where he speaks of Christ's exaltation to a power and dominion paramount to all other, he should not have an eye to that little and low government of the Jews, which it was beneath the subjects of so glorious a kingdom to subject themselves unto." Locke.

The Jewish dispensation having been represented as "heavenly places," the superiority of Christ to the officers of that dispensation is naturally described as an exaltation above the supposed ranks and orders of beings in those heavenly places: but as Christ is also superior to all the officers of his church, this superiority is represented as an exaltation above such supposed orders of beings in the world, or age to come, that is, the Christian dispensation, as well as in the present world, or age, that is, the dispensation of the law. So that there is no reason to

only in the present age, but in that also which is to come[2]. *And he hath put all things in subjection under his feet*[3]; *and hath appointed him*[4] *head over all things in the church, which is his body*[5], *the completion*[6] *of him who filleth all, with all things.* Ch. I. Ver. 22. 23.

Our glorious Lord and Master, being thus ad-

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suppose that the apostle had any intention to express or allude to the superiority of Christ above angels in heaven.

[2] *The present age:*] or, *dispensation*. See Mr. Locke's note on Eph. ii. 2. That αιων has the sense of *dispensation* does not admit of a doubt. See Heb. i. 2.

[3] *Put all things*, &c.] Alluding to Ps. cx. 1; Ps. viii. 6—8; 1 Cor. xv. 25, 27; Heb. ii. 8.

[4] *Appointed.*] "In the original 'given:' a Hebrew phraseology. See Gen. xvii. 5; Ezek. iii.17." Newcome.

[5] *Which is his body.*] "deriving all its nourishment and influences, its growth and support, its direction and management, from Christ as the head: even as the natural body is influenced and supported, guided and managed, by its natural head." Chandler.

[6] *The completion.*] πληρωμα, "the complement:" that which is wanting to make an object complete. "The Jews and Gentiles," says Dr. Chandler, "are the different members of Christ's church, and these different members are the full complement of his body. The word πληρωμα is used in a sense like this by the best Greek writers. *Æl. V. H.* l. 5, c. 10." The learned writer imagines an allusion to the statue of Diana at Ephesus; but with little appearance of reason.

"It is a fine figure," says Dr. Priestley, "by which Christ is here represented as the head, and his disciples the body, all being one and the same system, he only having pre-eminence in point of honour, distinction, and usefulness. A similar idea is expressed by Christ being called our elder brother, implying that he is one of the same species and family. Accordingly, when he is called an heir of God, his brethren are joint heirs with him. This doctrine is uniformly inculcated in the New Testament, and we ought to have our minds deeply impressed with it, and fully to understand its value, in opposition to that strange system, however prevalent, which makes Christ a being of equal rank with God his Father; and thus in fact makes three Gods, or objects of religious worship. If any article of faith be worth earnestly contending for, it is this."

Ch. I. Ver. 23.

vanced by the power of God to supreme authority in his church, is made superior to all other teachers and prophets, how important soever the instructions they were authorized to communicate, how splendid soever the attestations of their mission, to whomsoever their message was addressed, or by whatever names and titles of civil or ecclesiastical authority they have been, or may be, dignified. Whether they lived under the old or under the new dispensation, whether the objects of their instructions were Jews or Gentiles, or both, they must all bow to the authority of Jesus, and acknowledge him as their superior and lord. His dignity is more exalted, his mission is more important, his miracles are more splendid, his dominion is more extensive and durable. Of him it is declared (Ps. viii. 6), that "all things are put in subjection under his feet:" by which is meant, that the whole world shall in due time embrace the gospel, and yield a willing subjection to his gentle yoke. And in the mean time God has authorized him to impart all necessary information to true believers, and to supply them with those gifts of the spirit which contribute to their conviction, edification, and comfort. So that Christ and his church form as it were a complete person: Christ is the head, and the church the body, which derives that light and vigour, and vital influence from him by his doctrine and his spirit, which are essential to the life and nourishment, the growth and beauty of every part, and to the symmetry and perfection of the whole.

4. The apostle proceeds to illustrate his position, that the power of God manifested in the conversion of Jews and heathen, and in their admission to the privileges and hopes of the gospel, is analogous to that power which was displayed in the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus Christ, ch. ii. 1—6. Ch. II.

And you hath God brought to life with Christ[1], *who are* now *dead to transgressions and sins*[2]. Ver. 1.

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[1] *And you* hath God brought to life.] Dr. Chandler, and after him Dr. Macknight, supplies the ellipsis in this verse from the preceding; viz. "you hath he filled who were dead," &c. Mr. Locke, with the public version and the generality of commentators, supplies the ellipsis from the fifth verse: *q. d.* you hath he brought to life with Christ. See Wakefield. The train of thought is this: I pray daily for you, ch. i. 16, that you may be apprized of the value of the inheritance, ver. 18,—and of the great power of God exerted upon you, ver. 19,—similar to that exerted in the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, ver. 20—23;—so likewise has he raised you who are now dead to your former state, ch. ii. 1,—in which you once lived, ver. 2;—and likewise we Jews, being in a situation equally deplorable, ver. 3,—are nevertheless made objects of mercy, ver. 4;—and being dead to our former state, ver. 5,—we and you are raised and exalted together with Christ, ver. 5, 6,—as monuments of free unmerited goodness, ver. 7—9,—to the practice of virtue, ver. 10. See Locke's note; who observes, that the conjunction καὶ gives us here the thread of Paul's discourse, which it is impossible to understand without seeing the train of it.

[2] *Dead to transgressions and sins.*] "to trespasses and sins." Wakefield. Dr. Chandler acknowledges that the words admit of being translated *dead to trespasses*, though he prefers the common translation. The best commentary upon this text is the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, in which the same thought is pursued at large. The apostle does not mean to represent the unconverted Gentiles as in a state of death, but as living in sin, and to the purposes of sin. When converted to the gospel, they die to sin; *i. e.* they renounce the idolatry and vices of their heathen state: and when by the profession of Christianity they entertain new views and expectations, and

Ch. II. Ver. 1.

Such is the astonishing power which Almighty God hath displayed in the resurrection of Christ, and in his exaltation to supreme authority in the church. Similar to this, and equally illustrative of divine power and goodness, is the wonderful change which has taken place in you Gentiles, in your conversion to the Christian religion. It may justly be said of you, that you have undergone a transformation equivalent to a death, a resurrection, and an exaltation. You are dead to your former state of idolatry and vice; and by the same power of God which raised up Jesus you are now animated with a life and spirit far different from that of your unconverted state.

2. *In which ye formerly walked*[1] *according to the course of this world*[2], *according to the prince of the power of the air*[3], *of the spirit which now worketh*[4] *in the sons of disobedience.*

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lead a different course of life, they are said, by Christ, and with Christ, and in resemblance of Christ, to be raised to life and exalted to heaven.

[1] *In which ye formerly walked:*] that is, *lived*; not in which you were dead. You were then alive to sin: sin was your master, in whose service you exerted all your powers. See Rom. vi.

[2] *Course of this world.*] Dr. Chandler observes, "that the Greek word αἰων and the Latin *ævum* both signify the life of man, and from thence by an easy figure the manner and custom of a person's living. It here signifies the corrupt principles and idolatrous practices of the Gentile world." "Αἰων, quodvis temporis spatium, *s. longius, s. brevius*—integram durationem *accommodatam nempe rebus et personis de quibus sermo est, significat, ita tamen, ut etiam* res et personas durantes, res in tempore factas, *seu*, existentes, *per metonymiam adjuncti complectatur:* ingenium ætatis—vivendi ratio. Rom. xii. 2; 1 Cor. ii. 6." Schleusner. Very properly rendered "the course of this world."

In your former heathen state you were the devoted subjects of the worst of tyrants; you lived in the unrestrained practice of those vices which were authorized and allowed by the idolatry of your country; you behaved like the rest of the heathen world, like the subjects of Satan, whose kingdom is in direct hostility to that of truth and virtue, of God and Christ: who is supposed by his deluded votaries to inhabit the regions of the air; and whose spirit, the spirit of obstinacy, of error, of malignity, and mis- Ch. II. Ver. 2.

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[3] *The prince of the power of the air:*] *i.e.* Satan, the mythological head of the unbelieving world; whose residence was supposed to be in the air, as that of Christ was supposed to be above him in the heavens. There is no occasion to suppose, either, with Dr. Harwood, that Jupiter is the person alluded to by the apostle, (see Harwood's *Introd. to New Test.*) or with many, that the devil is a real being, who resides in the air and who has power to govern the changes of the atmosphere. This most improbable doctrine, which makes a malignant spirit a colleague with the Deity in the government of the universe, receives no countenance from the writings of Paul, who only alludes to a mythology already subsisting. Should it be alleged, that if Satan be a figurative person, Christ, who is opposed to him as the ruler of the believing world, must also be a figurative person, it may perhaps be allowed, that when Christ is thus put in opposition to Satan, the word may, sometimes at least, be taken in a figurative sense to express the spirit and the principles of the Christian religion, in opposition to the spirit and principles of heathenism and idolatry. Mr. Wakefield renders the clause, "the ruler of this empire of darkness." Archbishop Newcome remarks, that though the sense of *darkness* is very suitable to αηρ in this place, and is attributed to it by Cocceius, Heinsius, and Wakefield, he cannot find it used thus except in the feminine gender. See 2 Pet. ii. 4, Jude 6.

[4] *Which now worketh.*] ενεργουντος. Mr. Locke observes, that "this is the proper term whereby in the Greek is signified the possession and acting of any person by an evil spirit." The apostle represents unconverted heathen as demoniacs, as madmen, as men out of their senses. See Doddridge.

Ch. II. Ver. 2. chief, possesses and actuates the minds of the mass of unbelievers, and impels them, like madmen, to reject and vilify the salutary scheme, and gracious offers of the gospel.

3. *Among whom we all likewise lived formerly, in our carnal desires, indulging the inclinations of the senses and of the thoughts* [1], *and were by nature children of wrath* [2] *even as the rest.*

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[1] *Of the senses and of the thoughts.*] Literally, *of the flesh and of the imaginations.* See Macknight. Dr. Chandler says "the literal version of the words is this, *doing the wills of the flesh and of the thoughts:* i. e. they did whatever their fleshly appetites prompted them to; and not only thus, but they studied after methods of vice and wickedness, and employed their thoughts how to invent new gratifications of their corrupt appetites and passions, and allowed themselves the freest indulgence in them." It was a maxim of the pharisees, that thoughts were not sinful.

[2] *By nature children of wrath:*] *i. e.* we Jews, like you Gentiles, were, *antecedent to our conversion to Christianity*, in a state of condemnation under the righteous law of God. See Gal. i. 15. 'we who were Jews by nature,' *i. e.* before our conversion to Christianity, 'and not sinners of the Gentiles.' That Jews as well as Gentiles were in a state of condemnation previously to the publication of Christianity, the apostle proves at large in the first three chapters of the epistle to the Romans. See particularly Rom. iii. 19, 20. How far this text, thus explained according to its true import, is from giving countenance to the commonly received doctrine of original sin, is sufficiently obvious. "It is evident (says Dr. Chandler) by the very form of expression, that the apostle refers to their condition before their conversion, and not to that which may be at all times affirmed equally of all mankind. For he says, and *were* by nature, not *are* by nature; and therefore their being formerly children of wrath could only refer to the vices of their condition before conversion, and means no more than their being subject to God's displeasure, because educated and brought up in, and habituated by inclination and practice to, the worst of immoralities and vices. This is the meaning of the word in the best writers." The learned author proceeds to cite authorities to

And to say the truth, we Jews, notwithstanding all our professions of sanctity and our means of better information, were sunk in vices as gross as those of the heathen world; equally with the Gentiles, whom we despised, yielding ourselves to the direction of our unbridled appetites and passions, and the strictest among us pleading for the uncontrouled indulgence of licentious imaginations; being utter strangers to that purity of principle which imposes severe restraints upon the thoughts and purposes of the heart. So that, antecedently to our conversion to the Christian religion, we were, nationally, as forlorn, and as liable to condemnation, as the unbelieving world now are. Ch. II. Ver. 3.

But God being rich in mercy, according to his great love with which he loved us, hath made us, who are now *dead to sins*[3], *alive together with Christ: by whose free favour ye are delivered*[4]; 4. 5.

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prove that the word φυσις, *nature*, is used to express a disposition contracted by habit. I am, however, rather inclined to think that the apostle uses the word in a technical sense, to express the condition in which they were born, that is, out of covenant; and he affirms that his countrymen, however they might pride themselves in their privileges, had by their transgressions cast themselves, as a nation, out of covenant, and were therefore, antecedently to their conversion, in no better state than the Gentiles themselves, whom they familiarly spoke of as sinners, and children of wrath. See Rom. ii. 17—20; Gal. ii. 15. "*By nature*, in our original state: before conversion. *children of anger*. Heirs of the divine displeasure on account of our *actual* vices." Newcome.

[3] Now *dead to sins*.] Not *in* sins, but *to* sins: *i. e.* to our former unconverted state. "made us, now dead to sins, alive together with Christ." Wakefield.

[4] *By whose favour ye are delivered*.] δια χαριτι. This is the

Ch. II. Ver. 6. *and hath raised us up with* him, *and hath made us sit together with* him, *in heavenly* places[1], *by Christ Jesus.*

Nevertheless it pleased God, who delights in mercy, that where sin had abounded, mercy should also abound. And not regarding even us sinful and apostate Jews as utterly unworthy of his notice, he has vouchsafed to raise to life, as Christ was raised, all of us, whether Jews or Gentiles, who are dead to our former state of ignorance and wickedness, and who are willing to renounce all dependence on ceremonial rites, and to reinstate us in a life of virtue, privilege, and hope. This favour we have obtained by the grace of Christ, through faith in the gospel of our common Master. And as he is raised by the

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reading of the Clermont and other ancient manuscripts, and of the Vulgate and Italic versions; and it best suits the connexion. See Chandler. The gospel is often called the grace or gift of Christ, because Christ was the medium of communicating this great blessing to the world. "Ye are saved," *i. e.* delivered from the evils of your heathen state; as the context sufficiently shows. The apostle here resumes his discourse concerning the heathen converts, and speaks of believers in general to the end of the section.

[1] *Hath made us sit together with* him *in heavenly* places.] Observe, the apostle says, God *hath* brought us to life, *hath* raised us up, *hath* made us sit in heavenly places by Christ: not he *will* do it. Therefore it is not a literal, but a figurative resurrection and ascension that is here intended, and a figurative heaven. The plain meaning is, that Jew and Gentile believers, having completely renounced former errors, prejudices, and vices, are now advanced to the privileges and hopes of the gospel. This is that kingdom of heaven of which Christ is appointed to be the sovereign; and as believers sit with him who sitteth at the right hand of God, they share with him in his dignity and authority, and under his auspices are employed in extending the limits of his glorious kingdom.

power of God, and exalted to the highest dignity in the new and heavenly dispensation, so we likewise are exalted with him, and are even now seated with him, and near him, in his heavenly kingdom: gratefully acknowledging subjection to him as our governor and head, deriving evangelical blessings from him, and in our respective posts employing and exerting our best talents to extend the limits of his auspicious empire. Ch. II. Ver. 6.

5. This whole scheme is an illustrious display of undeserved and unexpected mercy, which precludes all boasting on the part of those who are interested in it and benefited by it, ver. 7—10.

That in the ages which are coming[2] *he might show the superabundant riches of his favour and kindness towards us through Christ Jesus.* 7.

The design and end of all these extraordinary

[2] *The ages which are coming.*] *i. e.* the gospel dispensation. Mark xi. 10; Heb. vi. 5, ii. 5.—"God was pleased to quicken and raise up the Gentiles who believed, that in all successive ages of the world they might stand as a demonstration of the acceptableness of faith in God, and of his fixed purposes of mercy and grace towards all without exception that should receive and obey the gospel. The conversion of the Gentiles by the ministry of the apostles, was a great instance of God's goodness to them, and a standing proof, throughout all future ages, of the certainty of God's favour to all who should believe, to the end of time." Chandler. "The great favour and goodness of God," says Mr. Locke, "manifests itself in the salvation of sinners in all ages; but that which most eminently sets forth the glory of his grace was *the case of* those who were first of all converted from heathenism to Christianity, and brought out of the kingdom of darkness, in which they were as dead men, without life, hope, or so much as a thought of salvation or a better state, into the kingdom of God."

Ch. II. Ver. 7. operations of divine power in our conversion to the Christian faith, and in thus transferring us, as it were, from an earthly to a heavenly state, from a state of ignorance and prejudice, and vice and misery, to a state of light and virtue, and privilege and hope, is to exhibit and to magnify his unspeakable mercy and compassion in this new dispensation, which his faithful and holy servant and messenger Jesus of Nazareth has been commissioned to introduce into the world.

8. *For by free favour ye are delivered through faith, and this*[1] *not of yourselves,* it is *the gift of*
9, 10. *God. Not of works, that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works*[2]*, which God hath before prepared for us, that we should walk in them*[3].

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[1] *And this.*] και τουτο. Dr. Doddridge and others contend that *faith* is the antecedent; Chandler, Newcome and others refer τουτο to the whole antecedent sentence: *q. d.* this salvation by faith is the gift of God. The sense amounts nearly to the same; the glory of all is to be ascribed to God. Dr. Doddridge in favour of his interpretation pleads Phil. i. 28; Eph. vi. 18; Gal. iii. 17, iv. 19; and refers to Elsner's *Obs.* vol. i. p. 128, and Raphelius *Annot. ex Herod.* p. 186. Faith may be called the gift of God, as he communicated the evidences and placed the mind in circumstances in which those evidences produced conviction. Dr. Chandler contends that his translation is more agreeable to the construction and the context.

[2] *Created in Christ Jesus.*] κτισθεντες· "the original word, which we render *create*, properly signifies to *produce* or *form* any thing. Thus it is used by the best writers for the building of walls and cities, the planting of groves, the making laws, &c. So that it is not strictly applied to what we mean by creation, nor doth it involve the notion of almighty power: and in Latin Cicero speaks of *creating* magistrates, dangers, calamities, &c. The Ephesians were God's workmanship, *created* in or by Christ

I again repeat, that it is solely to be imputed to the free, unsolicited, and unmerited goodness of God that you have been delivered from the evils and disadvantages of your heathen state, and by the profession of faith in Christ have been admitted to participate in the privileges of the gospel. And this deliverance is to be ascribed to no merit and to no effort on your part: you neither knew the danger of your case nor sought for deliverance. You owe all to the free gift of God. He formed the

Ch. II. Ver. 10.

Jesus to good works; brought by his gospel to the knowledge of true religion and virtue, and quickened by the powerful motives contained in it to obey and live according to the precepts thereof. The forming particular doctrines from metaphorical expressions, and straining similitudes to their utmost extent, is not to explain but pervert the sense of writers, to make them speak in the most absurd and unintelligible manner, and to expose their meaning to ridicule and contempt." Chandler.

[3] *Which God*, &c.] Archbishop Newcome renders the words, "in which God before designed that we should walk." He observes, that instead of εν οἷς—ἵνα περιπατησωμεν, the apostle uses a pleonastic pronoun, after the Hebrew manner. Dr. Chandler has an excellent note upon the text: "God (says he) prepared ordinances and statutes for his people the Jews under the law by Moses, that they should observe and do them, Prov. xxiv. 27, Ps. lix. 4. But under the gospel dispensation he intended a more excellent service, and chose us that we should be holy and without blame before him in Christ. These works he prepared for the gospel dispensation, as what should supersede all ceremonial observances."

Upon the whole, the sum of the apostle's argument is this: The conversion of Jews and Gentiles to the Christian faith is an extraordinary effort of divine power, the result of unsought for, unmerited goodness; the end and design of which is to form those who are so converted to the love and practice of virtue.

Mr. Locke has a long note upon the eighth verse, to show that "the apostle, when speaking of the Gentiles, calls their being brought back again from their apostasy into the kingdom of God, their being saved."

Ch. II. Ver. 10.

plan, he annexed the condition, he made the discovery, he proposed the evidence. You yourselves had no concern in the contrivance, and contributed nothing to the execution of the glorious scheme. So that no one can boast of himself as a party concerned in producing this astonishing effect. So far from it, you were as little accessory to it as if you had not even existed: for the change which you have undergone, in passing from heathenism to Christianity, is like that of passing from nothing into existence. It is a new creation. God has herein, as it were, formed you anew; and by Jesus Christ he has introduced you into a new state of existence, upon new conditions of life. For, as to Adam in paradise was given the law of innocence, and to the Jews by Moses, the law of Sinai, the yoke of ceremonies, so, to believers in Christ is given the law of virtue and beneficence, love to God and love to man, by which it was long ago determined and foretold that the followers of Jesus should be distinguished from the unbelieving world, and become entitled to the promised blessings of the gospel.

SECTION III.

THE APOSTLE, in order to excite in the Christian converts a just sense of the inestimable value of the blessings of the gospel, strongly urges them to retain an habitual recollection of the miseries of their past, and of the privileges of their present condition. Ch. ii. 11—22. Ch. II.

1. He reminds them of the disgrace and danger of their heathen state, ver. 11—13.

Wherefore remember, that ye who were *originally Gentiles by descent*[1], (*being called* the *uncircumcision*[2], *by that which is called* the *circumcision performed by hands in the flesh*[3]), *were at that time without Christ*[4], *aliens from the community*[5] *of Israel, and strangers to the covenants*[6], Ver. 11. 12.

[1] *By descent.*] εν σαρκι· literally, *in the flesh.* Rom. i. 3. See Chandler's note. "Gentiles born."

[2] *Called* the *uncircumcision*] "by the Jews in contempt; implying that they were destitute of every privilege in which they imagined themselves interested, and of which they looked upon circumcision as a seal or mark." Chandler.

[3] *In the flesh.*] To distinguish it from the circumcision of the heart, Rom. ii. 29; in which they were miserably deficient, Col. ii. 11. "which consists in cutting off and casting away the sinful affections, passions, and habits, of a corrupted mind." Chandler.

[4] *Without Christ.*] "destitute of all knowledge of the Messiah, or any expectation of deliverance or salvation by him." Locke; who argues, that the connexion determines this to be the sense of the words.

Ch. II. Ver. 12. *having no hope of the promise*[1], *and without God*[2] *in the world.*

I have been representing to you the extraordinary exertion of divine power and goodness in your conversion to the Christian religion, that you might be reclaimed to the love and practice of righteousness. And indeed it is highly reasonable that you should retain a just sense of the value of your present privileges, which you will best accomplish by contrasting your present happy condition with your former forlorn and miserable state. Remember then, my brethren, what you originally were: ignorant, idolatrous, and vicious heathen; regarded and treated with the utmost contempt by the Jews, who glory in the external marks of their relation to God, though they are too often deficient in that spirit of piety and purity which their profession requires, and their law inculcates. In this unhappy state you

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[7] *Aliens*, &c.] "They had no right of citizenship in the Jewish polity, nor any claim to the privileges of citizens." Chandler. "The Jews were then the only people of God." Locke.

[8] *Strangers to the covenants.*] *i. e.* "the patriarchal and Mosaic covenants, which promised the Messiah, Rom. ix. 4." Newcome. Mr. Wakefield's version is, "strangers to the covenants, having no hope of the promise, and without God, men of this world." This alteration in the punctuation is suggested in Bowyer's *Conjectures*.

[1] *No hope of the promise.*] *i. e.* of those blessings which the promises contained, justification by faith, acceptance with God, as his children, a title to the inheritance of eternal life. See Chandler.

[2] *Without God.*] "without having the true God for their God." Locke; who observes, that "it is in this sense the Gentiles are called ἄθεοι, few of them being, properly speaking, atheists, denying the existence of superior powers." See Rom. ix. 5; with Taylor's or Crellius's note.

had neither hope nor wish for a deliverer: not being descended from the ancient patriarchs, you were excluded from the privileges entailed upon their posterity, and from the community which God had selected as his own. You had never heard of the covenants which God had entered into with Abraham and his descendants, in which he promised his favour upon condition of obedience, and foretold the appearance of a great prophet, who should instruct them in a more perfect institute than that of Moses. In consequence of this ignorance, you had no interest in the promises, no expectation of any improvement of your moral condition, nor any hope of a future life. You had no just ideas of the nature and character of God; you neither loved nor worshiped him; you were enemies to him by wicked works, and outcasts from his favour; you were mere men of the world, who only sought after worldly pleasures, and who looked for nothing beyond the present life. Ch. II. Ver. 12.

2. He reminds them of the happy change which had taken place in their condition by faith in Christ, ver. 13.

But now, in Christ Jesus[3], *ye who formerly were far off*[4], *are brought near by the blood of Christ*[5]. 13.

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[3] *In Christ Jesus.*] "since your conversion to the faith of Christ." Chandler. *q. d.* you being in Christ Jesus, that is, in the number of his disciples. See Rom. xvi. 7.

[4] *Far off.*] From the connexion, and from ver. 17, it seems evident that the expressions 'far off' and 'near' allude to the

Ch. II. Ver. 13. Your state is now wonderfully improved. Instead of being at a distance from God, excluded from his temple, and regarded as aliens and enemies, you are admitted into his holy place, and brought near to his person, by your conversion to the Christian religion; being, as it were, consecrated and purified by the blood of Christ, which was shed to ratify the new and more comprehensive covenant, and to put an end to the distinction between Jew and Gentile.

3. By his death having abolished all ceremonial distinctions, Jesus has reconciled Jews and Gentiles to each other, and to God, ver. 14—18.

14. *For he is our peace*[1]: *who hath united both*[2], *and hath removed the enmity, the middle wall of*
15. *partition*[3]; *having in his own person abolished*[4]

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situation of the worshipers in the outer and the inner courts of the temple, the court of the Gentiles and that of the Jews. So the publican in the parable is described as standing afar off, *i. e.* in the court of the Gentiles, Luke xviii. 13.

[5] *By the blood of Christ.*] Qu. How by the blood of Christ? The apostle immediately explains himself. The death of Christ broke down the partition wall, and opened a way for the worshipers in the outer court to advance into the holy place.

[1] *Our peace.*] *i. e.* the maker or author of peace, see ver. 15; a common phraseology: so (ver 15) the partition wall, the ceremonial law, is called 'the enmity,' being the cause or the sign of enmity. Compare Gen. xv. 1, 1 Thess. ii. 20. "The cause of peace and union between Jews and Gentiles." Newcome.

[2] *United both:*] *i. e.* those who were far off, and those who were near; those who were in the outer, and those in the inner courts. Literally, "he hath made both one."

[3] *The enmity, the wall of partition,*] which separated the court of the Gentiles from that where the Jews worshiped, and into which it was not permitted to the Gentiles to enter, under pain

the law of commandments, consisting *in ordinances*[5]. Ch. II. Ver. 15.

To accomplish this important purpose, of bringing Jews and Gentiles into the same state of privi-

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of death. Josephus *Ant.* l. xv. § 5. St. Paul was seized upon the charge of having brought Gentiles into the inner court, Acts xxi. 28. I adopt the punctuation of Griesbach and Wakefield.

[4] *In his own person abolished the law.*] Gr. "in his own flesh," *i. e.* by his death he introduced another dispensation, which superseded the dispensation of rites and ceremonies, the observance of which ceased to be necessary as an introduction to the kingdom of God. Mr. Locke here introduces a long note, to explain what is meant by the abolition of the law, justly observing, "that the law of Moses is no where abrogated by an actual repeal; but that by the introduction of the kingdom of the Messiah, which extended to the Gentiles, and proposed new terms of admission, it ceased to be the law of the people and kingdom of God, but not to be the law of the Jewish nation. This did not make its observances unlawful to those who, before conversion, were under the law; but that which was unlawful and contrary to the gospel was, the making those ritual observances necessary to be joined with faith in believers for justification."

[5] *Ordinances.*] δογμασι, "*edicta multas observationes reddunt necessarias.*" Rosenmuller; that is, the ceremonial law. The Jews insisted upon the strict observation of its rites as necessary to admission into covenant with God; while the Gentiles regarded them as an insupportable yoke. This difference produced an enmity between them, which could not be reconciled till the ceremonial law was abolished. "This law of ceremonies," says Dr. Chandler, "was properly the partition wall, which kept the Jews and Gentiles from coalescing or uniting into one church and people; from worshiping together, and partaking in common the privileges of God's house and service; and therefore our blessed Saviour, by taking down this partition wall, *i. e.* by cancelling the obligation of the Mosaic law, became our peace, and made both one; made both Jews and Gentiles equally the people of God, invested them with a right to the same privileges, enjoined them the same method of worship, gave them the same body of laws, and thus laid a foundation for their future union in the strictest bonds of affection and friendship."

Ch. II. Ver. 15. lege and promise, Jesus came as the ambassador of peace. And this great design he has actually fulfilled: having reconciled believers of both descriptions to each other, by putting an end to that which was the principal cause of enmity; namely, the law of ceremonies, which formerly constituted the proud distinction of the Jews. Jesus having ratified by his death a covenant which admits all believers to equal privileges, without arbitrary and positive marks of distinction, has, as it were, broken down that wall in the temple which separated the court of the Gentiles from that of the Jews; so that converted heathen may now approach as near to the holy place as converted Jews; and all who profess subjection to Christ as their Master are taught to regard each other as brethren in him.

—15. *That he might form the two*[1] *into one new man*
16. *in himself*[2], thus *making peace*[3], *and that he might*

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[1] *Form the two.*] κτισῃ, *create, i. e.* make, or form, see ver. 10, note.

[2] *In himself:*] *i. e.* "in his mystical body, the church." Newcome. The apostle delights in representing the universal church, consisting of believers, Jews and Gentiles, as forming one body, of which Christ is the head; and this body is sometimes called Christ, see Eph. i. 23. Mr. Locke observes, that the apostle "always has Jesus Christ in his mind as the head of the church, which was his body; from and by whom alone, by being united to him, the whole body, and every member of it, received life, vigour, and strength, and all the benefits of that state, which admirably well shows that whoever were united to this head must needs be united to one another; and also, that all the privileges and advantages they enjoyed were wholly owing to their union with, and adhering to, him their head; which were the two things he inculcated upon the converted Gentiles at Ephesus." He adds: "If the Jewish nation had owned Jesus

reconcile both, in one person, to God[4]*; having slain the enmity by the cross.* Ch. II. Ver. 16.

Two purposes were to be accomplished by the abolition of the ceremonial law: the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles to each other, and to God. As to the first, it is so completely effected, that the great body of believers now forms one mystical person, of which Christ is the head; and of this body the several parts and limbs, in their respective places, live and act together in perfect harmony. This mystical person, consisting of Jesus and his faithful disciples of all nations and parties, is reconciled and consecrated to God, not by any formal initiatory rite, or ceremonial institute, but by the death of Christ, which abolishes all those legal distinctions which heretofore constituted ceremonial disqualifications, and barred the gates of the temple against the admission of the Gentiles.

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as the Messiah, they had continued the people of God: but, as they had nationally rejected him, they were no longer such; and all who after that would return to their allegiance, must be admitted upon other terms than being the posterity of Jacob."

[3] *Making peace,*] by making them members of the same body, all harmonizing with each other.

[4] *To God, having slain the enmity by the cross.*] I follow the reading and the punctuation of the Syriac and Mr. Wakefield. *The enmity slain by the cross* is the ceremonial law, which was the cause of enmity between Jew and Gentile. This being now abolished, and the two parties being now formed and moulded into one mystical body, of which Christ is the head, this new man is admitted into favour with God, and taken into a covenant state, not in consequence of any satisfaction made to offended justice, but from free, unpurchased, unmerited mercy. See ver. 8, 'By grace ye are saved, through faith, and this salvation is the free gift of God.' This is plainly the train of the apostle's ideas.

Ch. II. Ver. 17. *And he came*[1], *and proclaimed the glad tidings of peace to you* who were *afar off, and to those* that 18. were *near*[2]. *For through him we both have admission*[3], *by one spirit*[4], *to the Father.*

Having thus superseded the ceremonial law, which was the cause of alienation from God, and from each other, he came after he was risen from the dead, and by himself in person, and still more explicitly by his apostles and other chosen messengers, to announce the joyful tidings of peace and reconciliation. To you Gentiles, who worshiped in the outer court, he has proclaimed liberty of access to the holy place, and the removal of whatever prevented your admission into the rank and privileges of the people of God. To the Jews he has announced a new and better covenant, which makes provision for the remission of offences which the law condemned without mercy. And thus, through this highly favoured messenger of peace, Jesus Christ, we all, both Jews and Gentiles, are admit-

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[1] *He came.*] Newcome joins this with ver. 14, including the 15th and 16th in a parenthesis. Christ came to proclaim these tidings, after his resurrection, by his apostles and prophets, ver. 20.

[2] *To you* who were *afar off*, &c.] *q. d.* to you Gentiles who were in the outer court, and to the Jews who were in the inner court of the temple, see ver. 13, note.

[3] *Admission.*] An allusion to the custom of appointing persons to introduce strangers at the courts of princes. See Doddridge and Macknight.

[4] *By one spirit.*] "The extraordinary gifts of the spirit were the evidence of their adoption, and were poured out upon the Gentiles as well as upon the Jews." Chandler. One and the same spirit is communicated to all who believe, whether Jew or Gentile.

ted into the temple of God; we are allowed to invoke God as our Father, and to expect a glorious inheritance from him; of which the miraculous gifts and powers which are communicated alike to believers of every nation, are a convincing proof, and a most satisfactory earnest and pledge. Ch. II. Ver. 18.

4. Being thus incorporated with the people of God, they are dedicated to his service, being made constituent parts of an ever-increasing temple, consecrated to God, and inhabited by him, ver. 19—22.

So then, ye are no longer strangers and sojourners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and belonging to the house of God[5]. 19.

From this view which I have given you of the means by which reconciliation has been accomplished by Christ, you may draw the joyful conclusion that you Gentiles are no longer considered as foreigners and sojourners, who have no title to the privileges and immunities of the holy city, the com-

[5] *Belonging to the house of God.*] The word οικειοι signifies either belonging to a family as members or servants, Gal. vi. 10; or belonging to the building as a constituent part of it. The apostle glances at both these senses of the word, and passes off to another similitude. See Macknight. "The church of God (says Dr. Chandler) is compared to a city or republic, which hath its peculiar immunities, rights, and privileges; and of this city all who believe in Christ are equally free, of whatsoever nation or country they may be. They are no more παροικοι, *i. e.* mere dwellers or lodgers in a city, without enjoying the freedom of it, but the proper denizens of it, yea, such as belong to the very house and family of God, the universal Lord and Father. The word οικειος is used in both senses, to denote a domestic, or one who is a freeman, in opposition to a stranger or foreigner."

Ch. II. Ver. 19. munity of the chosen people of God; but that, by your profession of faith in Christ, without submitting to the yoke of the ritual law, you are entitled to all the privileges which any of the professing people of God have ever enjoyed. You are free citizens of the kingdom of Christ; you are admitted into the house of God; you are suffered to enter as worshipers into the holy place; you are received into his service; you are acknowledged as his children.

20. *Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets*[1], *Jesus Christ himself being the chief*
21. *corner*-stone[2]. *By which the whole building, being harmoniously framed together*[3], *groweth*[4] *to a holy*

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[1] *Apostles and prophets.*] "of the Christian church." Newcome. See ch. iii. 5, iv. 11; 1 Cor. xii. 28. *built upon*, &c. "since that gospel which they preach they received by immediate revelation from Christ." Chandler.

[2] *Corner*-stone.] "The chief corner-stone is that which is laid at the foundation, upon which the whole angle of the building rests; and which, therefore, is the principal support and tie of the whole edifice." Chandler. See Psalm cxviii. 22.

[3] *Harmoniously framed together.*] "The materials of a building in their original form (says Dr. Chandler in his beautiful note) are shapeless and disagreeing, and could never constitute an edifice till wrought and fashioned by the art and labour of the workmen, fitted in size and shape for their proper places. And what more unlikely than that Jews and Gentiles should ever be brought to coalesce and join in one society, and constitute one church, between whom there had been so long and inveterate an opposition and hatred? But in Christ they were fitly framed. His gospel, and doctrine, and spirit, so altered and fashioned them, that they became capable of settling and joining together, and in their several places contributing to the proportion, harmony, strength, and beauty of this sacred temple which it pleased God to erect out of them. Notwithstanding the enmity of their former state, and though they would will-

temple through the Lord[5]*: by which*[6] *ye also are built together for a habitation of God, through the spirit*[7]. Ch. II. Ver. 22.

I said that you belonged to the house of God: you do belong to it as members of his family; you also belong to it as constituent parts of that holy building the church. As such, you rest upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets; your faith being erected upon the doctrine which the authorized teachers of the gospel have taught and inculcated, and upon the evidence which they exhibited of the truth of their doctrine. But your principal

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ingly have destroyed each other, yet, under the power and skill of the Redeemer, they arose upon him as their proper foundation, out of their common ruins, a regular and stately temple, consecrated to God, and honoured with his presence."

Archbishop Newcome and others have observed that "the temple of Diana, at Ephesus, made this allegory a most pertinent one." But I confess that I see nothing in the allegory peculiarly appropriate to that celebrated temple. The apostle, upon other occasions, 1 Cor. iii. 11, 12, 16, 17, has compared the church to a temple, where it is not suspected that he had any particular temple in view. Nor would the temple of Diana have been thought on here, had it not been first presumed that the epistle was addressed to the Ephesians. And this allusion, if it were more direct than it is, would be of no avail in opposition to the many strong objections against that hypothesis, and particularly that from the apostle making no allusion to any of the memorable events which occurred to him at Ephesus, or even, to his having ever visited Ephesus at all.

[4] *Groweth.*] "is gradually increasing by the addition of new members." Macknight.

[5] *Through the Lord.*] "under the inspection of, and sacred to, the Lord." Chandler.

[6] *By which.*] *i. e.* "corner-stone." Newcome, Wakefield.

[7] *Habitation of God.*] "God dwells in you by those extraordinary gifts of his holy spirit which is the sure evidence of his acceptance and immediate presence." Chandler.—"a spiritual habitation of God." Wakefield.

Ch. II. Ver. 22. dependance is upon the testimony of Jesus himself, the chief of all the prophets of the Most High. He is the solid foundation and the chief corner-stone of this spiritual temple, which unites and firmly binds together different parts of the building. He is the great bond of union to the universal church. Resting upon this foundation, the united building rises by the continual accession of fresh materials, of new converts, to a harmonious and magnificent temple, constructed by the Lord, and consecrated to him. Upon this foundation you rest secure; and, firmly united with the great body of true believers of all nations, you constitute a glorious fabric, the universal church, in which God has fixed his permanent residence, as he once did in the most holy place; and where he manifests his presence, by the gifts of his holy spirit, in a manner more truly honourable and beneficial than the cloud of glory upon the mercy-seat.

SECTION IV.

Ch. III. *THE APOSTLE prays to God for the establishment of his Christian friends in the faith of Christ; and in a pertinent and eloquent digression he obviates the objections which would naturally occur from the consideration of his own sufferings in the cause.* Ch. iii. *throughout.*

1. He announces himself as a prisoner of Christ, for their sake, ver. 1.

For this cause[1] *I, Paul, the prisoner*[2] *of Christ Jesus, for the sake of you Gentiles*[3]. Ch. III. Ver. 1.

Having thus reminded you of your great privilege of admission into the kingdom and family of God, (ch. ii. 19,) I, Paul, whom you know by name and character, and many of you in person, who, in the introduction of this epistle, announced myself as the apostle of Christ, and who now am also a prisoner at Rome; not for any wrong that I have

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[1] *For this cause.*] "Because ye are admitted into the outward privileges of the gospel, ch. ii. 19. I pray that ye may be strengthened in it, ver. 16, &c. This verse is connected with ver. 14, where τατε χαριν is resumed; St. Paul having dropped his first thought, and pursued others which arose in his mind." Newcome.

[2] *The prisoner.*] Grotius, Chandler, Wakefield, and many others, read, "I, Paul, *am* a prisoner," and thus avoid the parenthesis. With Archbishop Newcome, and most others, I include the twelve verses following in a parenthesis; and think that the apostle takes up his expressions again ver. 14. This is, indeed, more obscure, but more agreeable to his usual style of writing; in which he frequently digresses to pursue incidental thoughts, which, however, are generally closely connected with the subject. A remarkable instance of this occurs 1 Cor. ix. x.

[3] *For the sake of you Gentiles.*] The apostle's long imprisonment, first at Cesarea, and afterwards at Rome, was, strictly speaking, owing to his public declaration, Acts xxii. 21, that he had received a divine commission to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. The historian remarks, ver. 22, "they gave him audience to this word, and then lift up their voices and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live." It was in consequence of the riot thus excited, that the chief captain ordered him to be arrested and brought into the castle. The exact, but undesigned coincidence between the epistle and the history is a considerable presumptive evidence of the genuineness and credibility of both. See this argument beautifully and conclusively illustrated in Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, ch. viii. no. 1.

CH. III. done, but for having taught the doctrine of Christ; and particularly for having executed his gracious commission with which I was intrusted for the benefit of you, the converted Gentiles—I, therefore, being now a prisoner for his sake and for yours, commend you to the divine blessing.

2. The apostle, recollecting himself, stops to obviate any unfavourable impression which might be occasioned by the circumstance of his being at that time a prisoner, ver. 2—13.

1.) He expatiates upon the important communication which had been made to him and others of the gracious design of divine Providence in the conversion of the heathen, ver. 2—6.

2. *Inasmuch*[1] *as ye have heard*[2] *of the dispensa-*

[1] *Inasmuch.*] With Newcome, Bowyer, &c., I include in a parenthesis ver. 2—13. Some, not without plausible reason, suppose the parenthesis extended through the chapter.

[2] *As ye have heard.*] ειγε ηκουσατε. Dr. Mill, Mr. Evanson, and others, infer from the expression "if that you have heard," that the epistle was not addressed to the Ephesians, but to some persons who had never seen the apostle. It has, however, been argued that the word ειγε does not express uncertainty, but may be rendered *si quidem*, seeing that, inasmuch as. See Locke, Whitby, Newcome, and Chandler. 2 Cor. v. 2; Eph. iv. 21. "Ειγε *magis est confidentis quam dubitantis.*" Hoogeveen. Nevertheless, I cannot help thinking with Mr. Evanson, that after the apostle had visited Ephesus twice, and had at one time spent almost three years amongst them, Acts xx. 31, it is very extraordinary that he should address the Ephesians only as having *heard* that the dispensation of the gospel to the Gentiles had been committed to him, and should refer them to the former part of his epistle, that they might, when they had read it, perceive his knowledge of the mystery of Christ. These considerations appear to me conclusive against the epistle being inscribed to the Ephesians; but I cannot coincide with the learned and

tion[3] *of the grace of God, which has been granted to me concerning you.* Ch. III. Ver. 2.

I am, my brethren, indeed suffering for my exertions in your cause, and for the zeal with which, in the face of my bigoted countrymen, I announced the commission with which I was charged to preach the gospel to you (see Acts xxii. 21). And this circumstance may possibly alarm and intimidate some of you: but I assure you that you have no reason at all to be disquieted on that account; for, when duly considered, my long imprisonment is more a subject of congratulation than uneasiness. For, though some of you may not know my person, you cannot fail to have heard much of that extraordinary commission with which I have been honoured by God to publish the designs of his great wisdom and goodness towards you.

That by revelation[4] *that mystery*[5] *was made known to me (as I have written before briefly*[6]*; by* 3. 4.

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acute writer, that they prove the epistle not to have been written by Paul. See Evanson's *Dissonance of the Evangelists*, p. 261, 262.

[3] *Dispensation of grace.*] "This dispensation," says Dr. Chandler, "seems to be that particular office in the Christian church to which this apostle was immediately called; and he styles it a dispensation of grace, because it was a great honour and signal favour conferred upon him, and because the design of it was extremely beneficial and favourable to the Gentiles." The apostle often speaks of the gospel as χαρις, *a free gift*, Rom. vi. 15, and of his own apostleship as χαρις, *an unmerited favour*, Rom. i. 5, Eph. iii. 8.

[4] *By revelation.*] "by the teaching of God himself. See Gal. i. 12." Newcome.

[5] *Mystery:*] the call of the Gentiles. See ver. 6.

[6] *Written before:*] in this epistle. See ch. i. 4—10, ii. 13—21. εν ολιγῳ, *in brief.* Worsley.

Ch. III. Ver. 5. *reading which ye will be able to perceive my knowledge in the mystery of Christ*) *which in other generations was not made known* [1] *to the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets* [2] *by the spirit.*

What I allude to is the discovery which God has been pleased to make to me in particular of a dispensation, the full import of which has hitherto been a secret and a mystery that was known to none but God himself. This mystery communicated to me I have in the former part of this epistle disclosed to you, not indeed insisting upon it to that extent which mercy so rich, so unmerited, and so unexpected, deserves. Nevertheless, if you will take the trouble to review what I have written, you will find that it comprehends a new and glorious discovery of truths the most interesting and important relative to the doctrine of Christ. And though it was hinted at occasionally and obscurely by the holy prophets of former ages, it was never so fully re-

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[1] *Not made known.*] "The calling of the Gentiles to be the people of God was frequently foretold by the prophets under the Old Testament; but yet it does not seem to have been expressly asserted by any of them that they should become God's people by faith only, without conformity to the law of Moses. The calling of the Gentiles in this manner was the grand secret of God's counsel and providence, which former ages knew nothing of in comparison with that clearness with which God was pleased to discover to the apostles and prophets under the New Testament." See Chandler. Comp. Rom. xvi. 25, 26, xiv. 24, 25. Newcome.

[2] *Prophets:*] *i. e.* authorized teachers of the gospel. See Eph. ii. 20; 1 Cor. xii. xiv. All inspired or duly authorized teachers are called prophets, though they did not foretell future events.

vealed to the servants and messengers of God in past generations, as it is now revealed and confirmed, by the communications of the holy spirit, to the apostles of Christ, and to the authorized teachers of his doctrine. Ch. III. Ver. 5.

That the Gentiles through the gospel[3] *are coheirs* with the Israelites, *incorporated* with them, *and joint partakers of the promise in Christ*[4]. 6.

Need I mention, that the glorious and interesting truth so long concealed in the eternal councils of heaven, and now first made known, to the joy and astonishment of all who possess the generous sentiments of the gospel, is this? That the Gentiles are no longer to be regarded as aliens and enemies, nor even as inferiors, in the same community, but that under the gospel dispensation, and believing in Christ, they are admitted to a full equality with the ancient people of God. They become, together with believing Jews, sons of God and coheirs of the divine inheritance of eternal life; they are incorporated in the same privileged community, and equally with the descendants of Abraham they participate in all the blessings and promises of the gospel.

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[3] *Through the gospel.*] Locke says, "in the time of the gospel:" rather, by faith in the gospel. "by the preaching of the gospel." Newcome.—This is the mystery now fully revealed, that believing Gentiles should be upon an equal footing with believing Jews, "joint heirs, a joint body, and joint partakers of his promise in Christ." Newcome.

[4] *The promise in Christ.*] "of which Christ was the object." Newcome. The received text reads, *his* promise; which is not supported by the best copies. See Griesbach.

Ch. III. 2.) Of these joyful tidings it was the apostle's honour and happiness to be appointed a herald, ver. 7—9.

Ver. 7. *Of which I have been made a minister, by the gracious gift*[1] *of God bestowed upon me according to the energy of his power*[2].

This glorious intelligence I am appointed to communicate. Not that I was myself a candidate for the honourable office: far from it. This great favour was the free unsolicited gift of God to me, and his mighty energy qualified me for the work. Nothing but omnipotence could have subdued my inveterate prejudices, or have imparted those dispositions and qualifications which were requisite to my success.

8. *Upon me, who am less than the least*[3] *of all*

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[1] *The gracious gift of God:*] Gr. "the gift of the *grace* or *favour* of God. See ver. 2. "Of which great and merciful dispensation God has made me a minister, and qualified me for preaching and demonstrating the truth of it, by the powers of his holy spirit conferred upon me." Pyle.—"The apostle unquestionably refers in these words," says Dr. Chandler, "to the extraordinary manner in which he was called to, and fitted for, the work and office of an apostle."

[2] *Energy of his power.*] "Paul's conversion to the Christian faith was purely miraculous, and his knowledge of the gospel the effect of immediate inspiration." Chandler. See Gal. ii. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 9, 10; and Locke on the text.

[3] *Less than the least.*] Dr. Doddridge says, "It has often been observed, that the apostle here makes a new word, ελαχιστοτερῳ, the comparative degree of the superlative, which no translation can fully equal or happily express. No doubt he refers to what he had been formerly, when he persecuted the church of God." See 1 Cor. xv. 9; 1 Tim. i. 13. "The original word," says Dr. Chandler, "is excellently well rendered by our translators. The apostle does not content himself with

saints, this favour hath been bestowed, to proclaim[4] *among the Gentiles the glad tidings of the unsearchable riches*[5] *of Christ.* Ch. III. Ver. 8.

I cannot express the astonishment and the gratitude that I feel at the high honour that has been conferred upon me. When I call to mind what I formerly was, a blasphemer, a persecutor, injurious, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, I can hardly believe that I am permitted to enter into this holy community. I am unworthy of the lowest place, of the meanest office, in the church of God; and yet to me, even to me, the most unworthy of the servants of God, is this high distinction granted, to be the herald of eternal truth, to proclaim to the ignorant, deluded, despised Gentiles the joyful tidings of inestimable blessings by Jesus Christ, freely offered to those who could never have expected them, and who indeed were not sufficiently apprized of their poverty and wretchedness to have sought after them.

And to manifest clearly unto all that mysterious dispensation[6] *which was concealed from the* past *ages in God, who hath created all* these *things*[7]. 9.

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saying that he was the least of all saints, but his humility goes yet lower, and he styles himself 'less than the least.' Such diminutive forms of expression are used by the best writers."

[4] *Proclaim*, &c.] This is the spirited and just translation of Mr. Wakefield.

[5] *Unsearchable riches.*] Dr. Doddridge remarks in this and the following verse an allusion to concealed treasure. Dr. Chandler supposes that the apostle alludes in this paragraph to the officers of the temple of Diana at Ephesus; but the resemblance does not appear to be very striking.

[6] *Mysterious dispensation.*] Most of the ancient manuscripts

Ch. III. Ver. 9. To me it has been granted to discover and make known this hidden treasure; to publish to the world this new and glorious dispensation, which was lately an unfathomable mystery, concealed in the eternal councils of God, from wise and good men in past ages and under former dispensations; and now in its proper season revealed by him whose wise and powerful providence has introduced this new and happy state of things.

3.) The consequence of the apostle's preaching was the manifestation of the wisdom of God in the gospel dispensation through the medium of the church, ver. 10—12.

10. *So that*[1] *the manifold variety of the wisdom of God*[2] *is now*[3] *made known through the church*[4] *to*

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and versions read οικονομια, *dispensation*, instead of κοινωνια, *fellowship*; and this reading is adopted by Griesbach, Wakefield, and Newcome. 'The dispensation of the mystery,' or, 'the mysterious dispensation,' is that dispensation which was formerly a mystery.

[7] *All* these *things:*] *i. e.* who has introduced this happy change of state in the moral world. The words "by Jesus Christ" are probably spurious, being omitted in many of the most ancient manuscripts and versions, though capable of a very good sense, as the new creation alone is spoken of by the apostle in this passage. Archbishop Newcome observes "that the sense most suitable to the place is this, 'who hath created all things, that is, Jews and Gentiles, anew to holiness of life.'" See ch. ii. 10, 15, iv. 24. How very precarious the argument is which is drawn from this text in favour of the pre-existence of Christ, and that he is the creator of all things, is obvious to every intelligent and impartial reader. See Tyrwhit *On the Creation of all Things by Jesus Christ.*

[1] *So that.*] Whitby observes that ἱνα may here signify *adeo ut.*

[2] *Manifold variety of the wisdom of God.*] πολυποικιλος. See Wakefield. "Now that the uncircumcised Gentiles believe in

the principalities and powers in heavenly places[5]: Ch. III.
according to the predisposition of the ages[6] *which* Ver. 11.
he made in respect to Jesus Christ our Lord[7].

In consequence of this manifestation of God's

Christ, and are by baptism admitted into the church, the wisdom of God is made known to the Jews, not to be tied up to one invariable way and form, as they persuade themselves, but displays itself in sundry manners as he thinks fit." Locke.

[5] *Now.*] "This word affords a presumptive argument that a recent creation is spoken of in the foregoing verse." Newcome.

[4] *Made known through the church.*] The existence of the Christian community, formed by the apostle's ministry, and acknowledged by God as his through the gifts of the spirit, constitutes a proof which the scribes and priests and ministers of the Jewish dispensation could not object to or repel, that the wisdom of God had other ways of reconciling sinners to himself, and of bringing the Gentiles into the church, than submission to the Mosaic institute.

"The Jews, and most even of the converted Jews, would not believe that the converted Gentiles were admitted without submitting to the laws and ceremonies of the Jews. Now, says St. Paul, God of his special grace has commissioned me to preach to the world this his hidden purpose of taking the Gentiles into the kingdom of his son, that so by the church consisting of members who are God's people, without being circumcised or observing the other Mosaical rites, might, which the Jews could by no means conceive, now be made known and declared, to the leaders and chiefs of that nation, the manifold wisdom of God, which is not, as the Jews imagine, tied up to their own way, but can bring about his purposes by sundry manners, and in ways that they thought not of." Locke.

[5] *Principalities and powers in heavenly* places.] The ANGELS, 1 Pet. i. 12. Newcome, Chandler, &c. "not only governors and magistrates of this world, but all ranks and degrees of creatures in heaven and earth." Pyle; who observes upon ch. i. 10, that "*heaven* and *earth* are sometimes a Jewish phrase to express *the whole world*; but they seem in these epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, with relation to Christ's government, to include the angels and heavenly spirits along with mankind."

But it is hard to say, what could be the use of communicating

Ch. III. Ver. 11.

gracious, and heretofore unknown counsels of mercy to mankind, a church has now been gathered in the world, which God acknowledges as his peculiar peo-

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by revelation any thing which passes in the world of spirits, even supposing such a world to exist, and to be informed of what is going on upon the earth. And if, with Mr. Locke, we understand *heaven and earth* as expressing Jews and Gentiles, those who are in, and those who are out of, covenant. It is in strict analogy with this figure to interpret *principalities and powers* as expressing the officers and ministers of the Jewish church. This is the explanation which Mr. Locke himself gives in a judicious and modest note upon this text, which, however, he professes that he "does not fully understand." After having observed, that it is not easy to conceive that the commission given to St. Paul was for the instruction of angels, and that heathen magistrates gave themselves no concern about it, he adds, "I dare not be positive, but I should take this to be the meaning of it. The high priests, scribes, and pharisees, who alone pretend to any authority in these matters, deny the converted heathen to be the people of God, because they neglect the law and circumcision, and those other rites whereby God has appointed those who are his people to be separated from the rest of the world and made holy to himself. Now, says St. Paul, God has commissioned me to preach his purpose of taking the Gentiles into the kingdom of his Son; that so, by the church, consisting of members who are God's people without being circumcised, might be declared to the leaders and chiefs of that nation the manifold wisdom of God; which is not, as the Jews imagine, tied up to their own ways, but can bring about his purposes by sundry manners, and in ways which they thought not of. And thus, by the church, is this mystery now made known to *principalities* and *powers*, *i. e.* to the rulers and teachers of the Jewish nation."

[6] *According to the predisposition of the ages.*] So Wakefield, Locke, &c. κατα προθεσιν των αιωνων. "The word προθεσις," says Dr. Chandler, "properly signifies the disposition which a person makes of any thing either in his intention or conduct. The literal translation of the Greek words is not, as in our version, *according to his eternal purpose*, the word *his* not being in the original, but *according to the disposition of ages which he made in or by Christ.*"

[7] *In respect to Jesus Christ.*] εν Χριστω, "for the coming of Christ." Macknight; who observes, that αιων is a word of va-

ple by the gifts of his holy spirit: a proof which none can call in question. And this church, thus endowed, manifests beyond all contradiction, and that to those who are most averse to believe, even to the priests and rulers of the Jewish dispensation, that the wisdom of God is not limited in its mode of operation; and that compliance with the law of Moses, in all its pompous and burdensome ceremonial, is not the only way of admitting sinners and outcasts into the bond of his covenant, and to the privileges of his peculiar people. And this new and happy state of things is not owing to any late change in the divine counsels, for all the various portions of this magnificent design take place in regular succession, according to the plan originally formed in the divine mind; God having from the beginning determined that all the more imperfect and limited revelations of his will under the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, should be made subservient to the great and final plan of universal redemption by Jesus Christ. Ch. III. Ver. 11.

By whom we have this freedom of speech, and access with confidence through faith in him[1]. 12.

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rious signification. Here it denotes the dispensations of religion under which mankind have been placed, the *patriarchal*, the *Mosaic*, the *Christian*. All these ages or dispensations the apostle says God planned and brought to pass for the sake of Christ Jesus, to prepare mankind for his reception." Dr. Chandler refers to Heb. i. 2, which he renders, *for whose sake*, or, *upon whose account*, he made even the ages, as illustrating this text: "all which dispensations had a reference to Christ, and led on to the accomplishment of the divine purposes of mercy to mankind."

[1] *Faith in him.*] πιστις αυτου, faith *of* him. The genitive

Ch. III. Ver. 12. And it is by the dispensation introduced by Christ which has now superseded all others, that we all, whether Jews or Gentiles, are encouraged to address ourselves to God as our God and Father; and by the profession of faith in Christ, and by this alone, without any ceremonial observances whatsoever, we are initiated into our present happy state of privilege, and joyful expectation.

4.) The apostle concludes his digression with a request to his friends not to be discouraged by his sufferings for their sake, ver. 13.

13. *Wherefore, I entreat that ye faint not*[1] *at my afflictions for you, which are your glory*[2].

Since, therefore, I esteem it so great an honour to be employed in the promulgation of the gospel

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case of the object, as well as of the agent, is so frequent in the sacred scriptures, that there needs nothing to be said of it." Locke.

[1] *Ye faint not,* &c.] Mr. Wakefield, with the Syriac version, renders the text, "I pray that I may not faint." The original is ambiguous; but the common interpretation appears preferable, because it is more probable that new converts would be discouraged by the apostle's persecutions than the apostle himself.

[2] *Your glory.*] Dr. Chandler observes, that the pronoun *which* may either be referred to the whole sentence, and then the meaning will be, that Your not being disheartened will be your glory; or it may refer only to the apostle's sufferings, and then the sense will be, My afflictions are your glory, as I am hereby enabled to give you an example of fortitude, and a proof that I know the truth of my doctrine. He adds: "both senses are so good that I know not which of them to prefer." Archbishop Newcome remarks, that the language seems to show that a personal regard subsisted between the writer of this epistle and those to whom it is addressed. See ch. vi. 22. He refers for the use of ἥτις to Phil. i. 28.

to the Gentiles, notwithstanding all the persecutions that I endure, and since I have exhibited such decisive evidence of the commission which I have received for this purpose, let not the imprisonment which I suffer, and the hardships which I so cheerfully undergo, diminish your regard either to me or to my doctrine. It is for your sake that I am in bonds; it is your honour to be benefited by the instructions of a teacher who is ready to attest the truth of his doctrine by his sufferings; and it will be much to your commendation to adhere to such a doctrine, and to such a teacher, in circumstances so difficult and perilous. Ch. III. Ver. 13.

3. The apostle, resuming his subject, prays for the establishment and perseverance of his Christian friends, and that they may be duly sensible of the inestimable value of the gospel, ver. 14—19.

For this cause[3] *I bend my knees to the Father*[4], *by whose name the whole family*[5] *in heaven and upon earth is called,* 14. 15.

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[3] *For this cause.*] The apostle here resumes the sentence begun ver. 1. See the note on that verse.

[4] *Father.*] With Mr. Wakefield, upon the authority of the Alexandrine and Ephrem manuscripts, and some ancient versions, I omit the words "of our Lord Jesus Christ," which make the sense ambiguous, and which seem to have been added by some officious scribe, or taken in from a marginal note. Archbishop Newcome has marked them as doubtful.

[5] *The whole family.*] Archbishop Newcome remarks, that the word πατρια, ver. 15, has a reference to πατερα, ver. 14. By the family "in heaven and earth," is commonly understood angels and men. Mr. Locke interprets it, "of Jesus Christ, who is already in heaven, and believers, who are still on earth." But

Ch. III. Ver. 15. To return, then, to the subject of your admission to the privileges of the gospel, from which the astonishment and gratitude which I always feel at the recollection of my being employed on this glorious errand, and the fear lest you should be intimidated by my sufferings, have tempted me so far to digress: When I call to mind the rich, and free, and unsolicited mercy of God, in bringing you idolatrous Gentiles within the inclosure of the church, I humbly offer my most fervent prayer to that venerable Being, who is the great universal Parent, and who, more especially, owns the character of the Father of the whole family of believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether antecedently to their conversion to the faith, they had, or had not, been subject to the Mosaic ritual: all being now equally acknowledged as his children, and equally the objects of his paternal love,

16. *That he would grant you, according to his glorious riches*[1], *that ye may be strengthened with power, by his spirit*[2], *in the inward man*[3]:

But I see no reason in this text to recede from Mr. Locke's own former explanation of the words *heaven and earth*, as signifying Jew and Gentile. Mr. Locke himself indeed, in his note upon ch. i. 10, gives it as his opinion, that the family in heaven and earth in this text (iii. 15) signifies "the united body of Christians, made up of Jews and Gentiles." I see no allusion here to the goddess Diana, which Dr. Chandler supposes, who remarks, that "she was the common goddess of the Asiatic cities. All Asia worshiped her, Acts xix. 27: which was therefore strictly and properly her family." But who would have thought of such an allusion if they had not pre-supposed that this epistle had been written to the Ephesians?

[1] *Glorious riches.*] "his abundant and glorious power." Chand-

The favour which I request for you is, that our benevolent and gracious Father, in conformity to the wonderful purposes of his love to you converted Gentiles, would, by the energy of his spirit so copiously diffused among you, enlighten your understandings, establish your faith, fix your resolution, and confirm your courage. Ch. III. Ver. 16.

That Christ may dwell[4] *in your hearts by faith.* 17.

That you may be sincere, judicious, established, and practical believers in the Christian doctrine.

So that being rooted[5] *and founded in love*[6], *ye* 18.

Chandler.—" the great glory he designed to you Gentiles. See Col. i. 27; Eph. i. 17." Locke.—" The glorious abundance of good things, and especially of spiritual endowments, which he can impart." Newcome.

[4] *Power by his spirit.*] " strengthened with might, *i. e.* mightily strengthened, that God would give them mighty courage. *By his spirit.* The extraordinary gifts of the spirit were the great means of confirmation and establishment." Dr. Chandler; who thinks that by *spirit* here may also be intended " the ordinary influences of the power and grace of God."

[3] *Inward man.*] " the mind and spirit (Rom. vii. 22; 2 Cor. iv. 16), of which the body is only the outward clothing and habitation." Chandler.

[4] *That Christ may dwell.*] Dr. Chandler here supposes an allusion to the temple of Diana, in which the goddess was supposed to reside. This is upon the hypothesis that the epistle is addressed to the Ephesians; which appears to me, for reasons before assigned, in the highest degree improbable. All these fanciful allusions, therefore, in the illustration of which so much learning and ingenuity are displayed, fall to the ground; nor, in truth, are the allusions to temples and buildings in this epistle at all more frequent, or appropriate, than in the other epistles of the same apostle. See 1 Cor. iii. 10, &c.

[5] *Rooted,* &c.] " Grotius observes that there is a trajection in *ἵνα*, as John xiii. 29, 1 Cor. ix. 15. The original runs, *being rooted,* &c., so that ye may be able, &c.; and Bengelius removes the comma or colon from *τεθεμελιωμενοι.*" Newcome.

[6] *Founded in love.*] Archbishop Newcome justly observes,

Ch. III. Ver. 19. *may be able to comprehend with all the saints, the breadth and length, and depth and height*[1], *and to know the exceeding love of the knowledge of Christ*[2], *so that ye may be filled to all the fulness of God*[3].

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that "the apostle here uses a figure taken from architecture;" but there is no occasion to suppose, with the learned prelate, any particular allusion to the temple of Diana; though Dr. Chandler "thinks that this verse is in every word almost a remarkable and beautiful allusion to Diana's temple at Ephesus;" but he acknowledges that "it is not taken any notice of by any interpreter that he has seen."

[1] *The breadth and length,* &c.] Dr. Chandler applies this description to "the spiritual temple, the Christian church, whose breadth and length extend as wide as the universe, and whose depth and height reach from earth to heaven, comprehending believers of all nations; also angels as well as men." Archbishop Newcome observes that "the words are applied to the mystery of calling the Gentiles, in all its consequences here and hereafter;" and accordingly he translates, the height *of this mystery.*

[2] *Exceeding love of the knowledge of Christ.*] I adopt the reading of the Alexandrine manuscript, αγαπην της γνωσεως, and take the words in Mr. Locke's sense, "to understand the exceeding love of God in bringing us to the knowledge of Christ." The apostle prays, that the Christians to whom he writes may see the great love of God, in contriving, executing and publishing the scheme of the gospel; in the firmness of the foundation, and in the vast extent, the grandeur and beauty of the superstructure, capable of containing all the people of God in all ages: that, possessing a complete view of this magnificent design, they may be filled to all the fulness of God.

Grotius also adopts the Alexandrine reading, which he says was Jerome's; and he explains it, "*summam illam dilectionem* Dei scilicet et proximi, *quæ ex cognitione Christi oritur.*" Bishop Pearce, in his *Epistolæ Duæ* (Works, vol. ii. p. 476) quoted by Bowyer, observes that the sense of ver. 18 is imperfect for want of a genitive, and that a genitive after υπερβαλλουσαν is scarcely Greek; he proposes, therefore, to place της γνωσεως after υψος, which will make both the sense and the construction clear: *q. d.* "that ye may be able to comprehend what is the breadth and length and depth and height of this knowledge,

And being established in faith, I pray that you may also be established in love; and to this end, that you may be enabled to form a just conception of the love of God as manifested in the gospel of Jesus. It is indeed, my brethren, a scheme replete with the purest, richest love to guilty, perishing mankind. The gospel dispensation is a magnificent temple: its foundations are in the centre of the earth; its summit pierces the clouds; its circumference is sufficiently ample to include the whole human race, both Jew and Gentile; it is graced with the presence of God, who there delights to

Ch. III. Ver. 19.

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and to know the surpassing love of Christ." This is a very judicious correction of the text; and, though only conjectural, it is by no means improbable.

Castalio's version is, "*ut cognoscere valeatis quàm omnem cognitionem excedat amor Christi*," 'that ye may know how far the love of Christ excels all knowledge.' Mr. Wakefield renders the passage thus: "and to understand (which is far better than that knowledge) the love of Christ, so as to be filled with all the fulness of God." Upon the whole, the Alexandrine reading and Mr. Locke's interpretation appear to me most suitable to the connexion, unless Bishop Pearce's conjectural emendation should be preferred.

[3] *Filled to all the fulness,* &c.] ver. 18, that you may comprehend the height and depth, &c., ver. 19, that you may know the love of Christ, &c. (ἱνα), to the end that ye may be filled *to,* or *with,* all the fulness of God, *i. e.* that you may fully comprehend and gratefully acknowledge the complete scheme of divine mercy. "according to all the fulness of God." Worsley. Mr. Locke's interpretation is, "filled to that degree of fulness which is suitable to his purpose of munificence;" and "by the fulness of God he understands such a fulness as God is wont to bestow. παν το πληρωμα means, that there is not a fulness of one thing and emptiness of another, but a fulness of all necessary gifts." This is the interpretation generally received. So Grotius, "*ut impleamini omnibus illis donis quibus Deus implere homines solet.*"

Ch. III. Ver. 19. manifest the glory of his mercy through Jesus the High Priest of our profession. May you all take your proper stations in this sacred inclosure; and, with true believers of every name, may you behold, with heartfelt pleasure, the unlimited dimensions of this stupendous fabric; and remark, with generous delight, the unspeakable love of God, through Christ, in the admission of believers into the church, without distinction of Jew or Gentile! So that, when you contemplate this great work from beginning to end, both in its design and in its execution, you may be filled with admiration and delight, in the view of a scheme so complete in all its parts, so worthy of its divine contriver, so honourable to God, so beneficial to men [1].

4. The apostle concludes his prayer and the doctrinal part of his epistle with a suitable doxology, ver. 20, 21.

20. *Now, unto Him who is able to do very abun-*

[1] If we admit the emendation of Bishop Pearce, which is, to say the least, very plausible, the paraphrase may perhaps stand thus:

q. d. that you, and all believers, may possess a comprehensive view of this knowledge: that you may see the vast extent of the scheme of the gospel; how admirably it is adapted, by the liberality of its terms, to include all the people of God, all the virtuous in all ages and countries—that you may form a just conception of the love of God in the mission of Jesus Christ, which so far surpasses all that could antecedently have been expected and imagined—and finally, that you may be filled to the full with admiration and gratitude at the glorious manifestation of the wisdom and goodness of God, in the dispensation of the gospel.

dantly above all which we ask or conceive[2], *accor-* Ch. III.
ding to the power[3] *which strongly worketh in us,* Ver. 20.
unto him be glory in the church, in Christ Jesus[4], 21.

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[2] *Ask or conceive.*] This is a most appropriate doxology. Neither the converted Gentiles nor the apostle himself would ever have thought of asking for that which was so graciously given to them, without any solicitation, or even wish, to obtain it.

[3] *According to the power:*] "*i. e.* according to the similitude of that power which worketh by the gifts of the spirit." Newcome. That wonderful power which had been exerted in their conversion, and in the apostle's mission, was a proof that God could do more and better than they could ask or think.

"This power was exerted," says Dr. Chandler, "in their being quickened when dead in trespasses and sins, and recovered from the dominion of the powers of darkness; and in building them up to himself a church and people, that they might be to the praise of his glorious grace. Now the same power which they had already experienced in producing this wonderful change, a change which they neither asked nor thought of, was abundantly sufficient to confer on them as real and valuable blessings for the future, suitable to all their wants, far exceeding all their thoughts, and even greater than they themselves could ever directly ask for."

[4] *In the church in Christ Jesus:*] *i. e.* in the Christian church; to be in Christ is to be a believer in him. See Rom. xvi. 7. "To him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus. The great object of adoration, and the medium by which it should be offered, are here expressly and distinctly represented. The object is the Almighty Father; the person by and through whom, or in whose name, this glory and praise is to be offered, is Jesus Christ." Chandler. Yet if this learned writer means that these words *by, or through, or in the name of Christ,* are required to be repeated at the close of every prayer, as though there was some mysterious efficacy in them, as is now usual, I do not see the necessity, or use, or scripture warrant, for such a custom. That we ought at all times to be ready to acknowledge that all we know of God, and of the most acceptable method of praying to him, is derived from the instructions of Christ, cannot be doubted. But the constant use of the name of Christ, as a sort of charm at the end of a prayer, seems unnecessary; and if introduced with a view to make the Father placable, it is blameable in the extreme.

Ch. III. Ver. 21. *throughout all the generations of this most excellent dispensation*[1]. *Amen.*

And now, my Christian friends, having thus surveyed the wonderful love of God, in contriving, in executing, and in completing the scheme of the

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[1] *Throughout all the generations,* &c.] In the original, εις πασας τας γενεας τȣ αιωνος των αιωνων· literally, *through all the generations of the age of ages;* which is generally understood as an emphatical expression of eternity. Archbishop Newcome renders it, "throughout all generations, for ever and ever." Locke, with the public version, "throughout all ages, world without end." Wakefield, "through the generations of eternity." Priestley, "to the end of all time." Doddridge, "through all the successions of an endless eternity."—Dr. Chandler says, "the expression in Greek is so emphatical that it can scarce be rendered into English. 'To all the generations of the age of ages,' *i. e.* throughout all the successions of all possible ages." Rosenmuller, after Grotius, "*Junctæ sunt duæ formulæ synonymæ Hebr.*" and adds, "*ut* summa æternitas *quanta mente quidem humana cogitari potest, exprimeretur.*"

With great deference to these learned expositors, I would submit that, as the doxology to be offered is that of *the church,* the duration expressed can extend no further than while the church continues; which, of course, is limited to the end of time, or of the Christian age or dispensation; and this is the natural and proper signification of the apostle's words: viz. 'to him be glory in the church, *of* or *through* Christ *Jesus,* through all the generations of this age of ages;' or, agreeably to a familiar Hebrew idiom, 'of this most excellent age or dispensation.' Or if, with some good manuscripts, we drop των αιωνων (see Griesbach), the reading will be, 'all the generations of this,' *i. e.* 'the Christian age,' which appears to me to be clearly the apostle's meaning.

Dr. Chandler explains the apostle's rule, *q. d.* throughout all the successions of all possible ages glory must be ascribed to the Father by Christ. "I confess," says he, "that the practice of the Christian church, for many ages, has superseded this command, though I do not find any injunction or precedent in the New Testament for doing it; the apostolic example may and ought to be followed."

How far this apostolic precedent can be made consistent with the well known doxology, 'Glory be to the Father, and to the

gospel, and especially in the conversion and admission of the Gentiles, what can we do better than express our gratitude in devout thanksgiving? To Him, therefore, to that almighty and most merciful Being, who has in this illustrious manner demonstrated, that he is not only able but willing to confer benefits upon his ignorant, thoughtless, ruined creatures, far beyond all their prayers and desires, and even their conceptions, which kindness he has abundantly manifested in the powerful operation of his spirit in the conversion of you Gentiles, and in my own apostolical mission and success, neither of which could have been imagined, much less solicited by us; to that ever-blessed Being to whose great mercy we are all so deeply indebted, be ascribed, by the whole Christian church, throughout all the successive generations of this most excellent, and most benign, of all the moral dispensations of God to mankind, even to the end of time, all those high honours, and all that grateful homage, which are so justly due to him from all who have been enlightened, and sanctified, and saved by him. Amen.

Ch. III. Ver. 21.

Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end,' it behoves those who daily use this famous doxclogy, and impose it upon others, seriously to consider.

For the sense here given to the word *αιων*, see ch. ii. 2—7; Matt. xxiv. 3; Heb. i. 2.

PART THE SECOND.

PRACTICAL DIRECTIONS AND CONCLUDING SALUTATIONS. Ch. iv.—vi.

SECTION I.

Ch. IV. *EXHORTATIONS to the practice of personal and social virtue, and Cautions against relapsing into the vices of the idolatrous heathen.* Ch. iv. 1—v. 21.

I.

THE APOSTLE exhorts to humility and concord, particularly with a view to the distribution of spiritual gifts, and the appointment of officers in the church. Ch. iv. 1—16.

1. He bespeaks their attention to his advice, from the consideration of his persecutions; and earnestly recommends mutual forbearance, and unity, ver. 1—3.

Ver. 1. *I, therefore, the prisoner*[1] *on account of the*

[1] *The prisoner.*] The apostle recurs to the expression ch. iii. 1; and some suppose the parenthesis continued through the whole of the third chapter. The consideration of the exhortations being addressed to them by the apostle while suffering in their cause, would give them great weight with every ingenuous mind.

Lord[2], *entreat you that ye walk worthily of the calling*[3] *with which ye have been called.* Ch. IV. Ver. 1.

Having represented the exuberant display of divine power and mercy in the invitation of you, who were once idolatrous Gentiles, to the faith of the gospel; and in freely admitting you to the character and privileges of children of God, let me now remind you of the obligations under which you are laid by your holy profession. And remember, my brethren, that the man who inculcates these duties upon you is Paul the prisoner: the prisoner for his and your master Jesus Christ, and for the testimony which he has borne to his doctrine. He is Paul, the prisoner for you Gentiles, who lost his liberty for his zeal in your service, and for his known attachment to the rights and privileges of the Gentile church; who would not, therefore, impose upon you any unnecessary restraint, and whose sufferings for you entitle him to a peculiar share in your regard. And the sum and substance of my advice to you is this: That you would, upon all occasions, behave in such a manner as to reflect credit upon your Christian profession, and to exemplify the beneficial energy of your evangelical expectations and hopes.

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[2] *On account of the Lord.*] εν Κυριω, in the Lord; "*pro δια τον Κυριον, ut* c. iii. 1. *Vel nomine Jesu Christi vos obtestor.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Worthily of the calling,*] "*i. e.* (says Dr. Chandler) in a manner agreeable to the nature and suitable to the design of it." "of the honourable appellations, *children of God*, &c., by which you are called." Macknight.

Ch. IV. Ver. 3. *With all humility of mind*[1] *and gentleness*[2]; *with long-suffering*[3], *bearing with each other*[4] *in* 2. *love; earnestly endeavouring to preserve the unity of the spirit*[5] *in the bond of peace*[6].

And, in the first place, let me recommend humility and lowliness of spirit, recollecting that you owe all the privileges you possess to the free, unmerited, unsolicited goodness of God. And let this consideration suppress all disquietude and jealousy at the supposed superiority of others, either in offices or endowments.

Let your disposition be kind and gentle, not easily offended, not angry at trifles: and, though the provocation be great, let it not throw you off your guard, nor induce you to use intemperate language, much less to indulge a spirit of resentment and revenge. Bear with each others ignorance, infirmities, and prejudices; recollecting how much you need the forbearance of others. And, if you cultivate the kind affection which the gospel recommends, you

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[1] *Humility.*] "*Modestia vel humilitas maxime decet homines, qui omnia vera bona Deo se debere sentiunt.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *Gentleness.*] "*Lenitatis est non moveri ob res leves.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Long-suffering.*] "*Indulgentia, etiam in gravioribus cohibere iram.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *Bearing with each other.*] "*Ita ut toleretis vos invicem, amore compulsi.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *Unity of the spirit.*] "*animorum studiorumque consensus, in primis in religione. Alii το πνευμα interpretantur corpus spirituale, ecclesiam: alii religionem ipsam.*" Rosenmuller.

[6] *Bond of peace.*] "*vinculum tranquillitatis,* i. e. *tranquillitas, quæ est vinculum societatis: est tropus omnibus linguis communis.*" Rosenmuller.

will not find this a difficult task. Finally: be unwearied in your endeavours to promote mutual kindness among individuals, and the peace and unity of the church, by cultivating in yourselves and others that peaceful spirit which is the bond of society. Ch. IV. Ver. 3.

2. The apostle suggests various considerations to recommend harmony and peace, ver. 4—6.

There is *one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called to one hope*[7]. 4.

Every thing concurs to induce you to live in peace and union. There is one body, of which you are all members, namely, the church; there is one spirit which animates this body, of whose various gifts you are respectively partakers. And there is one hope, the hope of a resurrection to everlasting life, which is the great object of Christian revelation, and in this most important blessing you all equally share.

One Lord[8], *one faith*[9], *one baptism*[10], *one God*, 5, 6.

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[7] *To one hope.*] "to one common hope, *i. e.* to the hope of the same blessedness and salvation. Thus the preposition is rendered by our translators, Luke i. 17; and thus it is used by the best Greek authors." Chandler. Mr. Wakefield drops τῆς κλήσεως ὑμῶν, on the authority of the Æthiopic version, which however is not noticed by Griesbach.

[8] *Lord,*] "or Master; this is in a peculiar manner applied to our blessed Saviour, 1 Cor. viii. 6, and signifies his authority over the church." Chandler.

[9] *One faith.*] "one and the same gospel, containing one settled and fixed scheme of truth, that was preached by him and his apostles." Chandler.

[10] *One baptism.*] Hence some infer that water baptism is not obligatory, understanding the apostle to refer here to the baptism of the spirit. But there can be little doubt that the apostle

Ch. IV. Ver. 6. *even the Father of all*[1], *who* is *above all*[2], *and through all*[3], *and in all*[4].

Be it further remembered, as a powerful inducement to Christian unanimity, that there is one Master, even Christ, whose servants you are, whose laws you must obey, and whose benign example you are to follow. There is also one great article of faith, in which you all agree, namely, that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead; and, agreeing in this essential principle, you may well bear with each others differences in things of less importance. There is one rite, that of baptism, by which you have all been initiated into the Christian communion; and, in consequence of which, without submitting to the burdensome ceremonies of the law, you become entitled to all the privileges of the sons of God. And, to sum up all, there is one God, the

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here means the baptism of water, which it is certain that he himself practised. See Doddridge. "All Christians were equally baptized by water." Chandler.

[1] *Father of all.*] "the universal creator: Father in an especial manner of the rational creation, and particularly of every faithful Christian." Chandler.

[2] *Above all.*] "superior in perfection, dignity, and authority: even above him who is the one Lord of all Christians, being his Father and his God." Chandler.

[3] *Through all.*] "universally present: upholding all things by his power, directing all things by his wisdom, overruling and disposing all events by his providence, managing the affairs of his church." Chandler.

[4] *In all.*] The word ὑμιν (*you*) is not found in the Alexandrine and Ephrem manuscripts, nor in the Æthiopic version; it is omitted by Mr. Wakefield, and marked as doubtful by Archbishop Newcome. "amongst you all; manifesting his goodness by the privileges to which he has called you, and the extraordinary gifts of his spirit." Chandler.

sole object of your faith and adoration; whose providence governs all, whose energy supports all things, whose spirit dwells in all believers, and who thus demonstrates himself to be the kind impartial Father of all. Let jealousy and discord be for ever banished from amongst those who are united together by so many strong and tender ties. Ch. IV Ver. 6.

3. As a further incentive to Christian unity, he reminds them that all their spiritual gifts were imparted by Christ in that measure and degree which he thought fit, ver. 7, 8.

Now unto every one of us has been granted in its measure the gracious gift of Christ[5]. 7.

It is particularly unbecoming for the disciples of Christ to entertain jealousies and to foment controversies concerning the pre-eminence of spiritual gifts, because they possess none but what they received from the free unmerited kindness of Christ himself, and in that measure and degree which he has been pleased to communicate. No one, therefore, can have any right to be discontented on the one hand, or vainglorious on the other.

Wherefore the scripture *saith, He ascended on* 8.

[5] *In its measure*, &c.] This is Mr. Wakefield's translation. "In such measure and proportion as Christ thinks proper to distribute them." Chandler. It appears from this and other passages of scripture, that the distribution of spiritual gifts and powers, in the apostolic age, was under the direction of Christ himself; who during that period seems to have maintained a personal, and often a visible and sensible, intercourse with the church. See Matt. xxviii. 20.

Ch. IV. Ver. 8. *high, he led captivity captive, he gave gifts to men* [1].

What I have now observed concerning our entire dependence upon Christ for the gifts we possess, may be very well expressed in the words of David in Psalm lxviii., which was written upon the occasion of the removal of the ark to Mount Sion, ver. 18. The Psalmist describes Jehovah as a glorious conqueror returning from the wars to take possession of his imperial throne, leading in triumph his captive enemies, the late oppressors of his loyal people, and distributing magnificent presents amongst his faithful followers. Thus it may be said of our glorious chief, that he has ascended to his heavenly throne, that he has subdued his enemies and ours, having, by his death, abolished all the ceremonial law, which was the great bar to our acceptance with God; and, like a triumphant conqueror, he has distributed to his faithful adherents those precious gifts

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[1] *The scripture saith;*] *i. e.* David, Ps. lxviii. 18; where he represents God returning as a conqueror from a complete victory over the enemies of his people, and bestowing rewards upon his faithful adherents. The expression in the psalm is, "thou hast received gifts;" but the Chaldee paraphrase and the Syriac and Arabic versions render it as the apostle cites it, "he gave gifts;" and this, as Dr. Chandler observes, "is the genuine sense of the place, for God could no otherwise receive gifts, than as he caused them to be given to his people. I suppose this whole passage alludes to the custom of victorious princes causing their captives to pass before them, and distributing largesses to their people. The passage is cited, not, as I apprehend, by way of strict proof, but by way of accommodation, and to illustrate the point by a like instance."

of the holy spirit, which are the sure pledge of our admission into the family of God. Ch. IV.

4. The apostle, in a parenthesis, argues the antecedent humiliation of Christ, from the prediction of his exaltation, ver. 9, 10.

Now this expression, "*he ascended*," *what does it mean*[2], *but that he* [*first*] *descended also into the lower parts of the earth*[3]? Ver. 9.

The Psalmist saith that he ascended: now if we apply this language to Christ, to whom it may easily be accommodated, it may lead us to reflect upon a very important circumstance relating to Jesus, which, indeed, ought ever to be present to our minds; I mean his humiliation, his ignominious death, and descent into the grave; a fact which, however offensive to unbelievers, must be admitted and regarded by us as the great foundation of our faith and hope.

He that descended[4], *is the same who also ascend-* 10.

[2] *What does it mean?*] τι εστιν, "How can it be, unless—" Wakefield. The apostle argues, that as Jesus ascended, he must first have descended: the inference, perhaps, is not perfectly logical; but this allusion to the death and burial of Christ is a plain proof that this fact lay uppermost in the apostle's mind, and was regarded by him as of great importance in the Christian system.

[3] *Lower parts of the earth.*] This expression signifies the *womb*, Ps. cxxxix. 15; and the *grave*, Ps. lxiii. 9. In the latter sense it is unquestionably used by the apostle in this place, as Dr. Newcome rightly observes. The word *first* (πρωτον) is wanting in the most authentic manuscripts, and is dropped by Griesbach. It is evident that the text affords no *argument* for the commonly received doctrine of the pre-existence of Jesus Christ.

[4] *He that descended.*] The apostle seems desirous of impress-

Ch. IV. Ver. 10.

ed above all heavens [1], *that he might complete all* things [2].

Unbelievers may, if they please, revile us as the disciples of a crucified malefactor. We glory in the assurance, founded upon evidence the most satisfactory, that the same Jesus who was crucified and laid in the grave, was raised from the dead; and, though he is now removed from all visible intercourse with this world, he is exalted to higher dignity and authority than any of the other prophets and messengers of God; being constituted head of the church, and empowered to communicate those spiritual gifts which are necessary for the completion of this his mystical body, and for the growth and perfection of every part.

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ing the recollection of the death of Christ upon the minds of his readers, as an event which ought to be remembered in connexion with his exaltation, and of which they ought never to be ashamed.

[1] *Above all heavens.*] An allusion, no doubt, to our Lord's ascension in the air; but as the fact cannot be true in a literal and local sense, there being no such concentric spheres as the Jewish philosophy supposed, the true meaning of the apostle probably is, to express the unrivalled superiority of Jesus over all former prophets and messengers of God, and his headship over the church. See Eph. i. 10, iii. 15.

[2] *Complete all* things.] So Wakefield. things, *i. e.* persons. See Tyrwhit's *Dissertation on the Creation of all Things by Jesus Christ*, in the *Commentaries and Essays*. The church is the fulness or complement of Christ the head, ch. i. 23. He supplies or fills the various parts with vital influence; *i.e.* he communicates to the church what is necessary to its existence and well-being, viz. the gifts of the holy spirit, by which the apostles and teachers of Christianity were qualified for their mission, and by which the gospel was promulgated in the world. See Macknight and Chandler. "that he might bestow on all his disciples a fulness of gifts." Newcome.

5. Resuming his discourse, he reminds his readers, that the gifts communicated by Christ were intended to qualify believers for the exercise of different offices for the edification of the church, ver. 11—13. Ch. IV.

And he appointed[3] *some to be apostles, and some* Ver. 11.
prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors
and teachers, for the perfecting[4] *of the saints, for* 12.
employment in the ministry, for the edification of
the body of Christ.

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[3] *He appointed:*] or, he *gave*. As a triumphant conqueror having taken possession of his kingdom, he dispenses honours and offices to his faithful adherents. This is an additional argument that Christ had a personal intercourse with the church during the apostolic age, of which there has been no proof or example since. See ver. 7. The gifts of the spirit seem to have been dispensed immediately by him, John xv. 26; and he repeatedly appeared to the apostle Paul, to direct and support him in his apostolic labours. There might therefore be a propriety in ascribing effects immediately to his interposition, and even in directing prayers to him in the apostolic age, which would be unwarrantable and highly improper now that we have no evidence of his personal presence and agency.

[4] *Perfecting.*] Dr. Chandler observes, that "καταρτιζω signifies an exact composition of one thing out of many; and figuratively, to reconcile those who have been at variance. So that the 'perfection of the saints' seems to intend the full settlement of the church, by introducing Jews and Gentiles into it, and uniting them together in affection and love as members of the same body."

Archbishop Newcome remarks, that perhaps the first clause of the 12th verse refers to apostles and prophets, the second to evangelists, and the third to pastors and teachers. This observation appears to me to be judicious, and I have adopted it in the exposition. Dr. Doddridge says, he "shall not take upon him to determine whether two different offices are intended by pastors and teachers; but that it has been justly observed, that if diocesan bishops were the very remedy by which the holy ghost designed to prevent or heal those schisms of which the Ephesian church was in such apparent danger (Acts xx. 29, 30), it

Ch. IV. Ver. 12.

By the different gifts and powers which our exalted and triumphant chief has bestowed upon his disciples, he has qualified and appointed some to be apostles, the immediate witnesses of his resurrection from the dead, whom he furnished with a complete and comprehensive knowledge of the simplicity, liberality, and extent of the gospel dispensation. Others he qualified for the office of prophets, occasionally inspiring them with the foreknowledge of future events, and honouring them with extraordinary revelations for the instruction of others. And the main design of these chief and most useful offices in the church is to publish the gospel to Jews and Gentiles, and to unite believers of both descriptions in one firm, compact and harmonious body. Some were qualified for, and appointed to, the office of evangelists, companions of the apostles, who by the gift of tongues, and the instructions which they received from the apostles, became qualified and authorized to teach the gospel in those places which the apostles could not themselves visit; and lastly, some were appointed by Christ to reside in the churches which were formed in different places for the purpose of superintending discipline and communicating further instruction where it was necessary, so that the magnificent edifice of the church

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is very strange there should be no mention of *them* amidst all these ecclesiastics which are here enumerated." Dr. Doddridge and others connect the two first clauses of the 12th verse, and render them thus: "for the perfecting of saints to the work of the ministry," &c. The words will very well bear this sense, though the other appears to me preferable.

might continually increase, and the body of Christ might grow in all its parts. Ch. IV.

Till we all[1] *arrive at the unity of the faith and knowledge of the son of God, at perfect maturity*[2], *at the full proportion of the stature of Christ*[3]. Ver. 13.

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[1] *Till we all,* &c.] The apostle keeps in view a favourite idea which he had advanced ch. i. 23. The church is a mystical body, of which Christ is the head, and individual Christians are parts of that body. While they think the observance of Jewish rites, or any other condition besides faith in the mission of Christ and a practical profession of it, necessary to communion with him, they are imperfect, ungrown parts of the body; but when they fully adopt the Christian faith in its pure and uncorrupted state, they are grown to a manly proportion, and are of a proper size to be joined to that mystical body of which Christ is the head. If we carry in mind this analogy, to which the apostle is so very partial, we shall easily enter into his meaning in this and the following verses, though he occasionally breaks and mixes his metaphors.

[2] *At perfect maturity.*] So Worsley. Gr. "manhood." Dr. Macknight ingeniously observes, that "the apostle having represented the Christian church under the idea of Christ's body, ver. 4, he here speaks of it as in a state of childhood, whilst its members were few in number and imperfect in knowledge; and told the Ephesians, that the supernaturally endowed teachers were to continue in the church till it was so enlarged, and so well instructed in the doctrine of the gospel, as to be able to direct and defend itself without any supernatural aid. This advanced state of the church the apostle termed perfect manhood: at which when the church arrived, the supernatural gifts of the Spirit were to be removed as no longer necessary."

Perhaps the apostle's meaning rather is, that these supernatural communications were made for the purpose of promoting the growth of every individual; not that they would continue till all were come to maturity.

[3] *The full proportion of the stature of Christ.*] εις μετρον ηλικιας τε πληρωματος, *to the measure of the stature of the complement of Christ.* See ch. i. 23. *i. e.* till they have attained their full growth as portions of the mystical body of Christ, till they are become mature and perfect Christians, well instructed and well disciplined in the practice of the Christian religion. "to the full size of the stature of Christ." Wakefield.

Ch. IV. Ver 13. These various offices appointed by the great head of the church, and occupied by persons qualified by spiritual gifts for their respective situations, ought not to be the object of low ambition and malignant jealousy. They are calculated to unite Christians of all classes and nations in the harmonious belief and courageous profession of the fundamental truth, that Jesus Christ is the son of God, the first-begotten from the dead, the promised deliverer of the world, and in a conduct correspondent to this holy profession. When this is accomplished, we may indeed be said to have attained the manhood of Christianity; and then in our respective stations we shall appear as full-grown limbs of that mystical body, which, united to Christ the head, forms the complete figure of the universal church.

6. The great design of all the gifts dispensed by Christ, is to promote stability of principle and mutual affection in the several members of the great body of professing Christians, ver. 14—16.

14. *That we may be no longer children*[1], *fluctuat-*

[1] *That we may be no longer children.*] The apostle here plainly declares that just principles of the Christian doctrine, derived from the instructions of apostles, prophets, evangelists, and other inspired and authorized teachers, are the only proper security against false and pernicious doctrines propagated by artful and bad men, for their own personal advantage: he particularly alludes to judaizing teachers. Dr. Chandler observes, that "the apostle heaps together a crowd of strong and lively figures. He represents such of the Christian church as were wavering and unsettled in their principles, as children who are continually changing their mind." He describes the conduct of

ing, and whirled about by every wind of doctrine, through the sleight of men[2], *and through* their *crafty method of deceit*[3]. Ch. IV. Ver. 14.

The intention of this wise provision which Christ has made for the instruction of the church is, that we may have a clear and distinct knowledge of the leading principles of the Christian doctrine; deriving them from those teachers only who prove their commission from him. Being thus well-grounded in the faith, we shall not become the dupes of false and artful teachers, who, to answer their own secular views, would impose upon us their own mischievous errors as Christian truths. Nor

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false teachers by a word (κυβεια) which signifies that "they had no more honour than gamesters at dice;" and whose opinions have "no more certainty or constancy than the dice, which vary at every throw." Πανουργια signifies *sleight of hand* and denotes the subtlety and false arts of those who endeavoured to corrupt them.

[2] *The sleight of men.*] κυβεια, "1. *alea, lusus aleæ; 2. fallacia et astutia in ludo tesserarum*, et per synecdochen significat, *omnem fraudulentiam et versutiam*, qua utuntur homines alios decepturi." Schleusner.

"The deceitful arts of false teachers are here compared to those of gamesters, who, by using false dice, cheat those with whom they play. The men whose base arts the apostle describes were the unbelieving Jews and heathen philosophers, who opposed the gospel by sophistry and calumny." Macknight.

[3] *Their crafty method of deceit.*] εν πανουργια προς την μεθοδειαν, "craft to invent methods." Worsley. "*Solertia ad male agendum, multo usu comparata.*" Schleusner; who observes that the word is always taken in a bad sense in the New Testament, though it admits a good one. Μεθοδεια της πλανης, *excogitata ratio alios decipiendi, et in errores inducendi.*" Schleusner.—"through their craftiness for the purpose of artful deceit." Newcome.—"for the more subtle disposition and orderance of error." Chandler.—"by their malicious cunning, by the contrivances of error." Wakefield.

Ch. IV. Ver. 14. shall we, like children, waver in uncertainty, without any fixed principles; at one time professing one opinion, at another time another, being destitute of all consistency of judgement and dignity of character.

15. *But maintaining the truth*[1] *in love, we may grow up in all things to him who is the head,* even *Christ.*

Being thus instructed in the genuine doctrine of Christ by apostles, prophets, and evangelists, it is our duty stedfastly to adhere to the truth, to defend it against all opposers, and upon no consideration whatever to suffer it to be corrupted by human inventions. And this may and ought to be done in perfect consistency with genuine benevolence; for, indeed, the more we know and study the doctrine of Christ, the more earnest, diligent, and persevering shall we be in our endeavours to do good to others. Thus shall we in our respective situations, as parts of the mystical body of Christ, be daily growing up in due proportion, to him who is our perfect and glorious head.

16. *From whom the whole body*[2] *fitly compacted and*

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[1] *But maintaining the truth.*] Αληθευοντες denotes "not so much speaking truth as embracing and adhering to it; and to render the Christian perfect, he must add to this regard to truth, love, or universal benevolence." Chandler.—"speaking the truth in love." Newcome.—"dealing truly, may grow up in love." Wakefield.

[2] *From whom the whole body.*] "The whole body that consists of divers parts: συναρμολογουμενον is in all these parts proportioned and fitted for the nearest conjunction, και συμβιβαζομενον, and to connect and fasten with each other by every joint contributing to this purpose; so that the body receives its

connected together by the aid of every joint, and according to the proportionate operation of every single limb[3], *thriveth*[4] *to the improvement*[5] *of itself in love.* Ch. IV. Ver. 16.

It is from Christ, the head, that the whole church, which, like the natural body, consists of various

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increase by the operation, *i. e.* the growth of every single member, till by that sympathy or kind of affection which there is between them, it grows up to its full strength and perfection. And thus the various offices and gifts of the Christian church do unite, as the joints of the body do the several parts of it, the several members of the church, and will all conspire to promote its welfare, honour, and prosperity, if those members are united to one another in love." Chandler.

[3] *Every limb.*] This is the reading of the Alexandrine and Ephrem manuscripts, the Syriac, Coptic, and other versions: it is marked as not improbable by Griesbach, and is adopted by Newcome and Wakefield.

[4] *Thriveth.*] την αυξησιν τϑ σωματος ποιειται. Wakefield. Literally, *maketh increase of the body.* "maketh its increase." Newcome; who remarks, that "in the Greek the antecedent is used instead of the pronoun."

[5] *Improvement.*] So Wakefield. οικοδομην, *edification:* Newcome, and others; but *improvement* better corresponds with the apostle's allegory.

"By the stress," says Dr. Priestley, "which the apostle here and elsewhere lays upon good morals, we see that this was the great object of the gospel; and in this respect it was essentially different from the religion of the Gentile world, which in reality had no connexion with morals, as it consisted of nothing but superstitious observances, with which they thought the favour of their gods to be arbitrarily connected. So far was religion, properly so called, from teaching good morals to the Gentile world, that their temples, and the precincts of them, were often used for the vilest purposes: accordingly, Christians were soon distinguished from heathens for their better morals. But this was not effected immediately, because it requires time for good principles to operate, and to produce their genuine fruits. On this account, the apostles are so frequent and earnest in their expostulations with their new converts on this most important subject."

Ch. IV. Ver. 16. parts and limbs, every one in its proper place, ornamental, useful, and necessary to the compactness, beauty, and perfection of the whole, derives its nourishment and vigour. It is from him that those supplies of the holy spirit are communicated, by which every believer in his proper station is qualified to occupy the post assigned him, and contributes to the increase and prosperity of the general body of Christians. Though, therefore, all cannot occupy the highest posts, nor all possess the most splendid gifts, yet all may be virtuous, useful, and approved. Let, then, all jealousy and contention be entirely laid aside, and all exert their earnest and harmonious efforts in supporting the truth, and in diffusing the knowledge and the spirit of pure and practical Christianity.

II.

The apostle earnestly exhorts the Christian converts to shun the impurities of heathenism, and to maintain a dignity of character becoming their superior knowledge and advantages, ch. iv. 17—24.

1. He solemnly cautions them against the evil examples of their heathen neighbours, ver. 17—19.

17. *This therefore I declare, and earnestly charge* [1]

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[1] *Charge.*] Dr. Chandler observes, that "the word μαρτυρομαι in the best Greek writers often signifies *to beseech*, and *earnestly entreat*; and that this is unquestionably the meaning of it in this place." Archbishop Newcome renders it "to charge," and refers to 1 Thess. ii. 12.

you *in* the name of *the Lord*[2], *that ye no longer* Ch. IV.
walk as the Gentiles[3] *walk, in the vanity of their*
minds[4], *darkened in their understanding*[5], *alien-* Ver. 18.
ated from the life of God[6] *because of their igno-*
rance, because of the hardness[7] *of their heart: who* 19.
have abandoned themselves without remorse[8] *to las-*
civiousness, and to all exorbitant impurity[9].

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[2] *In* the name of *the Lord.*] εν Κυριῳ, in, or by, the Lord: *i. e.* "by his authority, or by the greatness of his love, or by the sincerity of your love and regard to him." Chandler.—"as a disciple and apostle of Christ." Newcome.

[3] *Walk as the Gentiles.*] λοιπα, the *other* Gentiles, which is in the received text, is wanting in many manuscripts and versions; it is omitted by Mr. Wakefield, and marked as doubtful by Archbishop Newcome. 'Walking' is a common expression in Paul's writings, to denote a manner or course of life.

[4] *Vanity of their minds:*] *i. e.* "their false and inconclusive reasonings, which led them into the most absurd and dangerous errors in judgement and practice." Rom. i. 21; 1 Pet. i. 18. Chandler. See Macknight.

[5] *Darkened in their understanding:*] viz. "through contracted habits of vice, and those strong prejudices and corrupt principles in which they had been brought up; which prevent the access of light and knowledge, and pervert the judgement." Dr. Chandler.

[6] *Life of God.*] "from that course of life which God requires: from living to God." Gal. ii. 19. Grotius, Newcome. "from that life which God prescribes and approves." Chandler.

[7] *Hardness.*] πωρωσις, *blindness,* according to the common translation, and so Wakefield and Newcome. Dr. Chandler says, "It properly signifies the hardness and callousness of a man's skin, contracted by frequent exercise and labour; and this seems to be the true rendering, because the apostle had spoken of the darkness of their understanding just before."

[8] *Without remorse.*] απηλγηκοτες. Some copies read απηλπικοτες, *without hope, desperate,* and therefore wicked. The common reading is supported by the best authorities. "The word primarily means, to be void of sorrow; hence it signifies persons who through despair have thrown off all sense of grief and misery, and cease all care to free themselves from it. Hence it implies the last and worst state of wickedness and vice,

Ch. IV. Ver. 19.

Being therefore earnestly desirous that you may attain to Christian perfection, it is my solemn declaration in his name, and my explicit testimony under his authority, that the practice of vice is utterly inconsistent with a vital union to him, and with the participation of blessings from him: I warn and charge you, therefore, as you value your relation to him and your expectations from him, that you cautiously abstain from all those criminal excesses which in your unconverted state you practised without hesitation, and to which your heathen neighbours now abandon themselves without consideration or remorse. Their miserable reasonings, unassisted by the clear light of divine revelation, have indeed led them into the most pernicious errors both in doctrine and practice. Their understandings being obscured by the most inveterate prejudices, their affections being alienated from the practice of virtue, and from obedience to the will of God, being ignorant that his favour alone is the true source of life and happiness, and their hearts

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in which men have no remorse of conscience, but are desperately wicked, hardened, and insensible in vice." Chandler.

[9] *Exorbitant impurity.*] In the public version, "to work uncleanness with greediness." Πλεονεξια, Dr. Chandler says, properly signifies *covetousness*; and he understands it of those who committed these crimes for gain. Some of the best manuscripts read και πλεονεξιας, which Mr. Wakefield follows. Mr. Locke in a valuable note shows that the word πλεονεξια is not uncommonly used by the apostle as a decent expression for lewdness of the grossest and most abominable kind, and understands it in the same sense here: so likewise Wakefield. See Eph. v. 3; 1 Thess. iv. 5; 1 Cor. v. 10, 11; Rom. i. 29.

having become callous to every refined feeling, and even to the sense of shame, they abandon themselves without compunction to vices which are the disgrace of human nature, and utterly inconsistent with every sentiment of purity, dignity, and virtue. Ch. IV. Ver. 19.

2. The apostle further alleges, that believers in Christ have been instructed to aspire after the strictest purity of morals, ver. 20—24.

But it is not so with you. Ye have learned Christ[1]: 20.
inasmuch[2] *as ye have heard him, and been instructed in him, even as the truth is in Jesus*[3]; 21.

Far different, my Christian friends, I trust, is your present character from that prejudice, ignorance, pollution, and callousness of mind which I have just described, by which you yourselves were formerly entangled, and in which, as you well know, the heathen world is now immersed. It is your privilege that you have been introduced into the school of Christ. You have heard him addressing you in the person of his ambassadors; you have been taught by him who sent his apostles and prophets to preach the gospel to you, and who instructed them in what they were to deliver in his name; and be assured,

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[1] *It is not so with you.*] Such is the spirited translation of Chandler. *q. d.* "This is not your practice: *ye have learned Christ:* Christianity, in which you have been instructed, hath reformed you." See Luke xxii. 26.—"You have been scholars at his school." Locke.

[2] *Inasmuch.*] Ειγε. See Chandler, Wakefield.—"since ye have heard concerning him." Newcome.

[3] *In Jesus:*] "the antecedent for the pronoun, as in ver. 16." Newcome.

Ch. IV. Ver. 21. whatever insinuations some may throw out to the contrary, that the pure uncorrupted gospel has been preached to you, and that your teachers have faithfully accomplished the object of their mission. And this was the tenor of the message which they had in charge to exhort you.

22. *To put off the old man of your former course of life* [1], *which was going to destruction with deceitful*
23. *desires* [2], *and to renew yourselves in the spirit of*
24. *your mind, and to put on the new man, the* man *according to God* [3], *created to righteousness, and holiness, and truth* [4].

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[1] *To put off the old man,* &c.] This is Mr. Wakefield's translation, and seems to convey the true meaning of the passage. Some think there is an allusion here to the custom of baptism; in which the baptized persons laid aside their old garments when they went into the water, in token of laying aside their former sins, and put on white garments after baptism, to denote the purity of their Christian conversation. Dr. Chandler thinks that this custom of exchanging garments was not so ancient as the times of the apostle: yet it might have been the custom of the Jews, from whom the mode of baptism was probably borrowed. Chandler, however, supposes that the apostle "particularly alludes to theatrical representations, in which the actors put on different characters and took on themselves the persons of other men." The apostle's idea therefore seems to be, that in the school of Christ they have been taught by him to act a very different part from what they had before practised.

[2] *Going to destruction,* &c.] The unbridled licentiousness of their heathen state naturally tends to destruction here and hereafter. See Wakefield.

[3] *The* man *according to God.*] So Mr. Wakefield, see ver. 18, the man formed after the image of God, and living the life of God. They are to put off their former ancient selves, their heathen character and vices, and to assume a new self, a holy character, a person resembling God, approved by him, and devoted to him.

[4] *And truth.*] The Clermont and some other ancient manuscripts, and the Italic version, read και αληθεια. The common

On this great theatre of human life you have formerly acted a most immoral and a dangerous part. You sustained the character which your heathen neighbours now do. You lived in the practice of vices, which, whatever flattering appearances they might assume, afforded no real satisfaction, and which tended to your destruction both in body and soul. The Christian doctrine warned you to renounce the character and to escape the danger. Christ by his faithful messengers required you to prepare your mind for a very different course of life. He taught you another and a far more honourable and useful lesson. You are now to assume a new character; a character such as God will approve, and which is formed after his own model; a character by which you may be distinguished as belonging to him, as dedicated to his service, as the firm and faithful adherents to truth and virtue. Ch. IV. Ver. 24.

III.

The apostle cautions his readers against the vices of heathenism, and urges them to the practice of the contrary virtues upon principles peculiar to the Christian religion, ch. iv. 25—v. 2.

1. He recommends a strict regard to truth, ver. 25.

Therefore, laying aside falsehood[5], *speak truth* 25.

reading is *holiness of truth*; or, true holiness, not external, but that of the mind. See Newcome. Mr. Wakefield's version is, "fashioned in righteousness and holiness, the true man."

[5] *Therefore,* &c.] The apostle now proceeds to state the qua-

Ch. IV. Ver. 25. *every one to his neighbour, for we are members one of another.*

Having thus, by your profession of the Christian religion, assumed a new character, let your conduct ever be consistent with it. And though in your former heathen state the violation of truth was regarded by you as a matter of little moment, if any advantage could be gained by it, you must now, under your present character, utterly renounce every species and degree of falsehood and deceit; and in all your conversation and intercourse with each other, your language must always be the representative of your real sentiments; you must be sincere in your declarations, and inviolably faithful to your engagements. You are all parts of the body of Christ, and therefore are all members one of another; your true interest is one and the same; you must therefore feel for others, and act by them as you would feel for and act by your own selves, as though they were vital parts of your own bodies.

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lities of that old man which they were to put off, viz. the vices of their heathen state; and to contrast them with those of the new man which they were to put on, viz. the virtues of the Christian religion. And first of all they must lay aside the practice of lying, which the heathen philosophy approves and recommends. *He may lie who knows how to do it*, says Plato, εν δεοντι καιρῳ, *in a fit season*. See this and many other passages from the writings of the philosophers, to the same purpose, in Whitby on the text. In opposition to which, the apostle recommends a stedfast adherence to truth upon all occasions, and enforces his exhortation by his favourite analogy, that being all members of the mystical body of Christ, they are all members of each other, and they cannot injure others without in some degree hurting themselves.

2. He further cautions against exorbitant anger, ver. 26, 27. Ch. IV.

If ye be angry[1], *yet sin not; let not the sun go down upon your resentment*[2], *and give no advantage*[3] *to the accuser*[4]. Ver. 26. 27.

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[1] *If ye be angry.*] See Wakefield, Newcome, Bowyer, Beza, and Grotius. "The words," says Dr. Whitby, "are not a command to be angry, but a caution to avoid sinful anger." Comp. John ii. 19. See also Matt. vii. 1, 7; Prov. xix. 25; Isa. viii. 9, 10; Nah. iii. 14, 15; Ecclus. xxx. 9. Dr. Chandler says, that "the expression may be rendered 'Are ye angry? see that ye do not sin;' viz. by indulging it too far, and harbouring your resentment too long; και, *tamen*, John i. 10; 1 Cor. v. 10; Phil. i. 18."

[2] *Let not the sun,* &c.] Plutarch says that the scholars of Pythagoras, when they had been angry with each other, shook hands and embraced before the sun went down. See Whitby. To this the apostle may perhaps allude. Though, as Dr. Chandler observes, "the advice is not to be understood literally, as though it were always sinful to keep anger after sunset." "The plain meaning (continues he) of the whole advice is, 'be not angry without just occasion; and, whenever you are, be of a reconcilable spirit, and carry not your displeasure against the offender too far, either in measure or duration.'"

[3] *Give no advantage,* &c.] Dr. Chandler observes, that "the phrase διδοναι τοπον, *to give place*, is used by the best Greek writers to signify the *giving a handle, occasion,* or *opportunity, to any thing.*" Dr. Newcome's version is, "give not advantage," &c.

[4] *The accuser.*] So Erasmus and Wakefield, and unquestionably right. In the common and most other versions it is "the devil." But in what sense it is not easy to explain. Dr. Chandler adopts both interpretations: "do not give occasion to the devil to lead you to commit the most heinous crimes, nor to the enemies of Christianity to reproach and slander you." There is no reason to believe that the apostle intended to express two meanings so very different. The latter, therefore, as being natural, intelligible, and pertinent, is by far the most probable. See Macknight; who, though he translates "devil," yet in his note remarks, that "Erasmus, with the Syriac version, gives the sense, *ut ne detis locum calumniatori.* According to their translation the apostle's meaning is, 'give no occasion to infi-

CH. IV. VER. 27. In your former heathen state you were accustomed to regard anger and revenge as the qualities of a noble and generous mind, and regarded it as meanness of spirit to forgive an injury. But you are now entered under the discipline of Christ, and have assumed the profession of Christians. Anger is a passion which, in the present state of imperfection, will occasionally rise in the breast. But, whatever be the provocation, guard to the utmost of your power against excess in your resentment. Let not anger rise upon trivial occasions, nor to an exorbitant degree, and suffer it not to dwell in your heart. Where offence has been given, be easily pacified; where it is acknowledged, be ready to forgive; and where correction is necessary, let it be administered with moderation. And give no occasion to the enemies of your faith to calumniate your character, and to say that Christians, whatever they may pretend to, are neither more forbearing nor more placable than other men.

3. The apostle recommends honesty and industry, ver. 28.

28. *Let him that hath stolen*[1], *steal no more; but*

dels to speak evil of the holy religion which ye profess.'" Possibly the apostle may mean nothing more than to guard them against giving way to a bad temper, an angry unforgiving spirit. John xiii. 2, διαβολος is used to express the wickedness of the heart of Judas. "do not yield to any temptation to sin, from whatever source it may arise." Priestley.

[1] *Hath stolen*, &c.] Stealing was a common vice among the barbarous nations, nor was it regarded by them as deserving of reproach. See Whitby.

rather let him labour, providing with his hands what is good[2], *that he may have* something *to impart to him that is necessitous.* Ch. IV. Ver. 28.

In your former heathen state, violations of honesty, where they could be committed with impunity, were as little regarded as violations of chastity, truth, and meekness, and were hardly thought worthy of blame: these, therefore, are some of the deeds of the old man, which you are to renounce altogether, now that you have assumed the profession of Christianity, and have entered upon a new and a holy life. Have any of you, then, unjustly deprived another of his property; let him immediately restore what he has unlawfully acquired, for there can be no repentance without restitution; and, for the future, let him resolutely abstain from every dishonest action, whatever temptation or opportunity may offer itself, and how secure soever he may be from detection and punishment. And let every one by honourable industry endeavour to acquire such a plentiful supply of the good things of this life, that he may not only be under no temptation to take unjustly what belongs to his neighbour, but may be both able and willing, from his own abundant stores, to relieve those who are in want.

4. That conversation be inoffensive and instructive, ver. 29, 30.

[2] *What is good.*] "the good things of life." Wakefield.—"a livelihood." Dr. Chandler; "or such a support as may not only be barely sufficient for himself, but may enable him to give somewhat to other persons who are in distress."

Ch. IV. Ver. 29. *Let no corrupt discourse*[1] *proceed out of your mouth, but whatever* may be *useful for edification in faith*[2], *that it may contribute to the benefit*[3] *of* 30. *the hearers. And offend not*[4] *the holy spirit of God*[5], *by which ye have been sealed to the day of redemption*[6].

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[1] *Corrupt discourse.*] "By corrupt or rotten discourse," says Archbishop Newcome, "obscene talk is principally meant. Hesychius explains σαπρον by αισχρον, ακαθαρτον. The word properly means what is rancid, or putrid by age. Alberti."—Dr. Chandler observes, "that it is used by the best writers to signify idle, insignificant, useless, and unprofitable discourse; and in this large sense it appears to be used in this place, as seems plain not only from the original notion of the word, but from what the apostle expressly opposes to it." Wakefield renders it *unmeaning*.

[2] *Edification in faith.*] "The reading of πιστεως, *faith*, is," as Archbishop Newcome remarks, "well established by manuscripts: it is preferred by Bengelius;" and marked with approbation by Griesbach. The common reading, χρειας, is tautological. Mr. Wakefield renders the clause, "what is good to the furtherance of the business." Dr. Chandler renders χρειας 'occasion or use,' and explains it of such kind of discourse as is suitable to the present occasion.

[3] *Benefit.*] χαριν. Dr. Chandler explains "that it may be grateful and acceptable to such as hear it." "*Ut gratus acceptusque sit.*" Raphelius. So Wakefield. χαρις being often used for the 'gospel,' or for the 'temper and spirit of Christianity,' the apostle may perhaps principally refer to their improvement in the knowledge and spirit of the gospel; especially if πιστεως be the true reading.

[4] *Offend not.*] "Though the primary sense of λυπεω is to *grieve*, it is often used in the best writers for 'offending' and 'displeasing.' 'Grieving the holy spirit of God' signifies 'offending God himself,' who conferred those extraordinary gifts." Chandler. "*Delicata res est spiritus Dei*, was a maxim of one of the ancients." See Doddridge.

[5] *Holy spirit of God.*] The gifts of the holy spirit, by which converted Gentiles were proved to be in covenant with God, are here personified, and said to be grieved or offended: *i. e.* corrupt discourse, as it tends to defeat the design of Christi-

Another practice of your heathen state, which you must now entirely lay aside, is all trifling, foolish, and obscene conversation, all kind of language which has a tendency to corrupt the heart and to debase the character. Let not such discourse ever be heard among professing Christians. But let conversation in your social intercourse be always innocent, and often edifying. Endeavour to confirm each others faith in the gospel, and thus to improve each other in Christian knowledge, and in virtuous resolution. And do not, upon any consideration, by grossness of language, or indecency of behaviour, offend the delicacy or provoke the resentment of that holy spirit of God which dwells in the temple of your hearts, and whose residence there is a stand- Ch. IV. Ver. 30.

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anity, would provoke God to withdraw from them the gifts of the spirit with which they are favoured.

[6] *Sealed to the day of redemption:*] *i. e.* by which that covenant is sealed and ratified, the promises of which have a respect to blessings which will be hereafter conferred upon you at the day of redemption, *i. e.* at the resurrection, when you shall be put in the actual possession of a place in his kingdom, whereof the spirit is now an earnest. See Locke. See Rom. viii. 23.—"As these gifts were vouchsafed in token of God's acceptance of the persons on whom they were conferred, and were thereby a kind of impression or seal that God put on them, to assure them of the future inheritance of his children, so if persons offended God by their vices, in such a manner as to provoke him to withdraw these gifts from them, they forfeited this seal of their right to the heavenly inheritance, and were left in a state of condemnation. And as these gifts were granted in confirmation of a religion which enjoined the greatest purity of heart and conversation, and the perpetual study of love and peace, the apostle, by placing this exhortation between the commands to abstain from corrupt conversation, and a bitter, wrathful, revengeful spirit and behaviour, seems plainly to intimate that by those sins God was in a peculiar manner offended." Chandler.

Ch. IV. Ver. 30.

ing proof that you are his chosen people, and heirs of the promised inheritance. In other words, do not by any misdemeanour, either in conversation or conduct, offend God, and provoke him to withdraw from you those manifestations of his spirit which are the tokens of his favour, and the earnest of your deliverance from the power of sin and death.

5. The apostle urges them to abstain from all malignity and clamorous contention, and to cultivate kindness, forgiveness, and disinterested goodwill, after the example of God and Christ, ver. 31—v. 2.

31. *Let all bitterness*[1], *and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be removed from you, with all malice.*

Among your unconverted and ungodly neighbours, who are under no restraint from moral and religious considerations, nothing is more common than malignant quarrels, fierce contentions and brawlings, abusive language, malice, and mischief. Be assured, my brethren, that nothing can be more contrary to the spirit of the gospel than such a temper and behaviour as this; and, if it is your desire to approve yourselves the genuine disciples of Jesus,

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[1] *Bitterness*, &c.] It is not easy to distinguish the different signification of each different word which is here used. Dr. Doddridge observes, "that perhaps it might only be the apostle's design, in amassing so many almost synonymous expressions together, to show that he would have them be upon their guard against all the malevolent passions, and those outrages of speech and expression which they tend to produce."

you must utterly renounce these malignant passions, and live under the influence of a very different spirit. Ch. IV. Ver. 31.

And be ye kind one to another, tenderly affectioned[2], *freely forgiving one another, even as God by Christ*[3] *hath freely forgiven you. Be ye, therefore*[4], *the imitators of God, as beloved children.* 32. Ch. V. Ver. 1.

Instead of hating, and wishing ill, and doing mischief to one another, the law to which you are now subject requires that you should be always ready

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[2] *Tenderly affectioned.*] "This precept is very different from that of Epictetus, who says, 'If one is in affliction, thou mayest say thou hast pity on him, but take care not to feel any pity.'" Macknight.

[3] *By Christ,* &c.] that is, 'God in the gospel has declared free pardon to all who repent and believe.' The expression εν Χριστω is very improperly rendered in the public version, "for Christ's sake," a phrase which greatly diminishes the force of the apostle's argument, which is to urge Christians to the exercise of a forgiving spirit, from the consideration of the great mercy of God exercised in the forgiveness of their offences without any foreign consideration whatever. He certainly did not mean to recommend to those who had been offended to withhold forgiveness till satisfaction had been made by a third party.

"God is no where said to forgive sin for the sake of Christ. It is a great injury to the character of the Divine Being to suppose that he does not forgive repenting sinners freely, without any satisfaction to his justice, or the intercession of others. All that is necessary is men's becoming proper objects of his mercy, which true repentance and leading a new life will always make them. If this had not been the case, the divine conduct could never have been proposed to our imitation in this respect. Now, we are taught to pray that God would forgive us, as we forgive others, and we are told that if our offending brother only repent, we must forgive him. The Divine Being, therefore, no doubt acts upon the same generous maxim." Dr. Priestley.

[4] *Be ye, therefore.*] Griesbach joins the two first verses of the sixth chapter to the end of the fifth, "from which," as Chandler remarks, "they ought never to have been separated."

Ch. V. Ver. 1. to perform kind offices for each other; that, instead of contriving and rejoicing in each others calamities, you should sympathize in the tenderest manner with those who are in distress, and contribute to the utmost of your ability to their relief; instead of making a boast of taking ample revenge for a supposed injury or insult, you should be ready to forgive upon the first symptoms of repentance, and that without insisting always upon the satisfaction to which you are justly entitled. For, consider how often and how grievously you have offended God, and yet how kind he has been to you in sending Jesus Christ to offer you that forgiveness which you never sought for, and, had you been left to yourselves, would never have obtained. Imitate, then, the merciful spirit of your merciful God; and, instead of indulging a revengeful temper, rather be the first to invite to reconciliation those with whom you have the greatest reason to be offended. Thus, by your resemblance to your heavenly Father, approve yourselves his beloved children.

2. *And walk in love, even as Christ loved us, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice*[1] *to God of fragrant odour.*

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[1] *Offering and sacrifice.*] Some distinguish προσφορα as 'a peace offering,' and θυσια as 'a sin offering.' See Macknight, and Dr. Bates's *Harmony of Divine Attributes*, p. 254. But Dr. Doddridge justly observes, "I cannot lay much stress upon this distinction." Neither, indeed, ought any stress to be laid upon the figurative representation of the death of Christ as a sacrifice, as though it necessarily implied atonement, propitiation, or satisfaction to God for the sins of men; a notion ut-

Let your whole life be a continued scene of benevolent exertions; and be ever ready to make the most generous sacrifices of ease and interest, of health and safety, for the benefit of your fellow-creatures. Such is the glorious example which our honoured Master hath set before us. Such was his love to mankind and his generous pity for lost sinners, that, after having laboured with indefatigable zeal for their instruction, he closed his ministry by sacrificing his life upon the cross for their benefit. And so acceptable was this illustrious instance of magnanimous self-denial to his heavenly Father, that he has crowned his virtue with a proportionate reward, and given him a name above every name. And be assured, my brethren, that all who follow his example shall participate in his triumph. Ch. v. Ver. 2.

IV.

The apostle earnestly warns them against the vices of heathenism, and enjoins the Christian virtues of purity, prudence, temperance, and thankfulness, ch. v. 3—21.

1. He strictly prohibits, in every shape and in

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terly unfounded in the scriptures. Christ, from good will to men, made a sacrifice of his life upon the cross; and his benevolent and disinterested conduct in this instance was highly acceptable to God, which is here expressed by the sacrifical term, 'an offering of fragrant odour.' See Lev. ii. 1—9; Numb. xv. 3—14. And it is the duty of the disciples of Christ to cherish and to exercise the same kind and generous spirit, and, where occasion may require, to submit to the greatest sacrifices for the good of others, 1 John iii. 16.

CH. V. every degree, those gross impurities which were allowed amongst the heathen, ver. 3, 4.

VER. 3. *Now let not fornication, nor any* kind of *impurity, nor licentious desire*[1], *be even named amongst*
4. *you, as becometh saints, nor ribaldry*[2], *nor buffoonery*[3], *nor scurrilous jesting*[4], *which are* wholly *improper*[5]; *but rather graceful conversation*[6].

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[1] *Licentious desire.*] πλεονεξια· "excessive appetite." Wakefield. See Eph. iv. 19. The usual sense of πλεονεξια is 'covetousness;' but Locke, after Hammond, observes, "that if it is considered how often it stands connected with various species of impurity, it can hardly be doubted that in this connexion it is used as a decent expression for very gross crimes, such as were not even to be named amongst Christians." See Rom. i. 29.

[2] *Ribaldry.*] See Worsley's translation. αισχροτης· "indecent speeches." Wakefield. "The former advice," says Dr. Chandler, "related to impurity of action, this to obsceneness of conversation and speech, which is here condemned by the apostle, as inconsistent with the obligation of our Christian profession; in which many who call themselves Christians give themselves very scandalous liberties, to the shocking of chaste ears, and to the breach of decency and all good manners."

[3] *Buffoonery.*] "μωρολογια." Worsley. "unchaste speeches." Wakefield. "*Studium ineptorum et impudicorum sermonum.*" Schleusner. Archbishop Newcome renders the word, *foolish talking*; *q. d.* "nor impure talk, Col. iii. 8; nor light and idle talk, unworthy of the character or of the subject; nor scurrilous jesting, injurious to peace and reputation." He adds, from Erasmus, "*Non fero quosdam qui quoties urbani videri volunt e divinis literis ad suas ineptias detorquent aliquid.*"

[4] *Scurrilous jesting.*] ευτραπελια. So Newcome. "double meanings." Macknight. "*scurrilitas, dicacitas.*" Schleusner. "The original sense," says Dr. Chandler, "is an artfully turned discourse; it is used both in a good and bad sense. The apostle here intends such ambiguous forms of speech as are intended to raise mirth by dishonest and corrupt meanings. This, amongst some, passes for wit; but, in the judgement of the apostle, it is foolish talking; and, in the opinion of all wise and sober persons, it is rudeness and ill manners."

[5] Wholly *improper.*] ακ ανηκοντα· *not convenient*, "most

Ch. V. Ver. 4.

You well know in what low estimation the virtues of purity and chastity are held by your heathen neighbours, how deeply their conversation is tinctured with indecent and obscene language, and with how little shame or sense of guilt they indulge themselves in the most abominable practices. I now solemnly warn you, my brethren, that these habits of your former heathen and idolatrous state must be entirely relinquished, and for ever renounced. You must not only, as believers in Christ, consecrated and set apart from the rest of mankind, abstain from the practice, but even from the familiar mention of these odious vices. Your conversation, also, must be purified from all those lewd expressions and indecent speeches which afford so much mirth to men of gross and sensual minds, but which are wholly unsuitable to the dignity of the Christian character. I do not, however, mean to proscribe innocent mirth. God is not honoured by sadness of spirit. Let your conversation, then, be cheerful and easy;

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disagreeable." Pyle; who refers to Rom. i. 28, which he says "ought to be so translated."—"which are greatly unbecoming, and highly displeasing to God." See ver. 11. Chandler. Mr. Wakefield, from Bowyer, supplies κατα before τα, and reads ἡ ευτραπελια (κατα) τα ουκ ανηκοντα, which he renders, "unseasonable levity, levity upon improper subjects."

[6] *Graceful conversation.*] ευχαριστια. "*urbanitas et jucunditas in sermone temperata et honesta, gratia et honestas orationis, et opponitur τῃ μωρολογιᾳ.*" Schleusner; who refers to Xenophon. This forms a better opposition to the preceding vices than "thanksgiving." comp. ch. iv. 29. Chandler includes both senses in his exposition: "Endeavour to render your speech grateful and profitable to those you converse with; and abound in thanksgivings to God for all his mercies." See Col. iii. 15—17.

Ch. V. Ver. 4. the natural effusion of a grateful heart, acceptable alike to God and man.

2. He plainly warns them that these vices utterly exclude from all the privileges of a Christian profession, and entail condemnation even upon the ignorant and idolatrous heathen, ver. 5—7.

5. *For be assured of this, that no fornicator, or unchaste* person, *or lascivious libertine* [1], *who is an idolater* [2], *hath* any *inheritance in the kingdom of*
6. *Christ and of God* [3]. *Let no man deceive you with vain words* [4], *for because of these* things *the*

[1] *Lascivious libertine.*] πλεονεκτης. See Locke; compare ver. 3. "one of excessive appetites." Wakefield. There can be no doubt that the crime alluded to in this verse is the same that is mentioned in the third verse; and, from the connexion, it seems evident that the apostle alludes to these abominable impurities which were practised and avowed amongst the heathen, and which often even constituted a part of their sacred rites. "a man of such inordinate desires as an idolater is and must be. This sense is most agreeable to the apostle's design." Pyle.

[2] *Who is an idolater.*] *q. d.* whatever such a profligate wretch may call himself, he is no Christian: he retains the very worst part of heathenism, and ought to be avoided by all sincere professors of Christianity, and to be excluded from the communion of the church. Archbishop Newcome explains the expression of "making riches his god;" so likewise Dr. Chandler; but this appears to me wide of the apostle's meaning, which is, that these licentious practices are the very essence of idolatry, and the worst part of it.

[3] *Of Christ,* &c.] Mr. Wakefield observes, "that the Æthiopic and Arabic versions omit και before Θεου," and he renders the clause, "no fornicator, &c., can have an inheritance in the kingdom of the anointed teacher of God."

[4] *Vain words.*] "Suffer not yourselves to be imposed upon by the vain and false pretences of corrupt men, who may endeavour to persuade you that these vices may be indulged with safety." Chandler; who observes that "the word means false

wrath of God cometh on the sons of disobedience[5]. Ch. V.
Be not, therefore, associates with them. Ver. 7.

Do not, my brethren, make light of my advice, and think not that the crimes to which I have alluded can be made consistent with the Christian profession, or the Christian hope. I solemnly assure you that every violation of chastity, from cases which are commonly regarded as the least criminal, even to those of the greatest enormity, however connived at or tolerated, or even required, in the abominable rites of heathen deities, constitute an absolute exclusion from all the privileges of that holy community which God has been pleased to establish in the world, and of which Jesus is the holy and exalted head. There are, indeed, some who assume the character of lovers of wisdom, who will gravely argue in defence of these licentious practices. But beware of being deceived by their plausible and insidious harangues: they may make as light as they please of their infamous debaucheries, but let them

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and deceitful representations, void of solidity and truth." Mr. Locke renders it, "empty talk;" and remarks, that "One would guess by this that, as there were Jews who would persuade them that it was necessary for all Christians to observe the law of Moses, so there were others who retained so much of their ancient heathenism, as to endeavour to make them believe that these abominations were indifferent actions, not offensive to God, nor inconsistent with his worship." Dr. Whitby, in his note upon this text, produces several authorities to show that fornication was approved and recommended by the heathen philosophers.

[5] *Sons of disobedience*] "here, and in ch. ii. 2, and Col. iii. 6, are plainly the Gentiles, who refused to come in and submit themselves to the gospel." Locke.

Ch. V. Ver. 7. know that they are not only forbidden under the severest penalties to professing Christians, but that they are inconsistent even with the law of nature, and justly entail the righteous vengeance of God on the heathen world. Be not, then, associates with them in their crimes, lest ye also partake with them in their punishments.

3. The light of the gospel requires a conduct that will bear inspection, and is absolutely inconsistent with those deeds of darkness and of shame which were the disgrace of the heathen world, ver. 8—12.

8. *For ye were formerly darkness*[1], *but now* ye are *light in the Lord*[2]*: walk as children of light.*

I press this advice upon you from the consideration of the happy change which has taken place in your moral state. Not long ago you were as ignorant of the character of God, of the requisitions of duty, and of the doctrine of immortality, as any of your poor unconverted neighbours. You were darkness itself; totally uninformed upon every topic of pure morality and true religion. You are now in a very different state. You are brought into mar-

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[1] *Darkness.*] See Col. i. 12, 13. "The kingdom of Satan over the Gentile world was a kingdom of darkness; and, to express the ignorance which the Gentiles were in, the apostle calls them 'darkness itself.'" Locke.

[2] *In the Lord.*] *q. d.* ye believing in, or instructed by, the Lord, are light, *i. e.* says Dr. Chandler, "ye are instructed in the knowledge of God and of true religion by the gospel of Christ." "The converts from heathenism are said to be called out of darkness into marvellous light in the Lord: *i. e.* as Christians." Newcome.

vellous light. By the revelation of the gospel you have been fully instructed, both with regard to your duties and your expectations. Let your conduct, then, correspond with your privileges. Live as Christians, and not as heathen. Ch. v. Ver. 8.

For the fruit[3] *of the light*[4] consisteth[5] *in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth*[6]. 9.

If you are truly enlightened by the doctrine and governed by the spirit of the gospel, you will abound in acts of beneficence. You will be scrupulously exact in rendering to every one his due, inflexibly firm in your adherence to truth, and inviolably faithful to all your engagements.

Searching out[7] *what is well pleasing to the Lord.* 10.

Being in possession of the best means of information, you will diligently study the doctrine of Christ, that you may learn the virtues of the Chris-

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[3] *For the fruit.*] "This parenthesis," says Mr. Locke, "serves to give us the literal sense of all that is here required by the apostle in this allegorical discourse of light."

[4] *Light.*] The common reading is πνευματος, *spirit*, but φωτος, *light*, is authorized by the most approved manuscripts and versions; and it best suits the connexion, and is adopted by Griesbach and Newcome. See Macknight's note. The word *spirit* does not occur in this connexion, and is probably borrowed from Gal. v. 22.

[5] Consisteth.] See Macknight.

[6] *Goodness*, &c.] "universal goodness, justice, and veracity." Chandler.

[7] *Searching out.*] δοκιμαζοντες. "giving proof." Wakefield. —"The most frequent signification of the original word," says Dr. Chandler, "is, *to discern*, or *search out*: sometimes it signifies to approve any thing when fully apprehended and discerned. In both senses it well suits the connexion."

Ch. V. Ver. 10. tian character, and may attain that purity of spirit which alone is acceptable to God, who is the searcher of hearts.

11. *And participate not in the mischievous works*[1] *of*
12. *darkness, but rather even reprove them*[2]. *For it is indecent even to mention their secret practices*[3].

Far from joining in the lewd revels, the indecent language, and the licentious practices of your idolatrous neighbours, which are most hateful, and equally injurious to their bodies and their souls, rather seek every favourable opportunity to enter your protest against, and to testify your abhorrence of, these abominable vices. Discourage them, at least,

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[1] *Mischievous works:*] ακαρποις "here signifies, not only *unprofitable*, but mischievous; as Rom. i. 28. Thus it answers to *inutilis*, which signifies *mischievous* in the best Latin authors." Pyle. "destructive." Newcome; who adds, "We have the same litotes, ver. 4, 'which are not fit,' for, 'which are unfit and disgraceful.' See Rom. vi. 21."—"such as are attended with the most mischievous and destructive consequences." Chandler.

[2] *Reprove them.*] Chandler observes, that "the original word signifies both *to reprove* and *to convince*. Christians ought to endeavour, by the light of a good conversation, to reprove the vices of their Gentile neighbours, that so they may convince them of the evil and danger of them."

[3] *Secret practices.*] It is generally understood that there is a reference in these verses to the heathen mysteries; and Chandler observes, that "the word συγκοινωνειτε is used by profane authors to denote a participation in their religious rites and mysteries." Dr. Whitby, in his note upon the text, produces authorities to prove that the Eleusinian and Bacchanalian mysteries were full of the most detestable iniquity. Dr. Doddridge remarks, from Saurin, "a sarcasm in this clause seldom attended to: as if it were insinuated here, they are called απορρητα, *things not to be spoken of*. True, says the apostle, they are properly so; things not too *sacred*, but too *infamous*, to be mentioned."

by the sanctity of your example. They veil these odious practices under the sacred appellation of religious mysteries, into which none but the initiated are permitted to be introduced; and mysteries let them ever remain, for the infamy of their conduct upon these occasions is too gross, and too atrocious, to be described. Ch. v. Ver. 12.

4. The Christian religion denounces shame upon the gross vices of heathen idolatry, and calls upon every one to renounce the works of darkness, and to walk in the light of the gospel, ver. 13, 14.

But all these things are discovered, being *reproved by the light*[4]*: for the light is that which discovereth every thing*[5]*; therefore it saith*[6]*, Awake, O sleeper! and rise from the dead, and Christ will shine upon thee.* 13. 14.

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[4] *All these things,* &c.] So this clause is rendered and explained by Dr. Chandler: "All things, viz. which were done by the heathen in secret, were discovered, *i. e.* their moral turpitude, and the doers of them rendered ashamed, being reproved, *i. e.* demonstrated to be wicked and abominable by the light, *i. e.* by the Christian religion, or by the lustre of an unblameable and virtuous behaviour."

[5] *For the light,* &c.] Dr. Chandler renders the words, "it is the light which makes manifest every thing." An anonymous writer in Bowyer suggests the propriety of the transposition, το γαρ παν φανερωμενον. Mr. Wakefield translates this verse, "For all these things show themselves when convicted by the light, and whatever showeth itself is become light;" *i. e.* as he explains it in the note, "is thereby brought to shame." He adds, "after all, this is to me one of the most difficult passages of scripture."

[6] *It saith.*] The words which follow are not to be found in the Old Testament. They are, however, commonly supposed to be an allusion to Isa. lx. 1, "Arise, shine! for thy light is

Ch. V. Ver. 14.

But all these odious vices, so common in the heathen mysteries, so shamefully justified by the philosophers, so impudently practised by persons of all descriptions, and which so often constitute an essential part of idol worship, are now plainly proved to be disgraceful to human nature, and offensive to the divine purity. This important discovery is revealed by the gospel; the light of which now shines upon the benighted world, and exposes to just abhorrence and contempt those vices the malignant nature and pernicious tendency of which were not, under the darkness of heathenism, sufficiently apparent to mankind. Justly indeed may the evangelical doctrine be called light, since it makes the most important discoveries in the moral world, and so clearly reveals the duties and the expectations of man. And as a benignant angel, commissioned upon the kindest errand, it addresses itself in the most energetic language to those whose eyes are closed to the evidence and beauty of moral and religious truth, whose hearts are dead to every princi-

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come; for the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." A writer in Bowyer supposes it to have been inserted from the margin. *Scaligerana*, p. 136. G. Syncellus in *Chron.* p. 27, says it is cited out of an apocryphal piece of the prophet Jeremiah. Chandler thinks it was some sentence spoken by Christ, though not recorded in the evangelical history. Archbishop Newcome supplies the words "*the Spirit* saveth," and explains it as a declaration by the apostle immediately from God. Dr. Macknight says, that "the apostle by a rhetorical figure introduces the gospel as addressing an exhortation to the Gentiles, to awake out of the lethargy of sin;" and refers to Rom. x. 6 for a similar personification. This interpretation appears both just and beautiful, and it is adopted in the exposition.

ple of virtue and piety, and who are buried in sensuality and vice, summoning them to awake from the slumbers of ignorance, calling upon them to rise from the death of sin, and inviting them to participate in the light, the life, and happiness of the gospel. And, blessed be God, this invitation is not always urged in vain. Ch. V. Ver. 14.

5. The apostle recommends prudence, and that they should not unnecessarily provoke persecution, ver. 15—17.

See, therefore, that ye walk correctly[1], *not as unwise, but as wise, gaining time*[2], *because the days are evil. Therefore be not inconsiderate*[3], *but understand what the will of the Lord* is. 15. 16. 17.

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[1] *Correctly.*] ακριβως. "*exactly*, according to the evangelical rule." Newcome.—"accurately," Macknight and Doddridge. "with great exactness and care, so as neither to become partakers with the Gentiles in their crimes, nor to expose yourselves to their malice and anger by an imprudent rebuke of their very vices." Chandler. "walk correctly (Dr. Paley, *Hor. Paul.* p. 226), suiting yourselves to the difficulty and ticklishness of the times in which you live. When we advise a person to walk correctly, our advice is always given with a reference to the opinion of others."

[2] *Gaining time.*] So Chandler; and Macknight, who refers to Dan. ii. 8: "I know of a certainty that ye would gain time," οτι καιρον εξαγοραζετε. "The English expression, 'gaining time,'" says Dr. Chandler, "will take in the proper meaning of the apostle; especially as the original expression seems to refer to debtors who by some valuable consideration buy off the fixed time for the payment of their debts; or, as we say, gain further time for this purpose. When the apostle wrote, the time was extremely dangerous, and the profession of Christianity hazardous. What was the prudence requisite? It was to gain time, that the evils might not come upon them to which imprudence would certainly expose them. See Col. iv. 5."

[3] *Inconsiderate.*] αφρονες. "Yet, for the sake of this gaining

Ch. V. Ver. 17. You, my brethren, are in the number of those who have listened to the invitations of the gospel, and who walk in the light of Christ. Let me charge you to keep to the path of duty with the greatest accuracy and circumspection. Warn, admonish, instruct, and edify others by your example and conversation. Do not by any unguarded conduct expose yourselves or your cause to reproach, and give no unnecessary offence. Let the wisdom of the serpent be united with the simplicity of the dove. And by a prudent and conciliatory conduct, without a mean desertion of principle, adjourn as far as possible the season of persecution and peril. But in order to this, do not venture to join with your heathen neighbours in their mad and impious revels; for it would be far better to endure the severest torments their malice could inflict, than to be associates with them in their crimes. Consider, therefore, with yourselves how far you may with a safe conscience avoid giving offence, and how you may, consistently with your duty to God, forbear to provoke those evils which it will be sufficient to meet with fortitude, when they cannot be avoided consistently with integrity and honour.

6. Instead of intemperate revellings, the apostle

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time, do not become *madmen*, by joining the votaries of Bacchus in their frantic rites." Macknight. Dr. Chandler also supposes an allusion to the feasts of Bacchus, and that the advice of the apostle is, that "they should not act like persons out of their minds, but as persons fully apprized of their interest and duty. *q. d.* Do not act without thought and understanding."

recommends the love of virtue, pious hymns and thanksgivings, and a kind conciliatory conduct, ver. 18—21. Ch. V.

And be not intoxicated with wine, by which is dissoluteness[1], *but be filled with the spirit*[2]. Ver. 18.

Instead of joining in the bacchanalian revels of your idolatrous neighbours, and escaping from persecution by indulging yourselves, and countenancing them, in those excesses of intemperance which lead to every species of wickedness and debauchery, and which are absolutely inconsistent with your characters and hopes as Christians, drink deeply into the doctrine and spirit of the gospel, with which if you are thoroughly imbued, you will lead a life diametrically the reverse of that low and gross and contemptible character which I have just described, and will be formed to habits of purity, truth, and virtue.

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[1] *Dissoluteness.*] "ασωτια, ex α priv. et σωω servo, *qui servari nequit, vita fœdissima et ad omnem turpitudinem objecta.*" Schleusner. See Wetstein *N. T.* vol. i. p. 758. "dissoluteness, riot, profligacy." Harwood. "the habit of which vice shows that a man is so lost that he cannot be saved from present and final destruction without great difficulty." Newcome. —"*Wherein is excess.* This rendering doth by no means come up to the force of St. Paul's word, which signifies a wretched and abandoned disposition, the being lost to all virtue, and fit for the worst excesses and enormities, a perfect dissoluteness of mind and behaviour. So that the meaning of the advice is, Be not drunk with wine, because habitual drunkenness is an argument of a very dissolute and profligate temper; or because it leads to, and is the cause of, the most licentious and abandoned behaviour." Chandler.—"in which is a shameful want of order." Wakefield.

[2] *The spirit.*] "spiritual gifts." Chandler. "with the grand discoveries of the gospel." Macknight; more correctly. The attainment of spiritual gifts was not in their power.

Ch. V. Ver. 19. *Speaking among yourselves psalms and hymns and spiritual odes* [1], *singing and making melody*
20. *with your hearts to the Lord. Giving thanks at all times for all things* [2] *in the name* [3] *of our Lord*
21. *Jesus Christ to* our *God and Father* [4]. *Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ* [5].

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[1] *Speaking among yourselves psalms and hymns and spiritual odes.*] So Wakefield. Gr. "in psalms." "in psalms, such as those of David, in hymns of praise to God, and in other songs dictated by the spirit." Newcome. See 1 Cor. xiv. 15, 16. Probably the meaning is, that they were to entertain themselves and each other with hymns and anthems upon religious subjects, and particularly in praising God for his goodness in the Christian revelation, whether the compositions which they made use of were inspired or not. It is also supposed that responsive melodies are here alluded to. See Macknight.

[2] *All things.*] Dr. Barrow interprets the expression as if the meaning were, Consider yourselves as appointed to return to God the tribute of praise due from the whole human race. See his *Works*, vol. i. p. 257: also Doddridge *in loc.*

[3] *In the name:*] *i. e.* under the direction and authority of our Master Jesus Christ. We are to give thanks in the way in which we have been directed by Jesus Christ. The apostle does not mean to require that every act of prayer or thanksgiving should be concluded with the words *in the name of Christ*, as if there was some charm in that expression which would prevail upon God to grant what he might otherwise be inclined to withhold. "*Secundum voluntatem, ex præcepto Domini nostri Jesu Christi.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *To* our *God and Father.*] τω Θεω και πατρι, "to God, *even* the Father, or, our God and Father." Newcome.—"to God the Father." Wakefield. "The primitive Christians," says Dr. Priestley, "were noted for their observance of this advice, being frequently employed in singing spiritual hymns and psalms. Singing consists chiefly in thanksgiving, and this you see is here directed to God through Christ; Christianity being the means by which glory is brought to God. Here, as upon all other occasions, you see the supremacy of one God the Father, and the subordination of Christ, as well as of other prophets, to him, who is his God as well as ours, and his Father, or the author of his being, as well as ours."

Nor is the spirit of the gospel in the least degree inconsistent with innocent cheerfulness, but highly productive of it. And when your hearts are full of joy, arising from conscious integrity, and from the discoveries and hopes of the gospel, let your tongues express your gratitude and delight in responsive melodies; either using the language of those devotional compositions of which David and other pious harmonists have furnished us with so pleasing a variety; or, odes composed for the occasion, as every one's disposition and ability may prompt. Remembering, that sincerity is of more value in the estimation of God, than the finest poetry or the sublimest harmony; and that the most acceptable melody is a grateful heart. Give thanks to God, therefore, at all times for all things; for spiritual as well as temporal blessings, for adversity as well as prosperity. All is the appointment of God, all is intended for good; let all therefore be acknowledged with gratitude and praise. Give thanks to God likewise for his loving kindness to all men: praise him for the bounties of his providence, and for the riches of his grace to the whole family of mankind, and let a generous sympathy inspire the accents of gratitude. Let all be done according to

Ch. V. Ver. 21.

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[5] *The fear of Christ.*] This is the reading of the Alexandrine and many other manuscripts and versions of the best repute: it is received into the text by Griesbach, Wakefield, and Newcome. The common reading is, "the fear of God." The fear of Christ expresses that reverence which is due to his authority as a teacher sent from God.—"*Obsequium exhibite vobis invicem ex pietate* (reverentia), *erga Christum.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. v. Ver. 21. the directions of our common Master Jesus Christ; who has taught us to address our religious homage, neither to himself nor to any other creature, but solely to that great and venerable Being who is his Father and our Father, his God and our God.

And as the best proof of your reverence for Christ as your Master, and of your gratitude to your God and Father, be kind one to another, and fulfill with affectionate solicitude the important duties of the various relations of social and domestic life.

SECTION II.

Exhortations to Relative Duties. Ch. v. 22—vi. 9.

I.

The apostle insists upon the duties of the conjugal relation, with a particular allusion to the case in which either of the parties was an unbeliever. Ch. v. 22—33.

1. The apostle prescribes the duty of the wife to the husband, ver. 22—24.

22. *Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as*
23. the church[1] is *to the Lord; for the husband is the*

[1] *As* the church.] An anonymous writer in Bowyer suggests ἡ εκκλησια, *the church*, as the word proper to be supplied between ὡς and τῳ κυριῳ. And as it best agrees with the strain of the argument, I have introduced it into the translation. Dr.

head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: he is the protector of this his *body*[2]. *As the church, then, is subject to Christ, so* let *wives* be *to their husbands in every thing*[3]. Ch. V. Ver. 24.

Fulfill with becoming attention the duties of the various relations of life. And, to begin with that which is the most important of all, the conjugal relation: Let it not be imagined that the profession of Christianity interferes in the least degree with the social and civil duties; on the contrary, it enforces them more strongly and by peculiar motives. Let not Christian wives, even though united to unbelieving husbands, think themselves authorized to relax in that respectful attention to them which the laws and customs of society require, and which they have been accustomed to show. Let them regard the relation in which they stand to

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Chandler observes, that "the submission here required is that which flows from sincere affection and love: for such is the submission we pay to Christ, and this is all a wise and good man will desire, and which no prudent and religious woman will ever refuse."

[2] *This* his *body*:] "*i. e.* the church." Newcome.

[3] *In every thing*.] "This," says Archbishop Newcome, "is to be limited by reason. It is observable that when St. Paul inculcates submission to civil magistrates, he avoids expressing himself so strongly." "The church's subjection to Christ," Dr. Chandler observes, "is founded in gratitude; and results from that protection which he grants it, and those blessings which he confers upon it. And from hence it follows, that if the husband be defective in his care of the wife, and refuses her that tenderness, protection, friendship, and support, which the matrimonial relation gives her a claim to, the husband so far vacates the reasons and obligations of that submission which he might otherwise reasonably expect from her, and which an obliged virtuous wife would gladly pay him."

Ch. V. Ver. 24. their husbands, as similar to that of the church to Christ. He is to the church what the head is to the body: so likewise is the husband to the wife: and as the church, instructed, protected, and cherished by Christ, yields a ready obedience to his mild and wise and beneficial precepts; so while the husband, though an unbeliever, continues to conduct himself with becoming tenderness and affection, and to exercise only that mild authority which the laws and manners of society warrant, and which in certain cases may be expedient, let the wife submit to his direction and yield to his authority in all cases in which she is not restrained from it by duties of superior obligation.

It may be proper to observe here, that the apostle's directions are better suited to the state of society and manners in the East, where the female sex then were, and still are, kept under an undue and ungenerous restraint, than to the more enlightened views and more polished manners of European countries and modern times; and they are by no means to be regarded as obligatory in their strict and literal meaning. Good sense, good temper, good manners, mutual affection and sincere piety, will regulate the conduct of persons in the married state toward each other, far better than any specific precepts.

2. The apostle enjoins upon the husband to show regard and tenderness, even to an unbelieving wife,

similar to that which Christ has manifested towards the church, ver. 25—27. Ch. V.

Husbands, love your wives[1], *even as Christ loved the church*[2], *and gave himself up for it, that he might sanctify it, having purified it by the washing of water and by the word*[3], *that he himself*[4] Ver. 25. 26. 27.

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[1] *Husbands,* &c.] "These precepts concerning relative duties," says Dr. Chandler, "evidently relate to such persons as were of different religions. Lest women who were converted to Christianity should imagine they were discharged from the obligations and duties of the matrimonial contract towards their husbands, if they were either Jews or heathens, the apostle commands them to live in a reasonable subjection to them. And lest the husband, when converted, should hate or endeavour to divorce his wife, if Jewish or pagan, the apostle commands him to treat her with the tenderest affection, and by methods of kindness to endeavour to reclaim and purify her from the superstitions of judaism or the idolatries of paganism."

[2] *As Christ,* &c.] "As Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it, *i. e.* might reform men from superstitious idolatries and vices, and separate them to himself to be his peculiar people, so ought men tenderly to love their heathen or Jewish wives, that thus by kindness and affection they might prove the means of their sanctification and conversion to Christ." Chandler.

[3] *And by the word.*] So the Syriac: see Newcome. By the word they had been instructed in the Christian faith; by the washing of water in baptism they had made profession of it; and by both united they were purified and sanctified, *i.e.* openly separated from the unbelieving world. "Εν ῥηματι *optime vertitur per doctrinam, et conjungitur cum verbis,* ἱνα αυτην ἁγιαση. *Nam per doctrinam, quam discimus, emendamur, reddimur pii, et abstrahimur a vitiis.* Καθαρισας κ. τ. λ. *postquam nos aquæ lavacro abluit.*" Rosenmuller. *q. d.* that he might sanctify it by his word, *i. e.* doctrine, after having purified it by the washing of water. Upon his profession of faith, the converted heathen is baptized and admitted into the Christian community, and by his continued attendance upon the Christian doctrine he gradually becomes thoroughly instructed and reformed.

[4] *That he himself.*] The Alexandrine, Clermont, and other manuscripts and versions read αυτος for αυτην. This is also the

Ch. V. Ver. 27. *might present the church to himself, glorious* [1], *not having blemish or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be holy and unblameable.*

Let not husbands whose wives are unbelievers think themselves authorized to neglect them, or treat them unkindly, on that account. This ignorance of truth, this alienation from God, is their great calamity: let them be regarded with a generous tenderness and pity. So Christ loved the Gentile church, and pitied it in its heathen state; not because of its merits, but of its wretchedness. And, moved by disinterested compassion, he made a voluntary sacrifice of himself for it, in order first to separate it from the unbelieving world by the rite of baptism and the public profession of religion, and then to purify it by the efficacy of his doctrine: intending thereby to cleanse it completely from every moral stain, to make it resplendent in the beauty of holiness, and to prepare and qualify it for its high and honourable destiny of an intimate and everlast-

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reading of the Coptic, Italic, and Vulgate versions, and is adopted by Locke, Griesbach, and Newcome. "Ἔνδοξον, *quicquid nitet*: σπιλος, *macula in facie, vel vestimentis.* ῥυτιδες, *rugæ*." Rosenmuller. "The apostle (says Mr. Locke), to recommend to husbands love and tenderness to their wives, in imitation of Christ's affection to the church, shows, that whereas other brides take care to spruce themselves and to set off their persons with all manner of neatness and cleanness, to recommend themselves to their bridegrooms, Christ himself, at the expense of his own pains and blood, purified and prepared for himself his spouse the church, that he might present it to himself without spot or wrinkle."

[1] *Glorious: a church*, &c.] This punctuation is preferred by Chandler and Macknight: they both suppose an allusion to Ps. xlv. 13.

ing union to him. Thus let Christians who are connected in the conjugal relation with unbelievers by no means think themselves at liberty to withdraw from them, but, after the example of Christ, let them spare no pains to promote their conversion, to bring them to the knowledge of the truth, and to form them to the temper and spirit of the gospel; which will be the surest pledge of mutual happiness both here and hereafter. Ch. V. Ver. 27.

3. The apostle enforces his exhortation by an allusion to the account given in the Jewish scriptures of the first formation of the woman, ver. 28—32.

Husbands ought so to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself[2]. *For no one ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ the church. For we are members of his body;* we are *of his flesh, and of his bones*[3]. *Accordingly*[4], *a* 28. 29. 30. 31.

[2] *Loveth himself.*] There is no doubt an allusion here to the account given of the formation of the woman out of the man, Gen. ii. 21—25; which, whether it is to be understood literally or figuratively, as a fact or as a fable, was equally suitable to the apostle's purpose. He alludes to it as a known story.

[3] *Of his flesh,* &c.] An unquestionable allusion to the words of Adam, Gen. ii. 24, 'This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh.' The church is a part of Christ's mystical person, as the woman of the person of the first man. "The apostle," says Mr. Locke, "had here two things in view: the one was, to press men to love their wives, by the example of Christ's love to his church; and the force of that argument lay in this, that a man and his wife were one flesh, as Christ and his church were one; but this being a truth of the greater consequence, though an incident, he subjoins the reason, *Because we are members of his body,* &c. These words, from Gen. ii. 23, in his concise way

Ch. V. Ver. 32. *man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall adhere to his wife, and they two shall be one person. This mystery is great*[1]*; yet I affirm* it *in reference to Christ, and the church.*

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he understands both of Christ and the church. He then goes on with Gen. ii. 24, which makes their being one flesh the reason why a man was more strictly to be united to his wife than to his parents or any other relation."

[*] *Accordingly.*] αντι τουτου "answerably to this." Doddridge. The apostle's analogy seems to be this: As the woman was part of the body of the man, so is the church the body of Christ. And still further: As, in consequence of this formation of the woman, the matrimonial connexion is represented as the most indissoluble of all relations, such also is the relation between Christ and his church. Nothing must separate them.

[1] *This mystery is great.*] "This," says Dr. Chandler, "is the natural order of the words." The sense of them it is not easy to ascertain. It seems to me that the apostle is pursuing his analogy, *q. d.* The indissoluble nature of the matrimonial bond is a considerable difficulty, and seems liable to some objection: nevertheless, εγω δε, I apply it in its utmost extent to the union between Christ and the church; this must never be dissolved. No professing Christian must apostatize from the faith, nor will Christ ever discard his genuine disciples. The apostle here follows the turn of his mind, probably owing to his pharisaic education, to pursue analogies from the Old Testament. There is no reason to suppose that any such figurative meaning was originally intended in the narrative in Genesis; still less to admit, with Mr. Locke, that the apostle was inspired to interpret these passages. Some persons understand the mystery to relate to the eternal Son of God becoming incarnate. But this is far from the apostle's purpose. The Vulgate version renders the text, "marriage is a great sacrament;" and upon this text found their doctrine, that marriage is one of the seven sacraments. But this is a palpable error.

"This mystery," says Dr. Chandler, "this secret union of persons by matrimonial affection, is great, and it is called a mystery, from the indissoluble union which that matrimony constitutes; and because the tenderness of conjugal affection, when sincere, is such as no words can describe. The Papists, from this passage, would fain prove matrimony to be a sacrament; whereas μυστηριον never signifies in the New Testament *a sa-*

You have read in the Jewish scriptures, that the woman was formed from a rib taken out of the side of the man, Gen. ii. 21. Now, whether this account be history or fable, it teaches the important truth that the conjugal relation is the most intimate and indissoluble that can subsist in the world; and that persons in the married state should consider themselves as one and the same in person, in spirit, in affection, in feeling, in design, and in conduct; it is therefore as unnatural for a man to be unkind and cruel to his wife, as it would be to see him tearing and mangling his own flesh. A man who loves his wife, loves himself; while he contributes to her ease and comfort, he contributes to his own. Here, like- Ch. V. Ver. 32.

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crament, but something that either was or is a secret; and therefore can never agree to the nature of a Christian sacrament."

" *Hoc mysterium vocat grave. Operæ pretium esse, inquit Paulus, has res invicem conferre, cogitare quomodo unum sub altero lateat. Hoc et similibus locis, Paulus imitatus est Judæorum interpretandi modum mysticum, quo, cum persona, historia, ritibus, comparatur simul res alia, quæ per illa illustretur. Inde scriptor allegoricus dici solet etiam mysticus. Non opus est ut nos Pauli exemplo hunc modum interpretandi imitemur, nobis enim non est res cum Judæis, quorum ingenio nos accommodare debeamus.*" Rosenmuller.

" *This mystery is great: q. d.* This truth, which revelation has opened to us, is great. I mean, that Christ should *leave the glory which he had with the Father*, and should join himself to his spouse the church." Newcome. Dr. Doddridge is still more confident: " The mystery *certainly was*, that the *eternal Son of God*, receiving the degenerate race of man into an union with himself," &c. Surely nothing but attachment to a favourite system could ever have induced these learned and pious writers to have given an interpretation to the apostle's language, to which neither the words themselves nor the context afford the slightest countenance.

Ch. V. Ver. 32. wise, the analogy applies to Christ and the church; the church is Christ's mystical body, which he regards as a constituent part of himself; which, therefore, he protects, nourishes, and comforts. As Adam is said to have called Eve 'bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh,' so may Christ be regarded as speaking of the church. And as it is said of man, that he shall forego all other relations in order to form an indissoluble connexion with the female of his choice, so the connexion between Christ and his church is equally paramount and indissoluble. You may think this doctrine strange, but I assure you that it is true. And they who have once entered into the Christian covenant must no more think of receding, than a man can recede from his marriage vow.

4. The apostle concludes this branch of his subject with a general exhortation to conjugal virtue, ver. 33.

33. *However*[1], *let each of you, individually, so love his wife as himself, and let the wife reverence* her *husband.*

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[1] *However.*] πλην *q. d.* Dropping the allegory altogether, the sum and substance of my advice is this, &c. "I speak of the sacred and strict union there is between him (Christ), and the members of it, (the church,) only that you may every one of you apply it to each other. πλην και ὑμεις, *only that you may apply it to yourselves, each one of you.*" Chandler. "Enimvero, *particula transeundi*, Ut ad rem redeam. *Nam sensum illum allegoricum obiter tantum attingere voluit.*" Rosenmuller. "However, not to enlarge on this truth respecting Christ, let us, &c. See Phil. iii. 16." Newcome.

To return from this digression, and to drop the allegory, what I mean to recommend is, that each party should be strictly attentive to the duties of the conjugal relation, whether the other party be a Christian or an unbeliever. Let the husband, by kind and generous behaviour, win over the unbelieving wife to the profession of a religion which breathes the spirit of love; and let the dutiful behaviour of the Christian wife prove to the unbelieving husband that the profession of Christianity, while it strictly enforces all other duties, does not diminish that respectful deference which the laws and customs of society require from an affectionate and faithful wife to a kind and virtuous husband. Ch. V. Ver. 32.

II.

The apostle inculcates filial and parental duties, especially in cases where either of the parties were unbelievers, ch. vi. 1—4.

1. He represents the duties of children, and particularly to unbelieving parents, ver. 1—3.

Children, obey your parents in the *Lord*[2], *for this is just*[3]. Ch. VI. Ver. 1.

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[2] *In* the *Lord.*] εν κυριῳ "by virtue of his command, and as far as they could consistently with the obligations of their Christian profession." Chandler. These words are wanting in the Clermont and some other very ancient manuscripts, and have much the appearance of a marginal gloss. In the parallel passage, Col. iii. 20, they are placed at the end of the sentence. Dr. Chandler understands the advice as given to the converted children of unbelieving parents, that they might not

Ch. VI. Ver. 1.

The disciples of Moses, whose attachment to legal rites and rigours, and whose zeal for making proselytes is unbounded, teach that conversion to their system is a dissolution of all the bonds of civil society, and even of nature; so that parents and children are as entirely released from all the peculiar duties of those endearing relations, to those who remain in a heathen state, as if they were entire strangers to each other. Far different is the spirit and the doctrine of the Christian dispensation. Instead of relaxing, it enforces the duties of every relation by the most powerful and engaging motives. Let children, therefore, obey their parents; and particularly let those young persons, whose parents are not yet converted to the faith, yield to them the same respectful and dutiful obedience which that honourable and endearing relation naturally claims; except in those cases where obedience to the parent would be inconsistent with the allegiance which

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think themselves exempt from filial duty. The Jews represented proselytism to their religion as dissolving the bonds of natural relation. "*Transgressi in morem eorum idem usurpant: nec quicquid prius imbuuntur quam contemnere divos; exuere patriam; parentes, liberos, fratres, vilia habere.*" Tacitus *Hist.* v. 7. It is not improbable that the judaizing teachers might inculcate a similar doctrine, which would make it peculiarly proper for the apostle to enter his protest against it, and strongly to press upon new converts the discharge of relative and social duties. See Dr. Jennings's *Jewish Antiquities*, b. i. ch. 3.

[3] *This is just.*] "It is reasonable in itself, independent of any law of God, it being the dictate of nature, and for the general good, that till persons come to the full use of their own reason, they should be under the direction of that of their parents, who are responsible for them." Priestley.

they owe to Christ. It is just that children should obey their parents thus far, because they are under great obligations to them for past care and kindness; because, in general, the prudence and experience of the parent is much superior to that of the child; and because such behaviour may induce the unbelieving parent to inquire into the evidence of a doctrine which produces such beneficial effects. But that obedience to parents is to be limited by the paramount authority of Christ, is also just; for Christ is the messenger of God, and it is right to obey God rather than man. Ch. VI. Ver. 1.

This is the first commandment with a promise[1]*:* 2.
Honour thy father and thy mother, that it may be 3.
well with thee, and that thou mayest live long in the land.

That obedience to parents is peculiarly acceptable to God, may be inferred from the eminent distinction which this precept obtains among those commandments which the finger of God engraved upon the tables of stone. The precept which requires children to love, obey, and in case of need to support, their aged parents, is the only one to which a specific promise is annexed; namely, long life in the land of Canaan. And this shows how little

[1] *This is the first commandment*, &c.] I follow Mr. Wakefield, in placing this clause at the beginning of the sentence. It is justly observed that the meaning is, that this is the first, and indeed the only, commandment in the decalogue which hath any "special and appropriated promise;" the promise in the second commandment being of a general nature: "to all who love God and keep his commandments." See Newcome.

Exod.

Ch. VI. Ver. 3.

reason the Jewish zealots have for teaching, that proselytism supersedes the duties of natural relations. And though temporal blessings are not the proper objects of evangelical promise, yet be assured that, as nothing is more acceptable to God than filial piety, so there is no virtue that has a more direct tendency to secure peace, reputation, and prosperity in life.

2. The apostle gives directions to parents for their conduct towards children, especially if they are unbelievers, ver. 4.

4. *And, ye parents, do not exasperate*[1] *your children, but educate them in* the *discipline and instruction of* the *Lord*[2].

Exod. xx. 6. "εντολη πρωτη *videtur potius esse*, primarium præceptum, *unum e præcipuis, vel ad fructum, vel ad necessitatem observandi.*" Rosenmuller.

[1] *Do not exasperate*, &c.] "If converted Christian parents had children that seemed averse to the faith of Christ," says Dr. Chandler, "they were not to treat them with severity, nor to exasperate them by an unkind and harsh behaviour, because this might tend to prejudice them against Christianity itself."

[2] The *discipline*, &c.] Wakefield. "παιδεια *est disciplina, seu morum gubernatio, ut ex* παιδευα *Cyri apparet.*" Raphelius. "Νουθετειν *est* τον νεον ευθετειν, τον νεον καλως η ορθως τιθεναι: επανορθουν, *monere mitius, vel severius, acriter redarguere et reprehendere, immo, pœna afficere.*" Kypke *apud* Newcome. "παιδεια, *omnis institutio et disciplina puerilis, sive illa fiat institutione in literis, sive morum et animi informatione ad honesta quævis exemplo, admonitionibus, beneficiis et pœnis.* νουθεσια, *admonitio, disciplina, qua alterum ad meliorem mentem revocare studemus.*" Schleusner. "The apostle exhorts parents to treat children as rational creatures, and not with that harshness and severity which was common with the ancients, who had a power over their children which the humanity of modern laws does not permit. But they were to be more especially careful to instruct

Let not parents behave harshly and unkindly to their children; and particularly let not Christian parents think themselves authorized to treat with peculiar severity those who are not yet converted to the faith. Harsh behaviour and violent language will exasperate rather than convince. If they wish that their children should become true disciples of Jesus, let them mildly instruct them in the principles of Christian doctrine, and the evidences of the Christian faith, so as to enlighten their understandings and to bring conviction to their reason; and by wise and gentle, but firm, discipline, let them restrain their children from the vices of heathenism, and train them up to the practice and habit of Christian virtue. Ch. VI. Ver. 4.

III.

The apostle enforces the mutual duties of masters and servants, or bondmen, ver. 5—9.

1. The duties of believing servants to unbelieving masters are strongly represented and enforced, ver. 5—8.

Bond-servants[3], *be obedient to your earthly* 5.

their children in the principles of religion, this being a thing of more consequence to them than any thing else they could do for them." Priestley.

[3] *Bond-servants.*] "δουλος," says Dr. Chandler, "is, properly, a slave; and, lest slaves converted to Christianity should imagine that they were discharged from their subjection to their masters because they were become by faith the freed men of Christ, the apostle enjoins upon them the most exemplary obedience."

Ch. VI. Ver. 5. *masters* [1], *with reverential fear* [2], *in the integrity* [3] *of your heart, as unto Christ* [4].

Let not those whom the state and laws of society have placed in the degraded and unhappy condition of bondmen and slaves, imagine that Christianity is intended to operate any immediate change in their civil state or social duties. The benevolent principles and liberal spirit of the doctrine of Jesus will indeed, in due time, abolish slavery, and put an end to all unjust and arbitrary rule which man exercises over his fellow man. In the mean time, let the Christian slave yield obedience to his heathen master, not only from terror and the dread of punishment, but with the same uprightness and sincerity with which he obeys the precepts of his heavenly master Christ.

6. *Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers* [5], *but as*

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[1] *Earthly masters.*] In the original, "according to the flesh." "in opposition (says Archbishop Newcome) to their religious master, Christ." Mr. Wakefield translates it, "your worldly masters."

[2] *Reverential fear:*] literally, *fear and trembling.* See Worsley's translation. "*i. e.* with diligence and earnestness." Newcome. "with that fear and dread of their displeasure which becomes your state of slavery and subjection." Chandler. The same expression occurs Phil. ii. 12; it seems to be a proverbial phrase. "*summa cum reverentia.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Integrity,*] or, 'in singleness of heart.' "This virtue," says Dr. Newcome, "is opposed to that deceit and duplicity for which slaves were remarkable."

[4] *Unto Christ.*] The Alexandrine and some other manuscripts, and the Coptic version, here read 'the Lord.' See Griesbach.

[5] *Eye-service,* &c.] Dr. Doddridge observes, that "Grotius takes notice of the elegance of the compound words made use of here in the original, which our translators have endeavoured to imitate. But as the Greek abounds more in such compound

bond-servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart[6]; *performing service with good-will as to the Lord*[7], *and not to men.* Ch. VI. Ver. 7.

Let not Christian servants behave as the heathen are often known to do: being active and diligent under their master's eye, to excite his attention and to gain his favour, but idle and vicious when they can be so with impunity. Let them perform their duty faithfully, considering the lawful requisitions of their masters as the requisitions of Christ, whose command it is that they should be obeyed; and to obey Christ is to do the will of God, whose servant and messenger he is. Obey your heathen masters, therefore, from a sense of duty to God, whose notice you can never escape. Let, then, your obedience be not only exact and faithful, but benevolent and cheerful; and whatever you do for the service of your master, regard it as done for the service of Christ, who will not suffer you to go without a proper remuneration.

Knowing that whatever good work any man doeth, he will receive it from the Lord, whether he be a slave[8] *or a free-man.* 8.

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words than any other language, so the apostle Paul has frequently introduced them into his writings with a peculiar elegance and beauty, of which the best translation must, in many instances, fall very short." Rom. ii. 11; 2 Cor. vi. 14; Col. ii. 4; 1 Tim. i. 6; 2 Tim. i. 6, ii. 15.

[6] *From the heart.*] " ἐκ ψυχῆς, *lubenter, sed tanquam ingenui Christiani, qui lubenter præceptis Dei obsequuntur.*" Rosenmuller.

[7] *As to the Lord.*] i.e. " *Respicientes præcipue non illos homines, quorum servi estis, sed Christum, qui id exigit, et qui præmium reddit.*" Rosenmuller.

[8] *A slave.*] " These slaves were the property of their mas-

Ch. VI. Ver. 8. Your unbelieving and unjust masters may sometimes govern you with the rod of oppression; and, instead of expressing approbation, or allowing a proper recompense for your fidelity and diligence, they may treat you with insult and cruelty. Let not this discourage you: least of all let it induce you to neglect your duty. You must habitually regard yourselves as the servants of Christ; he is your true master: and none of his servants, whatever their rank and condition may be, shall go without his due reward: nor shall the lowest act of duty fail of its corresponding recompense. Let no consideration, therefore, tempt you to neglect the duties of your humble and laborious station; and let your character exhibit to all around you the efficacy of Christian principles, and the triumph of Christian hopes.

2. The apostle gives advice to Christian masters, ver. 9.

9. *And* ye, *masters, deal equitably*[1] *with them, for-*

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ters; and some of these being treated, upon their conversion to Christianity, as rational beings by the apostles and their fellow Christians, were more sensible of the yoke of servitude; and there were not wanting in those days who told them that their masters had no right to hold them in that abject state. To this doctrine they were too ready to give ear. But the apostle, sensible of what disservice this would be to the Christian cause, urges upon Christian slaves to render to their masters all the services that were required of them; and even to do it more cheerfully, as now lying under an additional obligation to the performance of every duty, being servants of God and of Christ, who would reward their obedience here in a better state hereafter." Priestley.

[1] *Deal equitably.*] τα αυτα ποιειτε. Mr. Wakefield understands the words in the same sense as ισοτητα, Col. iv. 1, and

bearing threats[2]*; knowing that their and your*[3] *master also is in heaven; with whom is no respect of persons.* Ch. VI. Ver. 9.

Let Christian masters act justly and equitably towards their heathen slaves; and let them not imagine that they are to be treated with undue severity because they are of a different religion. As men, they possess the feelings and claim the rights of humanity. Abstain from harsh and reproachful language, and do not threaten severe punishments for trivial faults. Or if, in the heat of resentment, you may have let fall an unguarded threat, beware of executing the injustice you have denounced. These

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renders them "deal *equally*." Dr. Chandler explains the precept, "act by them in the like manner; *i. e.* with a benevolent and friendly mind, and out of regard to the will and example of Christ."

[2] *Forbearing threats.*] ανιεντες· "moderating threatening." Macknight. Neither uttering unjust threats, nor executing them when uttered.

[3] *Their and your.*] αυτων και υμων· this is the reading of the Alexandrine, Clermont, and other manuscripts, and of the Vulgate version. See Griesbach. "The apostle," says Dr. Priestley, "gives proper admonition to masters to forbear that rigorous and inhuman treatment of slaves which was too common in that age. There were some slaves of better condition, who managed their masters' most confidential affairs; many of whom were persons of good education. Of this superior class there were many converts to Christianity. But the common labouring slaves were treated in much the same manner as slaves are now treated in the West Indies. We do not find any express precept in the scriptures against the practice of slavery. But the general maxims of Christianity are particularly applicable to this case, especially that golden rule, of doing to others as we would have others do to us. It is indeed true that the mild spirit of Christianity has greatly contributed to abolish slavery in this western part of the world; and it is not doubted but that, in time, its happy influence will be felt every where, to the abolishing of slavery universally."

Ch. VI. Ver. 9. poor and friendless wretches may not, perhaps, be able to revenge the injuries they receive; but your religion teaches you that they have a protector in heaven, at whose tribunal both you and they will soon appear, who is equally the sovereign both of the master and the slave; and who will administer justice with an impartial hand. Be merciful, therefore, and you shall obtain mercy.

SECTION III.

THE APOSTLE, in language highly figurative, cautions his readers against the pernicious errors of seducing and artful teachers, against which he advises them to fortify themselves by a firm adherence to the doctrine and the spirit of the gospel. Ch. vi. 10—20.

1. The apostle warns them of the necessity of a firm attachment to the gospel, in all its extent, as the best guard against the artifices of seducing teachers, ver. 10, 11.

10. *As to what remains, my brethren, strengthen yourselves in the Lord, and in his mighty power*[1];

[1] *Strengthen,* &c.] *i. e.* establish yourselves in the doctrine of Christ, which has been confirmed by miracles, the works of extraordinary and supernatural power. Dr. Chandler paraphrases the text, *q. d.* "Be ye established and confirmed in your Christian profession; and fortify your minds with all those helps and assistances which the Lord, or the gospel of Christ, furnishes you with." The other interpretation is better suited to the context.

put on the complete armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the artifices of the slanderer[2]. Ch. VI. Ver. 11.

I cannot conclude this epistle without warning you earnestly and faithfully of a dangerous and artful enemy, against whom it is highly requisite that you should be continually upon your guard; and for an encounter with whom you must be well prepared. Confirm yourselves, therefore, in your Christian principles; in those principles which you have received as the doctrine of Christ, and which have been proved to be such by the miraculous powers of the missionaries by whom they have been taught. Arm yourselves, therefore, at all points with the doctrine and the spirit of the gospel, and you will easily detect the sophistry and repel the attacks of those who would corrupt the simplicity of the Christian faith, and who calumniate the characters of its most enlightened teachers.

2. Under highly figurative language, the apostle describes the characters of the enemies of truth, ver. 12, 13.

[2] *The slanderer.*] τȣ διαϐόλȣ, *the devil.* So the public and most other versions: applying it to the supposed leader of evil spirits. *Accuser.* Wakefield. "the insidious artifice of the false accuser." Harwood. That the apostle is here cautioning his readers against the artifices of the judaizing teachers, by which they endeavoured to corrupt the Christian doctrine, by blending it with the ceremonies of the Mosaic ritual, is sufficiently evident from the context; and that these teachers were justly entitled to the name of διαϐόλοι, or *slanderers*, is notorious both from Luke's history, and Paul's epistles: especially those to the Galatians and Corinthians.

Ch. VI. Ver. 12. *For your conflict*[1] *is not* only[2] *with blood and flesh*[3], *but with principalities, with powers, with*

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[1] *Your conflict.*] ὑμων is the reading of the Clermont manuscript, and of some others of good authority, and is marked by Griesbach as well supported, though not admitted into his text. παλη, *wrestling.* "Plutarch tells us that wrestling was the most artful and subtle of all the ancient games, and that it was derived from a word which signifies to throw a man down by deceit and craft. Persons who understand this exercise have many fetches and turns, and changes of posture, which they make use of to supplant and trip up their adversaries. And it is with great justice that a state of persecution is compared with it." Chandler.

Macknight observes, that the word here used must signify *fighting:* for instead of being clad in armour, the Greeks always wrestled naked.

[2] *Not* only, &c.] This is one instance amongst many of that idiom of the Hebrew language in which an absolute negation is used when inferiority only is intended. Your conflict is not with flesh and blood: that is, not only, or, chiefly. Other instances are numerous. See Matt. xii. 7; 1 Cor. i. 17. See Macknight's *Prelim. Ess.*, No. 4, p. 97. He states it as a form of the comparative degree.

[3] *Not with blood and flesh, but with principalities,* &c.] "our conflict is not barely with men, but with principalities," &c. Locke; who adds in his note, that "principalities and powers are put here, it is visible, for those revolted angels which stood in opposition to the kingdom of God." Such is Mr. Locke's interpretation, and with him run the whole mass of commentators with very few exceptions. It is unfortunate that this excellent critic did not upon this occasion recollect his own judicious observations upon ch. i. 10, where he interprets the very same expressions, of the "government of those who ruled by the law of Moses." Dr. Chandler explains the words *blood and flesh* as expressing "men of low degree, in opposition to the powerful, rich, and mighty." Dr. Harwood's version is, "For we combat not merely with the vices and prejudices of private individuals, but we have to conflict with all the confederate and united powers of grand and potent establishments, both civil and religious, which are supported by the sovereigns and rulers of this benighted age."

This makes an excellent sense, well suited to the connexion and to the apostle's design. Perhaps, however, we shall approximate more nearly to the true meaning of the apostle, if, by

the rulers of this dark world[4], *with spiritual wickedness*[5] *in heavenly* places. *Wherefore, take up* Ch. VI. Ver. 13.

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taking the words *principalities, powers,* &c. in the sense in which they are used ch. i. 21, as meaning the Jewish hierarchy, and zealots for the law in general, we should understand its correlative, *blood and flesh*, as expressing heathen idolaters, and opposers of the gospel. See Heb. xii. 4. The contrast then will be, not between wicked men and wicked angels, according to the common opinion, nor, between men of low degree and men in power, according to Dr. Chandler and Dr. Harwood, but between the power and prejudices of heathen idolaters, and those of Jewish rulers and zealots for the law; not excluding the judaizing Christians, who created so much uneasiness to the apostle and to the Gentile believers.

This interpretation is countenanced by Mr. Wakefield; and it gives a clear and consistent sense to this difficult and highly figurative passage: whereas the common interpretation, though supported by great names, is in truth totally unintelligible, and would appear so to every person of reflection, if, as in many other cases, its absurdity had not been veiled by its familiarity. For how can frail and feeble mortals be prepared to encounter with hosts of *revolted angels*, even supposing such beings to have a real existence?

[4] *Rulers of this dark world.*] The words τε αιωνος are unnecessary, and are omitted, as Archbishop Newcome observes, upon sufficient authority. "Κοσμοκρατωρ, *mundi dominus.* Eph. vi. 12. *qui locus ab aliis, de doctoribus aut principibus Judæorum, ab aliis, vero, de geniis malis explicatur, a quibus hæc sublunaria gubernari credebant Judæi superstitiosi. Utrique explicationi favet usus loquendi.*" Schleusner. The state of the Jews at that time may justly be called a state of darkness, as their inveterate prejudices blinded their eyes against the light of the gospel.

[5] *Spiritual wickedness,* &c.] In the original, "the spiritual things of wickedness;" "which," says Dr. Chandler, "may signify, either apostate spirits, or, what I rather incline to think, the wicked and perverse corrupters of the Christian doctrine." Christians are called πνευματικοι the natural adversaries to these are πνευματικα της πονηριας, *spiritual wickednesses;* men who, pretending to the spirit, endeavoured to corrupt the simplicity of the faith. See Rev. xviii. 2, xvi. 14; 1 John iv. 6; 1 Tim. iv. 1. Mr. Wakefield's translation is, "For we have not only to wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the autho-

Ch. VI. Ver. 13. *the complete armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in this evil day, and having subdued every thing* [1], *to stand.*

The caution I have suggested to you is not superfluous; for I solemnly announce to you who have embraced the Christian faith, and who are desirous of maintaining it in its primitive purity, that you are engaged in a very arduous and perilous conflict, which will require the constant exertion of your best vigilance and skill to maintain your ground and to secure the victory. And do not imagine that I am here speaking of a personal combat between man and man, which, except in very extraordinary circumstances, is at all times inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel; nor yet do I refer particularly to the opposition to which you will be exposed, in your attempts to propagate the gospel, from heathen prejudices and heathen power: the struggle to which I chiefly allude, is that which you will have to maintain against those who would resist the progress, or corrupt the purity, of the Christian faith. I have before reminded you that you are, in a sense, risen with Christ, and are ex-

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rity, against the powers, against the rulers of this dark age, against the wickedness of spiritual men in a heavenly dispensation:" *i. e.* as he explains it in his notes, "against Jewish governors, who have a dispensation of religion from heaven, as well as against heathen magistrates, under the darkness of superstition and idolatry."

[1] *Subdued every thing.*] "and having vanquished them, to maintain your ground." Harwood; who produces several passages from Dionysius Halicarnassensis, to prove that the verb κατεργαζω often signifies *to vanquish* or *dispatch* an enemy.

alted with him into the community of the sons of God without submitting to the yoke of the law, and that this has been so clearly made out to the Jewish leaders, that the greatest zealots could not deny it: see Eph. i. 21. These, therefore, and especially those sects and orders of men who are by profession most zealously and blindly attached to the Mosaic ritual, and to oral tradition, are full of the bitterest malignity against the gospel and its professors, and will leave no effort untried to pervert your principles and to seduce you from the faith: and some even of those who profess the Christian religion discover the same malignant opposition to the enlarged and liberal spirit of the gospel, and would bend the necks of their fellow-Christians under the yoke of the ceremonial law. These are the enemies, to oppose whom with success, it is necessary for you to gird on the whole armour of the gospel, by which alone you will be able to repel their hostile and insidious attacks; and, having vanquished them all, to stand your ground, and to approve yourselves as good soldiers of your glorious chief. Ch. VI. Ver. 13.

3. He describes the armour which the gospel furnishes to its professors to fit them for this important and perilous warfare, ver. 14—17.

Stand[2], *therefore, having your loins girded about* 14.

[2] *Stand.*] Dr. Chandler observes, "The Christian must never flee from his post, or quit the field." "Some (says Dod-

Ch. VI. Ver. 14. 15. *with truth*[1]; *having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having your feet ready shod*[2] *with the gospel of peace.*

Now, that you may not be at a loss to know what that armour of proof is which I so earnestly recommend, I will give you a brief description of it. In the first place, then, Let truth be your military belt: adhere firmly to the doctrine of the gospel; profess it sincerely, openly, and without disguise: this will inspire you with strength and vigour of mind. Put on next, the breastplate of integrity and universal virtue. Truth and righteousness must go together; and, united, they will form an impenetrable defence. And, that you may pass on in your Christian career with as little molestation as possible, you must always wear the greaves of peace. The gentle inoffen-

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dridge) have observed, that no armour is provided for the back, as we must always face the enemy, or, have no defence from danger." It may also be remarked that the Christian virtues, here described as *the armour of God*, are very suitable for opposing the corruptions of Christian doctrine, and their use in this view is very obvious; but the propriety of the comparison, to say the least, is not equally apparent if the enemies to be resisted are evil angels.

[1] *Truth.*] It is not perhaps easy to ascertain the distinct meaning of every expression. By *truth*, the military belt, we may reasonably understand, the genuine doctrine of the gospel; which must be firmly adhered to and publicly professed. The breastplate is *righteousness*, the practice of universal virtue, and the greaves are *peace*, "that benevolent peaceful spirit required by the gospel; which (says Chandler) will render persons ever ready for and cheerful in every kind and friendly office, and will be one of the best securities any one can have against the injuries of persecution."

[2] *Feet ready shod.*] See Wakefield. "shod with the readiness or activity of the gospel of peace." Chandler.

sive spirit of the gospel will do much to smooth the ruggedness of the way, and to disarm the fury of the enemy and the persecutor. While, therefore, you firmly profess the truth, let your conduct at all times be mild and peaceable. Ch. VI. Ver. 15.

Besides all[3] *these, take up the shield of faith, by which ye will be able to quench all the fiery darts*[4] *of the wicked* adversary[5]. 16.

In addition to truth, righteousness, and peace, you must grasp the shield of faith: faith in the protection, and promise of God, by Jesus Christ, will keep you from being alarmed and wounded by those bold denunciations of vengeance and damnation, which the enemies of truth, and of the liberty of the gospel church, vociferate against the faithful disciples of Jesus, as if the thunder of heaven were at their own disposal. These burning shafts, so formidable to weak and unstable minds, are easily repelled by the broad impenetrable shield of rational confidence in the goodness of God, and in the promises of the Christian covenant.

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[3] *Besides all.*] επι πασιν, in addition to all. See Harwood.

[4] *Fiery darts.*] "It was customary among the ancients," says Dr. Chandler, "to make small firebrands in the form of arrows, composed of pitch, tar, and brimstone, which they shot either into towns to set them on fire, or amongst their enemies, to disorder and annoy them. These the soldiers used to receive on their shields, and so prevented them from doing harm." In the allegory, the fiery darts may be explained of the damnatory anathemas of the corrupters of Christian truth, which confidence in the divine mercy will easily repel.

[5] *The wicked* adversary.] So Dr. Harwood. The slanderer, mentioned ver. 11. The principalities and powers, &c.; that is, the enemies of truth, ver. 12.

Ch. VI. Ver. 17. *Take also the helmet of salvation*[1], *and that spiritual sword, which is the word of God*[2].

Let the hope of eternal life, founded upon the promises of the gospel, be the ornament and the defence of your head. Let this divine hope be the predominant affection in your breast, the constant spring of action in your soul, and by its benign influence let it overrule every inferior emotion, every low and unworthy impulse; and thus let it keep the understanding clear and cool, and capable of discerning and judging right, and diffuse an habitual cheerfulness over the countenance.—The last weapon which I shall mention, as necessary to complete the suit of Christian armour, is a weapon of attack as well as defence, which, if managed with skill and courage, will soon put hosts of adversaries to flight. I mean the word of God, the authentic declarations of the divine will by Christ and his apostles; which, if they are well understood and properly applied, will, like a sharp and well-tempered sword, cut

[1] *Helmet of salvation.*] 1 Thess. v. 8, for a helmet, the *hope* of salvation. "The hope of salvation," says Chandler, "built on the promises of God, will preserve from the fatal effects of all temptations, from worldly terrors and evils, so that they shall not disorder the imagination, or pervert the judgement, or cause men to desert the path of duty."

[2] *That spiritual sword,* &c.] So Mr. Wakefield. "The knowledge of this (says Dr. Chandler) not only separates them from evil affections, but teaches them to discern between truth and falsehood; guards the Christian from the entrance of corrupt and destructive doctrine, and destroys the influence and force of the most artful and delusive errors." Beza observes that all the parts of the complete armour of the ancients are elegantly introduced into the apostle's account of the armour of the Christian. See Macknight.

down that formidable band of reasonings and motives which the champions of error set in array against the advocates of truth. This is a weapon furnished by God himself, who by his spirit inspired the holy prophets; and its stroke is irresistible. If God, who is eternal and unchangeable, has declared that all sincere believers in Christ shall be accepted by him and adopted into his family, the envy, malice, and rage of those who would arrogate to themselves exclusively the tokens of the divine favour, may justly be regarded with pity and contempt. Ch. VI. Ver. 17.

In this armour stand, persevere, and advance. This will be your safety and your wisdom: as no armour is provided but that which enables you to face the enemy, nor any security for those who retreat.

4. The apostle recommends earnest prayer and intercession for one another; and particularly for himself, then a prisoner at Rome, ver. 18—20.

Continually offering all prayer and supplication[3] *in the spirit*[4], *and watching thereto*[5] *with all perseverance, and supplication for all the saints.* 18.

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[3] *Prayer and supplication.*] προσευχης και δεησεως. "These two words," says Dr. Chandler, "seem naturally to denote the asking of what is good, and the deprecating of what is evil, from their two roots; the first of which signifies 'wishing,' and the latter 'fearing.' Dr. Macknight renders them "supplication and deprecation." This distinction, however, is not adhered to, the word δεησις being used in the latter clause of this very verse for prayer in general.

[4] *In the spirit:*] *i. e.* "either with their heart and mind, sincerely and fervently; or, according as the spirit of God should excite and move them." Chandler.—"praying in your mind at all times, *i. e.* as ye keep watch." John xi. 33. Wakefield.

[5] *Watching thereto.*] "The apostle continues the use of mi-

Ch. VI. Ver. 18. Clothed and girded as you are in the panoply of the gospel, I would not have you so far depend upon your own courage and prowess as to forget your dependence upon God. From him you derive all your weapons of attack and defence, and all your skill to wield them; and upon his blessing you depend for success. To him therefore, while you stand upon the watch to observe the motions of the enemy, continually address your humble, fervent supplications, for yourselves and others, in obedience to the precepts, and agreeably to the spirit of the gospel; that you and they may be preserved from pernicious errors, and may be enabled to defend the truth of the gospel with success.

19. *Particularly*[1] *for me, that utterance*[2] *may be*

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litary terms; and alludes here to the sentinels and guards of an army, who were to watch in their posts during the night, to prevent surprise and give notice of danger." Chandler.

[1] *Particularly.*] Dr. Doddridge observes from Blackwall (*Sacred Classics*, vol i. p. 145), that the particle καὶ sometimes signifies *particularly*, or, *especially*; and that he produces passages to this purpose from proper authorities. See also Macknight.

"Earnest intercession for others," says Dr. Priestley, "is particularly recommended in the scriptures; and there is the same reason for it as for praying for ourselves, because the interests of others ought to be as dear to us as our own. As to the efficacy of prayer in general with God, to whom it is addressed, we must remain at a loss: it is enough for us that it is prescribed by God, who would not do it without sufficient reason. It is certainly well adapted to our present infant state, and has the happiest effect upon our minds. But whatever connexion there be between our prayers and the blessings we pray for, or something equivalent, though seemingly the reverse of our prayers, we may be assured that at this day there is nothing supernatural in it. We pray for our daily bread, and we thank God for it; but it is never given us except through the medium

given me, so that I may open my mouth to make Ch. VI.
known with confidence[3] *this mystery of the gospel*[4],
for which I discharge my embassy in a chain[5], *that* Ver. 20.
I may speak boldly in its behalf, *as I ought to speak.*

Amongst others, I particularly request your intercessions for myself, who am engaged in the same honourable conflict with you, and have suffered severely in the struggle. Whether I labour or suffer, it is an encouragement to me to know that my brethren sympathize with me, and are offering up their prayers for me. Intreat, then, that God will be pleased to grant me both ability and opportu-

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of our own labour; and the same, no doubt, is the case with blessings of a spiritual nature. This is certain, that a sense of our dependence upon God for all blessings, temporal and spiritual, cannot be too deeply impressed upon the mind: and this can only be done by meditation and prayer."

[2] *Utterance*, &c.] Dr. Doddridge supposes that this may refer to some impediment in his speech, or other imperfection in the manner of his address. See 2 Cor. xii. 7, Gal. iv. 14.

[3] *To make known with confidence.*] This punctuation is approved by Stephanus, Estius, Bengelius, and Griesbach. The common reading is, "that I may open my mouth boldly." See Bowyer and Wakefield.

[4] *Mystery*, &c.] *i. e.* "the call of the Gentiles." See ch. ii. 3—10. Newcome.

[5] *In a chain.*] εν αλυσει. An allusion, no doubt, to his being in the custody of a soldier, and chained to him. "Few (says Dr. Doddridge) need be told that it was usual among the Romans to chain the prisoner's right arm to the left arm of the soldier that guarded him. But as the persons of ambassadors were always sacred, the apostle seems to refer to the outrage that was done to his divine master in this violation of his liberty." "It is a fine idea," says Dr. Priestley, "under which the apostle here exhibits himself. He was a prisoner and in bonds; but, notwithstanding this, he considered himself as an ambassador, and from a power superior to any on earth."

Ch. VI. Ver 20. nity to publish the gospel; and particularly, to speak boldly that great mystery so offensive to prejudiced and narrow-minded zealots, that believing Gentiles are admitted under the gospel dispensation to equal privileges with believing Jews. A glorious doctrine! of which I esteem it my highest honour to be an authorized ambassador; though, in consequence of my fidelity to my trust, I am now chained to a guard, and have long been a prisoner and an exile. Nevertheless, there is nothing I so much desire, whether a prisoner, or at large, as to be employed in this honourable ministry, and to proclaim the joyful tidings of the gospel with a zeal and freedom which becomes one whose obligations to the mercy of God in Christ are so various and transcendent.

CONCLUSION.

THE EPISTLE concludes with referring them to Tychicus for further information concerning himself; and with a general salutation and appropriate benediction, ver. 21—24.

21. *Now that ye also may know my affairs, and what I am doing, Tychicus*[1], *a beloved brother and*

[1] *Tychicus.*] "He was one of Paul's friends and fellow-labourers, and had been his companion in the last interview he had with the elders of Ephesus, when he sent for them to come to him at Miletus. Acts xx. 4, 17." Doddridge.

faithful minister in the Lord, will inform you of Ch. VI.
every thing. *Him I have sent unto you for this* Ver. 22.
express purpose, that ye may know what relates to me[2], *and* that *he may comfort your hearts.*

I have not time to write particularly the state of my affairs; and it is the less necessary, as Tychicus my Christian brother, and faithful fellow-labourer in the gospel, who has passed some time with me at Rome, and who knows in what manner I employ myself, under what disadvantages and with what success I teach the gospel, will give you all the information concerning me that you can wish. He is the bearer of this epistle: and though much pleased with his company, and relieved by his help, I have sent him for the express purpose of letting you know the state in which I am; and of comforting and encouraging you, by representing the cheerfulness with which I bear persecution in the cause of Christian truth, and the great degree in which my sufferings have contributed to promote the success of the gospel.

Peace be *unto the brethren, and love, with faith,* 23.
from God our *Father, and from* our *Lord Jesus Christ*[3].

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[2] *What relates to me.*] "The apostle means, that he wishes them to know what success he had had in preaching at Rome, what opposition he had met with, what comfort he enjoyed under his sufferings, what converts he had made to Christ, and in what manner the evidences of the gospel affected the minds of the inhabitants of Rome." Macknight.

[3] *From God,* &c.] *i. e.* from God the Father, who is the ori-

Ch. VI. Ver. 23. May the best blessings for this life and the next be imparted to all who profess the Christian name; and in order to this, may God our Father, through the mission and doctrine of Jesus Christ our teacher and Lord, implant in your hearts that genuine faith which will be productive of love to God and benevolence to man; and which, without the rigour of the ceremonial law, is of itself a sufficient qualification for the character and privileges of the sons of God.

24. *Favour* be *with all those who love the uncorrupted* doctrine[1] *of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*

May the favour of God, and the complete participation of all the blessings of the gospel, be granted

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ginal source and author of the blessings of the gospel; and from the Lord Jesus Christ, who was appointed by him to publish and dispense them to mankind. *q. d.* May they have that peace which is the result of love to God and man, and founded in a cordial belief in the gospel which was given by God and published by Christ. "Here," says Dr. Priestley, "as upon all other occasions, God or the Father is spoken of as one being, and Jesus Christ, or our Lord, as another. The difference is that of God and man, which certainly ought not to be confounded."

[1] *Who love the uncorrupted* doctrine.] εν αφθαρσια. "who love our Lord Jesus Christ *in incorruption*." Mr. Locke remarks the peculiarity of the phrase, and explains it, "without mixing or joining any thing with him in the work of salvation which may render the gospel useless and ineffectual." See Gal. v. 2. Archbishop Newcome explains the text in the same sense: "not adulterating the gospel with false doctrines, as the judaizers did." As the expression "loving the Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption" sounds harsh, I have ventured to translate it by the equivalent phrase, "loving the uncorrupted doctrine of

to those who show their regard to Christ by receiving his doctrine in its primitive purity, and in firmly resisting every attempt to blend the simplicity of the gospel with the unauthorized inventions of human folly and presumption. Amen. Ch. VI. Ver. 24.

Christ."—"who love the Lord Jesus Christ in purity." Wakefield. Dr. Harwood gives a peculiar turn to the passage: "who love our Lord Jesus Christ, who is in immortality." The phrase is never used in the sense given to it in the public version, "who love our Lord Jesus Christ in *sincerity*," that is, *truly* and *faithfully*.

THE EPISTLE

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

THE PHILIPPIANS.

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

PHILIPPI [1] was a considerable city in the eastern district of Macedonia, and a Roman colony. The gospel was first preached in this city about A.D. 51, when the apostle Paul, having separated from

[1] Philippi took its name from Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, who improved and fortified it, partly for the sake of the gold mines in the neighbourhood, and partly for defence against the Thracians. Acts xvi. 12, it is called "a colony;" and, ver. 21, the inhabitants call themselves Romans. It appears, by the coins of several of the Roman emperors, that it was first colonized by Julius Cæsar, and that other inhabitants were afterwards sent thither by Augustus. It is well known that Roman colonists retained the laws and privileges of Roman citizens. Acts xvi. 12, Philippi is called the *chief* city of that part of Macedonia, and the margin reads, the *first* city. Neither of these assertions is true; Amphipolis being the metropolis, and Neapolis the first city to which a traveller from Asia would come. See ver. 11. It is conjectured that the true

Barnabas, had chosen Silas to be the companion of his labours, and in his circuit through the Lesser Asia having arrived at Troas, he had been admonished in a vision to extend his mission to Macedonia, Acts xvi. 9, 10. He landed at Neapolis, and proceeded to Philippi; where, after having converted Lydia, a woman of property, he and his companions consented to pass some days at her house. In this interval he miraculously healed a young woman whose mind was deranged, and who, imagining herself possessed with a spirit of divination, had taken a fancy to bear her testimony to the divine authority of the Christian missionaries. The keepers of this unhappy creature, who by her restoration to her right mind were deprived of the iniquitous gains which they extorted from the credulity of the superstitious crowd, exasperated against the apostle and his companion, accused them before the magistrates as turbulent men, who were guilty of illegal practices, and who disturbed the peace of the city: upon which charge they were severely beaten, and cast into prison, without being heard in their own defence. But having been released by miracle, the jailer was converted and baptized. The next day, the apostles having obliged

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reading is, "which is a city of the first part of Macedonia." This would require a very small alteration of the original (πρωτης instead of πρωτη της). Paulus Æmilius, when he conquered Macedonia, divided the country into four districts, of which the first was between the rivers Strymon and Nessus: in which district stood Philippi. See Peirce's *Synopsis* of the Epistle, and Benson's *Propagation of Christianity*, vol. ii. p. 87.

the magistrates to attend in person to set them at liberty, and to make an apology for having infringed their privileges as Roman citizens, they quitted Philippi and went to Thessalonica, Acts xvi. 12—40. In this mission, Luke and Timothy were associated with Paul and Silas.

The apostle passed through Philippi some years afterwards, in his way to Jerusalem from Macedonia, Acts xx. 6; and it is generally believed that he visited this city again, agreeably to his expressed intention, Philip. ii. 24, soon after his release from his first imprisonment.

It appears from the apostle's grateful acknowledgements, that the Christian converts at Philippi had been very kind to him. They had not only entertained him and his associates with great hospitality during his residence amongst them, but they had also sent him very liberal supplies, both into Achaia [1] and Thessalonica; and would have done more for him in other places if they could have

[1] *Achaia.*] This Dr. Paley apprehends the apostle to refer to Phil. iv. 15, 16; which he translates thus: "Now ye Philippians, know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I was departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only; and that also in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity." From 2 Cor. xi. 8, 9, it appears that he accepted no pecuniary assistance from the converts of that country, but that he drew his supplies from the Macedonian Christians. This was at the beginning of the gospel, *i. e.* when he first preached the gospel in these parts. The ingenious and learned author justly infers from this undesigned coincidence in the two epistles, the impossibility of forgery. See Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, p. 263—267.

found a safe and convenient conveyance. And it is observable, that the church at Philippi was the only society of Christians from whom the apostle, when he first preached the gospel in Greece, accepted contributions of this kind; choosing, from prudential considerations, to wave his right of being maintained by those to whom he preached, and to support himself by his own manual labour, rather than give occasion to his enemies to calumniate his motives, or obstruct the progress of the gospel by making it burdensome to the hearers. See Phil. iii. 10, 14—16, 2 Cor. xii. 13, 14. It is generally inferred from 1 Cor. vii. 8, that the apostle was a widower, but many have concluded, from an expression in this epistle (ch. iv. 3), that Paul was a married man: but that his consort being unable to accompany him in his fatiguing and perilous missions, he had, as a testimony of his high regard and affection to his generous friends at Philippi left her under their protection in that city, where she was employed, in company with other pious women, in acts of piety and charity. The Philippians had lately sent the apostle a very liberal present by Epaphroditus (ch. iv. 18), by whom it should seem that they had also expressed their tender sympathy with him in his confinement, and their alarms lest the progress of the gospel should be retarded by the arrest and persecution of its most zealous and successful advocate. This worthy messenger of the church, who had been visited with a long and dangerous sickness at Rome, probably in consequence of the

fatigue which he had suffered, was now recovering; and being impatient to return to his anxious friends, who had heard of his illness, the apostle dispatched him with this letter (ch. ii. 25—30), the design of which is to acknowledge and to return them thanks for their pious liberality, to remove their apprehensions with regard to the consequences of his imprisonment, to fortify them against the intrusion and the mischievous doctrines of the judaizing zealots, and to encourage them to persevere in their adherence to the gospel. It has been observed, that this epistle contains very high commendations of the conduct of the Philippians, with little or no mixture of reproof[1]; a clear evidence that the Christian doctrine had not at that time been corrupted among them; and indeed it is probable that not many Jews were settled in the place, as there does not appear to have been any synagogue at Philippi. See Acts xvi. 13.[2]

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[1] "*Est hæc Epistola, quanquam et ipsa Romæ in vinculis scripta, lætior, alacriorque, et blandior cæteris, ideo quod Philippis, quæ urbs præcipua est Macedoniæ et colonia, bis fuisset Paulus, et bene successisset ibi Pauli prædicatio, etc. Post quæ tempora Philippenses plerique fideliter custodierant ea quæ a Paulo acceperant, amoremque in tam bonum magistrum, et reverentiam multis modis erant testati.*" Grotius.

[2] If the Jews had been numerous at Philippi they would have had a synagogue, where the apostle would, as usual, have opened his commission; whereas it appears that he began to preach at an oratory by the river side, out of the city, to the pious women who resorted thither. The Jewish converts were most easily seduced by judaizing teachers, and usually gave the the apostle most trouble; the converts at Philippi were probably chiefly among the Gentiles.

THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS was written about A. D. 62[1], and near the close of the apostle's first imprisonment. It is one of those epistles the genuineness of which has never been impeached. Its authenticity is not only established by the concurrent testimony of the ecclesiastical writers, but by very strong internal evidence[2], particularly by many undesigned coincidences with the history of Luke, and by a cast of sentiment and a structure of style which are peculiar to St. Paul, and easily distinguished by those who are much conversant with that apostle's invaluable writings.

Having introduced the epistle with an appropriate salutation, ch. i. 1, 2, the apostle proceeds,

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[1] Dr. Lardner thinks, some time before the close of that year. *Supplement*, vol. ii. ch. xii. sect. 11.

[2] As internal evidences of the genuineness of this epistle, Dr. Paley mentions: 1.) The account of Epaphroditus, his journey, errand, sickness, &c. which are all incidentally hinted at as circumstances well known to his correspondent. 2.) The insinuation that Epaphroditus's recovery was natural, and not miraculous. 3.) The coincidence of the hints which he drops of having received supplies from the Philippians while he was in Achaia, with the facts he mentions in the second epistle to the Corinthians. Phil. iv. 15, 16, compared with 2 Cor. xi. 8, 9. 4.) The allusion to Timothy having been at Philippi, ch. i. 1, ii. 19, which, though not expressly mentioned, is plainly implied in Luke's history, Acts xvi 3, xvii. 14. 5.) The epistle purports to have been written near the close of an imprisonment of long duration, which agrees with Luke's account, Acts xxviii 31. 6.) The temper of the apostle's mind, as discovered in this epistle, ch. i. 23, and in the 2 Cor. v. 8, &c. is a presumption that they were written by the same person. 7.) The allusions to his persecutions at Philippi, ch. i. 29, 30, ii. 1, 2, agree with the account given by Luke, Acts xvi. 22.

I. To express his gratitude to his Philippian friends for their liberality, and his prayers for their improvement, ver. 3—11.

II. To quiet their apprehensions, he gives some account of his own situation and views, of his feelings and his prospects of release, and of the great success of the gospel at Rome, ver. 12—26.

III. He exhorts the Philippian converts to cultivate a temper and spirit worthy of the gospel, and particularly to unanimity and fortitude in the profession of truth, after the example of Jesus Christ, and in hope of future reward. Ch. i. 27—ii. 16.

IV. The apostle promises to send Timothy to Philippi as soon as he could judge how his own case was likely to terminate, he expresses his hope of following him speedily; and in the mean time he dispatches their friend and messenger Epaphroditus to them without delay, passing, at the same time, a high encomium upon his character, and warmly recommending him to their esteem, ver. 17—30.

V. The apostle earnestly warns them against the artifices of Jewish zealots, and urges them to follow his own example, and to adhere firmly to the doctrine which he had taught them. Ch. iii. 1—iv. 1.

VI. He sends specific messages to a few distinguished individuals; he adds some general exhortations; he renews his expressions of gratitude for

their repeated kindness and liberality, and particularly for their late generous and acceptable present by Epaphroditus; and concludes the epistle with a suitable doxology, a general salutation, and the usual benediction, ver. 2—23.

THE
EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

THE APOSTLE'S INTRODUCTION.

CHAP. I. 1, 2.

THE apostle, associating the name of Timothy with his own, introduces the epistle with a general salutation to the officers and members of the Philippian church, ch. i. 1, 2. Ch. I.

PAUL and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ[1], *to all the holy* believers *in Christ Jesus*[2] *who are* Ver. 1.

[1] *Servants,* &c.] There are but four epistles in which Paul does not introduce himself under the character of an apostle. The two epistles to the Thessalonians were written before his authority had been disputed; and that to Philemon was a private letter, requesting a favour of a friend. The object of this epistle to the Philippians appears to be in a great measure to express his gratitude to them for their liberality: he seems, therefore, purposely to avoid mentioning a title which carried in it a claim to a maintenance. See 1 Thess. ii. 6, 2 Cor. xii. 12, 13. Nor does it appear that there was any party formed against the apostle in the church at Philippi. Timothy's name is joined with his own, because he had been with the apostle when he first preached the gospel at Philippi. See Peirce *in loc.* and Benson on Philemon, ver. 1.

[2] *Holy* believers, &c.] In the original, "all the *holy* in Christ

Ch. I. Ver. 2. *at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons* [1], *favour* be *to you and peace from God our Father, and* from *the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Paul and his beloved associate Timothy, whose

Jesus:" a periphrasis for all *Christians;* a word which the apostle never uses in any of his epistles, though it must have been familiar to him, as it was first imposed at Antioch, where he and Barnabas had preached the gospel with much success, Acts xi. 26: a plain proof that those learned men are mistaken who infer, from the expression used by Luke, that this appellation was given by divine appointment.

[1] *Bishops,* &c.] The existence of these officers in the primitive church is indisputable; and the mention of them in this epistle, and in no other, seems to me to be no serious objection against the genuineness of the epistle. They might have been particularly active in the collection which had been made for the apostle, or there might be some other reason for mentioning them of which we are ignorant. See Doddridge and Macknight; and Whitby, who also justly argues that the apostle, by the word *bishops,* επισκοποι, here, means the elders of the church. "By bishops," says Dr. Priestley, "the apostle could only mean the elders or presbyters of the church, to all of whom, as to those of the church of Ephesus, he gives the title of bishops, or, overseers. There could be no such thing in that age as a bishop of one church having a superintendence over the ministers of other churches. Whether diocesan episcopacy be a useful Institution or not, there is nothing to countenance it in the scriptures; and the history of the church in later ages shows how liable it is to the grossest abuses, making the church of Christ to resemble the kingdoms of this world, by feeding the pride and ignorance of some churches and bishops, to the degradation and oppression of others."

It is very true, as Dr. Priestley observes, that diocesan episcopacy is not a divine institution. Neither is any other form of church discipline and government. The Christian religion, with great wisdom, leaves every society of believers to model its own discipline according to its own ideas of expedience. And though episcopacy has been often perverted to evil purposes, to which all human institutions are liable, and of which episcopacy is far from exhibiting the sole example, it does not follow that this mode of church government which has so generally prevailed may not in all cases be lawful, and in some highly expedient.

highest boast it is to be the servants of Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah, and the messengers of his grace to the heathen world, send their affectionate salutations to their generous friends, to all true believers in Christ in the celebrated city of Philippi; and particularly to those grave and venerable men who so worthily preside over their religious assemblies; and likewise to those active and faithful persons to whose management the temporal concerns of the society are committed. The blessing of God be upon you all, and a large participation of that peace which results from the faith and hope and temper of the gospel of Christ. Ch. I. Ver. 2.

SECTION I.

THE APOSTLE expresses his gratitude for their kindness, and his prayers for their improvement in the spirit of the gospel. Ch. i. 3—11.

1. The apostle expresses his great satisfaction in their liberal spirit, his gratitude to God for it, and his firm persuasion that they will persevere in their Christian principles and conduct, ver. 3—7.

I thank my God for all your remembrance of me[2]; *always and in every prayer of mine for you* 3. 4.

[2] *All your remembrance* of me.] επι πασῃ τῃ μνειᾳ ὑμων. Compare Luke xv. 7, 10. See Peirce; who proposes and vindicates this translation.

Ch. I. Ver. 5. *all, making supplication with joy, because of your contribution to the gospel*[1] *from the first day until*
6. *now. Being confident of this, that each of you who hath begun a good work*[2] *will go on to finish* it *until*
7. *the day of Jesus Christ. As it is just for me to think this of you all, because you retain me in* your *hearts*[3]*, and because you were all joint contributors to the present which I received*[4]*, both during my*

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[1] *Contribution*, &c.] κοινωνια εις το ευαγγελιον· *i. e.* "communicating or contributing to my support while I have been employed in preaching the gospel." Peirce; who observes, that if he had intended what our translators have expressed, he would have said τω ευαγγελιω. 1 Cor. i. 9. Eph. iii. 9. See Wakefield. *From the first day:* "i. e. ever since I began to preach among you." Peirce.

[2] *That each of you*, &c.] So Mr. Wakefield translates the clause; and much more suitably to the connexion than the common version. *Until the day*, &c. "*i. e.* as long as you live." Peirce.

[3] *You retain me in your hearts.*] δια το εχειν με εν τη καρδια υμας. The original is ambiguous: I adopt the version of Peirce and Wakefield, as more agreeable to the context.

[4] *Joint-contributors*, &c.] "You have all been contributors to the gift I have received, in order to my being the better prepared for my defence." Peirce; who shows that the word κοινωνος is sometimes taken in an active sense in classical authors. See 1 Cor. ix. 23; which he translates thus: "This I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be συγκοινωνος, in conjunction with others, a communicator of the gospel. "Pearce (Peirce) I believe," says Dr. Paley *Hor. Paul.* p. 256, "was the first commentator who gave this sense to the expression, and I believe also that his exposition is now generally assented to." It is very evident that Dr. Paley appeals to Peirce of Exeter, whose criticism he cites, and not to Bishop Pearce. But it is remarkable that Bishop Pearce himself, in his *Epistolæ Duæ*, Works, vol. ii. p. 478, incidentally gives the same sense to the passage. He considers the text in ver. 3, 4, as corrupted and confused, and conjectures the true reading to be, Ευχαριστω τω Θεω μου (επι παση τη δεησει μου παντοτε υπερ παντων υμων, μετα χαρας την μνειαν ποιουμενος) επι τη κοινωνια, κ. τ. λ. "*et Apostolum puto*

bonds and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel. Ch. I. Ver. 7.

It is with the greatest satisfaction that I not only hear of, but that I also experience in my own person, the happy effects of your Christian benevolence. I thank God that you still remember your faithful friend and teacher in the gospel, and that neither length of time nor distance of place, nor depression of circumstances, have effaced your affectionate sympathy. I often pray for you; which is the only way in which I can express my love and gratitude to you. And as often as I pray, I recollect with joy, and express with gratitude, your great liberality in the generous contributions which you have made to support the great expense of the mission of the gospel among the heathen. This generous spirit manifested itself, not only when your affections were warmly excited at your first conversion to the faith, but, to your great honour, this zeal has never relaxed, from that time to the present hour: and I have no doubt that you will persevere, as long as you live, in the same generous, public-spirited conduct; and that you will be found so employed when you are

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velle dicere, se gratias Deo agere quia Philippenses huic suas divitias communicârunt, ut *Judæis inopia laborantibus ministraretur.*" This, though a very ingenious conjecture, being destitute of all authority, is therefore inadmissible, as Mr. Peirce observes, who gives what he esteems a correct interpretation of the received text.

How little support is given by this passage to the Calvinistic doctrine of final Perseverance, or that a man who has been once converted cannot fall away from grace, is sufficiently obvious.

Ch. I. Ver. 7. summoned to the great and final tribunal. I speak with confidence of you all without exception; and I have the best reason for the good hopes which I entertain respecting you, for I am informed that every individual among you sympathizes kindly with me in my present confinement, and that you all contributed in proportion to your ability to that handsome and seasonable present which you have sent me; and for which I may have particular occasion, as I expect in a short time to be called upon to defend myself, and the gospel which I am commissioned to preach, at the imperial tribunal.

2. The apostle further assures them of his tender affection for them, which he expresses in earnest prayer to God for their improvement in the knowledge and spirit of the gospel, ver. 8—11.

8. *For God is my witness how earnestly I long*
after you all with the tender affection[1] *of Jesus*
9. *Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound*
still more and more in knowledge and in *all discern-*
10. *ment*[2]*, that ye may distinguish things that differ*[3]*,*

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[1] *Tender affection.*] Gr. *bowels.* See Wakefield and Newcome.

[2] *Discernment.*] αισθησει· "see Prov. i. 7, The fear of the Lord is the beginning αισθησεως." Newcome. "I pray that your attachment to the gospel may increase and show itself by your knowledge of its principles and your feeling of its influence. The word, in the original, implies perception and feeling." Dr. Priestley.

[3] *Distinguish things that differ.*] So Peirce. Wakefield and Newcome prefer the common version, viz. "things that are excellent." Peirce refers to 1 Thess. v. 21 as a parallel text, "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good;" and adds,

that ye may continue clear[4] *and unperverted*[5] *till the day of Christ: being filled with the fruit*[6] *of righteousness*[7] *through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.* Ch. I. Ver. 11.

Be assured, my dear friends, that your great kindness to me, and your generous remembrance of me, is not lost upon me. God, who searches the heart, is witness to the truth and fervour of my affection for you; how earnestly I desire to visit you, how much I wish to impart to you some Christian instruction, some spiritual consolation. But, for the present, a personal interview is not permitted. And the only return I can make for your kindness and liberality is, by praying for you. And this, my

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"Nor can a man's holding fast any controverted opinion in religion be of any advantage unless he hold it fast upon such a trial; nor is there any other way for men to approve themselves sincere against the day of Christ while they neglect this course, as is here plainly intimated."

[4] *Clear.*] "εἰλικρινῆς, *qui ad solem explicatus et spectatus purus reperitur.*" Schleusner. It is generally understood of sincerity, in opposition to deceit and duplicity: see Peirce. Grotius explains it, "*ut clarè omnia perspiciatis;*" and Mr. Wakefield translates it, "that ye may continue with discernment." See 2 Pet. iii. 1. Perhaps this sense better suits the connexion: *q. d.* that you may be *clear-sighted* in the doctrine of Christ.

[5] *Unperverted.*] ἀπρόσκοποι. The word is doubtful: it sometimes signifies, not giving offence to others, 1 Cor. x. 32. Mr. Peirce thinks it here signifies, "Do nothing to offend yourselves:" *i. e.* to wound your own consciences, Acts xxiv. 16. Mr. Wakefield translates it, "without stumbling;" and in this sense it best connects with εἰλικρινεῖς, if that word is rendered *clear-sighted.*

[6] *Fruit.*] This word is read in the singular number in the best copies. See Griesbach.

[7] *Righteousness:*] *i. e.* liberality. See Ps. cxii. 3, 9; 2 Cor. ix. 9, 10; James ii. 13. Peirce.

Ch. I. Ver. 11. brethren, is the object of my earnest aspirations on your account: That you may persevere and improve in that amiable, benevolent, and generous spirit, by which you have hitherto been distinguished; and that your Christian benevolence may be combined with proportionable improvement in Christian knowledge, and in a capacity to form a right judgement concerning the doctrines of the gospel. And this I desire for you, to the end that you may be able to distinguish truth and falsehood, right and wrong, and may not be in danger of being misled by false and seducing teachers, who, I fear, are endeavouring to insinuate themselves among you. Hitherto you have maintained the gospel doctrine in its purity, and have preserved inviolable your Christian liberty. I pray that you may persevere to the end of life in the same honourable course; that your principles may be uncorrupted; that your conduct may excite no prejudices against your profession: that so you may enjoy, to their utmost extent, the comfort, the reputation, and the affectionate gratitude, which are the genuine fruit and just reward of your Christian liberality, which redounds so much to the honour of God, and to the credit of the gospel, and for which you will hereafter receive ample recompense at the great day, when we shall all appear before the judgement-seat of Christ.

SECTION II.

THE APOSTLE reports to the Philippians an encouraging account of his present situation; and expresses his hope that it would soon be in his power to make them a visit. Ch. i. 12—26. Ch. I.

1. He informs them that his long confinement had, upon the whole, contributed to the success of the gospel, ver. 12—14.

Now I would have you know, brethren, that what hath happened to me hath turned out rather[1] *to the advancement of the gospel. So that my bonds are well known to be for the sake of Christ*[2], *through all the palace*[3], *and all other* places; *and many of the brethren in the Lord*[4], *emboldened by my bonds* Ver. 12. 13. 14.

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[1] *Rather.*] μαλλον. Mr. Wakefield's version is, "has been *greatly* to the furtherance of the gospel."

[2] *For the sake of Christ.*] The expression in the original is ambiguous; the sense given in the translation seems best adapted to the context, and is given by Peirce, Harwood, Macknight, Wakefield, and Newcome. If it were known that he was imprisoned solely for preaching the Christian doctrine, and not for any offence against the state, it might tend to make an impression in his favour, and contribute to his enlargement.

[3] *Palace.*] "the word properly signifies, the judgement-hall. Some think the camp of the pretorian guards is meant. See *Le Clerc, Suppl. to Hammond.*" Newcome.

[4] *Brethren in the Lord.*] "Christian brethren, described in the second clause of the next verse." Newcome.

Ch. I. Ver. 14. *have ventured*[1], *with much more undaunted courage, to speak the word of God*[2].

You are naturally apprehensive, lest my long imprisonment at Rome may have been a considerable impediment to the progress of the gospel. But divine providence often compasses its ends by means which are to us unsearchable; and in the present case I can assure you for your comfort, that an event which appeared in itself so likely to obstruct and to put an end to my usefulness, has, in fact, contributed greatly to extend it. My tedious and unjust confinement has promoted the diffusion of the gospel. For it has excited the curiosity of many, even in Cæsar's palace, as well as in all other districts of the city, to inquire into the cause of this bitter persecution; and having discovered that the only ground of accusation was, that I preached the gospel to the Gentiles, it has led them to inquire into the contents of this glorious dispensation; the consequence of which has been, that many have become sincere and confirmed believers, and some of them of no inconsiderable rank in the imperial court. And though the chain I wear is a considerable restraint upon my personal exertions, yet I am happy to say that I have many faithful colleagues who are both able and willing to labour in this honourable cause,

[1] *Have ventured.*] See Doddridge's version. Gr. "are more abundantly bold to speak the word without fear."

[2] *Of God.*] τȣ Θεȣ. This, which is wanting in the received text, is the reading of the Alexandrine and several other manuscripts, and of the Syriac, Italic, and Vulgate versions. See Griesbach and Peirce.

and who, observing the cheerfulness with which I endure this long confinement, and its happy effect, so contrary to their expectation, in diffusing the knowledge of the gospel, have become more active, zealous, and courageous in the propagation of Christian truth, and brave every danger in so glorious and divine a cause. Ch. I. Ver. 14.

2. The apostle expresses the great satisfaction he felt in the zeal with which the gospel was promulgated, even though some of the preachers of it were influenced by motives personally unkind to himself, ver. 15—18.

Some, indeed, are preaching Christ even through envy and contention[1], *and some also through goodwill. Those* who preach him *from love*[2] preach, 15. 17.

[1] *Some are preaching Christ even through envy and contention.*] These were, no doubt, judaizing zealots, who, professing to believe Jesus to be the Messiah, but insisting upon the observation of the Jewish ceremonial as essential to salvation, were implacable enemies to the apostle, who was a zealous advocate for the liberty of the Gentile Christians. These would probably take advantage of the apostle's confinement; and would go about among the new converts, endeavouring to persuade them to submit to the Mosaic ritual, than which nothing, as they well knew, would be more mortifying to him. It should seem that, though these men preached their judaizing doctrine in a degree which marked the malignity of their temper, and their hostility to the apostle, yet they did not preach it to that extent in Rome to which they carried it in some other places. Otherwise the apostle would hardly have called it preaching Christ. See Gal. i. 6—9, v. 2, 3. Perhaps these zealots were afraid of insisting loudly and publicly at Rome upon the absolute necessity of submission to the Jewish ritual, lest they should give offence to the civil power. See Peirce and Macknight. Mr. Evanson, surely, has little reason to argue, from the bad spirit of Paul's opponents, that the epistle is not genuine.

[2] *Those* who, &c.] The construction of the original (οἱ μεν—

Ch. I. Ver. 16. 18. *knowing that I lie* in prison *for the defence*[1] *of the gospel. But those* who preach *from strife, proclaim Christ with no pure intention*[2], *meaning to add affliction to my bonds. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and herein I do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice*[3].

Many are engaged in preaching the great truth, that Jesus is the Christ; but, I am sorry to add,

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οἱ δὲ) requires the transposition of the 16th and 17th verses, which is supported by many good manuscripts and versions. See Griesbach, Wakefield, and Newcome. Peirce justly remarks, "that οἱ ἐξ ἀγαπης, and οἱ ἐξ ἐριθειας, are the subjects and not the predicate of their respective sentences;" which is also the construction of Wakefield and Newcome.

[1] *Lie* in prison *for the defence.*] εις απολογιαν τε ευαγγελιϑ κειμαι. "that I lie in bonds in order to make an apology." Peirce; who thinks this sense better suited to the connexion than the common version, *I am set or appointed for the defence*, &c.: he observes, that the proper sense of απολογια is a *defence* upon an accusation. Perhaps the meaning is, *q. d.* I must remain in confinement till after my defence; and therefore, as I can do less, these exert themselves the more.

[2] *With no pure intention.*] ἁγνως. This expression may refer either to the insincerity of their motives, or to their corruption of the Christian doctrine: perhaps the apostle included both. I have adopted Mr. Wakefield's translation.

[3] *Will rejoice.*] "The friends of Paul," says Dr. Priestley, "were encouraged by his firmness to preach the gospel with the greatest boldness; and others who were probably judaizing teachers, of whom, as appears by St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, there were many in that metropolis, preached it in such a manner as tended to disparage the apostle, thinking perhaps to mortify him by preaching independently of him, and undervaluing him; and also, preaching many doctrines that he did not approve, especially the universal obligation to adhere to the laws of Moses. Paul, however, rejoiced in this preaching of the gospel, for hereby converts would be made to it, and the evil that might be occasioned by the preaching of his enemies would in time be rectified."

not all with equally pure and benevolent motives. Strange to relate, there are some who preach the good news of universal peace and good will to men, from a contentious, perverse, and envious spirit; but there are also some who preach the same doctrine from the best and most generous motives. These illustrious characters, who honour me with their friendship, are the more active in the labours of their ministry, because they know not only that I am a prisoner for the sake of the gospel, but that till I have made my defence, or rather, which is in effect the same, till I have pleaded the cause and made known the doctrine of Christ before the imperial tribunal, I must continue in confinement, unable to exert myself as I wish. It is their desire, therefore, to supply my deficiency, and in this they manifest their affection to me by their zealous co-operation in the same cause. The other party, who oppose my doctrine and envy my success, teach indeed that Jesus is the Christ, and so far it is well. But they neither act from a good motive, nor teach uncorrupted doctrine. As far as they dare, at this distance from Jerusalem, the chief seat of their polity and worship, they insist upon the observation of judaical rites; and thus they expect and intend to add to my sufferings, by the pain which they know that it would give me to witness their success in propagating unsound doctrine. But in this they are mistaken: for after all, and amidst all the imperfection, and all the insincerity with which they exercise their ministry, they agree with those who are animated

Ch. I. Ver. 18.

Ch. I. Ver. 18. by a better spirit in teaching, the fundamental truths of the Christian religion, and in this I do and I will rejoice: knowing that they who sincerely embrace the first elements of Christianity, and who practically acknowledge Jesus as their master, will not, whatever their teachers may intend, be materially injured by speculative errors.

3. The apostle expresses his cheerful confidence that this zeal for the gospel would contribute to his release; and that his defence at his approaching trial would be conducive to the success of the Christian doctrine, ver. 19, 20.

19. *For I know*[1] *that this*[2] *will end in my deliverance*[3] *through your prayer, and* through *the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ*[4], *according to my*

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[1] *I know.*] οἰδα. Though the apostle uses strong language, he does not mean to express absolute certainty of release, but merely a confident expectation of it; for in the next sentence he expresses at least a possibility that the issue might be fatal.

[2] *This:*] *i. e.* "this preaching of Christ of which my bonds are the occasion, ver. 18." Peirce. "this *imprisonment.*" Wakefield.

[3] *Deliverance.*] σωτηριαν, *release from confinement.* 2 Cor. i. 6, Acts vii. 25, xxvii. 34, are passages in which the word is used in a sense different from *eternal happiness.* See Peirce, Wakefield, Harwood, Macknight, and Newcome. Peirce suggests that "the preaching of the Judaizers, out of envy, would give his friends an opportunity to represent to the emperor and those in power, that he was persecuted by the Jews out of malice, and not for any real crimes against the state. He might be sensible what good use would be made of this to favour his release."

[4] *Supply of the spirit,*] "which was promised in imminent danger, and for which the apostle had occasion in his defence before Nero." Harwood.

carnest expectation and hope that I shall disgrace myself in no respect[5]; *but* that *with all freedom of speech now, as at all other times, Christ will be honoured in my person*[6], *whether it be by life, or by death.* Ch. I. Ver. 20.

I rejoice in the zeal with which the fundamental doctrines of the gospel are promulgated; nor need you, my friends, be anxious lest I should suffer any inconvenience on this account; for I am persuaded, that so far from being an impediment to my release, as some desire and expect, it will rather tend to accelerate that happy event, in connexion with your prayers for me, and with that supply of holy courage and freedom of speech which Christ has promised to his faithful servants, when they are called to plead his cause before kings and rulers. The enmity of Jewish zealots will be no disadvantage to me in the imperial court; and the prevalence of the gospel in its genuine spirit must be favourable to my cause. And I am fully confident that my honoured Master, who has so powerfully supported me upon all former occasions, will not, by denying me his promised aid, suffer me to disgrace myself and the cause in which I am embarked, at the approaching important crisis; but that, by a becoming freedom of speech when I am called to defend my character and cause at the tribunal of Cæsar, the doctrine of

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[5] *Disgrace myself.*] So Mr. Wakefield; or, *be disappointed.* He refers to Rom. v. 5; where the word is used in the sense of *disappoint.* "I shall be put to shame in nothing." Newcome.

[6] *Person.*] Gr. "body."

Ch. I. Ver. 20. Christ will obtain a glorious triumph through my instrumentality, whatever the event may be as to my own person, and whether I, the herald of salvation, be condemned or released.

4. The apostle, though on his own account desirous of release from a state of labour and suffering, expresses, nevertheless, an entire readiness to continue at his post as long as he could be of use to others by preaching the gospel, ver. 21—24.

21. *For to me to live* is *Christ, and to die, gain*[1].
22. *But though this living in the flesh,* would be *to me a fruitful labour*[2]; *yet, what I should choose I*
23. *cannot say*[3]. *But I am distressed between the*

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[1] *To live is Christ, and to die, gain.*] The Arabic translator reads χρηστον, *good*; which Griesbach marks as a valuable reading. Beza, Calvin, Gataker, and Peirce make Χριστος the subject of both members of the sentence, and κερδος the predicate of both; *q. d.* for Christ to me, both in life and death, is gain. But Wolfius *Cur. Crit.* observes, that the apostle would then have written εμοι γαρ Χριστος, και το ζην, και το αποθανειν κερδος. See Bowyer.

[2] Would be *to me a fruitful labour.*] Gr. "fruit of labour," *i. e.* fruitful, or advantageous labour. To him to live was to preach Christ; and this employment would be highly advantageous; the greater the labour, the greater would be his reward. Yet even this consideration can hardly reconcile him to life. The expression in the original is elliptical: ει δε το ζην εν σαρκι, τουτο μοι καρπος εργου. Dr. Newcome supplies διδοται μοι after σαρκι, and his version is: "But if it be given to me to live in the flesh, this preaching of Christ is the fruit of my labour." "But if this life in *the* flesh *be* to me a fruitful employment *in his gospel.*" Wakefield. "*Quod si vero vita mea in corpore, utilitatem afferret muneri meo, sane quid eligam nescio.* Και, *sane.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *I cannot say.*] ου γνωριζω. So Wakefield; who thus preserves the proper signification of the word, which is lost in the common

two[4], *having a desire to depart*[5], *and to be with* Ch. I.
Christ, which were very far better[6]. *Nevertheless,* Ver. 24.
to continue in the flesh is more necessary for you.

I am well prepared for the awful alternative of life or death. While I live, indeed, I am doing

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translation, and which has created a difficulty to critics. See Peirce.

[4] *Distressed between the two.*] See Wakefield. "I am borne different ways." Doddridge; who observes, "that the original is very emphatical, συνεχομαι εκ των δυο, and seems to be an allusion to a ship riding at anchor, and at the same time likely to be forced to sea by the violence of the winds."

[5] *To depart.*] εις το αναλυσαι "to be unbound." Doddridge. Many manuscripts omit εις, and it is ingeniously conjectured by Bishop Pearce, that the true reading is τυ αναλυσαι. See Peirce and Bowyer, and Bishop Pearce's *Epp. Duæ.*

[6] *Very far better.*] πολλῳ μαλλον κρεισσον. The original is very emphatical. "*multo magis melius.*" Vulgate. The Clermont and some other manuscripts read πσσῳ for πολλῳ, and omit γαρ. *q. d. O how very far better!* It is commonly inferred from this text, and with some appearance of plausibility, that the apostle expected to be introduced into a state of activity and happiness immediately after death; but this conclusion is inconsistent with his doctrine in the epistles to the Corinthians and the Thessalonians, where he represents the happiness of a future life as entirely dependent upon a resurrection from the dead; without which he assures them that their faith is vain, and that all who had fallen asleep in Christ had perished, 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14, 1 Cor. xv. 12—18. To make the apostle, therefore, consistent with himself, we must understand him as comparing the present state with that which will take place immediately after the resurrection, and accounting as nothing the intervening lapse of time. Not, indeed, upon the metaphysical, however just, supposition, that the interval of thousands of ages is in reality nothing; but, because the apostle, and all the Christians in that age, believed that the second appearance of Christ to raise the dead, and judge the world, would take place in the course of a very few years, so that some who were then living would be witnesses to that awful event. It is upon this ground that he regarded as nothing the few years which he supposed would elapse before the resurrection of the dead. See 1 Thess. iv. 15.

"Nothing can be inferred from this text," says Dr. Priestley,

Ch. I. Ver. 24. something to promote the cause of Christ, and to diffuse his doctrine in the world; and this it is which gives life all its value, and reconciles me to remaining in life. But, independently of usefulness, life would be of little value; and death would be far preferable to the fatigues and sufferings which I continually undergo. Indeed, so weary do I often feel, that the desire of rest almost prevails over that

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" in favour of an intermediate state between death and the resurrection. For the apostle, considering his own situation, would naturally connect the end of this life with the commencement of another and a better, as he would have no perception of any interval between them. That the apostle had no view to any state short of the coming of Christ to judgement, is evident from the phrase he makes use of, viz. being with Christ, which can only take place at his second coming. For Christ himself has said that he would come again, and that he would take his disciples to himself; which clearly implies that they were not to be with him before that time.

" Accordingly, for many centuries after the notion of an intermediate state was advanced, a notion which has been the foundation of the doctrine of purgatory, and many other absurd and mischievous opinions and practices in the church of Rome, and of no good whatever, it was never imagined that the departed souls were to be with Christ, but only in a place under ground called Hades, where they were to wait till the resurrection of their bodies, at which time, and not before, it was supposed that they would be with Christ. The opinion, of the soul going immediately to heaven, was not advanced with any degree of confidence by any Christians except the Gnostics, who believed in no resurrection at all, till about a thousand years after Christ."

"The scripture," says the venerable Bishop Law, " in speaking of the connexion between our present and our future being, doth not take into the account our intermediate state in death, no more than we, in describing the course of any man's actions, take in the time he sleeps. Therefore the scripture must affirm an immediate connexion between death and judgement, Heb. ix. 27, and represents the coming of Christ as near at hand, James v. 8, 9." Law's *Inquiry*, App. No. xiii. xiv.

of usefulness; and I can hardly say whether I incline most to live or die. My situation is like that of a ship at anchor, exposed to the impulse of opposite currents. Self-interest and the love of ease sometimes prompt the wish to break loose, to depart from a region of storms and dangers, and to return to port, where I should soon be summoned into the presence of my glorious chief, and receive the promised reward—a reward how great and transcendent! a state how unspeakably preferable to the present mixed and variable scene! Nevertheless it is for your advantage, and for that of the church in general, that I should remain a little longer at my post; and I am content to do so. My master's will is mine: I desire nothing so much as to approve my fidelity to him. Ch. I Ver. 24.

5. With these views the apostle expresses his firm conviction that he shall be spared, and in due time restored to the society of his friends, ver. 25, 26.

And, being confident of this, I know[1] *that I shall remain, yea I shall remain with you all*[2]*, for the advancement of your faith and joy*[3]*; that your* 25. 26.

[1] *I know,*] by inference, not by revelation; for in that case he could not have supposed it possible that his confinement might issue in martyrdom, ver. 20.

[2] *With you all.*] "I shall not only remain on earth, but continue my intercourse with you. See ver. 26." Newcome.

[3] *Advancement,* &c.] Doddridge. "for your furtherance and joy in the faith." Newcome. Mr. Wakefield translates the words, "for your satisfaction, and the furtherance of your faith;" and observes in his note, that "the transposition of the two substantives is authorized by the Syriac, and in some measure

Ch. I. Ver. 26. *glorying*[1] *in Christ Jesus may abound through me, by my presence with you again.*

Being fully persuaded that the continuance of my mission will, for the present, be of considerable advantage to the Gentile churches, I have no doubt that my life will be prolonged. And not only so, but I am further persuaded that I shall also obtain my release from this long confinement, and shall be permitted once more to visit you, and all the other Gentile churches which I have planted, to confirm your faith and promote your joy, by recounting to you the beneficial effects which have resulted from this painful and tedious imprisonment. And my presence with you will completely justify the triumph which you have so often expressed in your conversion to the Christian doctrine by me, who was your first instructor; and will confute and bring to shame the malignant insinuations of those who would infer from my sufferings, and particularly from my long restraint from public service, that I am not an authorized apostle of Jesus Christ.

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by other versions, to say nothing of the context." Griesbach takes no notice of any various reading. I have given Dr. Doddridge's translation, which evidently expresses the apostle's meaning. So Grotius explains the text: "*Quò majori cum gaudio conjuncta sit fides vestra.*" "*Ut adjuvem vestrum profectum in cognitione et virtute, et gaudium, quod ex fide promanare solet.*" Rosenmuller.

[1] *Glorying in Christ.*] They would not only rejoice to see the apostle at liberty, and to enjoy his instructions, but would also triumph over his adversaries, who represented his imprisonment as a proof of the invalidity of his mission. See Peirce and Newcome.

SECTION III.

THE APOSTLE exhorts the Philippians to cultivate a spirit worthy of the gospel, and particularly recommends mutual affection, humility, and fortitude in the profession of truth, from the example of Christ, and in expectation of future reward. Ch. i. 27—ii. 16. Ch. I.

1. The apostle urges them to a firm adherence to truth and duty, undismayed by opposition, ver. 27—30.

Only[2], *behave worthy of the gospel of Christ*[3], *that whether I come and see you, or being absent hear of your concerns,* I may be assured[4] *that ye stand firm in one spirit*[5], *striving together with one soul for the faith of the gospel*[6], *and in no* Ver. 27. 28.

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[2] *Only.*] *Hoc tantum moneo in præsentia.* Menochius apud *Pol. Syn.* See Newcome. Gal. ii. 10, v. 13.

[3] *Behave,* &c.] πολιτευεσθε. "The word literally signifies, 'to behave as denizens of some city or corporation.'" Doddridge.

[4] I may be assured.] The expression is elliptical by the omission of ιδω και ακουω after ὑμων, and the ellipsis is supplied variously, but the apostle's meaning is evident. See Wakefield.

[5] *Stand firm in one spirit.*] unanimous in your adherence to truth. See Peirce. "Standi *verbum athletis convenit gradum servantibus; a quibus sumpta est translatio.*" Beza.

[6] *Striving,* &c.] "united in exertion to maintain the uncorrupted faith in opposition to Jewish zealots. See ch. iii." Peirce; who observes, "that their own unanimity, and their withstanding and opposing seducers to Judaism, were the two points on

Ch. I. Ver. 28. *degree intimidated by* your *opponents*[1], (*which* constancy[2] *is to them a certain evidence of* your *ruin*[3],
29. *but to you of salvation*[4]: *For this favour has been graciously given*[5] *to you by God with respect to Christ, not only to believe in him, but even to suf-*
30 *fer for him:*) *enduring the same conflict*[6] *which ye saw in me, and now hear* to be *in me.*

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which the apostle was about chiefly to insist." *Striving, συναθλεντες, wrestling together, jointly contending:* the metaphor is still kept up. "It signifies," says Dr. Macknight, "the greatest exertions of courage and strength. The word denotes the action of the Athletæ in the Olympic games."

[1] *Intimidated.*] πτυρομενοι, startled by your opposers: *i. e.* judaizing teachers, "who alone, says Mr. Locke (Eph. i. 25), were likely to affright the convert Gentiles, and to make them start out of the way of the gospel; which is the proper import of the word." Peirce.

[2] *Which* constancy.] "ητις, says Dr. Newcome, is here used for οπερ, as Eph. iii. 13 it is used for αιτινες· being in both places attracted by the following substantive. See also Col. i. 27."

[3] *Of* your *ruin.*] "When these Judaizers saw that they could not by all their endeavours prevail upon the Gentiles to comply with what they took to be the condition of salvation, Acts xv. 1, they would esteem them obstinate and incorrigible, and as abandoned by God to everlasting perdition." "It is no new thing (adds Mr. Peirce) for men to make such things the conditions of salvation, as God does not; and then unmercifully to damn those who do not submit to them." Peirce. See also Macknight. The common interpretation supposes, that the constancy of the Philippians was an evidence of destruction to their opponents: which is hardly consistent or intelligible. The construction requires, that from the middle of the 28th verse to the end of the 29th should be included in a parenthesis.

[4] *Salvation.*] I follow Mr. Wakefield in finishing this sentence at σωτηριας. He pleads the authority of the Syriac, Æthiopic, and Arabic translators. Griesbach is silent.

[5] *Graciously given.*] The apostle here, with great address, speaks of suffering for Christ as an honour and a favour: thus obviating the objections of those who represented persecution as a token of divine displeasure, and of disapprobation of the persecuted cause. Newcome, Peirce.

[6] *Enduring the same conflict,* &c.] The construction requires

Ch. I. Ver. 30.

To promote your stability and improvement in the Christian doctrine, I am willing to continue in a state of labour and of suffering. I have one, and but one, favour to ask of you in return for this testimony of my affection: Live as Christians. Let your whole conduct correspond with the laws and the spirit of that holy community into which you are now initiated, and in the privileges and immunities of which you have been made to participate. I hope soon to be at liberty to visit you: at all events, I cannot be long without hearing of you. But in whatever way I gain information of your state, let me have the satisfaction to learn that you all adhere stedfastly to the doctrine of the gospel, in its simplicity and purity; that you are unanimous in the profession of it, and that you support one another in earnestly contending for the truth, and in a zealous opposition to all false doctrine, under whatever pretence it may be pressed upon you. They who wish to subvert your principles announce their doctrines as essential to salvation, and anathematize all who will not receive them. Fear them not: their anathemas are vain. This firmness of yours they will call obstinacy, and represent it as a sure mark of reprobation. But believe me when I assure you, that you cannot possess a stronger evidence

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that this should be joined with the former part of the 28th verse. Bowyer. It is uncertain what that conflict is to which the apostle alludes, whether the opposition of judaizing teachers, or of persecution. The former, from the connexion, seems most probable; though we hear nothing of any such contest which the apostle had at Philippi. Perhaps both may be included.

Ch. I. Ver. 30. of the safety of your state than a firm practical adherence to the purity of the Christian faith. You have also this further proof of your interest in the promises of the gospel. God has not only called you to the profession of the gospel, but he has vouchsafed you the great honour of being confessors and sufferers in this holy cause. Do not, then, disgrace it or yourselves, by suffering this inestimable treasure to be injured and corrupted. Your situation is similar to my own: you saw that I strenuously resisted every attempt to blend the simplicity of the gospel with the bondage of the law; you know that I am now in confinement for maintaining the liberty of the Gentile church, and you are now struggling with the zealots who wish to bring you under the yoke of the ceremonial institution. Follow my example: resist them firmly: and upon no consideration abandon the principles, or resign the privileges, of the gospel.

2. The apostle earnestly adjures them to manifest their affection to him by uniting zeal for truth with a peaceable, humble, and disinterested spirit, ch. ii. 1—4.

Ch. II. Ver. 1. *If, therefore*[1], *there be any consolation in Christ*[2], *if any comfort from love, if any commu-*

[1] *If, therefore.*] *q. d.* If you have that affection for me which you profess, and which I am confident that you feel, complete my happiness; which you will accomplish most effectually by love and kindness to each other, and by a cordial union to support the pure doctrine of the gospel, in opposition to those who would subvert the truth or corrupt its purity.

nion of spirit[3], *if any tender compassion*[4], *complete ye my joy*[5]: *that ye may be unanimous, maintaining the same love, having your souls joined together in attending to one thing*[6], *doing nothing through contention or vainglory, but in humility of mind giving others a preference to yourselves: each one considering not his own* attainments *only, but every man the* attainments *of others also*[7]. Ch. II. Ver. 2. 3. 4.

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[2] *If any consolation in Christ.*] *q. d.* if there be any comfort in the doctrine of Christ, in which we mutually participate.

[3] *Communion of spirit,* &c.] κοινωνια πνευματος. This may be understood of the gifts of the holy spirit communicated by the apostle; or, more probably, of spiritual union or fellowship. See Peirce and Wakefield.

[4] *Any tender compassion.*] Gr. "any bowels and mercies." "affection and compassion." Wakefield. *q. d.* if you have any sympathy in my privations and sufferings, which indeed you have so largely contributed to relieve.

[5] *Complete,* &c.] The apostle had before expressed his great joy at the good account which he had received from Epaphroditus of their faith and liberality, chap. i. 4: he now wishes that they may render his satisfaction complete, by mutual harmony among themselves, and by a stedfast adherence to the purity of the faith.

[6] *Attending to one thing.*] "The apostle forcibly inculcates unanimity and agreement by a redundancy of language." In this observation of Archbishop Newcome most expositors concur. Mr. Wakefield's version is, "having the same dispositions, the same love, the same soul, the same mind." Dr. Daniel Scott joins the two former and the two latter clauses; viz. "that ye may be unanimous, maintaining the same love; having your souls joined together, in attending to the one thing." See Doddridge's note upon the text. Mr. Peirce expounds the words thus: "Let me have a complete joy and satisfaction, in your manifesting the same disposition towards me which I have declared that I have towards you all." And he observes, in his note, that it "*will make all easy* if we understand the apostle in the first clause as exhorting them to be like-minded with himself; and the το εν φρονουντες as signifying their agreement with one another." The difficulty is, to avoid tautology.

[7] *Not his own* attainments *only*] "his own advantages and

Ch. II. Ver. 4.

In this conflict of principles and parties, allow me to put in my claim to a share in your regard. If there be any thing valuable in your Christian profession, you owe it in some measure to me, who first enlightened you in the doctrine of Christ. If, then, you set any value upon that doctrine which reveals an immortal existence, if there be any delight in that cordial affection which the true disciples of Jesus bear to each other, if there be one common spirit of holiness and zeal pervading the community of those who believe, and in which we, I trust, largely participate; finally, if you still feel, as I am sure you do, a kind affection for your first instructor in the faith, and a tender sympathy with him in his sufferings for truth, let me conjure you by all these tender and engaging considerations to contribute what lies in your power to my comfort and satisfaction. You have indeed already done much; you have received the gospel readily; you have professed it honourably and consistently; you have shown me much personal kindness. Persevere, my brethren: complete my satisfaction, fulfill my joy. Unite with me in firm adherence to Christian principles, in resolute opposition to false doctrine, and to insidious and seducing teachers. Be unanimous amongst yourselves in the prosecution of this honourable cause. If you maintain your inte-

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excellencies, thus filling himself with pride." Newcome —"The apostle does not mean to encourage a busy pragmatical temper; which he elsewhere utterly condemns. 1 Thess. iv. 11; 2 Thess. iii. 11, 12; 1 Tim. v. 13." Peirce.

grity, you will indeed afford me the highest delight, an ample remuneration for all my labours and my sufferings. Unite in opposing the common enemy; but first of all, love one another: be peaceable; be humble; let each be ready to give preference to others, and to wave his own right to precedence. Think not highly of your own attainments; regard not solely your own interest. Allow to others the merit of those good qualities which they possess; and be zealous and active in promoting the welfare of others; for in so doing you will best consult your own ultimate advantage. Ch. II. Ver. 4.

3. The apostle, to enforce the practice of self-denial, urges the example of Christ, in his voluntary humiliation and subsequent exaltation, ver. 5—11.

1.) The apostle states the circumstances of Christ's voluntary humiliation as an example of self-denial to his followers, ver. 5—8.

Let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God[1], *did* 5. 6.

[1] *In the form of God.*] εν μορφη Θεου· "Μορφη, forma, *omne quod in oculos occurrit, imago, similitudo.*" Schleusner. Hesych. ιδεα, ειδος. This word occurs but three times in the New Testament: Mark xvi. 12, he appeared in another form to two of them; and Philip. ii. 7, he took upon him the form of a servant. Its proper signification is, an external visible appearance. In this sense Christ could not resemble God, who is invisible; the word is used, therefore, in a figurative sense: and to pretend that here is an allusion to some pre-existent glory, or to his supposed appearance upon Mount Sinai, is perfectly gratuitous, and destitute of all proof and probability. I have given in the paraphrase what appears to me the true sense of the expression.

CH. II. VER. 7. *not peremptorily lay claim*[1] *to this resemblance of God*[2], *but divested himself*[3], *assuming the form of*

God alone, the omnipotent Author of Nature, can controul its laws and operations at pleasure; and the voluntary power of working miracles which Christ was permitted to exercise, exhibited a striking resemblance of the divine omnipotence, and distinguished this illustrious prophet from all former prophets and messengers of God.

[1] *Did not peremptorily lay claim*, &c.] *ουχ ἁρπαγμον ἡγησατο. did not regard it as a prey:* did not seize as his right: as a property acquired by his own prowess, for which he was amenable to no account. "Ἁρπαγμος, *proprie*, direptio, *ipsa rapiendi actio. Nomen verbale; et nomina in ος desinentia fere actionem, non rem, et statum, significant. Sed interdum tamen passivè usurpatur, ut significet* rem raptam, prædam, *vel* rem avidè diripiendam *et vindicandam. Hinc formula ἁρπαγμον ἡγεισθαι τι*, cupidè aliquâ re uti, studiosissimè eam occupare, *et* sibi vindicare, *significat.*" Schleusner.—"*non rapinam arbitratus est.*" Vulg.—"did not esteem it a prey or booty." Newcome; and Peirce, who observes "that *ἁρπαγμος*, which is a word that occurs very seldom in classic authors, has probably the sense of *ἁρπαγμα*, as *βαπτισμος* of *βαπτισμα*, &c., and that it signifies something actually in possession, which a person is eagerly desirous to retain." Mr. Wakefield, from Eustathius, shows that, according to the genius of the Greek language, *ἁρπαγμος* is equivalent to *ἁρπαγμα. Sylva Critica*, iii. 112, § cxlii. Dr. Clarke observes, that the construction also requires, that the clause *ουχ ἁρπαγμον κ. τ. λ.* should be understood as expressing, not his greatness, but his humiliation; otherwise the expression would have been, not *αλλα*, but *ὁμως δε*, or, *αλλ' ὁμως*, *nevertheless.* Clarke's *Script. Doct.*, No. 934. The connexion also requires this sense; for the apostle is exhorting the Philippians, after the example of Christ, not to seek after that to which they had no claim, but, for the benefit of others, to part with that which they might have retained. It highly favours this interpretation that it is the sense in which the word was understood by all the Ante-Nicene writers. The churches of Vienne and Lyons, in their epistle to those of Asia, speaking of the martyrs who suffered in the time of the emperor Verus, say, They were such zealous followers of the example of Christ, who being in the form of God, *ουχ ἁρπαγμον κ. τ. λ. did not claim as a right, was not tenacious of being like God*, that though they had often been cast to wild beasts, and had en-

a servant[4], *and becoming like* other *men*[5]. *And being in condition like* another *man*[6], *in obedience* Ch. II. Ver. 8.

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dured all manner of torments, yet would they not suffer themselves to be honoured with the title of martyrs, &c. See also Origen on John, p. 34, Huet. et Novatian *De Trin.* cap. 17. Grotius, Tillotson, Whitby, and Bishop Bull, disapprove the common translation. Mr. Wakefield renders the clause, " did not think of eagerly retaining this divine likeness."

[4] *Resemblance of God.*] ισα Θεῳ, " to be as God, or in the likeness of God," Whitby; who observes, that ισα is frequently used adverbially in the LXX. Job x. 10, *hast thou not curdled me,* ισα τυρῳ, *like cheese?* xi. 12, *man is born,* ισα ονῳ, *like a wild ass's colt.* See also xiii. 12, xv. 16; Isa. li. 23. If the apostle had intended to express complete equality, he would rather have used ισον τῳ Θεῳ. See John v. 18. But the thought of the humble Jesus arrogating to himself perfect equality with the Almighty God, whose servant and messenger he was, could never have entered into the apostle's mind. The true sense of the passage appears to be that which is expressed in the paraphrase, viz. that Christ, possessing voluntary powers of working miracles, did not regard them as his own property and right. He had been taught by the discipline of his temptation in the wilderness, that he was not to exercise the powers intrusted to him to promote his own interest, or to gratify his own ambition; nor, in general, to extricate himself from danger. And this was so remarkably the character of our Lord, that he even prohibited his disciples from speaking of some of the most illustrious of his miracles; he was supported by the contributions of his followers, in preference to a supernatural supply; and till his appointed hour was come, he chose rather to withdraw from the scene of danger than to rescue himself by miracle. And this, by the way, obviates the objection which some have made against the supposition that Jesus was intrusted with discretionary miraculous powers. It amounts to exactly the same thing, whether he never wrought a miracle but by immediate impulse, or whether, being intrusted with a voluntary power of working miracles, his mind was so perfectly disciplined that he never exercised that power but upon proper occasions.

[5] *Divested himself.*] ἑαυτὸν εκενωσε. " emptied himself of it." Wakefield.—" made himself of no account." Newcome. Not that he actually resigned his miraculous powers, but that he never exerted them except upon special occasions; and that in

Ch. II. Ver. 8. to God *he humbled himself*[7] *unto death, even unto death upon a cross.*

Practise self-denial. Be ever ready to make the greatest sacrifices for the good of others; and be assured you will not ultimately be losers by your generosity. Drink deeply into the spirit of Christ, and follow his great example. He voluntarily and cheerfully made far greater sacrifices for the benefit of mankind than it is possible for any of his followers to pretend to, and his reward was proportionably

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the common intercourses of life he acted as though he possessed them not, so that no one from his appearance would expect any thing extraordinary from him.

[4] *Assuming the form of a servant.*] μορφην δουλου λαβων, he voluntarily submitted to the labours, the indignities, and to the punishment of a slave. Μορφη δουλου does not imply that he was actually a slave, nor does μορφη Θεου prove that he was truly God. He resembled God in his miraculous powers, he resembled a slave in his labours and sufferings.

[5] *Becoming like* other *men.*] εν ὁμοιωματι ανθρωπων γενομενος, *being made in the likeness of men:* i. e. of *other* men, who possessed no superior powers. He made himself *like* them by not exerting the powers he possessed upon ordinary occasions. See Judges xvi. 7, 11, 13, 17: *I shall become weak, and be ὡς εἱς των ανθρωπων, like* another *man.* The expression *likeness of men,* no more proves that Christ possessed a nature different from that of men, than the similar expression, as applied to Sampson, proves that warrior to have been one of a superior class of beings.

[6] *Being in condition like* another *man.*] σχηματι εὑρεθεις ὡς ανθρωπος, being found in fashion as a man. εὑρεθεις, *cum esset, cum existeret.* Ellys's *Fortuita Sacra,* Newcome, Peirce. σχημα, state and condition. Raphelius. "*Omnem habitum et statum alicujus rei externum significat.*" Schleusner. 1 Cor. vii. 31.

[7] *He humbled himself unto death.*] This plainly implies, that the submission of Christ to a violent death was a voluntary act, which it was in his power to have avoided if he would; agreeably to his own declaration John x. 15, 17, 18.

great. He was exalted far above all other men by his miraculous gifts; he was anointed with the holy spirit and with power; the spirit was communicated to him without limitation; and he exercised at pleasure those miraculous powers which were given him for the confirmation of his mission: and in this sphere, like that Almighty Being himself whose delegate and ambassador he was, he spontaneously controuled the laws, and changed the course, of nature. Nevertheless, so admirably was his mind enlightened, and his heart disciplined to his situation and office, that he never presumed to arrogate these mighty powers, this similitude to the Almighty, as his own natural right, as the acquisition of his own wisdom and strength, for the possession of which he was indebted to none, in the exercise of which he was controulable by none, and for the use of which he was amenable to none. Far otherwise. He knew that he possessed these mighty powers as a trust for which he was accountable, and in the use of which he had been fully instructed: and therefore he strictly confined the exercise of them to the purposes for which they were communicated. He never exhibited them for the purpose of display; he seldom used them for his own personal benefit; he acted in the concerns of life as though he possessed them not. He declined the applause which the gratitude of the happy subjects of his beneficent miracles, and the admiration of surrounding multitudes would have accumulated upon his head. Resembling the Almighty in the Ch. II. Ver. 8.

Ch. II. Ver. 8. powers which he possessed, in external appearance he assimilated himself to a servant. For the good of mankind he submitted to the labours, and bore the indignities, of a slave. Thus, notwithstanding the dignity of his character and the greatness of his powers, he could not in appearance be distinguished from other men. And being, as to his external state and condition, like a person of the meanest rank in life, destitute even of necessaries, when it was in his power to have commanded all the pomp and luxury which opulence could supply, he carried his self-denial still further; and in obedience to the will of God, who had given him a commission to redeem mankind from idolatry and vice, he submitted to greater indignities still. And though no human power could have wrested his life from him, though legions of angels would, in obedience to his summons, have instantaneously appeared in his defence, though he could in an instant have struck all his adversaries to the ground, and though he felt and trembled at the horrors of his approaching sufferings, yet because the purposes of his mission required it, and his heavenly Father directed it, he without hesitation submitted to a death which it was in his power to have avoided; and that, a kind of death the most painful and ignominious, being nailed to and suspended upon a cross. These were the sacrifices which Jesus made, and the sufferings which he voluntarily underwent for the good of mankind.

2.) The apostle insists upon Christ's exaltation as the reward of his self-denial, ver. 9—11. Ch. II.

Therefore God, on his part, hath very highly exalted him[1], *and hath granted him that name*[2] *which is superior to every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend*[3], *of those who are in heaven, and upon earth, and under the earth*[4], *and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Ver. 9. 10. 11.

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[1] *God on his part,* &c.] καὶ, *vicissim.* Rom. i. 24. Newcome. "ὑπερύψωσε. *Ideo Deus eum multo sublimiorem fecit quam erat antea.*" Grotius, Peirce. Heb. xii. 2, Dan. iv. 34.

[2] *That name.*] See Griesbach and Newcome. *A name superior to every name:* i. e. authority superior to all former prophets and messengers of the divine will. "*Nomen hic est dignitas.*" Grotius. See Eph. i. 21.

[3] *In the name of Jesus,* &c.] *i. e.* that all should be taught by Jesus the worship of the true God. "It should be translated *in,* says Secker, *Sermons,* vol. iii. p. 344. *To bow the knee* is to pray. Eph. iii. 14. Or, rather thus: that a token of subjection should be shown *at, for, on account of* the glorious name, dignity, or authority of Jesus. Matt. vi. 7, xi. 6; Acts vii. 29. The next verse shows what this dignity is." Newcome. Viz. that every tongue should confess, &c.

[4] *Of those that are in heaven,* &c.] *i. e.* says Newcome, and most of the expositors with him, "*of angels, of men now living, and of departed men.*" I would rather understand this figurative expression of Jew and Gentile, the living and the dead. See Mr. Locke's note upon Eph. i. 10. At any rate, let it be remembered, that it is the worship of God, not of Jesus, which is here spoken of. *In* the name, not *at* the name, of Jesus, every knee shall bow: as his *disciples,* not as his *worshipers,* as many believe.

Mr. Peirce conjectures, or rather he considers the scriptures as teaching, that "antecedently to the advent of Christ, God allotted to the angels provinces and dominions; one being appointed to preside over one country, and another over another. But that at our Lord's resurrection an end was put to this rule of angels; they themselves, together with all nations, were put under Christ, whose authority and power were then highly ad-

Ch. II. Ver. 11.

This unexampled instance of voluntary humiliation and suffering for the benefit of mankind was not left destitute of its proper reward. The righteous and benevolent Governor of the world, who, to answer the wise purposes of his administration, imposed this severe duty upon his holy servant Jesus Christ, has in return made him ample compensation for this great act of filial obedience and magnanimous benevolence. He first raised him from the grave; and has since advanced him to the highest honour and authority. He has made him superior to all former prophets and messengers of his will, without excepting the Jewish legislator himself; whose authority was never meant to extend beyond the limits of the Hebrew nation, while the divine religion of Jesus Christ, confirmed by his

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vanced above what they were before: he being intrusted with universal dominion, and all that were rulers and governors before being made his subjects and ministers." To this, I had almost said *wild*, but at best very improbable, hypothesis, the learned writer accommodates the tenth verse: and upon this principle he explains the ninth, 'And upon this account God has advanced him higher than before.'

"Whether the apostle annexed any distinct ideas to these phrases," says Dr. Priestley, "or only meant to give one general idea of the great power to which God had raised Christ, is not very certain. The phrase *heaven and earth* might have been a kind of proverbial expression, denoting the universe in general. But it has been conjectured that *the things in heaven, the things in earth, and the things under the earth,* in this place may refer to the threefold division of the heathen gods, some of whom were said to have power in heaven, others upon earth, and others under the earth, or among the ghosts of the dead: intimating, that all these heathen deities would fall before the doctrine of the gospel of Christ; or, that idolatry in all its forms would fall before it. This interpretation appears to me not improbable."

miracles, his death, and resurrection, is intended for universal prevalence. The law which he has promulgated is to be obligatory upon all mankind; upon those who were favoured with former revelations, as well as upon those who were left to unassisted reason and the dim light of nature. The blessings of the gospel extend to the dead as well as to the living; and the doctrine of Jesus reveals the awful truth, that all who are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth. It is the will of God that this divine religion, of which Jesus is the honoured founder, should be promulgated to all nations; and in due time all the systems of heathen idolatry shall fall before the banner of the cross: all the tribes of mankind, of every rank and degree, shall bow to the sceptre of Christ: all shall learn from him how to offer the most acceptable homage to his and their Father; and while they joyfully acknowledge and honour him as their Master, they shall with grateful hearts adore the mercy of God in sending his well-beloved son and faithful servant into the world, as the teacher of truth and the messenger of peace. Such is the honour and reward which has been conferred upon Jesus, our great Lord and Master, for his willing obedience, and his meritorious self-denial for the good of mankind. Be you animated by the same spirit, and from the same righteous and merciful Judge you shall receive your due reward. Ch. II. Ver. 11.

4. The apostle enforces his exhortation from the

Ch. II. deference which they had hitherto uniformly paid to his authority; and from the help which they had obtained from God, ver. 12, 13.

Ver. 12. *Wherefore*[1], *my beloved* brethren, *as ye have always obeyed* me[2] *with respect and reverence*[3], *and* that *not only when I was present but much more now in my absence, promote earnestly the welfare*
13. *of each other*[4], *for God is working in you both to be willing*[5], *and to perform.*

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[1] *Wherefore:*] *i. e.* since Christ has done so much for us. Newcome, Peirce. See ver. 3—5.

[2] *Obeyed* me.] So Peirce and Wakefield. This suits the connexion better than if the word *God* had been supplied, agreeably to the opinion of some expositors · for the apostle, being about to give a solemn charge, enforces it by reminding them of the attention which they had been used to pay to his advice and directions. Mr. Wakefield observes, that "this translation is as consistent with the original, and much more with the scope of the writer, than the former."

[3] *With respect and reverence.*] μετα φοβε και τρομε, *with fear and trembling;* probably a colloquial phrase, by which is expressed respectful deference to the directions of a teacher or master. It occurs in three other places only in the New Testament, 2 Cor. vii. 15, "whilst he (Titus) remembers the obedience of you all, how with *fear and trembling* you received him." See also 1 Cor. ii. 3, Eph. vi. 5. In this sense it is properly connected with the clause which precedes it, and expresses the deference which the Philippians paid to the instructions of the apostle. Mr. Peirce, who proposes and defends this interpretation, renders the words *humility* and *concern.*

[4] *Promote earnestly the welfare of each other.*] την ἑαυτων σωτηριαν κατεργαζεσθε. The connexion seems to require this interpretation in preference to the common one, "work out your own salvation." See Peirce, Harwood, and Wakefield. ἑαυτων is sometimes used for *one another.* See Eph. iv. 32. χαριζομενοι ἑαυτοις, *forgiving one another,* Col. iii. 16, Heb. iii. 13. Mr. Peirce, however, allows that the word does not occur in this sense in any other passage in this epistle. σωτηρια is unquestionably sometimes used in the sense of temporal welfare, prosperity, or comfort. See Philip. i. 19, with Peirce's

Ch. II. Ver. 13.

You see, my beloved Christian brethren, the example of our Master Jesus Christ. How great his condescension, his self-denial, his voluntary humiliation, and sufferings for the benefit of mankind, and how transcendent his reward! I beseech, I charge you to resemble him to the utmost of your ability, in your exertions to assist and benefit one another. And I flatter myself that this my solemn injunction will not be ineffectual. I bear you testimony that, while I was with you, and exercising my ministry at Philippi, you discovered the utmost anxiety and solicitude to comply with my wishes, and to conform to my instructions in every thing. And since I have left you, and especially since I have been a prisoner for the gospel, you have discovered, if possible, a still more earnest concern to adhere to the principles and rules which you received from me. Let me not be disappointed in the present case: especially as God, in his good providence,

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note. κατεργαζομαι signifies *to secure, to effect.* Dr. Harwood translates it, "sedulously effect and secure one another's welfare." See Harwood's note *in loc.*

[a] *God is working*, &c.] To will, *i.e.* by the motives of the gospel he produces this effect in your minds, and by the opportunities his providence affords he enables you to fulfill your generous purposes. This expression does not necessarily imply an immediate divine impulse upon the mind, much less does it countenance the strange doctrine of irresistible grace. "It is God who infuseth into you the powers of acting and willing in this manner." Harwood. Bishop Pearce, in his *Epistolæ Duæ*, objects to the expression ενεργειν εν ὑμιν—το ενεργειν, and conjectures that επιτελειν is the true reading. Mr. Peirce, though he allows the ingenuity of the conjecture, objects to the admission of a merely conjectural emendation, unsupported by manuscripts; and ably defends the received text.

Ch. II. Ver. 13. has imparted to you the discoveries and promises of the gospel, which is a law of love, and which, if practically believed, will be sure to generate a kind and benevolent temper, and has afforded you many opportunities of exercising and gratifying your generous feelings.

5. The apostle further enforces his exhortation from a regard to the credit and success of the gospel, and from the expectation of Christ's appearance, ver. 14—16.

14. *Do all things with good-will*[1], *without grudging*
15. *and hesitation*[2], *that ye may be blameless and un-*

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[1] *With good-will.*] I place the period after ενεργειν, with an anonymous writer in Bowyer, and with Mr. Wakefield: της ευδοκιας αυτου, is the reading of the Ephrem manuscript alone.—The words υπερ της, κ. τ. λ. are commonly joined to ver. 13. Admitting this punctuation, Mr. Peirce observes, "that the sense is either, 'that God works in you to be willing to act in this manner, that he may promote good will among you, which ought to be a strong motive to good-will, because God does so much to promote it;' or, 'that God works in you to be inclined to, and to act from this principle.'" Archbishop Newcome adopts the common version: "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." "As a motive to constant vigilance and exertion," says Dr. Priestley, "the apostle reminds the Philippians of the great goodness of God, who, by giving the gospel in reality, does every thing for us; the principles of the gospel being that which animates and engages us to act as we ought to do in life. It is unquestionably God that works in us, and for us, but not immediately. The contrary idea has been the source of much enthusiasm."

[2] *Grudging and hesitation.*] "γογγυσμων και διαλογισμων· γογγυσμος, *indignatio clandestina quæ non palam profertur.* 1 Pet. iv. 9. διαλογισμος, *cogitatio et opinio hominis secum ratiocinantis.* Luc. v. 22. *dubitatio.* Luc. xxiv. 38. *disceptatio.* Luc. ix. 46." Schleusner. Deut. xv. 9. See Peirce; who observes, that the apostle here continues his subject from ver. 3.

corrupted[3], *the children of God without reproach*[4], *in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation*[5], *amongst whom shine ye forth as lights*[6] *in the world, holding out*[7] *the doctrine of life, that I may glory* Ch. II. Ver. 15. 16.

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[3] *Blameless and uncorrupted.*] αμεμπτοι και ακεραιοι· αμεμπτος, *integer ab omni vitiositate. ακεραιος, ακεραιζειν lædere, nocere. Eum notat qui nemini lædit, ab omni dolo, ac fraude alienus, homo perfectus.*" Schleusner. " Some derive the word from κερaω *misceo*, and give it the sense of *sincerum, immixtum:* blameless and uncorrupt." Wakefield.

[4] *Without reproach.*] αμωμητα. " unreproveable." Newcome. " spotless." Wakefield. " *Ex α priv. et μωμος macula, nulla macula notatus.*" Schleusner.

[5] *Crooked and perverse generation.*] " σκολιας και διεστραμμενης. See Deut. xxxii. 5. σκολιος *tortuosus, obliquus, curvus.* Luc. iii. 5. metaphorice *pravus, iniquus; perversus.* Act. ii. 40. διαστρεφω, *torqueo, in varios anfractus flecto, corrumpo, perverto, vitiosum reddo.*" Schleusner. These epithets are applied to the Jews in the Old and New Testaments; but there can be no reason to limit them to that nation only. They may be extended to idolatrous heathen, to persecuting Jews, or to judaizing zealots, who were desirous to corrupt the genuine doctrines of the gospel.

[6] *Amongst whom shine ye forth as lights*, &c.] " εν οις, agreeing with ανθρωποις understood." Bowyer, Newcome. " as luminaries." Wakefield. Dr. Doddridge, from Saurin, supposes that there is an allusion to a light-house, and paraphrases the words thus: " Shine as elevated lights in the dark world about you, that you may direct those who sail on this dangerous sea, and secure them from suffering shipwreck on those fatal rocks which every where lie in their way." The imperative sense of the verb is preferable to the indicative.

[7] *Holding out.*] The word επεχω has the sense both of holding fast, and holding out or exhibiting. See Schleusner. The latter seems better suited to the connexion. Christians, as luminaries to the world, are to exhibit, both by instruction and example, the excellence and energy of that doctrine which reveals a future everlasting life. " Beza thinks this is an allusion to those towers which were built at the entrance of harbours, and on which fires were kept burning to direct ships into port." Macknight.

Ch. II. Ver. 16. *in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain.*

Let your benevolent actions be the genuine effect of a truly benevolent spirit. Perform them without a reluctance which would indicate that your kindness was extorted and involuntary, and without any of those frivolous excuses and pretences which betray a backwardness to good works. By this liberal and generous spirit you will show that your profession is not a mere name, and that your principles produce their proper effect, so that none will have reason to charge you with insincerity. You will approve yourselves the genuine sons of God, who has adopted you into his family who were once aliens and enemies, and admitted you to all the privileges and expectations of his children. You will retain your integrity and preserve your character and principles unsullied, amidst the scoffs of idolaters, the malice of unbelieving Jews, and the insidious arts and practices of false brethren, who are desirous of subverting your faith and infringing your Christian liberty. In the midst of temptation hold fast your integrity; and in a dark and benighted region let the lustre of your benevolent example exhibit to the admiring world the beauty and excellence of the doctrine of Christ, and thus engage them to embrace it cordially as the only foundation of our immortal hopes. If such be your conduct, you will fulfill my best wishes and gratify my highest ambition. We shall then have a glorious meeting at the tribunal of Jesus Christ, where

I shall enjoy the unspeakable satisfaction to see that I have won the prize for which I have contended in the course, and my anxious and persevering labours will be crowned with the reward of which I was most ambitious, the salvation of those to whom I proclaimed the joyful tidings of the gospel. Ch. II. Ver. 16.

6. The apostle expresses his willingness to suffer as well as to labour in the cause of truth, and for the benefit of his hearers, and calls upon his friends to congratulate with him, if this should be the event of his present conflict, ver. 17, 18.

Yea, if I should even be poured out as a libation[1] *upon the sacrifice and offering of your faith, I rejoice and congratulate with you all; and* in *the same* manner *do ye also rejoice and congratulate with me*[2]. 17. 18.

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[1] *Poured out as a libation.*] "If my blood be poured out as a drink-offering, Lev. ii. 6, Num. xv. 5, 7, upon the acceptable sacrifice and public oblation of your Christian faith to God, Rom. xv. 16. The heathen also poured libations of wine on the victim which was about to be sacrificed." Newcome." The word σπενδομαι occurs twice only in the New Testament: here, and 2 Tim. iv. 6. It is rendered by Schleusner, *paulatim absumor*; perhaps it may have no direct allusion to a sacrifical rite. "The apostle," says Dr. Priestley, "compares the faith of the Philippians and the fruits of it to the victim, and himself to this libation which accompanies it; intimating that he would cheerfully give up his life to promote their faith in the gospel."

[2] *Congratulate with me.*] Dr. Doddridge remarks, that he "cannot read this heroic discourse of the apostle without reflecting on the behaviour of the brave Athenian mentioned by Plutarch, (*Opp.* p. 347,) who returned to Athens from the victo-

Ch. II. Ver. 18. Yea, my Christian friends, with this glorious prospect in view, I am as willing to suffer, as to labour, in the cause of truth, and for the benefit of mankind. And if my present confinement and my approaching trial should, as it possibly may, terminate in martyrdom; if my blood should be poured out as a libation upon the acceptable sacrifice of your faith, and the public offering of your homage and worship to the true God, so far from regretting it as a calamity, I shall glory in it as an honour; I shall triumph in it as the crown and completion of my most fervent desires; and, my dear brethren, I call upon you, as deeply interested in my success, and as faithful confessors in the same cause, to unite your joy and congratulations with mine for the honour conferred on one whom you profess so highly to esteem, so affectionately to love.

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rious battle of Marathon, bleeding to death with the wounds he had received in the action, and coming directly to the house where the magistrates were assembled, uttered only these two words, χαιρετε, χαιρομεν, *take your share of our joy*, and immediately dropped down dead at their feet."

SECTION IV.

THE APOSTLE promises to send Timothy to the Philippians as soon as he could judge how his own case was likely to be determined at Rome; he expresses his hope of visiting them soon in person, and in the mean time, he dispatches Epaphroditus with this epistle, and passes a high encomium upon his character. Ch. ii. 19—30. Ch. II.

1. The apostle promises that as soon as he can learn how his own case will be determined he will send Timothy, of whom he gives a high and honourable character, ver. 19—23.

But I hope in the Lord Jesus[1] *to send Timothy to you soon, that I may be of good comfort also when I know* the state *of your affairs.* Ver. 19.

[1] *I hope in the Lord Jesus:*] that is, I hope that Jesus, my master, will permit me. The apostle upon every occasion expresses himself as immediately under the direction of Jesus, from whom he received his commission, and with whom he appears occasionally to have been favoured with personal intercourse, and to have been directed by him in his various journeys.

Mr. Peirce judiciously remarks, "that St. Paul having declared his readiness to lay down his life for them, apprehended how tenderly they would take it; and therefore, to prevent their being over much concerned, he here tells them that, however willing he was to die for them, he did not expect to do so presently; and acquaints them that when he could see which way his affair was like to turn, he should be able to spare them Timothy, from whom he expected a good account of them."

Ch. II. Ver. 19. But though I use this strong language, and well know that I am approaching the termination of my course, and know not how my imprisonment will end, and am prepared to welcome the issue whatever it be, I do not mean that you should suppose that I am in immediate danger. No; I hope first to be cheered with good tidings from you. I hope, therefore, that the Lord Jesus, whose servant I am, and whose directions I obey, will permit me in a short time to spare the evangelist Timothy to make you a friendly visit, and from him I hope to receive such a report of you, and of the prosperous state of religion among you, as will yield me the highest satisfaction and comfort.

20. *For I have no one* here *of a like disposition* with him[1], *who will sincerely concern himself in your*
21. *affairs. For all seek their own* interest, *rather than*[2] *that of Christ Jesus.*

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[1] *Of a like disposition* with him.] ισοψυχον. So Newcome and Doddridge. This appears to me to suit the connexion better than the sense which Peirce gives to the word "like-affected to myself." See 2 Cor. xii. 18, 1 Cor. xvi. 10. The apostle's meaning seems to be: That of the associates who were then with him, none felt so much concern for the Philippians as Timothy; and none would exert himself so much, or submit to so many inconveniences to serve them.

[2] *Rather than.*] See Peirce. In the original, "all seek their own, not the things of Christ Jesus." The apostle probably only means to speak comparatively, though the negative is used absolutely here, as in many other places, Matt. ix. 13, vi. 19, 20, 34; John vi. 27; 1 Cor. x. 24. The apostle can hardly mean to pass an unqualified censure upon all his associates who were then with him, though none of them perhaps might be equal in zeal and self-denial to this young evangelist, and they might all be very reluctant to leave the society of Paul in

I send Timothy in preference to any other person, because I have no one here who enters so cordially into my views and feelings, and who is so deeply interested in your character and conduct as he; or who is so ready to make any sacrifice which may be requisite to promote your comfort and improvement. Indeed I have many friends with me whose characters I highly respect; but they are not particularly known to you, and rather wish to remain here, or to be employed in services less hazardous and laborious; and, to say the truth, some of them are perhaps too much disposed to prefer their own inclination, ease, and security, to the success of the gospel, and incline to go where they may be most comfortable, rather than where they may be most useful. Ch. II. Ver. 21.

But of him ye know the proof[3]; *that as a son with a father*[4], *so he hath served with me for the* 22.

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order to carry a message to Philippi. It is highly probable that Luke and Mark were both with him when he wrote this epistle. See Philem. v. 24.

[3] *The proof.*] Timothy was in company with Paul and Silas when they preached the gospel at Philippi, Acts xvi. 1—3. "There were few," says Dr. Priestley, "so wholly devoted to the service of the gospel, and who paid so little regard to their own ease and safety, as Timothy. The apostle had before expressed some chagrin at the conduct of Demas, and even that of Crescens and Titus, for deserting him, and consulting their own safety by flight."

[4] *As a son with a father.*] "sicut patri filius mecum inserviverit religioni. *Non dicit Paulus, Timotheus mihi servivit, sed mecum servivit, et quidem evangelio εις το ευαγγελιον, et ita quidem ut me, ut patrem filius, observaret, mihique in omnibus obsequentem se præberet.*" Rosenmuller. "Assure yourselves of Timothy's approved faithfulness, for he has been to me as a child to his father in the service of the gospel." Wakefield.

Ch. II. Ver. 23. *gospel. I hope, therefore, to send him forthwith, as soon as I shall see* the issue *of my affairs*[1].

My young friend and fellow-labourer Timothy breathes a very different spirit. You well recollect his behaviour during the critical and dangerous season of my ministry at Philippi; how firm, how active, how zealous, he was in propagating the gospel; and to what hazards he exposed himself in a place where I was myself so severely treated. You observed also how affectionately he behaved to me, how tenderly he sympathized with me, and the filial deference which he constantly showed to my advice and instructions. So that we appeared like a father and a son who were fellow-servants of the same master, and commissioned upon the same perilous and important errand, vying with each other who should best approve his zeal and fidelity in the service. I hope to send him to you soon, but not till my appeal has been decided in the imperial court, the result of which I know you will be anxious to hear, and the tidings of which he shall immediately convey to you.

2. The apostle expresses his hope that he should soon follow his friend, and make the Philippians a visit in person, ver. 24.

24. *But I am confident in the Lord*[2], *that I shall soon come to you myself.*

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[1] *As soon as I shall see,* &c.] ὡς αν απιδω τα περι εμε· "*ubi videro, quid de me futurum sit.*" Rosenmuller. "Him, then,

You may perhaps suspect, from the hints which I have dropped, that I am apprehensive that the issue of my trial may be fatal. But I assure you, on the contrary, that I have the highest expectation of a speedy release from my long confinement; and in this case, if I may indulge my own inclinations, one of my first visits shall be to you. And I am persuaded that my beloved and honoured master will not, in this instance, oppose the desire of his faithful servant. Ch. II. Ver. 24.

3. In the mean time he thought fit to send back Epaphroditus immediately, of whose character and services he expresses the highest approbation, and whom he warmly recommends to their affection and esteem, ver. 25—30.

Yet I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus[3] *my brother and fellow-labourer, and fellow-soldier, but your messenger and minister to my wants*[4]; *for he greatly longed after you all,* 25. 26.

I hope to send as soon as ever I shall see the issue of this *affair* with me." Wakefield.

[2] *Confident in the Lord.*] See the note on ver. 19.

[3] *Epaphroditus.*] Grotius supposes this person to be the same with Epaphras, who is mentioned in the epistles to the Colossians and Philemon: Col. i. 7, iv. 12; Philem. v. 23. It is indeed probable that Epaphras was at that time with Paul; but he seems to have been particularly connected with the church at Colossæ, as Epaphroditus was with that at Philippi. Dr. Jones has laboured with his usual learning and ingenuity to prove that Epaphroditus was the celebrated freedman of the emperor Nero; but this is hardly consistent with his having been employed by the Philippians (ch. iv. 18) to convey their present to the apostle; or his being described (ch. ii. 25) as their apostle and teacher. Dr. J. Jones's *Series of Facts*, chap. 4.

Ch. II. Ver. 27. *and was much dejected*[1] *because ye had heard that he was sick. For indeed he hath been sick, near unto death; but God had pity upon him, and not upon him only, but upon me also, that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow*[2].

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[1] *Your messenger and minister to my wants.*] ὑμων δε απος-τολον, και λειτουργον της χρειας μου· "minister of my concerns; literally, *of this business of mine*; meaning the particular errand on which he went." Wakefield. "your apostle, and who is now to act for me with you." Peirce. "whom you are now to regard as your apostle, and my substitute." Harwood. "*Vestrum autem apostolum et mei muneris vicarium.*" Castellio. The common translation, however, which is that of Newcome, and adopted in the text, may be defended. χρεια is used in the sense of *necessity*, ch. iv. 16, 19. The opposition in the clauses of the sentence is sufficiently supported, if the first clause is supposed to express the reasons why the apostle wished to detain Epaphroditus, and the latter the grounds upon which it was expedient that he should depart. λειτουργος της χρειας may be uncommon, but Mr. Peirce does not pretend that it is unallowable. Indeed απος-τολος των εθνων is a similar construction. And it is certainly very unusual for the minister of a church to be called its apostle. The common interpretation is favoured by ver. 30.

[1] *Much dejected.*] "full of anguish." Newcome. αδημονων. Erasmus says that the word signifies *to be almost killed with grief.*

[2] *That I might not have sorrow upon sorrow.*] It has been before observed that Dr. Paley notices the case of Epaphroditus as a proof that the apostles did not possess the power of working miracles at pleasure. Dr. Priestley makes the same observation; "otherwise (he remarks) Paul no doubt would not have suffered this Epaphroditus, whom he esteemed so highly, and others of his fellow Christians whose sickness he mentions, and whose lives he imagined to be of value for the propagation of the gospel, to continue in circumstances so painful to themselves, and so detrimental to the cause in which they were engaged. Miraculous power does not appear to have been in any case subject to the will of men, our Saviour and the apostles always feeling a supernatural impulse upon their minds, whenever divine wisdom judged a miracle to be proper."

I am fully ready to concede this point with respect to the

Though I cannot at present spare Timothy, yet I think it highly requisite to send Epaphroditus back to you immediately, both that he may carry this token of my affection, may inform you of the particulars of my situation, and that he may renew his ministerial labours among you. I should indeed have rejoiced to have kept him with me, both to have enjoyed his society as a Christian friend, and to have engaged him as an associate in the toils and dangers of my apostolic mission. But I consider you as possessing a prior claim to his eminently useful services. He came hither as the messenger of your liberality to me; it would therefore be inexcusable to detain him without your approbation. And indeed he is himself very anxious to return to you, being exceedingly desirous to see you again, especially since he has heard how much you were affected by the account you received of his late illness; and he cannot enjoy any peace till he has relieved your affectionate solicitude for him. And indeed he has been very dangerously ill; but God in great mercy, both to him and to me, has dis- Ch. II. Ver. 27.

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apostles; but he to *whom the spirit was communicated without measure*, appears to have possessed a power of performing at pleasure that class of miracles which were necessary for establishing his character and claims as the Son of God, the Messiah foretold by the prophets.

Dr. Priestley adds, "With respect to the miraculous healing of sickness, it is observed that it was seldom exerted in favour of preachers of the gospel, but generally of indifferent persons, though they might afterwards be won upon, by such marks of divine favour, to embrace the gospel. By this means the evidence of the miracles was less liable to suspicion."

Ch. II. Ver. 27. pelled our fears and restored his health; for truly, if I had lost so dear a friend, I should have been overwhelmed with an accumulation of distress.

28. *I have sent him, therefore, the more speedily*[1], *that when ye see him again ye may rejoice, and that*
29. *I may be the less sorrowful*[2]. *Receive him, therefore, in the Lord*[3], *with all joy, and hold such in*
30. *high estimation. For because of the work of Christ he was near to death, having exposed his own life*[4], *that he might supply the remainder of your kind offices towards me*[5].

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[1] *Speedily.*] "σπουδαιοτερως, *festinantiùs.*" Vulg. See Peirce. "ἀ σπουδαιως, *festinans.*" Schleusner.

[2] *Less sorrowful.*] "Because my sympathy in your concern about Epaphroditus will be removed." Newcome.

[3] *In the Lord.*] "As a Christian minister." Peirce. "as a fellow-disciple of the Lord." Newcome.

[4] *Having exposed his own life*] παραβολευσαμενος, according to the Alexandrine and other manuscripts of the best authority. "*parabolatus de animâ suâ.*" Vulg. See Griesbach. "*Parabolani sunt qui se in periculum maximum projiciunt.*" Rob. Steph. *Thes. Linguæ Latinæ.* Epaphroditus, by the fatigue he had undergone in the execution of his commission, had probably brought on a fever, which had endangered his life. "Epaphroditus had exposed his own life to the utmost danger, as they did who took care of people infected with the pestilence, who were called *parabolani*; or as they did who fought with wild beasts. Vid. Socrat. *H. E.* lib. 7. c. 22." Peirce; who conjectures that the danger was incurred by sickness brought on by fatigue, and that it must have happened some time before, "as the news had not only been carried to Philippi, but the knowledge of their being acquainted with it had been brought back to Rome."

[5] *That he might supply,* &c.] "that he might supply your lack of service towards me:" το υμων υστερημα της προς με λειτουργιας. "Our translators, (whose version is here given,)" says Mr. Wakefield, "quite misunderstood the passage. The defect of the Philippians, or rather towards them, was the apostle's inability to come himself, which he sent Epaphroditus to

Ch. II. Ver. 30.

For these reasons I was the more desirous to send him back to you without delay, both that you might have the satisfaction to see your friend in good health, and that I might share in your joy, and be under less apprehension on your account. Receive him then, my brethren, with a cheerful welcome, as your faithful minister in the gospel of our common Lord; and hold such able and zealous servants of Christ in the highest respect and affection. Epaphroditus eminently deserves it at your hands: his late dangerous sickness was brought on by his too ardent exertions to fulfill the generous commission with which you had entrusted him in my behalf. Benevolence so active and disinterested cannot be too highly prized.

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supply." His own translation is, "making no account of his life, that he might fill up the deficiency of my service towards you." But without stopping to inquire whether the words will admit of this translation, the version of Peirce, Newcome, and others, seems more natural, and better suited to the connexion: "exposing his life to the most imminent danger, that he might fill up the remainder of your beneficence to me." "*Id mihi præstaret, quod præstare, vestri erat officii.*" Castalio.

The Public Version appears to express the true meaning of the passage. Epaphroditus fell sick through fatigue, occasioned by his zealous exertions to supply your place; by attempting to do what you would have done for me had you been at Rome: or, as Archbishop Newcome expresses it, "by conveying your supply to me, and giving me personal attendance." See 2 Cor. x. 8, 9.

SECTION V.

Ch. III. *THE APOSTLE warns the Philippians against being misled by the artifices of judaizing zealots, and exhibits his own conduct as an example of an absolute renunciation of dependence upon any legal pretensions as the ground of acceptance with God.* Ch. iii. 1.—iv. 1.

1. The apostle apologizes to his friends for insisting upon the same topics which he had given in charge to Epaphroditus, ver. 1.

Ver. 1. *As to what remains, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord*[1]. *To write the same things*[2] *to you is not irksome to me, and to you it is safe.*

To proceed, my brethren and beloved friends, to the advice which I would now offer as peculiarly suitable to your present circumstances: my first exhortation is, Rejoice in, and be thankful for, that liberal dispensation of which you partake, and which imposes upon you no harsh and insupportable yoke. I have desired Epaphroditus to warn you against a

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[1] *Rejoice in the Lord.*] "as Christians: in your Christian privileges and hopes." Newcome.

[2] *The same things:*] *i. e.* "which I have delivered in charge to Epaphroditus." Peirce.—"which I have inculcated when present with you; or, which I have written to other churches." Newcome. I prefer Peirce's interpretation. Two manuscripts read ταυτα, *these things.*

delusion of which you are in some danger. I shall now address the same warning to you; and shall think it no trouble to repeat to you what I have said to him, and the advice will probably come to you with greater effect when you observe the perfect coincidence in the doctrine of those whom you have been used to regard as your instructors in Christian truth. Ch. III. Ver. 1.

2. He briefly warns them against those evil-minded teachers who would seduce them into a needless subjection to the ceremonial law, ver. 2, 3.

Beware of the dogs[3], *beware of the evil labourers*[4], *beware of the concision*[5]. *For we are the* 2. 3.

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[3] *Beware of the dogs.*] "The apostle seems to retort upon the wicked and persecuting Jews the name given by them to the Gentiles." Newcome. See Isa. lvi. 10—12, Rev. xxii. 15, Matt. vii. 6. "cruel, fierce, and mischievous." Peirce. "It was customary with the Jews," says Dr. Priestley, "as well as with other Oriental nations, to denote particular characters by the names of those animals in which they predominate. Thus our Saviour, 'Cast not your pearls before swine,' 'Go and tell that *fox*.' Here the name *dog* probably means persons of a quarrelsome disposition, always ready to promote contention and division: which was the character of the judaizing teachers."

[4] *The evil labourers:*] not merely evil-doers. εργατης, *operarius*, a labourer in any business: here the apostle means labourers who set up to be teachers. κακους εργατας, *evil labourers*, similar to κακεργους, persons who act fraudulently and deceitfully. See Peirce. In 2 Cor. xi. 13 the apostle calls the same persons *deceitful labourers*.

[5] *The concision.*] An expression of contempt, denying them a right to the title of περιτομη, the circumcision, in which they gloried. "those who rend and divide the church." Peirce.—Mr. Wakefield translates the passage, "Beware of those dogs, beware of their wicked practices, beware of their biting you."

Ch. III. Ver. 3. *circumcision who worship God by the spirit*[1], *and who glory in Christ Jesus, and place no confidence in the flesh.*

When I consider what they are who attempt to rob you of your liberty and your peace, when I call to mind their restless malice and their hypocritical professions, I cannot restrain my indignation. Be, therefore, much upon your guard against those fierce and hungry dogs who wish to break in upon and to devour the flock. I mean those false teachers who are exerting their utmost endeavours to pervert your faith, to alienate your affections from your faithful instructors, and to make a prey of you. Beware of those men who, preaching up the necessity of Jewish rites, are in fact dividing and rending asunder the church of Christ by their schismatical and sectarian spirit. They call themselves, indeed,

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In this last clause he professes to follow an interpretation in Gataker's *Advers. Miscell.* p. 826. καταταμη, *concisio, mutilatio: q. d.* The rite being now abolished, is no longer entitled to its former honourable name. Theophylact *apud* Schleusner. "We are not to infer from this," says Dr. Priestley, "that the apostle undervalued circumcision, or any other part of the Jewish ritual. Had he thought the law of Moses to be abolished by the gospel with respect to the Jews, he certainly would never have circumcised Timothy; especially as his mother only, and not his father, was of Jewish extraction. All that he says in contempt of Jewish observances, is only to be understood of them in comparison of moral virtues, on which alone any stress is laid in the gospel, and which the superstitious attachment of the Jews to their ceremonies led them to neglect."

[1] *Who worship God,* &c.] the spirit; *i. e.* the gospel, as opposed to the law of rites. See Gal. iii. 3, 5, iv. 29, v. 5; Rom. ii. 29. *we glory in Christ Jesus:* i. e. in our faith in and relation to Jesus as the Messiah. *and have no confidence in the flesh:* i. e. in subjection to the law.

the chosen and the holy people of God; they glory in their conformity to the ceremonial law, and they place their confidence in the seals and symbols of the Mosaic institute. But in this, if they are sincere, they are most egregiously mistaken: for we, my friends, are the true and accepted people of God who worship the Father of our spirits agreeably to the terms of the new dispensation; who glory, not in being the adherents of Moses, but the disciples of Jesus the true Messiah; and who place our confidence, not in the symbols of the old and superseded covenant, but in our conformity to the terms of the new and better dispensation. Ch. III. Ver. 3.

3. The apostle shows that no one ever had greater cause than himself to boast in Jewish privileges, and ritual conformity, ver. 4—6.

Although I might *have confidence, even in the flesh. If any other may presume to have confidence in the flesh* [2], *I* still *more. Circumcised on the eighth day* [3], *of* the *race of Israel, of* the *tribe of* 4. 5.

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[2] *Presume*, &c.] See Mr. Wakefield. *in the flesh.* The context plainly shows, that by *the flesh*, the apostle means the rites, privileges, and profession of a Jew educated under the law.

[3] *Circumcised the eighth day.*] See Bowyer, Newcome, and Griesbach, for the construction of the original. Dr. Doddridge observes, that "the Jews did not only lay a great deal of stress on the rite of circumcision, but on the time of performing it, *i. e.* exactly the eighth day; and that the LXX. have an addition to Gen. xvii. 14, which is also in the Samaritan Pentateuch, 'the male-child which is not circumcised the eighth day shall be cut off from among his people.'" It is generally supposed that the apostle in these observations refers to some particular person who was the leader of the judaizing party in the

Ch. III. Ver. 6. *Benjamin, an Hebrew of Hebrews*[1]; *concerning* the *law, a pharisee; concerning zeal, a persecutor of the church*[2]; *concerning justification by the law*[3], *blameless.*

Your false teachers boast of their Jewish extraction, and of their strict adherence to Jewish rites, which they represent as essential to acceptance with God. But be assured, that under the gospel dispensation all this is of no value. Impute not this disavowal to envy, or to any consciousness of defect on my part: I am equal, yea superior, to every one of them in those claims to merit which Judaism can give. So that if any confidence could be placed in such kind of privileges or of works, as entitling men to the divine favour, I, above the proudest of

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church at Philippi, and who made great boasts of his Jewish privileges.

[1] *Hebrew of Hebrews.*] *i. e.* a Hebrew of the purest pedigree: or, as some think, a Hebrew in language, in opposition to the Hellenistic Jews, who used the LXX. See Newcome.

[2] *A persecutor of the church.*] "St. Paul was far from accounting this a virtue: he freely condemns it elsewhere as a grievous sin. 1 Cor. xv. 9, 1 Tim. i. 13. All, therefore, he can mean by what he says is, that if a zeal for the law were, as the Jews thought, a ground of confidence, he could with a witness pretend to it, since his zeal had been so great for it as to lead him to persecute the Christians, because he thought they dishonoured it." Peirce.

[3] *Justification by the law.*] This is opposed, ver. 9, to justification by faith in Christ. The former is that state of privilege which a Jew obtained by an exact conformity to the Mosaic ritual. In this respect the apostle was comparatively blameless: no person had a better claim than he to the reward which was due to ceremonial obedience. See Peirce and Macknight.—"the imperfect justification which can only make me appear blameless as to legal transgression in the sight of men." Newcome.

them all, have a right to boast this confidence. I was circumcised, as the law prescribes, precisely on the eighth day after my birth. I am a genuine descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to whom the promises were made; I am of the tribe of Benjamin, one of the two which returned from the captivity. I am a Hebrew of the purest pedigree: both my parents were of the Hebrew nation, and descendants of Hebrew ancestors. I was educated at Jerusalem in a strict observance of the law; I was admitted a member of the rigid sect of the pharisees, and was as rigorous in my external conduct as any of that fraternity. I was beyond measure zealous for judaical rites, and for that reason a vehement persecutor of those who professed to hold the doctrine of Jesus in higher estimation than the law of Moses. So that, if lineal descent from the Abrahamic family, if early initiation, if intemperate zeal, if rigid profession, could entitle any one to justification in the sight of God, I may challenge the whole Jewish nation to produce one who possesses a claim superior to my own. Ch. III. Ver. 6.

4. The apostle explicitly disclaims all merit of this kind, and rests his hope of acceptance with God upon his faith in Jesus Christ, ver. 7—9.

But these things, which were once *gain to me, I accounted loss for Christ*[4]. *Yea doubtless, and* 7. 8.

[4] *Gain—loss.*] κερδη—ζημιαν, profit and loss in commercial speculation. The apostle represents this ceremonial righteousness, which he once valued as his choicest treasure, as being

Ch. III. Ver. 8. *I account all but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ*[1] *Jesus my Lord; for whose sake I have cast away*[2] *all these things, and do account* 9. *them* but *refuse*[3], *that I might gain Christ*[4] *and be found in him*[5], *not having my own justification,*

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now in his estimation nothing but refuse and lumber, which he had thrown overboard to make room for that justification by faith which was a prize of the highest value. See Peirce.

[1] *Knowledge of Christ.*] "By the knowledge of Christ Jesus we are to understand the knowledge of Christianity; so also by *winning Christ* is to be understood gaining the rewards of Christianity. With Christ himself, personally considered, we can have nothing to do; and the manner in which many enthusiastic persons have expressed themselves on this subject is highly reprehensible." Dr. Priestley.

[2] *Cast away all these things.*] "Ζημιοω has two senses; one *to suffer loss* or *damage*, the other *to part with* or *throw away*, in order to prevent a greater detriment, as when goods are thrown overboard to save the ship." Peirce. See Grotius on Matt. xvi. 26.

[3] *Refuse.*] σκυβαλα. "*Latissime patet hoc vocabulum, et quodvis vile rejectamentum notat.*" Schleusner.

[4] *That I might gain Christ:*] that is, the blessings of his gospel. This is the treasure which I now seek after, and for which I have cast away what I formerly most highly prized. "He seems here to consider Christ as the most important and valuable thing, which he was therefore solicitous to secure to himself above every thing; and his meaning is, That I may attain the knowledge of Christ and faith in him, so as to have him for my Saviour, and be entitled to all the advantages which belong to those who are found in him." Peirce.

[5] *Be found in him.*] See chap. ii. 7. *To be found in Christ* is the same as to be in him; and to be *in* Christ, is to believe in him and to profess his doctrine. See Rom. xvi. 7, 11. Mr. Peirce considers the text as parallel to Gal. iii. 27, according to Mr. Locke's interpretation: Believers having put on Christ are clothed with him, so that God, looking on, sees nothing but Christ. "This expression, being *found in Christ*," says Dr. Priestley, "which has been so much abused by ignorant and enthusiastic persons, means nothing more than continuing in the profession of Christianity. Also by his *own righteousness which was of the law*, the apostle means, not moral virtue,

which is *by* the *law, but that* which is *through the faith of Christ*[6]*: even the justification* which is *from God by faith.* Ch. III. Ver. 9.

Upon these external distinctions I once laid a most unreasonable stress, and thought highly of my character and state on account of them. But I now view them in a very different light; and what I then valued most I now regard as of no real worth: and indeed as worse than nothing, if they are placed in competition with the blessings of the gospel. Yes indeed, my dear brethren, I solemnly assure you that I reckon, not only these proud distinctions, but all the most valued blessings of life, as nothing, as a price infinitely below the value of that saving doctrine of my master Jesus Christ; which in its sublimity, in its evidence, and in its glorious effects, far surpasses every thing which bears the name of learning or science.

For the acquisition of this most excellent knowledge I have in fact sacrificed all that was most dear and valuable in life; my most endearing and useful

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which he was very far from undervaluing, but the mere observance of the Mosaic ritual. And that *righteousness which is by faith in Christ*, means that virtue or ground of justification in the sight of God which is taught in the gospel, independently of the law."

[6] *That* which is *through the faith of Christ.*] That state of privilege and acceptance with God, which was to be attained by faith in Christ without submitting to the rites of the law; of which justification the apostle treats at large in his epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians. It was a state in which they were admitted to all the outward privileges of the gospel; and which, if practically improved, would entitle them to an interest in its spiritual and everlasting blessings.

Ch. III. Ver. 9. connexions, my temporal interest, my flattering prospects, and even my fondest prejudices; and have exposed myself to poverty, to contempt, to persecution, and to death in its most terrifying forms. I have, as it were, cast overboard all that I once thought precious. But I am far from repenting of the sacrifices I have made; for though I would not undervalue the blessings of life, when they are to be obtained in consistence with duty, I would nevertheless cheerfully discard them all, as I would cast away the vilest refuse, if this self-denial should be necessary to securing the prize at which I aim, a true knowledge of the doctrine of Christ, and an interest in the blessings of the gospel; that I may be justified in the sight of God, not by ritual merits, which is all that I could ever pretend to, but by faith in Jesus as the Christ, which is the reasonable and sole condition of the gospel covenant. This justification, this happy state of acceptance and of privilege, is the free gift of God to all who, convinced by the evidence proposed, receive and acknowledge Jesus as the Christ.

5. The apostle pants after this practical knowledge of Christ, to whatever dangers or sufferings it may lead, being confident that it must terminate in a resurrection to immortal happiness, ver. 10, 11.

10. *That I may know* Christ [1], *and the efficacy of*

[1] *That I may know* Christ.] τε γνωναι. The English version supposes the infinitive to be put for the subjunctive, and that τε γνωναι answers to εὑρεθω, ver. 9. Bengelius supposes the

his resurrection[2], *and the participation of his sufferings*[3]; *being made conformable to his death*[4], *so that, in any way, I may arrive at the resurrection of the dead*[5]. Ch. III. Ver. 11.

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infinitive to be taken as a gerund, and to be governed by πιστει, 'the faith of knowing him.' Peirce supposes it governed by δικαιοσυνην (see ver. 21,) the righteousness of knowing, or which consists in knowing, Christ. This interpretation would be more probable if the intervening words επι τη πιστει, should be dropped, as they are in the Ethiopic and Syriac; and by Mr. Wakefield, whose translation is, "so as to know Christ."

[2] *Efficacy of his resurrection.*] "its power of confirming my faith in him, and my hope of salvation through him." Macknight. See 1 Pet. i. 3.

[3] *Participation of his sufferings.*] "either those which he himself endured, or which are allotted to his disciples, for his sake and in his cause. The latter the more probable." Peirce.

[4] *Conformable to his death.*] εὑρεθω συμμορφιζομενος· see ver. 9. Grotius. *may be found conformable to his death.* The Alexandrine and Clermont copies read συμμορφιζομενος, *made conformable;* which Griesbach marks as the preferable reading. Peirce justly observes, that "though *dying to sin* is several times spoken of as a conformity to Christ in his death, Rom. vi. 3, &c., yet conformity to his death by dying for his sake seems to be more agreeable to the scope of this place. Rom. viii. 17, 2 Cor. iv. 10—14."—Dr. Priestley observes, that "the apostle alludes to his sufferings in the same cause with Christ, and his expectation of the same reward after death. From many other expressions it appears that the apostle did not consider the sufferings of Christ as of a peculiar nature, having any other cause or effect than the sufferings of other good men in a good cause. The public death of Christ was absolutely necessary, as a preparation to the proper evidence of his resurrection. Had he died a natural death and then appeared again, it might have been said that he had never died at all: it was therefore wisely ordered in the course of divine providence, that his death should be as public as possible. His resurrection was so circumstanced as to have the highest degree of credibility at this distance of time."

[5] *Resurrection of the dead.*] Mr. Peirce observes, that the expression "ει has not always a dubitative signification, 1 Tim. v. 10, Acts xxvi. 23; nor necessarily so when followed by πως,

Ch. III. Ver. 11. The great prize of which I am ambitious, and the possession of which will amply compensate for every loss, is that state of privilege, and hope, and peace, which is the result, not of the knowledge and profession merely, but of a practical conviction of the truth of the Christian doctrine, a conviction founded upon that amazing display of divine power by which Jesus was raised from the dead, and was made the pledge and pattern of the final resurrection of all his faithful disciples to immortal life and happiness. Nay, I am not unwilling to be a fellow-sufferer with him, to endure the ignominy and torture to which he was exposed, and to resign even life itself, if this sacrifice should be necessary to my safe arrival at the desired haven: to the attainment of that which is the great object of my triumphant expectation, and the glorious reward of all my toils and dangers and sufferings, a resurrection to life and happiness uninterrupted and everlasting. And I am persuaded that you, my brethren, among whom I laboured so long, who were also witnesses to my sufferings for the gospel, will give credit to my assertion, and will not regard it as a vainglorious boast: but will your-

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nor is it to be so understood here." κατανταω signifies, to arrive at a harbour; so that the apostle still keeps up his beautiful metaphor. Acts xviii. 19, 24, xxvi. 7. The apostle is here speaking of the resurrection of the just. And as the Philippians were personally acquainted with him, there was a propriety in appealing to what they had observed in his conduct which there would not have been in writing to the Colossians, who had never seen him. See Peirce's excellent note upon this text. "arrive at a complete resurrection from dead *works*." Wakefield.

selves be disposed to follow my example and to act the same wise and honourable part. Ch. III. Ver. 11.

6. He does not pretend that he has as yet obtained the object to which he aspires, but he professes to be incessantly reaching forwards towards it, ver. 12—14.

I say *not*[1] *that I have already received* the prize, *or already finished* my race[2]; *but I press forward, that I may lay hold on that*[3] *for which I also have* 12.

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[1] I say *not*.] The expression in the original is elliptical: *I say* is supplied by Peirce and Newcome. The apostle here changes his metaphor, and represents himself as in the situation of a man who is candidate for a prize in the races at the Grecian games, who is continually pressing forward till he reaches the goal. Mr. Peirce thinks that the apostle intends a secret comparison between his own character and that of the false teachers, who regarded and represented themselves as having attained perfection by their zealous conformity to the ceremonial law. But the apostle, though he had as good reason for boasting in this respect as they, was so far from regarding himself as complete in every particular and fully entitled to the prize, that he thought it necessary to stretch every nerve in order to maintain his ground and to secure final success.

[2] *Finished* my race.] So Mr. Wakefield. The false teachers fancied that their labours were finished, they had only to receive the prize; but the apostle had no such vain thought of himself. "am already perfected in evangelical excellence." Newcome. Comp. ver. 15.

[3] *That I may lay hold*, &c.] ει και καταλαβω. So Peirce; who considers ει και as similar to ει πως, ver. 11, not expressing any doubt in the apostle's mind. Castellio renders the phrase *ut comprehendam*. Yet still it may be doubted whether the apostle, in opposition to the bold confidence of the false teachers, did not mean to represent himself as under some degree of anxiety with regard to the issue of his exertions. Mr. Wakefield renders the words, "I am still pursuing if I may after all lay hold," &c.

Ch. III. Ver. 13. *been laid hold on*[1] *by Christ*[2]. *Brethren, I do not reckon*[3] *myself to have laid hold on it: but neglecting those that are behind, and stretching forward*
14. *to those before, I pursue one thing, according to my design*[4], *for the prize of that invitation of God from above*[5] *by Christ Jesus.*

Others, if they please, may boast the perfection of their character and the happiness of their state, in uniting the privileges of the disciples of Moses with the hopes of believers in Christ. I am not their inferior in either of these respects, and yet I am far from pretending, either that I have attained the prize of my ambition, or the perfection of those qualifications which are requisite for this purpose. Nevertheless, as Jesus mercifully arrested me in the

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[1] *Laid hold on.*] "The apostle, playing upon a word, represents himself as made a prize of by Christ, while he himself is desirous of obtaining that for which Christ made a prize of him." Dr. Priestley.

[2] *Christ.*] This is the reading of the best copies: the received text reads Christ *Jesus*. See Griesbach.

[3] *I do not reckon.*] "This will ever be the disposition of a mind truly virtuous. Every man who knows himself will be sensible of his imperfections, and if he be a good man he will be continually striving to remove them, and make nearer approaches to perfection." Dr. Priestley.

[4] *I pursue one thing*, &c.] "Join εν δε with κατα σκοπον διωκω, including the intermediate words in a parenthesis." Peirce and Bowyer. Peirce says he has no where met with good authorities to prove that σκοπος signifies the same as τερμα, *the goal*. He translates the words, therefore, "according to my aim or design." He admits that εν διωκω, επι το βραβειον is unusual, but he refers to Prov. xx. 6, LXX. as perfectly parallel.

[5] *Invitation of God from above.*] See Wakefield. The judges, seated on an eminence, summon the competitors to enter the lists. See Macknight.

midst of a course of hardened unbelief and fiery persecuting zeal, and has graciously enlisted me in his service, I now steadily pursue the great object for the sake of which I became a believer and was constituted an apostle. Indeed, my brethren, I pretend not to perfection, either in character or in state. But I have entered the lists, and I am resolved to press forward till I have reached the goal and won the prize. Not trusting to past merits and services, nor comparing myself with those whom I have left behind, I will still exert myself to the utmost in my Master's work, making it my sole aim to obtain that glorious reward which God has promised in the gospel of his Son to those who obey the heavenly call, and who persevere to the end of their course. Ch. III. Ver. 14.

7. The apostle urges the Philippians to follow his example, and expresses his hope that God will communicate to them all necessary truth, ver. 15, 16.

Let us, therefore, as many as are perfect men[6], *be of this mind; and if ye differ in any thing*[7], *God* 15.

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[6] *Perfect* men.] τελειοι, *perfect, q. d.* persons thoroughly instructed in the Christian doctrine. See 1 Cor. ii. 6, we speak wisdom among those that are perfect. It is opposed to νηπιος, *a child.* 1 Cor. xiv. 20, Heb. v. 13, 14. "Let us, as many as are perfect men, think thus as to the excellency of the knowledge of Christ." Newcome. In opposition to Judaizers. "grown up men not babes in Christ." Wakefield; who "suspects the purity of the latter part of the verse."

[7] *If ye differ,* &c.] ει τι ἑτερως φρονειτε. Mr. Peirce understands ἑτερως here, of *differing with one another.* They were all sufficiently instructed in the Christian doctrine not to be imposed upon by judaizing teachers; if there were any other points concerning which they were in doubt, God would, in one

Ch. III. Ver. 16. *will reveal this likewise to you. Nevertheless, as to what we have attained, let us walk therein*[1].

Upon the whole, then, let all of us who profess the faith of Christ, who are no longer babes but grown up men, and who have been well instructed in the doctrine and in the liberty of the gospel, be unanimous in our resolution that we will not be enslaved to the yoke of the ceremonial law, but that we will make it our chief study and our constant aim to obey the laws of Christ. And if there be any other points concerning which you differ in opinion, and in which you are not fully informed, if you are sincere lovers of truth, and open to conviction, using at the same time the proper means of inquiry, there is great reason to believe that God will, in one way or other, correct your errors, and lead you into all important truth. To this end let your practice keep pace with your knowledge. Let us all act up to the principles and to the spirit of the gospel. If we improve the light we have, we may reasonably hope that more will be communicated.

8. The apostle still more explicitly presses upon the Philippians to follow his example, and cautions

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way or other, communicate instruction. Revelation does not always express new inspiration. See Locke on Eph. i. 17.

[1] *Let us walk therein.*] The received text reads, *let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.* But the Alexandrine manuscript and some ancient versions leave out the words κανονι, το αυτο φρονειν, and these words are omitted in the editions of Griesbach and Newcome.

them against the practices of selfish and seducing teachers, ver. 17—21. Ch. III.

Brethren, be ye together imitators of me, and observe those who walk after the pattern which ye have in us [2]. Ver. 17.

My christian brethren, I have plainly stated to you my principles, views, and conduct; that I am by birth a Jew, and entitled to claim all the privileges of the disciples of Moses to a degree beyond what any one else can pretend to; that nevertheless I have renounced all for the sake of Christ; and that my sole object now is to comply with the requisitions and to secure the rewards of the gospel. You well know that I have not misrepresented my character and aims. Be, then, all of you without exception, imitators of me in these respects; and observe the conduct of those who habitually follow my example, the wise and faithful teachers who are settled among you, or the excellent person who bears this epistle to you; and mark how far superior their character shines above that of their opponents who disclaim my authority, and would subvert our faith.

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, 18.
and now tell you *even weeping,* that they are *enemies of the cross of Christ* [3]; *whose end* is *destruc-* 19.

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[2] *Observe those,* &c.] See Wakefield. The apostle here contrasts his own character and that of his colleagues with those of the judaizing zealots. "Here," says Peirce, "the reason very plainly appears why he said so much of himself in the foregoing verses."

[3] They are *enemies,* &c.] The apostle is here speaking of the judaizing teachers who were ashamed of the cross, who taught

Ch. III. Ver. 19.

tion[1], *whose God* is their *belly*[2], *and* whose *glory* is *in their shame*[3], *who affect earthly things*[4].

There are many in the Christian church, and it is well if there are not some even among you, who are of a character the reverse of that which I have described. I often mentioned them to you when I was present with you, and cautioned you against their seducing and mischievous arts. I now renew my caution to you again; and, anxious for your welfare, I with tears warn you against those artful and wicked teachers, who conceal their enmity to the doctrine of Christ and their shame of the cross, by an affectation of zeal for the Mosaic ritual; the tendency of whose doctrine, whatever they may think or profess, is to the ruin of themselves and of their hearers; who, whatever pretences they make

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the obligation of the ceremonial law, which had been abolished by the death of Christ; who preached the gospel with mercenary views, and who were men of immoral characters, 2 Cor. xi. 13, 15, 20, 1 Tim. vi. 5.

[1] *Destruction.*] απωλεια· "the ruin of *others*." Mr. Wakefield, *Comp.* c. 1. 28. "These men reckon upon your destruction, but they will certainly meet with their own." Peirce.

[2] *Whose God is* their *belly.*] who aim at nothing but their own gratification. See Rom. xvi. 18; 1 Tim. vi. 5; Tit. i. 11. "Whatever any person may profess," says Dr. Priestley, "of friendship for Christ and respect for the gospel, if their lives be not governed by the moral precepts of it, they are to be ranked with its enemies, their conduct tending to bring it into disgrace."

[3] *Glory* is *in their shame.*] "That is, who triumph in that which is really a disgrace; viz. in their circumcision, in their zeal for the law, in the number of their proselytes, in the advantage they derived from them." Peirce.

[4] *Who affect earthly things:*] that is, the ordinances and ceremonies of the law which were of an earthly nature. That this sense is included is evident from Col. iii. 1—3. See Peirce,

to peculiar sanctity, are in fact the slaves of luxury and intemperance, and seek only for the means of gratifying their appetite; who glory in their blind subjection to a ritual, to which, as professors of Christianity, it is a disgrace to them to be in bondage; and who are enthralled by that low and degrading spirit which is generated by an attachment to the law of Moses and the traditions of the pharisees. Ch. III. Ver. 19.

For we are citizens of heaven[5], *whence indeed*[6] *we are expecting a deliverer*[7], our *Lord Jesus* 20.

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[5] *For we are, &c.*] Include the 18th and 19th verses in a parenthesis, *q. d.* Mark those that walk, &c. *for* we are citizens of heaven. See Newcome and Wakefield. Formerly the Jews were in heaven and the Gentiles were on earth, *i. e.* the former were in a covenant, and the latter in an uncovenanted state. Now *they*, the judaizers, are earthly, but we Christians are citizens of heaven. Eph. ii. 6. This interpretation is the more probable if, as Peirce allows, 'earthly things' in the preceding verse express Jewish rites and ceremonies.

[6] *Whence indeed.*] εξ ὁ. Peirce, and Dr. Owen in Bowyer (see Newcome), with the generality of interpreters, supply τοπο, *q. d.* from which place. Two copies, of no great account, read εξ ων. "This is the most important of all considerations," says Dr. Priestley in his note upon this verse, "Christians should ever consider themselves as citizens of heaven. Our king or sovereign, who was not of this world, and whose kingdom was not of it, is now in heaven; and if we here below behave as the proper subjects of his spiritual kingdom, he will in due time come again, and take us to himself, to our proper country. I would observe, however, that according to this representation, we have nothing to expect from our King and Saviour before his coming to raise the dead, and judge the world."

[7] *We are expecting a deliverer.*] So Wakefield. The apostle always expresses himself as if the second coming of Christ was very near at hand, so that some then living would be eye-witnesses to it, 1 Thess. iv. 15. The times and seasons were not revealed to him, nor even to Christ himself, Acts i. 7.

Ch. III. Ver. 21. *Christ; who will transform this our lowly body into the similitude of his glorious body*[1], *according to the energy by which he is able even to subject all things to himself*[2].

Follow, then, as I have just observed, the example of me and of your other faithful and approved teachers; for we are members of a celestial community, and are entitled to the blessings and privileges of the new and heavenly dispensation, the laws of which it is our duty to obey. And, as the immediate consequence of this happy change of state, we are now taught to look with joyful expectation for the glorious appearance of our triumphant deliverer Jesus Christ from heaven, who is speedily coming, perhaps much sooner than many apprehend, to raise those who have fallen asleep in him, and to renovate those who shall be living when that awful consummation arrives. Then shall

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[1] *Will transform*, &c.] μεταχηματισει properly expresses a change of the outward appearance, not the substance of the thing spoken of. In the present state we bear the image of the earthly Adam, in the future we are to bear the image of the heavenly, 1 Cor. xv. 45—49. This mortal frame, which we inherit from a mortal ancestor, must be transformed into the similitude of the glorious person of Christ, 1 Cor. xv. 50—54, 1 Thess. iv. 15—17. What the full import of these expressions is, the event only can fully show. See Peirce. " who will change this lowly body of ours into the form, &c." Wakefield.

[2] *According to the energy*, &c.] See 1 Cor. xv. 24—26, 54—57. Mr. Peirce remarks, that this energy and power which is here attributed to Christ, is elsewhere ascribed to God, 1 Cor. vi. 14, for the power which Christ has, he received from the Father; Christ will subdue all things; his dominion will be universal. All the race of mankind will ultimately become subject to his authority; and his enemies, sin and death, all evil natural and moral, shall be destroyed.

this mortal put on immortality, and these frail and perishable frames shall, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, be transformed into the similitude of his own glorious person, qualified for immortal life, improvement and felicity. And this great and unknown change shall be produced in us by the energy of that stupendous power which is communicated to him by the Father, by which all his enemies shall be subjected to his authority; and sin and pain and death shall exist no more. Ch. III. Ver. 21.

9. The apostle concludes this division of his subject by an affectionate exhortation to stedfastness in their Christian profession, ch. iv. 1.

Wherefore[3], *my brethren, beloved and greatly desired, my joy and crown, thus stand firmly*[4] *in the Lord,* my *beloved*[5]. Ch. IV. Ver. 1.

To conclude: My dear brethren in the faith, children of the same father, heirs of the same immortal hopes, the worthy objects of my complacency and benevolence; whose company and conversation I earnestly desire; but for whose moral and Chris-

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[3] *Wherefore,* &c.] This verse should not have been separated from the preceding chapter, from which it is the proper inference. See 1 Cor xv. 58.

[4] *Thus stand firmly,* &c.] implying a commendation of their stedfastness hitherto, as well as an exhortation to perseverance. Stand fast in the Lord, *i. e.* be stedfast Christians. See ch. i. 5, 6, 28, 29, ii. 11—16, iii. 17. "*thus, q. d.* as I have exhorted you, follow this my example." Peirce.

[5] My *beloved.*] "Remarkable (says Peirce) is the number of words he here uses, as though he thought he never could apply words enough to express the greatness of his love and tenderness for them."

Ch. IV. Ver. 1.

tian improvement I am still more anxiously solicitous; whose conversion, whose practical and persevering faith, and whose kind remembrance of their persecuted instructor, have been, and continue to be, a source of the purest satisfaction and delight; and to whose joyful appearance with me at the tribunal of our glorious chief, I look forward with transport as to a prize more to be coveted than an imperial diadem; attend, my beloved brethren, to this my last, my earnest and most affectionate advice: Continue inflexible in your adherence to the purity of the Christian faith, and let no artifices of your seducing teachers, nor any consideration whatever, alienate your minds from the doctrine, the spirit, the practice, and the hope of the gospel.

SECTION VI.

THE APOSTLE offers seasonable advices and exhortations to some distinguished individuals; he repeats his thanks to the Philippians for their liberality, and particularly for their last present, and concludes the epistle with a suitable doxology, a general salutation, and the usual benediction. Ch. iv. 2—23.

1. The apostle gently hints some seasonable advice to some respectable members of the church at Philippi, ver. 2, 3.

I exhort Euodia, and I exhort Syntyche[1], *that they be of one mind in the Lord. Yea, I intreat thee also, true companion*[2], *assist these women,* for Ch. IV. Ver. 2, 3.

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[1] *Euodia and Syntyche.*] These were, no doubt, two women of respectable character in the church at Philippi. The apostle's exhortation supposes the existence of some difference, but whether with each other, or with the church in general, does not appear from the epistle. As the exhortation immediately succeeds the warning against false teachers, and these pious women appear, ver. 3, to have been very active in assisting the teachers of Christianity, it seems not improbable that they had been misled by the affected zeal of the judaizing teachers, and that the apostle's design was to recover them to the purity of the faith. This thought is hinted at in Mr. Peirce's note. Dr. Whitby thinks, that as persons cannot change their minds by intreaty or exhortation, the apostle exhorts them to promote the gospel with one soul.

[2] *True companion.*] So Newcome. γνησιε συζυγε, *true yokefellow*; metaphorically, *every one who is in any way united to, or associated with another.* See Schleusner. Some of the ancients imagined that the apostle is here addressing his own wife, whom he is supposed to have left at Philippi. Clemens *Alex. Strom.* ii. p. 448. Euseb. *E. H.* iii. 30. It is objected that γνησιε is in the masculine gender. But this, Erasmus observes, is not an unusual Atticism, and if it was a real objection, it must have occurred as such to the ancient Greek ecclesiastical writers. It is, however, generally understood from 1 Cor. vii. 7, 8, that the apostle was either unmarried or a widower; and most modern interpreters suppose that the apostle here addresses some eminent fellow-labourer in the gospel. Grotius and others think that he apostrophizes Epaphroditus; but this distinguished teacher was not then at Philippi; and the apostle never uses the expression συζυγος in this sense, but συνεργος. "It is uncertain what eminent person in the church of Philippi is here meant." Newcome. Perhaps the most probable supposition may be that of Chrysostom, and some ancient Greek commentators, (see Clarius's note, and Peirce *in loc.*,) that the person here addressed was the husband or brother of one of these women. It may be observed, that a difficulty of this kind, which is inexplicable to a commentator, could not occur to those to whom the letter was written, who would at once know the persons and circumstances to which the apostle al-

Ch. IV. Ver. 3. *they have earnestly laboured in the gospel with me, and with Clement*[1], *and* with *my other fellow-labourers, whose names* are *in the book of life*[2].

Having thus warned you of the danger you are in of being misled by false and interested teachers, I must now take leave to suggest a hint of friendly and Christian advice to two eminently pious women, who are, I fear, in some hazard of being warped from the simplicity of the faith. I earnestly beseech, therefore, and I seriously exhort those venerable matrons, Euodia and Syntyche, that they continue in unison with the church of Christ, and that they do not suffer themselves to be seduced from the pure doctrine of the gospel. And you, my dear brother, the faithful partner of one of these excellent women, assist their weakness, and teach them how to repel the artful attacks of the enemies of Christian faith and liberty. I am anxious on their account, because they were once zealous advocates

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luded. This is an inconvenience unavoidably attached to epistolary writing; and the occurrence of such obscure allusions is a presumption in favour of the genuineness of the epistle, which a forger would hardly give himself the trouble to invent.

[1] *Clement*] is supposed to be the person who was afterwards Bishop of Rome, who wrote an epistle to the Corinthians which is still extant.

[2] *Whose names*, &c.] This is an allusion to a public register of the names of persons who are entitled to the privileges and immunities of a corporation or society. It occurs repeatedly both in the Old Testament and the New. See Exod. xxxii. 32; Isa. iv. 3; Luke x. 20; Heb. xii. 33; Rev. xiii. 8, xxi. 27, xxii. 19; Mal. iii. 16. The apostle does not pretend to any revelation upon this subject; but, knowing the character and zeal of his fellow-labourers, he expresses his firm expectation of their future reward.

for truth, and in their proper province they afforded great assistance to myself, and to Clement, and to other teachers of the gospel who have laboured among them at different times, who are not only professing but practical believers, and useful ministers: and whose names are entered in the registers of that holy community the members of which are entitled by the promise of God to immortal life and happiness. Ch. IV. Ver. 3.

2. The apostle recommends cheerfulness, meekness, prayer, and thankfulness, ver. 4—7.

Rejoice in the Lord. Again I say, always rejoice[3]. 4.

My friends, in the midst of your difficulties and trials I call upon you to rejoice. Rejoice in your Christian profession, your Christian privileges, and your Christian hopes; I have given you this advice before; I now repeat it again. Rejoice continually. None have so much reason to rejoice as the sincere and enlightened believer in Christ. Let not any sophistry of error, nor any outward afflictions or persecutions, rob you of your invaluable treasure, or interrupt your sacred delight.

Let your mildness[4] *be known to all men. The Lord* is *near*[5]. 5.

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[3] *Again I say, always rejoice.*] This punctuation is recommended by Bengelius, "that the sentence may rise stronger after the word *again*, agreeably to the apostle's usual manner Gal. i. 8, v. 2, 3." Bowyer. See ch. iii. 1.

[4] *Mildness.*] ΤΟ ΕΠΙΕΙΚΕΣ. "The word denotes a disposition to clemency, lenity, and forgiveness." Newcome.

[5] *The Lord* is *near.*] This is generally understood of Christ's

Ch. IV. Ver. 5. You suffer in one shape or another for your adherence to Christian truth. Let not the injustice nor the severity of your sufferings betray you into any acrimonious expressions, and still less into any acts of retaliation for injuries received. Let your meekness and forbearance to your enemies and persecutors be conspicuous to all. It will make a favourable impression. At all events, remember that Jesus is near; that the hour is approaching when your beloved and honoured Lord will appear in his glory to animadvert with just severity upon his enemies and yours; and to give his faithful followers the crown of life. Leave it to him to redress your wrongs, and look to him for the promised reward.

6. *Be anxious about nothing*; *but upon every* occasion, *by prayer and supplication*[1], *with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.*

7. *And that peace of God*[2] *which exceedeth all com-*

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coming to the destruction of Jerusalem, but that would be little to the apostle's purpose. It seems more probable that the apostles expected the appearance of Christ to judge the world before the generation then existing was extinct. To them it was not given to know the times and the seasons, Acts i. 7. "*Ita sane arbitrabantur quia Christus tempus illud sui adventûs in occulto tenuerat.*" Grotius.

[1] *Supplication.*] Dr. Macknight renders the word δεησει, "deprecation of what is evil."

[2] *Peace of God will guard*, &c.] This expression occurs only in this place and Col. iii. 15; it probably signifies that state of peace and friendship with God into which they were introduced by the Christian religion, which, by enlightening their understandings and encouraging their hearts, would keep them firm in their adherence to the gospel. Newcome renders the phrase, "peace with God." The Vulgate and Italic versions read *custodiat*, which Mr. Wakefield adopts, *q. d. May that peace of God*, &c. The Alexandrine manuscript and the Syriac ver-

prehension, will safely guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Ch. IV. Ver. 7.

In the mean time, let not your minds be distracted by corroding care, or by any distressing apprehensions of what may happen to you in your passage through this world. Confide in God, and keep close to him in the exercises of devotion. Pray to him for what you want, deprecate what you fear, and be thankful for what you possess. While you thus offer up the tribute of gratitude and of piety, you may cheerfully hope for a divine blessing. And in particular, that happy state of reconciliation with God into which you are introduced by faith in Jesus Christ, will soothe your troubled spirits into tranquillity and peace. That exquisite delight which

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sion read, "the peace of Christ;" and in the parallel passage in the Epistle to the Colossians, this reading is so well supported, that Griesbach introduces it into his text. The sense is the same; that happy state into which the mind is brought by practical faith in the gospel of Christ, and reliance upon its promises.

Mr. Peirce observes, that "St. Paul is here arming the Philippians against persecution; nor could any thing be a greater support to them under it than the peace we have with God; for the sense of it will make the heaviest afflictions and pressures sit easy upon us. I grant a peaceable and quiet temper (which is the sense in which some understand the words) will be a support and comfort to a man under his troubles, when he considers that he has done nothing to provoke men, and that their fury and wrath against him is without cause. But this is inconsiderable in comparison with the support we shall have from a sense of God's favour and his being at peace with us. And the commendation here given to the peace of God, that it passeth all understanding, seems to suit better with this sense than the other." "'Peace' signifies happiness; and the 'peace of God' may signify 'great happiness,' or, 'such peace or happiness as God alone can bestow.'" Dr. Priestley.

Ch. IV. Ver. 7. arises from a humble hope in the divine mercy, and which none but those who experience it can comprehend, is the best and surest refuge to the bewildered understanding, and to the aching and foreboding heart.

3. The apostle enjoins the practice of all virtue, and proposes to their imitation his own example, ver. 8, 9.

8. *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true*[1], *whatsoever things* are *venerable*[2], *whatsoever things* are *just, whatsoever things* are *pure, whatsoever things* are *kind*[3], *whatsoever things* are *reputable*[4]; *if* there be *any virtue, if* there be *any*
9. *praise*[5], *attentively consider these things*[6]. *And*

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[1] *True.*] " *rectum, honestum ut* verum *apud Latinos*; ' Quid verum atque decens. Hor." Rosenmuller.

[2] *Venerable.*] σεμνα, " grave, or honourable." See Newcome. Mr. Wakefield renders the word *respectable,* " which," he observes, " has not a sufficiently ancient cast, but so exactly represents the original as to deserve the preference to every other." " *honestum, decorum, quicquid est viro gravi et honesto dignum.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Kind.*] " προσφιλη, *quæ benigna sunt et gratiosum faciunt hominem.*" Grotius. " amabilia." Rosenmuller.

[4] *Whatsoever things* are *reputable.*] " ευφημα, *quæ bonam famam pariunt.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *If* there be *any virtue,* &c.] " If there be any other virtuous or praiseworthy action. Praise is used for what is the cause of praise." Newcome. Some copies after επαινος, read επιστημης, " praise of knowledge;" and the Vulgate and some other versions read *disciplinæ,* which reading Peirce prefers, though he admits that the common reading amounts to the same thing. " *Si quæ res est, quæ in censu virtutum apud cordatos venit.* επαινος, *meton. quicquid est laude dignum.*" Rosenmuller.

[6] *Attentively consider.*] So Macknight. " ταυτα λογιζεσθε,

the things which ye have learned[7], *and admitted, and heard, and seen in me, these practise, and the God of peace*[8] *will be with you.* Ch. IV. Ver. 9.

And now, my beloved brethren and fellow-Christians, I shall in a few words sum up what remains to be added by way of exhortation. Maintain an invariable regard to truth. Let your words uniformly correspond with your real sentiments, and your actions with your promises. Let your conduct

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hoc animo recolite, nempe ideo, ut et in actionem producatis." Rosenmuller.

[7] *Which ye have learned.*] " which ye have learned from me, and received as the will of God, and have heard that I practise, and seen me do." Macknight. " It is happy when the preachers of the gospel can thus propose their own example for the imitation of their hearers; and certainly none ought to preach the gospel but those who, besides understanding the principles of it, can likewise recommend and enforce it by their own conduct." Dr. Priestley.

[8] *The God of peace:*] *i. e.* God the giver of peace. Mr. Peirce observes, that " this title is several times used by St. Paul when he is discoursing of Christians being peaceable as very proper to encourage them to mind the things which make for peace;" but he adds, " that he may as well be called the God of peace, upon account of his affording us peace with himself. See Heb. xiii. 20, 1 Thess. v. 23."

Dr. Priestley observes, that " the apostle concludes his epistle with mentioning particular circumstances relating to himself and the persons to whom he wrote, and with salutations from and to particular persons; all which are most unequivocal marks of the genuineness of the epistle. Indeed there are no epistles remaining from all antiquity which bear such indisputable marks of genuineness as these of Paul: and, as I have observed, the genuineness of these epistles sufficiently proves the truth of Christianity. For it is impossible to account for the writing of such epistles as these, without admitting the reality of the principal facts on which the truth of Christianity depends; and these epistles were written prior to any of the gospels."

Ch. IV. Ver. 9. be grave and dignified, worthy of your honourable profession and your exalted expectations. In your intercourse with others, be solicitous to give every one his due, and so insist upon your own rights as not to infringe upon the rights of others. Preserve the purity of your mind unsullied; and resolutely abstain from all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions. Be courteous and kind to all, and let beneficence in conduct flow from benevolence of heart. Behave at all times with that prudent circumspection and strict propriety which will ensure the approbation of the wise and good, and will defeat the malice of those who may wish to calumniate your character and profession. In a word, whatever may with truth be denominated virtuous and praiseworthy, let this be the object of your serious attention; and when you have formed your judgement, act accordingly.

Upon these topics it is unnecessary for me to enlarge at present. When I preached the gospel to you at first, I fairly stated the whole of its requisitions. You learned them from me; you admitted their obligation: you saw them exemplified in my conduct. I can appeal to you, that my character was uniformly consistent with my doctrine. As, then, you have received my doctrine, I beseech you to follow my example. Live in habitual subjection to the laws of Christ; and God, the Author of peace, who sent his son into the world, to proclaim and to seal the message of reconciliation and mercy, this God will be with you to preserve and bless

you, to ensure peace here, and everlasting happiness hereafter. Ch. IV.

4. The apostle expresses the great satisfaction which he felt on account of the generous spirit of the Philippians, and that still more for their sakes than for his own, ver. 10—14.

But I rejoiced in the Lord[1] *greatly, that now, at last, your concern for me hath revived*[2], *with regard to which ye were indeed concerned* before[3], *but ye wanted opportunity*[4]. Ver. 10.

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[1] *Rejoiced in the Lord:*] *i. e.* as a believer in Christ I was pleased to see the efficacy of Christian principles in the generosity of your conduct. See ch. iii. 1, iv. 4. "He uses (says Mr. Peirce) a very skilful way of commending the generosity of his benefactors; wherein he signifies, not only that they had done their duty, but that the Lord had favoured them by stirring them up to it; and that they had given him occasion of much thankfulness to the Lord: which shows his pious disposition who in such things took special notice of the Lord's hand and kindness to him." "It is observable," says Dr. Priestley, "that the apostle thanks God for their generosity to him. Men are only the instruments in the hands of providence. The first and proper cause of all good is God. But I would observe also, that God works only by second causes, and not immediately, for that would be by miracles, which we are not now authorized to expect."

[2] *Your concern,* &c.] Literally, *that you have revived,* or *flourished again, as to your concern for me.* It is a metaphor, borrowed from the revival of vegetables in the spring. "Like vegetables (says Dr. Doddridge), which, after having seemed during the winter to be dead in the earth, sprout up at the returning spring with new beauty."

[3] *With regard to which,* &c.] εφ' ω· *i. e.* πραγματι. "in which matter ye were careful." Peirce. Mr. Wakefield's translation is, "which indeed ye entertained before." "I know you would have done it sooner, had not my great distance from you prevented it." Pyle. "Qua de re tamen solliciti eratis, *ut Beza vertit. Hoc autem Paulus addit, ut mitiget, quod dixerat,*

Ch. IV. Ver. 10. As a faithful missionary of the benevolent religion of Jesus, and solicitous for the prevalence both of its knowledge and its power, I am highly gratified with the late seasonable exertion of your bounty towards me, which cheered me like the return of spring after a dreary winter. Indeed I well know that there has been no interruption of your kind inclinations towards me, though circumstances have for a long time precluded me from deriving the benefit which you were desirous to communicate.

11. *Nor do I speak on account of want*[1], *for I have learned in whatsoever* circumstances *I am, to be content.*

I assure you that my joy does not merely, or principally, arise from the ample supply of my wants, though I am far from being insensible of your kindness in this respect, or from any unbecoming contempt of the blessings of life; but acting always under a sense of duty in the discharge of my important mission, I have made up my mind to be satisfied with every change of condition which the providence of God may see fit to assign me.

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ipsorum studium reviruisse. εφ' ᾧ, h. e. περι ϐ, καθως. Και, *pro,* μεντοι." Rosenmuller.

[1] *Ye wanted opportunity.*] ηκαιρειϲθε δε, or, "ye wanted ability." Peirce approves this translation, because Chrysostom says that the word was commonly used in this sense. They wanted ability, not because of their poverty, but from the want of means and opportunities of conveyance.

[1] *Nor do I speak,* &c.] "Neque, κατα, propter *inopiam dico.*" Castellio. "*Non ideo hoc dico, quod in penuria constitutus fuerim, vel magna penuria laboraverim. Sapiens enim, ut statim aliis verbis addit Paulus, tenui etiam sorte est contentus, nec multis eget.*" Rosenmuller.

I both know what it is[2] *to be brought low, and* Ch. IV.
I know what it is *to abound; in every* season *and* Ver. 12.
in all conditions *I am instructed*[3] *both to be fed*
plentifully and to suffer hunger, both to abound and
to be in want. I am sufficient for all things through 13.
him who strengtheneth me[4]. *Nevertheless, ye have* 14.
done right in jointly contributing[5] *to* the relief of
my distress.

In the various scenes through which I have been conducted in the course of my ministry, I have experienced all the vicissitudes of external condition. I have experienced what it is to be poor, and what it is to be rich; I have been initiated into the great mystery of accommodating myself to all situations, to every change of time and circumstance, to live in abundance, or to be in want of the necessaries of

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[2] What it is, &c.] See Wakefield.

[3] *I am instructed.*] "μεμυημαι, μυεω, *proprie initio aliquem sacris et mysteriis.*" Schleusner. *q. d.* it has been a part of the discipline in which I have been initiated to instruct me how to conduct myself with propriety in all circumstances and upon all occasions. "*Initiatus sum*: i. e. *institutus. Hesychius interpretatur* πεπειραμαι, *expertus didici.* εν παντι sc. χρονω *vel* τοπω, *et* εν πασι sc. χρημασι, *in omnibus rebus vel negotiis.*" Rosenmuller. "always and in all things I am instructed." Newcome. "in every place and among all men." Peirce. I have adopted Wakefield's version.

[4] *Him who strengtheneth me.*] Χριστω, *Christ,* which is the reading of the received text, is wanting in the Alexandrine and Clermont copies, in the Coptic, Æthiopic, and Vulgate versions, and is omitted in Griesbach's edition, and in Archbishop Newcome's translation.

[5] *Jointly contributing.*] So Wakefield, Macknight, and Newcome. "My contentment in my circumstances does not at all lessen the commendableness of your behaviour, who have done well in commiserating and supplying me." Peirce.

Ch. IV. Ver. 14. life, to be supplied with every thing, or to be destitute of all things. And in every state I can be cheerful and satisfied; for God, who has invested me with my apostolical office, supports me in it, and enables me zealously to perform all the duties and cheerfully to endure all the trials with which I am exercised in the discharge of my mission. Nevertheless, I am not above accepting the kindness of my friends; and it is much to the credit of your character, that you have made so large a contribution towards the alleviation of those difficulties in which you knew that I was involved.

5. The apostle gratefully acknowledges the repeated and peculiar obligations that he was under to the generosity of the Philippians; and expresses his earnest prayer and hope that God would abundantly reward them for all their kindness to him: concluding with a suitable doxology, ver. 15—20.

15. *And indeed, O ye Philippians, ye yourselves know that at the beginning of the gospel, when I was departed from Macedonia*[1], *no church had*

[1] *At the beginning of the gospel, when I was departed from Macedonia.*] ὁτε εξηλθον απο κ. τ. λ. Dr. Paley, in his excellent *Horæ Paulinæ*, p. 265, mentions the coincidences of the facts here alluded to, with other passages in the New Testament, as remarkable illustrations of his argument for the genuineness of the epistles. *At the beginning of the gospel: q. d.* when the gospel was first preached in Macedonia. An indication that it had been preached there more than once at the time when the apostle wrote; and that the event alluded to had happened after the first visit: a fact confirmed by the history, Acts xvi. xx. The liberality of the Philippians occurred first, soon after he had quitted Macedonia: *Ye know* (ὁτι) *that when I* was de-

intercourse with me as concerning giving and receiving[2], *but ye only. And that even in Thessalonica*[3] *more than once*[4] *ye sent* relief *to my necessity.* Ch. IV. Ver. 16.

I remember with gratitude your oft experienced kindness. I need not remind you, my dear Philippian friends, how repeatedly you have attended to and relieved my wants, and have been ready unasked to impart your welcome bounty; when other churches, equally indebted to my apostolical labours, either did not consider my necessities, or

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parted—for so he renders εξηλθον, comp. Luke ii. 15, Matt. xii. 43, John xiii. 30, Acts x. 7,—*from Macedonia no church communicated with me, but ye only;* και ὁτι, *and ye know that in Thessalonica ye sent,* &c. Now it appears from 2 Cor. xi. 8, 9, that the Macedonians, *i. e.* the Philippians, sent relief to him at Corinth in Achaia, *i. e.* after he had left Macedonia, besides the supplies which they repeatedly remitted to him at Thessalonica. So that the apostle here alludes to two distinct remittances, or rather donations, at two distinct periods; one at Corinth soon after he had left Macedonia, the other at Thessalonica: which facts coincide with the history and the epistle in a way which plainly proves that the coincidence was undesigned, and consequently that the epistle could not have been forged.

[2] *As concerning giving and receiving.*] εις λογον. "No church communicated with me in a *single* instance of giving and receiving." Wakefield.

[3] *In Thessalonica.*] "a city so much larger and richer than your own." Peirce and Newcome. But it is not probable that the apostle intended to cast any reflection upon the liberality of the Thessalonians, for whom he expresses so much affection in his epistles to them. Possibly there might be the same reason for declining to accept a maintenance from them as from the Corinthians, and he chose rather to maintain himself by his own industry, and to derive the assistance he wanted from the Philippians, than to give his malignant enemies and persecutors a pretence to say that he was influenced by mean and sinister motives. 1 Thess. ii. 5, 6, 9; 2 Thess. iii. 7, 8, 9.

[4] *More than once.*] ἁπαξ και δις, *semel.* Grotius.

Ch. IV. Ver. 16. were unable to supply them, or from peculiar circumstances were prevented from gratifying their generous inclinations. And in particular, when I first preached the gospel in Achaia after I had left Macedonia, and when for special reasons I absolutely refused accepting any remuneration at Corinth, you, and you alone of all the churches which I had established, sent me a supply; which enabled me to preach the gospel at free-cost to the Corinthians. Nor can I ever forget, that before I left Macedonia, and while I was preaching and suffering at Thessalonica, you repeatedly sent a seasonable relief to my necessities.

17. *Not that I desire another gift* [1]*; but I rather desire fruit which may abound to your account.*

18. *For I have every thing* [2]*, and abound; I am fully* supplied, *having received from Epaphroditus the things* sent *by you, a fragrant odour, an acceptable sacrifice* [3]*, well pleasing to God.*

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[1] *Desire another gift.*] επιζητω. *I further desire.* Newcome. "Not that I wish for a gift *so much* as I wish for that fruit," &c. Wakefield.

[2] *I have every thing.*] "απεχω, rectè *omnia accepi.*" Grotius. Matt. vi. 2. But Peirce prefers the common translation; as he afterwards mentions his having received their present by Epaphroditus.

[3] *An acceptable sacrifice.*] "We see how familiar to the Jews," says Dr. Priestley, "were the rites of their religion, and how they supplied them with a constant source of figures of speech. If a present of money was called a *sacrifice well pleasing to God*, can we be surprised that so heroical an act of virtue as that which Christ manifested in his death should also be called a *sacrifice well pleasing to God*? How then can we be authorized from such phrases as these to suppose that the death of Christ was a sacrifice in any other sense than that in which this

Do not imagine, my brethren, that I remind you of these your former kindnesses, in order to trespass further upon your generosity at present: far from it. I mean no more than to encourage that liberal spirit, by the exercise of which upon every proper occasion you may be daily adding to your future reward. As to myself, I am quite at ease, in the enjoyment of abundance, since I received your bountiful present by Epaphroditus; which, as it was a most seasonable and acceptable supply to me, so as proceeding on your part from motives of piety and gratitude, it is an oblation more pleasing to God, whose servant and messenger I am, than a sacrifice of the sweetest perfume, and will in due time be acknowledged and rewarded by him as such. Ch. IV. Ver. 18.

Now may my God[4], *according to his glorious riches*[5], *supply all your wants by Christ Jesus.* 19.

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contribution of the Christians at Philippi to Paul was called a sacrifice; or, than prayer, or any other part of our duty, may be called a sacrifice? and yet the death of Christ has been considered so much a sacrifice, as by this means alone the anger of God against sin has been appeased, and that by this means only he has become propitious to offending sinners."

[4] *May my God.*] πληρωσαι· This is the reading of the Clermont and other manuscripts, and the Vulgate and Italic versions, is noted by Griesbach as deserving of respect, and is approved by Peirce. The common reading is πληρωσει, my God *will* supply.

[5] *Glorious riches.*] Put εν δοξη between commas. Not, "in glory by Christ Jesus;" but, "he shall supply your need with glory, according to his riches in Christ Jesus." Castellio, Bowyer. "May my God gloriously supply all your need, according to his riches, or, as he is abundantly able to do it." Peirce. "εν δοξη *referendum ad* πληρωσαι, gloriosè, *i.e. largissimè*." Rosenmuller.

Ch. IV. Ver. 20. *And to our God and Father*[1] be *glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

The only return I can make for all your kindness is by good wishes and prayers in your behalf. Of these be assured you have no common share. May that God, whose messenger I am, whose service I perform, in whose protection and favour I rejoice, and in whose great mercy I humbly confide, reward your generosity with a rich abundance of the glorious blessings of the gospel of Jesus; with peace, and joy, and everlasting life. To this great and venerable Being, who condescends to acknowledge the endearing character of a Father to all the true disciples of Jesus Christ, be ascribed by us, and by all his faithful servants, glory and praise for ever and ever. Amen.

CONCLUSION.

THE APOSTLE in a postscript adds a general salutation and the customary benediction, ver. 21—23.

21. *Salute every holy* believer *in Christ Jesus*[2].

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[1] *To our God and Father.*] "Here again I would observe," says Dr. Priestley, "what is conspicuous through all the New Testament, that *God* and *the Father* are synonymous terms, neither Christ nor any other person being so much as called God; and that to the Father alone is glory in the highest sense ascribed, he being the author of all good, and Christ his minister or servant in communicating blessings to mankind."

[2] *Holy* believer *in,* &c.] "every one that is holy through

The brethren[3] who are *with me salute you. All the saints*[4] *salute you; particularly those of Cesar's household*[5]. *The favour of our Lord Jesus Christ* be *with your spirit*[6]. *Amen.* Ch. VI. Ver. 22. 23.

I cannot close this epistle without sending my affectionate salutations to every individual member of your Christian society. All are entitled to my best regards; and I name none, that I may not appear to give preference to any. My respected colleagues in the honourable office of preaching the gospel send their salutations to you. All the mem-

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Christ Jesus." Newcome. It is the apostle's circumlocution for *Christian:* a term which he always avoids.

[3] *Brethren.*] These, being distinguished from the saints, probably signify the ministers of the gospel who were the apostle's coadjutors.

[4] *Saints:*] or, "holy men;" as ver. 21. "By *saints* in this place," says Dr. Priestley, "we are not to understand what was meant by that term in after ages, persons of greater sanctity than others: and least of all persons abstracted from the world and from the duties of it, but simply Christians, persons professing Christianity, and thereby constituting the church and people of God, as the Jews had been before, who were called a holy and peculiar people, as standing in a nearer relation to God than other nations."

[5] *Cesar's household.*] "Raphelius, Kypke, and Krebsius, show that the phrase may signify *non solum domesticos, sive aulicos sive libertos, Neronis, sed cognatos ejusdem.*" Newcome.—Dr. Macknight conjectures that the apostle may have been favourably regarded even by Poppea the emperor's wife; for Josephus, who was acquainted with her character, says she was a worshiper of the true God. *Antiq.* lib. xx. c. 7. Dr. John Jones has taken much pains to show that Epaphroditus, the freedman of Nero, and that Seneca, were both Christians. *Jones's Series of Important Facts demonstrating the Truth of the Christian Religion,* ch. iv.

[6] *Your spirit.*] μετα τ̃ πνευματος ὑμων, *i. e.* with you. This is the reading of some of the best manuscripts, and of many ancient versions: see Griesbach.

Ch. IV. Ver. 23. bers of the congregation of believers at Rome are solicitous to testify their affectionate regard to you. Amongst these are some whom perhaps you would little expect, some who live within the precincts of the court, who are even members of the imperial family: these in particular desire me to testify their high sense of your meritorious conduct. Finally, may all the invaluable blessings of the everlasting gospel, which is the free gift of God by Jesus Christ, be with you and yours! Amen. [1]

[1] The postscript, that "the Epistle to the Philippians was written from Rome by Epaphroditus," is correct. Dr. Macknight concludes his Notes with the observation, that "though the apostle has not mentioned it in his Letters, we may believe that not long after this epistle was written, he obtained a fair hearing and an honourable release, through the good offices of the Christians in Nero's family, as well as on account of the justice of his cause."

THE EPISTLE

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

THE COLOSSIANS.

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

COLOSSÆ was a considerable city of Phrygia Major, in the Lesser Asia, upon the river Lycus, at no great distance from Hierapolis, and Laodicea, which was the largest and the most opulent of the three, and the metropolis of that district. It is debated whether the apostle Paul planted the gospel in these cities, and even whether he had ever visited them in person. It seems, indeed, highly improbable, when the historian relates, Acts xvi. 6, that "Paul and Silas went through Phrygia and Galatia;" and Acts xviii. 23, that the apostle "went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order," that he should have declined to visit the principal cities in that region. It is, however, possible

that, for reasons not now apparent, Paul and Silas might have been warned to decline visiting these cities, as they had been forbidden to preach the gospel in Mysia, or to enter into Bithynia, Acts xvi. 6, 7 [1]. And it has generally been inferred from the apostle's expressions Col. ii. 1, "I would that ye should know what earnest care I have for you, and for those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh," that he had never visited these cities in person. And though Theodoret [2], a writer of the fifth century, has explained these words as though he had said, "not only for you, but for others who have never seen me." Dr. Whitby justly observes, "that the structure of the sentence is inconsistent with such an interpretation [3]."

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[1] It is also possible that the apostle in his missionary circuits might have passed through these cities, and even stopped a few days without any material occurrence worthy of record. It is plain, that in the second of these journeys the apostle was anxious to get on to Ephesus, and of course would not make a long stay at any of the places through which he passed.

[2] "Some are of opinion, says Theodoret, tom. iii. p. 342, that when the divine apostle wrote this epistle he had not seen the Colossians; and they endeavour to support their opinion by these words Col. ii. 1. But they should consider that the meaning of the words is this, 'I have not only a concern for *you*, but I have also a great concern for those who have not seen me.'" Lardner's *Works*, vol. vi. p. 457.

[3] Whitby says, "That St. Paul wrote this epistle to the Colossians when he had not yet seen them, is the opinion of most of the ancient scholiasts. This is confessed even by Theodoret, though he saith this does not follow from the words cited to confirm this opinion, but the contrary." And upon Theodoret's interpretation Dr. Whitby observes, "that the connecting particle being, not αλλα, or αλλα και, *but also*, but only και, *and*, seems to favour our translation and the opinion of the ancients."

It is also remarked, that (Col. i. 3) the apostle gives thanks to God for them since he had *heard* of their faith in Christ Jesus; whereas, when writing to the churches which he had himself planted or visited, he saith to the Thessalonians, 1 Thess. i. 3, "We give thanks to God, *remembering*, without ceasing, your work of faith;" and to the Philippians, ch. i. 3, "I thank my God upon every *remembrance* of you."

But the fact which principally decides the question is, That whereas, in the epistles addressed to churches which the apostle is known to have planted or visited, in those to the Thessalonians, to the Corinthians, to the Galatians and the Philippians, he is continually making allusions to circumstances which occurred while he was with them, to his conduct among them, or to their behaviour to him: in the epistle to the Colossians, as well as in that to the Ephesians, there is not a single allusion of this nature, there is not a sentence, or a word, which would lead any one to conclude that Paul had ever been at Colossæ, or that he had ever seen an individual of those to whom the epistle was inscribed.

Lardner has taken great pains to establish the fact that Paul had planted, or at least visited, the church at Colossæ; but Paley thinks that he has not been successful in his argument. On the other hand, it is admitted that the majority of the ancient ecclesiastical writers, with the exception of Theodoret, and a few others, believed that the apostle was a stranger to the Colossians; and this opinion is

adopted by Whitby, Peirce, Doddridge, Rosenmuller, and Paley.

It becomes, therefore, a question when and by whom was the gospel first preached at Colossæ [1]. And it is generally agreed that the Christian doctrine was planted there during the residence of Paul at Ephesus, where he passed three years. It is stated Acts xix. 9, 10, that "Paul discoursed daily in the school of one Tyrannus; and this was done for two years, so that all those who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Gentiles." At this period, no doubt, some of the inhabitants of Colossæ would have an opportunity of listening to the instructions of the apostle, and would be converted to the faith, and that they would carry the gospel home to their countrymen. Among these probably were Epaphras, Philemon, Archippus, and others.

The EPISTLE to the COLOSSIANS is one of those

[1] "It is uncertain by whom a Christian church was planted at Colossæ. It seems probable that it was not by Paul himself. Nor is it certain that the Colossians were converted to the Christian faith by any whom St. Paul sent to them. This, indeed, seems probable; for he had spent three years at Ephesus, Acts xx. 31, and it is not unlikely that during that time some of the Colossians having occasion to go to Ephesus, might by him be turned to Christianity, and might when they went home be employed by him to preach the gospel to their fellow-citizens. This may be thought the more probable from what Luke says of his success when he had been at Ephesus but two years, Acts xix. 10. Epaphras may well be supposed to be one of this number. He was himself a Colossian, chap. iv. 12, a faithful minister of Christ for them, chap. i. 7, by whom he intimates they had been chiefly instructed. And possibly they therefore sent him as their minister to St. Paul." Peirce.

the genuineness of which has never been called in question[2]. It professes to have been written by the apostle Paul: it contains nothing inconsistent with this supposition, nothing incongruous to the apostle's character and circumstances, to his doctrine, his style, and manner of thinking; or to the age in which he lived, and the relative situation of the writer and of those to whom his epistle is inscribed: and its authenticity is confirmed by various incidental coincidences with Luke's History and the other epistles, which are noticed by Archdeacon Paley. It was universally received by the primitive church; was early translated into different languages; copies of it were multiplied and widely diffused: it has been cited from age to age, invariably, as the production of the apostle's pen; and the copies which are now extant in all parts of the world, whether in the original language, or in versions ancient or modern, harmonize with each other, with very few, and those immaterial, variations.

This epistle was written by the apostle from Rome, at the latter end of the year 62, or the beginning of the year 63, at the same time with the epistle to the Ephesians, with which it remarkably

[2] The late learned and pious Edward Evanson is the single exception to this assertion, and his objection is founded upon the supposed inconsistency between the language of the epistle, which implies that he had never personally visited Colossæ, and the declaration of Luke that he had passed through Galatia and Phrygia in order. Evanson's *Dissonance of the Evangelists*, p. 313.

harmonizes both in matter and style, as is distinctly and beautifully illustrated by Paley[1]; and it was sent to Colossæ by the same messengers, Tychicus and Onesimus, who conveyed the Epistle to the Ephesians, or Laodiceans. Compare Eph. vi. 21, 22 with Col. iv. 7, 8.

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[1] "Both epistles," says Paley, p. 209, "represent the writer as under imprisonment for the gospel, and both treat of the same general subject. The epistle, therefore, to the Ephesians, and the epistle to the Colossians, import to be two letters written by the same person, nearly at the same time, and upon the same subject, and to have been sent by the same messenger. Now every thing in the sentiments, order, and diction of the two writings, corresponds with what might be expected from this circumstance of identity or cognation in their original. The leading doctrine of both epistles is the union of Jews and Gentiles under the Christian dispensation; and that doctrine in both is established by the same argument, or, more properly, illustrated by the same similitudes: 'one head,' 'one body,' 'one new man,' 'one temple,' are, in both epistles, the figures under which the society of believers in Christ, and their common relation to him as such, are represented. The ancient, and, as had been thought, the indelible distinction between Jew and Gentile, in both epistles is declared to be now abolished by the cross. Beside this consent in the general tenor of the two epistles, and in the run also, and warmth of thought with which they are composed, we may naturally expect in letters produced under the circumstances in which these appear to have been written, a closer resemblance of style and diction than between other letters of the same person, but of distant dates, or between letters adapted to different occasions. In particular we may look for many of the same expressions, and sometimes for whole sentences being alike, since such expressions and sentences would be repeated in the second letter (whichever that was), as yet fresh in the author's mind from the writing of the first. Compare Eph. i. 7, 10 with Col. i. 14, 20; Eph. iii. 2 with Col. i. 25. Sometimes the order of the principal words is inadvertently changed; and in many instances not single words, nor whole sentences, but parts and fragments of sentences are repeated. Eph. i. 19, ii. 5, compared with Col. ii. 12, 13; Eph. iv. 2—4 with Col. iii. 12—15."

Grotius introduces his Annotations upon the Epistle to the Colossians with observing: "All the Epistles of Paul are excellent; but chiefly those which are written from Rome by Paul the prisoner [2]."

The great design of this Epistle appears to be, to confirm the Colossians in the true faith of the gospel, to excite their admiration and gratitude at the goodness of God in inviting the Gentiles into the church; to warn them against the delusions of Jewish bigotry and heathen philosophy; and to exhort them to the cultivation of that spirit and the practice of those duties which become the professors of the holy religion of the gospel.

THE APOSTLE, after a suitable Introduction, enters upon the FIRST PART of his Epistle, in which he ex-

[2] "*Omnes epistolæ Pauli egregiæ sunt; sed omnium imprimis quæ Româ ex vinculis missæ sunt. Harum primam temporis ordine arbitror fuisse illam ad Philemonem: nam tunc adhuc cum ipso erat Epaphroditus qui et Epaphras. Alteram ad Philippenses, ubi Epaphroditum remittit. Tertiam, ad Ephesios, et eodem prope tempore hanc ad Colossenses cum adhuc quæ ad Ephesios scripserat in animo hærerent. Postrema vero omnium ea quæ posterior est ad Timotheum. Erant Colossæ urbs Phrygiæ, memorata et Herodoto, et Xenophonti, et Straboni, et Plinio, non longe a Laodicea: quæ urbes ambæ non multo post scriptam hanc epistolam terræ motu corruére. Ideo apud Ptolemæum non reperiuntur.*" Grotius.

That this learned critic was mistaken in his method of arranging the epistles from Rome is highly probable, as has been, or will hereafter be, shown. Nor is it certain that Epaphras was the same with Epaphroditus; for though the name might be the same, Epaphroditus, as Beausobre observes, was sent to Philippi, while Epaphras was detained a prisoner at Rome. Philemon, ver. 23.

presses his joy and thankfulness for the conversion and consistent behaviour of the Colossians: expatiates upon the liberties and privileges of the Gentile church, and upon the honour conferred upon himself as the apostle of the Gentiles; and warns them against the artifices of false teachers who would seduce them to subjection to the ceremonial law, or to the delusions of an erroneous philosophy. This subject extends from the third verse of the first chapter to the fourth verse of the third.

And in the First place, the apostle expresses his joy in the conversion of the Colossians; he prays for their improvement; he declares the superiority of Jesus Christ to all other prophets and teachers; he reminds them of the great goodness of God in bringing the Gentiles into the church; and expresses his gratitude for the honour conferred upon him in his appointment to the apostleship of the Gentiles. Ch. i. 3—29.

He then urges the Colossian brethren to persevere in their attachment to the pure unsophisticated doctrine of the gospel; and cautions them against corrupting it by the base intermixture of pharisaic tradition, of false philosophy, and of Jewish or heathen superstitions. Ch. ii. 1—iii. 4.

In the Second Part of this excellent Epistle, the apostle treats of Practical Duties, and particularly he insists first, upon personal duties and self-government; secondly, upon the duties which Christians owe to each other; he enters, thirdly,

into a brief detail of relative duties; and lastly, represents the conduct which ought to be observed towards unbelievers. Ch. iii. 5—iv. 6.

The Epistle closes with the recommendation of Tychicus and Onesimus, who are the bearers of it; with the salutations of the believers at Rome to those at Colossæ, with an order that the epistles to the Laodiceans and Colossians shall be mutually exchanged and read in both the churches; with a solemn charge to Archippus, and with the apostolical benediction: accompanied with a request that they would not forget that he was now a prisoner.

THE
EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

PART THE FIRST.

THE apostle, after a suitable introduction, expresses his joy and thankfulness for the conversion and good behaviour of the Colossians; he expatiates upon the liberty of the Gentile church, and the honour conferred upon himself by his commission to teach the Gentiles, and cautions them against the artifices of false teachers, who would seduce them to subjection to the ceremonial law. Ch. i.—iii. 4. Ch. I.

THE APOSTLE'S INTRODUCTION.

CHAP. I. 1, 2.

THE APOSTLE introduces the epistle with the usual salutation, joining the name of Timothy with his own.

PAUL an apostle of Jesus Christ, by divine appointment[1], *and Timothy* our *brother, to the holy*[2] Ver. 1. 2.

[1] *By divine appointment.*] So Wakefield. Gr. " by the will

Ch. I. Ver. 2. *and faithful*[3] *brethren in Christ at Colossæ, favour* be *unto you, and peace from God our Father*[4].

This epistle is dictated by me, Paul, who am acknowledged in the Gentile churches as an apostle of Jesus Christ, whose office it is to teach his doctrine, and bear testimony to his resurrection; an honourable office, which I did not arrogate to myself, but to which I was expressly appointed by God, in a way that is well known, and cannot be sufficiently admired. In this salutation I join the name of Timothy my pupil, convert, companion, fellow-labourer, and fellow-prisoner, with my own. And to the holy believers in Christ in the city of Colossæ, who firmly adhere to their principles in seasons of trial and temptation, we heartily wish that God our Father,

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of God." "to intimate his extraordinary and miraculous mission, Acts ix. xxvi. and his receiving the gospel by immediate revelation. Gal. i. ii." Peirce.

[2] *Holy:*] *i. e.* separated from the common state of mankind to be the people of God, and to serve him, as the Jews formerly were, and professing Christians now are, Rom. i. 18—25; Exod. xix. 5, 6; Numb. xv. 40; 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10. See Peirce.

[3] *Faithful.*] πιστοις. Peirce observes, that "this term being found in the introduction to this epistle, and in that to the Ephesians, and to no one other of St. Paul's, there is just reason to think it was a term suited to the present notion he had of those he was writing to, with reference to the business he was writing about. I take it, therefore, that by the *faithful brethren*, he means such as stood firm to Christ; which he did not count them to do; who made circumcision necessary to salvation. Gal. v. 1, 2."

[4] *God our Father.*] The words "and the Lord Jesus Christ," which are found in the received text, are wanting in the Clermont, the Corbey, and many other manuscripts, in the Syriac, the Æthiopic, and other versions, and in several ecclesiastical writers; they are also left out in Griesbach's edition, and in Newcome's translation.

and their Father, may send that peace which the gospel brings to all who sincerely profess it, and all other blessings comprehended in it, and resulting from it. Ch. I. Ver. 2.

SECTION I.

THE APOSTLE expresses his joy in the conversion of the Colossians, and prays for their improvement: he declares the superiority of Christ to all other prophets and teachers; reminds them of the great goodness of God in bringing them into the church, and expresses his gratitude for his own appointment to the apostolic office. Ch. i. 3—29.

1. The apostle thanks God for their faith and love, and for the success of the gospel at Colossæ, and throughout the world, ver. 3—6.

We give thanks[5] *to the God and Father*[6] *of our* 3.

[5] *We give thanks*, &c.] The apostle having heard a good account of their stedfastness, ver. 3, gives thanks to God for their interest in the hopes and promises of the gospel, ver. 5; which they would have forfeited had they apostatized from the doctrine he taught. "I thank the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ always on your account in my prayers." Peirce. "praying always for you." Newcome; who with the public version joins παντοτε with προσευχομενοι.

[6] *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*] "What more could have been said by any Unitarian? It is the same Being that is called our God and Father; and to whom our Saviour always prayed under the character of his God and Father. Where, therefore, is the evidence of Christ's having any nature superior to ours?" Dr. Priestley.

Ch. I. Ver. 4. *Lord Jesus Christ continually in our prayers for you (having heard*[1] *of your faith in Christ Jesus,*
5. *and* your *love towards all the saints), on account of*[2] *that hope which is laid up for you in the heavens*[3], *of which ye have heard before in the true doctrine*
6. *of the gospel*[4], *which hath appeared among you*[5]

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[1] *Having heard,* &c.] Not of their conversion, for this he must have known long before; but of their stedfast adherence to the truth to which he alludes, ver. 2; and of their love to *all* the saints of every denomination, without restricting their affection to those who adhered to the ceremonial law. The word *all* here is unquestionably emphatical, as is rightly observed by Peirce and Macknight. The apostle was apprehensive that they might have been corrupted by judaizing zealots; and he rejoices in the account brought to him by Epaphras, that they adhered to the pure and liberal principles in which they had been originally instructed. See Peirce's note, and Locke on Eph. i. 15.

[2] *On account of,* &c.] δια την ελπιδα. Mr. Peirce not finding any instance of ευχαριστειν being followed by δια with an accusative, connects this with ver. 4, and supposes that it expresses the motive for the sake of which they persevered in faith and love; *q. d.* the continuance of your faith and love for the sake of heavenly happiness. I rather prefer the common interpretation, which is also that of Wakefield and Newcome, and is most agreeable to the parallel passage in Eph. i. 15—20. There the apostle, thanking God for their faith and love, prays that they may be apprized of the value of the blessings of the gospel, represented by their advancement with Christ into heavenly places. Here he thanks God for the hope treasured up for them in the heavens: *i. e.* in the gospel dispensation.

[3] *In the heavens.*] "blessing God for the hope and full assurance which you now have of the heavenly happiness promised in the gospel of Christ." So Pyle, and others. But I beg leave to submit whether the word *heavens* may not here be better understood of the heavenly dispensation of the gospel, and whether this interpretation would not better correspond with the sense of επαφανιοις as applied to Christ Eph. i. 20, and to believers Eph. ii. 6. See Locke *on the Ephesians.* It cannot, however, be denied that *hope* is not unfrequently put for the *object* of hope.

[4] *The true doctrine of the gospel.*] So Newcome and Wakefield. Gr. "in the word of truth of the gospel."

as it hath *also in all the world*[6], *where it beareth fruit*[7] *and groweth*[8], *as it hath also among you from the day in which ye heard and acknowledged the favour of God in truth*[9]. Ch. I. Ver. 6.

In the daily exercises of devotion, when I bear upon my heart the cases of the several churches of Christ, in the presence of that merciful Being who is the God and Father of our master Jesus Christ, and whom we his disciples of every nation are taught to regard and adore as our Father and our God, I have always remembered you, my beloved brethren at Colossæ, ever since the encouraging accounts which I have received of your character and state; that you believe the gospel; and that undismayed by perils and persecutions you firmly adhere to the faith of Christ; that you love one another; and indeed that your kind affection extends to all of every name and country who truly believe in Jesus, without confining your benevolent regard to those only who mix up the burdensome ceremonial of the law with the free grace of the gospel.

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[5] *Hath appeared among you.*] So Wakefield. παροντος εις ὑμας, "which is come to you." Newcome.

[6] *In all the world:*] *i. e.* the known world, and particularly the Roman empire. Peirce thinks that the apostle alludes to the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles.

[7] *Where it beareth fruit.*] Gr. και, *and*, "beareth fruit."—Some good copies leave out και, and read, "as it bringeth forth fruit, and increaseth in all the world also, even as among you." See Griesbach and Newcome.

[8] *And groweth.*] These words are found in the most approved manuscripts and versions. See Griesbach. They are wanting in the received text.

[9] *The favour of God in truth.*] "Truly, really, substantially." Newcome. "this genuine kindness of God." Wakefield.

Ch. I. Ver. 6. And I bless God, that thus professing your faith in the gospel, and breathing its generous spirit, you have acquired a title to the glorious hope of immortal existence which is treasured up in this heavenly dispensation, and which is secured to all who practically receive it. It is your privilege that you have long ago been put into possession of this invaluable blessing, through the labours of those faithful men who first taught you the uncorrupted doctrine of Christ. And I am happy to assure you that this doctrine, notwithstanding all opposition, is now making great and rapid progress through the whole Roman empire, and indeed throughout the world: and that every where it produces the best effects in the hearts and lives of its sincere professors, exactly as it has done at Colossæ, ever since you knew and became justly sensible of the value of the gospel, that best and most important gift of God to mankind.

2. He mentions Epaphras, who had first preached the gospel to them, as the person from whom he had received this encouraging account, ver. 7, 8.

7. *Even as*[1] *ye learned* it *of Epaphras our beloved fellow-servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ*
8. *in* our *stead*[2]*; who has also declared to us your love in the spirit*[3].

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[1] *Even as.*] καὶ, *even*, is found in the best copies, and is introduced into the text by Griesbach.

[2] *In* our *stead.*] ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν. This is the reading of the Alexandrine and Clermont manuscripts, and approved by Gries-

I rejoice in your faithful adherence to that pure doctrine which you learned from Epaphras, whose name I cannot mention but in terms of the highest commendation. He is my beloved companion in the service of Christ, a faithful fellow-labourer in the propagation of the gospel. And as it was not in my power to visit Colossæ when I was preaching the gospel in those regions, I sent him to officiate in my stead; in which mission he was blessed with extraordinary success. It is from him that I have received here at Rome, where I am now a prisoner, that delightful intelligence of your Christian affection to each other, to all believers, and to myself, which has cheered my spirits, and is the subject of my devout and habitual gratitude. Ch. I. Ver. 8.

3. He assures them of his daily earnest prayers for their improvement in spiritual gifts and in Christian virtues; and especially in knowledge, holiness, and fortitude, ver. 9—12.

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bach, though not received into his text. The apostle, though he preached the gospel in the Lesser Asia, could not himself visit every city in person; but he probably sent evangelists, such as Timothy, Epaphras, &c. to preach the gospel in those places which he could not reach, and amongst the rest to Colossæ: where Epaphras, fully instructed by the apostle, seems to have met with great success. Epaphras may be a contraction for Epaphroditus, but he could not be the same person with that Epaphroditus whom Paul sent to Philippi.

[3] *Love in the spirit:*] *i. e.* your Christian affection; your love to me on account of my knowledge of the gospel, and my zeal and sufferings in its defence. Or, perhaps, more generally, your love to all the saints, to believers in general, without restriction. "your love in *your* spirit—your sincere and hearty love. See Rom. i. 9." Newcome.

Ch. I. Ver. 9. *For this* cause *we also, from the day that we heard* these things [1], *cease not to pray for you, and to request that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will* [2] *in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.*

After having heard so good a report concerning you, we could not but entertain a favourable opinion of you, and an anxious solicitude for your improvement. And for this reason, ever since I heard these pleasing tidings, I have made it the subject of my daily prayers to the Father of mercies that you may possess a complete, distinct and comprehensive knowledge of the will of God in the gospel dispensation, so that it may not be in the power of any false teacher to mislead you by the arts of sophistry, or pretences of superior knowledge.

10. *That ye may walk worthy of the Lord* [3] *so as to please him in all things, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge* [4] *of God.*

We also pray that your conduct may correspond

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[1] These things.] So Peirce. *i. e.* all the good things he had before mentioned concerning them, ver. 5, 6.

[2] *Filled,* &c.] Compare Eph. i. 8, 9 : *i. e.* a comprehensive view of the will of God, and particularly concerning the call of the Gentiles, the mystery which was now revealed. See Peirce and Locke on Eph. i. 17. "spiritual understanding; *i. e.* an understanding of spiritual things." Peirce.

[3] *That ye may walk worthy of the Lord.*] περιπατησαι for εις το περιπατησαι. Comp. Eph. iii. 17. Right knowledge is to lead to right practice. "so as to please him in all things." Newcome. Gr. "to all pleasing."

[4] *In the knowledge.*] The best manuscripts read τη επιγνωσει. "Επιγνωσις *major, perfectior et exactior cognitio et scientia; nam* επι *in compositis haud raro auget significationem.*" Schleusner.

with your faith and knowledge, that it may become your Christian profession, that it may be in all respects acceptable to God, who is then best pleased when those who profess the faith of Christ abound most in the fruits of righteousness, and increase in the practice of those virtues which prove them to be the genuine children of God. Obedience to the precepts will also contribute to the increase of your knowledge of the scheme of the gospel, and of the wisdom of God in it. Ch. I. Ver. 10.

Being endued with all strength according to his glorious power[5], *unto all patience and long-suffering with joy; giving thanks unto the Father, who by enlightening* us[6] *hath made us fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints.* 11. 12.

I further implore, that your faith may be confirmed by the possession of miraculous powers, and

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[5] *Endued with all strength according to his glorious power.*] This may be understood either of miraculous powers, or of fortitude and strength of mind, probably the latter. The *glorious power* of God is that which was exhibited in the conversion of the Gentiles, and which, Eph. i. 19, he compares to the power exerted in raising Christ from the dead. See Peirce.

[6] *By enlightening* us.] Mangey (see Bowyer) puts a comma after ἡμας and ἁγιων, see Eph. i. 18, which favours this interpretation. Rosenmuller also approves it. If the common construction be retained, the inheritance among the saints in light is, as Mr. Peirce well observes, opposed to the darkness, ver. 13, "and signifies the light which the saints have by the gospel in this world." See Eph. v. 8. Dr. Macknight adopts this interpretation. Peirce remarks that *us* and *we*, ver. 12, 13, 14, manifestly signify the Gentile converts. Mr. Wakefield translates the passage, "giving thanks to the Father for thinking us worthy of this share of the lot of the saints in light:" and he takes this to be the force of the word ἱκανωσαντι here, and 2 Cor. iii. 6, 1 Tim. i. 12.

Ch. I. Ver. 12. that your minds may be invigorated by the principles and hopes of the Christian religion, so that you may bear the afflictions of life, and particularly all persecution for the sake of Christ, not only with patience, meekness, and forbearance, but with joy and gratitude; giving thanks to God for your instruction in the discoveries, and your participation in the privileges of the gospel dispensation, whatever trials and sufferings you may be called to endure for the profession of it.

4. The apostle gratefully acknowledges God as the author of the happy change which had taken place in the state of the converted Gentiles, ver. 13, 14.

13. *Who hath rescued us from the dominion of darkness*[1], *and hath translated* us *into the kingdom of*
14. *his beloved son; by whom we have this deliverance*[2], even *the remission of sins*[3].

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[1] *Dominion of darkness.*] In the writings of the apostle the world is often represented as divided into two great empires. The unbelieving world is the empire of darkness, under the government of Satan, the enemy, the prince of darkness, the God of this world: believers are the kingdom of light, under the government of Christ, enlightened by his doctrine and regulated by his laws. To be translated from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of God's beloved son, is to be converted to the Christian religion. Eph. vi. 12, Acts xxvi. 18.

[2] *This deliverance.*] The received text adds διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ, *through his blood*; but these words are wanting in all the uncial, and in many other MSS. and in most of the ancient versions, and are left out of the text by Griesbach, Wakefield, and Newcome.

[3] *Remission of sins.*] See Eph. i. 7, "we are no longer regarded as unholy, or in an uncovenanted state." Dr. Priestley, who was

Ch. I. Ver. 14.

Of all the numerous topics of thanksgiving, there is none more worthy of being insisted upon with devout and ardent gratitude, than the happy change which by the mercy of God has taken place in your moral state. You were once subjects of the empire of darkness; poor, ignorant, idolatrous, vicious heathen; who knew nothing of God or duty, or of a future life. You are now by divine goodness introduced into a new and happy community, into a kingdom which God himself has lately established in the world, and placed under the government of his beloved Son Jesus Christ, whom he has commissioned to reclaim mankind from that wretched state of superstition and vice in which they are involved, and to enlighten their minds upon subjects of the greatest moral importance. And it is by his ministry and doctrine that we all, whether Jews or heathen, who now profess to be his disciples, have been delivered from our respective errors and prejudices, and from a state of hostility and alienation have been introduced into a state of external peace and amity with God; which, if we improve properly, will ensure our everlasting felicity.

5. The apostle proceeds in bold and highly figu-

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not aware of the true reading of this text, observes, that "to deliver mankind from a state of heathen darkness, and to bring them into a state of gospel light, Christ submitted even to death. This is the most natural meaning of the passage; which is far from implying that Christ redeemed mankind from the punishment due to sin, by dying in their stead, becoming the object of God's wrath for us. God the righteous judge can never so confound the innocent and the guilty."

CH. I. rative language to represent the dignity of Christ as the head of the new creation, and the renovator of the moral world, ver. 15—20.

VER. 15. *Who is an image of the invisible God*[1], *the first-born of the whole creation*[2].

Our honoured master Jesus Christ, the sovereign of this new empire, the author of this new and happy state of things, has received from God a commission for this purpose, and in his regal capacity he acts as the delegate and representative of his heavenly Father; so that God does as it were become visible in him, and makes known his pleasure by him. And so great and astonishing is the change which takes place in the moral state of those who are converted from heathenism to Christianity, that it may fitly be represented as a new creation, of which Christ is the former and the head.

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[1] *An image*, &c.] Gen. i. 26. Man is said to be made in the image of God, as having dominion over the creatures; and here Christ is represented as an image of God, as being the sovereign of that kingdom which God has established in the world. Nor is there any reason to suppose that Christ exercises any personal authority over believers: but as the dominion of Satan signifies the dominion, not of a real person, but of ignorance, idolatry, and vice, so the dominion of Christ is the dominion, not of Christ personally, but of the doctrines and the spirit of the gospel.

[2] *First-born*, &c.] πρωτοτοκος, an expression of endearment similar to the expressions, *beloved*, ver. 13, and *only-begotten*, John iii. 16. See also Exod. iv. 22. The meaning may be that Christ is the most distinguished person in the new dispensation, the chief of the prophets and messengers of God; as much superior to the rest as the first-born son is to the other children of the family. It may also have reference to priority in time, as well as in rank, ver. 18. He was the first who rose from the dead.

For in him[3] *were created all* things[4] *in the heavens and upon the earth*[5], *the visible and the invi-* Ch. I. Ver. 16.

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[3] *In him.*] All things are said to be created *in* him εν αυτῳ, *by* him δι' αυτου, and *for* him εις αυτον. The apostle appears evidently to intend a distinction which the generality of interpreters have overlooked. All things are created *in* him: *i. e.* all are new-modelled under the Christian dispensation, or by the profession of Christianity. This is the proper sense of εν αυτῳ. See Rom. xvi. 2, 7, 8; 2 Cor. v. 17, where εν Χριστῳ and similar phrases evidently mean nothing more than professing Christianity; the consequence of which was such a change in their moral state as might be called a new creation. "If any man be in Christ Jesus," *i. e.* a Christian, "there is a new creation;" an expression exactly similar to those which occur here. See also Gal. vi. 15.

[4] *Were created all* things, &c.] Observe that the apostle does not say that natural objects, the heavens, the earth, the sea, &c. were made by Christ; the formation of these things is uniformly attributed to the Supreme Being. Moreover, if the observation in the preceding note be just, that the words εν αυτῳ, *in* him, imply that this change took place in consequence of the Christian dispensation, it entirely precludes the notion of a creation of natural substances. Also when the apostle enters into the detail of things said to be created, he mentions neither animate nor inanimate beings, neither angels nor men, but enumerates merely states of things, thrones, dominions, &c.; which, whatever they mean, are not substances, but orders and ranks, or conditions, of being: so that nothing can be more astonishing than the confidence with which the generality of Christian interpreters explain this text as asserting that all natural substances, all worlds and all their inhabitants, and even celestial intelligences, angels, archangels, and the like, were created by Christ; than which nothing could be more remote from the apostle's meaning.

Archbishop Newcome here adopts the common interpretation. "Here," says he, "a proper creation is meant, and not a figurative one to good works: *thrones*, &c. are several orders of angels." But what evidence have we of this fact?

Dr. Priestley gives a more probable interpretation. "The countenance," says he, "which this passage has given to the notion of Christ being under God the creator of all things, has arisen from not attending to the meaning of the word which we render *creation*. In the scriptures it is often used to express

Ch. I. Ver. 16. *sible* [1], *whether thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers* [2], *all were created by him and for*

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renovation, or a happy change in the constitution of things, such as was brought about by the gospel. Isaiah evidently uses the term in this sense: *Behold I create all things new!*" See an excellent *Essay on the Creation of all Things by Jesus Christ*, by Mr. Tyrwhit of Jesus Coll. Cambridge in the *Commentaries and Essays* published by the Society for Promoting the Knowledge of the Scriptures, No. 14, vol. ii.

[3] *In the heavens*, &c.] *i. e.* amongst Jews and Gentiles. See Locke on Eph. i. 10, 20.

[1] *Visible and invisible:*] *i. e.* as I understand it, the Jews, who formerly stood in a visible relation to God as theirs by covenant; and the Gentiles, who had no external badge of communion with him. It seems surprising, if any thing relating to the prejudices and errors of mankind concerning religion could occasion surprise, that when the apostle, entering into detail, specifies "thrones and dominions" instead of *heaven and earth*, it should not have led his readers to see that *arrangement*, not *creation*, was the object of his discourse. "From him were derived," says Dr. Doddridge in his exposition, "the visible splendour of the celestial luminaries, the *sun*, the *moon*, and the *stars*, even all the hosts of these lower heavens, and from him the yet brighter glories of invisible and angelic beings."

Such is Dr. Doddridge's distribution of the subject, and such would have been the distribution of the apostle, had his train of ideas been the same as that of Dr. Doddridge. But he never thought, nor did he suspect that any of his readers would think, of attributing to the humble and lowly Jesus the power of creating the celestial luminaries. And yet the above-mentioned learned expositor gravely expresses his surprise that the Socinians should interpret this of the new creation, and thinks it incredible, "if the evidence were not so undeniably strong, that any set of learned commentators could fall into so unnatural an exposition."

[2] *Thrones*, &c.] The apostle seems to refer here to the orders and ranks of persons holding offices in the Jewish church, which having been alluded to under the name of heaven, the officers employed in it, prophets, priests, Levites, &c. are fitly represented under names given to a supposed celestial hierarchy. The meaning is, that Jesus has introduced a new order of things into the visible church, and that all who are employed to dispense the gospel and to occupy offices in the Christian

him[3]*; and he is superior to all things*[4]*, and all these things are holden together in him*[5]. Ch. I. Ver. 17.

Under this new dispensation, introduced by Christ, a most extraordinary and astonishing revolution has taken place in the moral world. It is, as I have just expressed it, a new creation: a creation not indeed of natural but of moral objects; not of things, but of states of things; not of external dignities, but of religious privileges. Under this new and heavenly dispensation Jews and Gentiles undergo a glorious and a happy change; they who were formerly the members of the visible church, and they who possessed no external badge of relation to God, are now formed into one harmonious community; and those who were most eminent for rank and station under the former covenant, cheerfully resign all former distinctions for the common but truly honourable character of believers in Jesus. This happy change was introduced by him, by his doctrine, his miracles, his sufferings, his resurrec-

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church, receive their commission from him, whether apostles, evangelists, &c. and that he, by his spirit, qualifies them for their work. See Eph. i. 20, 21.

[3] *By him and for him.*] δι' αυτου και εις αυτον. All things are *by* or *through* him. Christ is the medium of the new dispensation of the renovation of the moral world. All are created *for* him, that is, to be governed by him, and to reward his obedience and sufferings by the unspeakable delight which he derives from having been honoured as the medium of accomplishing the gracious purposes of God to man.

[4] *Superior to all things.*] "above all things." Wakefield.

[5] *Holden together in him.*] The Jewish and Gentile church are united in Christ. See Wakefield. Christ is the chief cornerstone, Eph. ii. 20.

Ch. I. Ver. 17. tion, his exaltation, and by the mission of his spirit, and it terminates in his well earned honour. For he is exalted to the high dignity of the chief of all the prophets and messengers of God, both under the old and the new dispensation; and in the great principle, allegiance to him, believers of all nations, without any invidious distinctions, harmoniously unite.

18. *And he is the head of the body, the church; being the first-fruits*[1], *the first-born from the dead, so as to be first in all things.*

Christ and his church are now one mystical person: Christ is the head, and the church the body, which is indeed necessary to the completion of his person, and which derives life and vigour from his doctrine and his spirit. And that he is entitled to this pre-eminence, is evident from considering that he is the first-fruit of the glorious harvest, the first human being who is raised to immortal life, and who is thus become the pattern and pledge of the final resurrection of all mankind.

19. *For by him* God *was pleased to inhabit the whole*
20. *complete* body[2]: *and through him to reconcile all*

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[1] *First-fruits.*] απαρχην this is the reading of five manuscripts, and the connexion seems to require it. 1 Cor. xv. 20. See Griesbach and Peirce. If αρχη is the true reading, it is probably a marginal gloss, and Mr. Wakefield observes, that it is wanting in the Æthiopic version.

[2] God *was pleased to inhabit the whole complete* body.] "εν αυτω ευδοκησε παν το πληρωμα κατοικησαι. *Quoniam per eum visum est patri, omnem universitatem inhabitare.*" Castalio; who observes, that whenever an infinitive verb is in the New Testament joined with ευδοκησε it always denotes the action of him

things to himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven[3], *making peace by the blood of his cross.* Ch. I. Ver. 20.

The church, which is the body, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, is the completion of Christ, who is the head: and God is pleased to dwell in this united church, and to manifest his favour and love to it by those gifts of the holy spirit, which he has authorized his Son to bestow so liberally upon it. And by the mission of Jesus, and particularly by his death, he has confirmed the new covenant and set aside the old; incorporating Jew and Gentile into one harmonious society, of which Jesus is the head. Being thus united to *him* by faith, they are joined in bonds of fraternal affection to each other, and no longer regard each other with an envious or a malignant eye.

6. The apostle assures the Colossians that being

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who is spoken of as pleased. Peirce adopts this interpretation, and renders the text, "it seemed good *to God* to inhabit all fulness by Christ:" that is, to inhabit the church, which is the πληρωμα, "the fulness or complement of Christ." Eph. i. 23. "*All* is added because there is a double fulness, a fulness of the Jews and a fulness of the Gentiles." Adopting this interpretation, I have a little altered the phraseology in the translation, to make it more intelligible to the English reader.

[3] *Things on earth,* &c.] *i. e.* Jews and Gentiles. "This sense," as Peirce justly observes, "best suits the connexion, and coincides exactly with the parallel passage, Eph. ii. 14—16. He is our peace who hath made both (Jews and Gentiles) one," &c. Nevertheless, this learned expositor declines, though with reluctance, to adopt this interpretation, which gives the only rational and proper sense, and explains the text as referring to some unknown and incomprehensible reconciliation of angels and men.

Ch. I. now, by the death of Christ, introduced into a new and holy community, all the privileges and blessings of it shall be ensured to them, provided that they adhere faithfully to their Christian profession, ver. 21—23.

Ver. 21. *And you who were formerly aliens and enemies in* your *minds by wicked works*[1], *he hath now in-*
22. *deed*[2] *reconciled through the death of his fleshly body*[3], *that he might present you before himself*[4] *holy and spotless, and irreproachable.*

Of this church, which is the mystical body of Christ, you are now approved members. Formerly, indeed, you were aliens from this holy community; being in principle and affection idolatrous and vicious heathen, you were enemies to the people of God, and had neither the wish nor the power to join that venerable society. But the death of Christ (I speak now not of his mystical but of his natural person) has put an end to the Jewish peculiarity, and has introduced a dispensation by which Jew

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[1] *Aliens and enemies by wicked works.*] See Eph. ii. 12. "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel." Peirce.

[2] *Indeed.*] δη for δε. Dr. Mangey. See Bowyer's *Conjectures.*

[3] *Reconciled through the death of his fleshly body.*] So Wakefield. The fleshly body is put in opposition to the spiritual or mystical body, ver. 18, 24. See Newcome. The death of Christ reconciles Jews and Gentiles, by putting an end to the Jewish peculiarity, and introducing a new and liberal dispensation. This thought is more largely insisted upon Eph. ii. 14—18; which fully explains the apostle's meaning here. See Newcome and Peirce.

[4] *Before himself.*] αὐτα for ἑαυτα· the passage, as is well observed by Peirce and others, is exactly parallel to Eph. v. 27, "that he might present it to himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing."

and Gentile are reconciled to each other and to God. Into this society you have been introduced by Christ; and his gracious intention is, that by this means you may attain, not only to a state of privilege, but to virtue of character, that so you may become honourable and useful members of that glorious body of which he is the exalted head. Ch. I. Ver. 22.

If ye continue[5] *in the faith, firm on its foundation, and be not moved away from the hope of that gospel which ye have heard, which hath been proclaimed to the whole creation under heaven*[6]*, of which I, Paul, have been appointed a minister.* 23.

I must, however, faithfully warn you that your improvement, and even your safety, depend upon your perseverance. You have no right to expect the blessings of the gospel any longer than you adhere to the profession of it; resting your hope on a practical belief of the fundamental truth that Jesus is the Christ, and not being influenced by any consideration whatever to depart from the genuine simplicity of that doctrine, which is the only proper ground of hope; which has been preached by the command of Christ to all mankind without distinction, even to the idolatrous heathen; and which I esteem it my greatest honour that I, notwithstanding my great unworthiness, have been selected, and expressly appointed, to be a teacher and publisher.

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[5] *If ye continue*, &c.] εἰγε. I prefer this translation to that of Peirce, who renders the phrase, "since ye continue." See Wakefield.

[6] *The whole creation*, &c.] "to Jews and Gentiles." Newcome.

Ch. I. 7. The apostle expresses the joy which he experienced amidst, and even on account of, the difficulties and persecutions which he endured in the discharge of his honourable commission, ver. 24—26.

Ver. 24. *Now I rejoice in these sufferings*[1] *for you; and am in my turn*[2] *filling up that which remains of the afflictions of Christ*[3] *in my person, for the sake of his body, which is the church.*

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[1] *These sufferings.*] The pronoun μου (my) in the received text, is wanting in the best manuscripts, and is omitted in Griesbach's edition, and in Newcome's version.

[2] *In my turn.*] ανταναπληρω. Le Clerc observes, that the apostle elegantly insinuates that he had formerly made others suffer for Christ. *Art. Crit.* part ii. sect. i. c. 12. See Peirce and Macknight. "I who formerly persecuted the church, now in my turn fill up, by my bodily sufferings, what remains behind in the course of my life of the afflictions allotted to me because of Christ. See Elsner." Newcome.

[3] *Afflictions of Christ:*] *i. e.* for the sake of Christ, or such sufferings as Christ underwent, 2 Cor. i. 5. See Newcome.—Dr. Doddridge observes, that "the apostle considered it as the plan of providence that a certain measure of sufferings should be endured by this body of which Christ was the head, and he rejoices to think that what he endured in his own person was congruous to that wise and gracious scheme." "This passage may mean either that the apostle partook largely of what remained in the cup of affliction of which Christ drank; or that Paul in his person endured to the utmost whatever affliction had been endured by others in the Christian cause." Philalethes's *Translation of Colossians*, &c. 1819. "It is remarkable," says Dr. Priestley, "that the apostle, in speaking of his own sufferings for the sake of the gospel, represents them in the same light with the sufferings of Christ himself, as both having the same general object and effect. Christ laid down his life for his friends and for the church, and the apostle also was ready to lay down his for the sake of Christ's body, which is the church. This is language which he could never have used if he had considered the death of Christ as the means of making atonement

Having mentioned my character as a minister of this new dispensation, let me assure you that the sufferings which I endure in the faithful discharge of my apostolic duties are far from exciting regret at my appointment to that honourable office. On the contrary, the persecutions I now undergo for preaching the gospel to the heathen are to me a source of exquisite satisfaction, as undoubted testimonies to my fidelity and efficacious means of success. I was once a persecutor of the church of Christ; in my turn I am now a sufferer in the same cause; and being a member of the mystical body, I willingly bear my share of the persecutions which that body is destined to endure in order to promote the growth and perfection of the whole. Ch. I. Ver. 24.

Of which church *I have been appointed a minister, in reference to that dispensation of God which hath been intrusted to me for you, that I may fully teach the word of God*; even *the mystery*[4], *which hath been concealed from ages and generations*[5], *but which is now made manifest to his saints.* 25. 26.

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for the sins of men. On this idea there would be great presumption and profaneness in the apostle's language. The idea which his language naturally conveys to us is this, That a great deal of suffering was necessary to establish the Christian church. That of Christ was one part, but not the whole; that of the apostles and other Christians must be added to it."

[4] *The mystery*, &c.] *i. e.* the call of the Gentiles to equal privileges with the Jews; see Eph. iii. 4—10, where the same subject is treated of more at large.

[5] *Ages and generations*.] *i. e.* the times under the law, which were measured by jubilees, and are therefore called χρονοι αιωνιοι, *secular times*. Before the days of Abraham, the call of the Israelites to be the peculiar people of God was as much a my-

Ch. I. Ver. 26. In the church of Christ I am appointed to execute a very honourable and important office for your benefit; being charged with a commission to teach in the most explicit and undisguised manner an important doctrine, which constitutes an essential and glorious part of the gospel dispensation; a doctrine which was indeed completely concealed from our ancestors, who lived under the ceremonial dispensation; but which is now revealed in the clearest manner to all who are sincerely willing to hear and to welcome the joyful tidings.

8. The apostle explains his meaning to be the admission of Gentiles to equality of privileges with Jews in the Christian church, a doctrine which it was the labour of his life to teach and inculcate, ver. 27—29.

27. *To whom God willed to make known the glorious riches of this mystery*[1] *towards you*[2] *Gentiles, which mystery is Christ the hope of glory.*

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stery as the call of the Gentiles afterwards. See Peirce, and Locke's note on Rom. xvi. 25. It was only during the Jewish dispensation that this mystery concerning the Gentiles could exist.

[1] *Glorious riches,* &c.] Gr. *the riches of the glory.* See Rom. ix. 23; Eph. i. 17, 18, ii. 7, iii. 16; Phil. iv. 19. Indeed, whenever the apostle mentions the admission of the converted Gentiles to equal privileges with the Jews, he seems at a loss for words to express his admiration, joy, and gratitude upon the occasion. "This great mystery," says Dr. Priestley, "to which the apostle often alludes, was the call of the Gentiles to partake of the privileges of Jewish Christians, without circumcision or conformity to any other Jewish rites. This does not now strike us as a thing of very great magnitude, but in that age it must have appeared of the greatest; and accordingly we

To true believers, who are separated by their Christian profession from the ungodly and idolatrous world, God has been graciously pleased to communicate the knowledge of his purposes of mercy towards the ignorant and despised heathen, namely, that the doctrine of Jesus, which is taught among you, and received by you, who were formerly idolaters, entitles you to a participation in that glorious hope which is the peculiar privilege of the sons of God, the hope of an everlasting inheritance. Ch. I. Ver. 27.

Whom we preach, admonishing every man[3], *and instructing every man in all wisdom*[4], *that we may present every man perfect in Christ*[5]. 28.

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find that the minds of the Jewish converts were never thoroughly reconciled to it. That the kingdom of Christ was not of this world, and that uncircumcised Gentiles were proper subjects of it, were two great articles of faith which Christians learned after the descent of the holy spirit on the day of Pentecost."

[2] *Towards you.*] See Wakefield, who thinks there can be little doubt that the words εν ὑμιν are transposed. For ὁς, the common reading in the last clause, the Alexandrine and two other uncial manuscripts read ὁ. See Griesbach. "Spes, *pro causa spei*. Gloria, *felicitas. Sive, spem excellentissimam; spem excellentissimæ felicitatis.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Every man.*] παντα ανθρωπον. It is observed that the apostle repeats these words three times in this sentence, strongly implying that the Gentiles, equally with the Jews, were the objects of the apostolic mission. See Peirce and Newcome. "*Ex toto commate patet, apostolum has voces,* δεινοτητος *et* εμφασεως *causâ, data operâ repetiisse.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *Wisdom.*] "This may be understood either of the manner in which the teachers of the gospel conducted their ministry, or, of the subject of their preaching, viz. the doctrine of the gospel, which is the truest philosophy. See 1 Cor. ii. 6." Peirce; who takes it in the latter sense.

[5] *In Christ.*] The received text reads "Christ Jesus." In

Ch. I. Ver. 28. This is the great doctrine which Jesus was commissioned to reveal; this it is the delightful employment of the faithful ambassadors of Christ to teach; this commission they execute, addressing themselves without distinction to Jew and Gentile, admonishing both of the necessity of adopting the gospel scheme, and instructing both in the nature and detail of the Christian doctrine, which is the truest wisdom, the sublimest and most valuable philosophy; and their great design in all is, that they may form these their converts, whether Jews or Gentiles, to the knowledge of truth and the practice of virtue, so that they may be able to present them to their master as believers of the highest order, worthy of being admitted into his glorious kingdom.

29. *To which purpose I also*[1] *am labouring, earnestly striving according to his energy, which operates powerfully by me*[2].

In this glorious cause I also am a humble and unwearied labourer. And though I meet with continual opposition, I persevere in the arduous struggle. Not indeed relying upon my own ability, for

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the best copies the word Jesus is wanting, and is dropped by Griesbach and Newcome. "τελειος εν Χριστῳ *est* perfectus Christianus, *qui bene institutus in religione, ita sentire et agere potest, ut Christianum decet.* Col. iv. 10, Eph. iv. 13." Rosenmuller.

[1] *I also*;] *i. e.* "together with the other preachers mentioned ver. 28." Newcome.

[2] *According*, &c.] "This may either refer to the miracles which God enabled him to perform in confirmation of his doctrine, see Gal. ii. 8, 2 Cor. xiii. 3, or else to the divine influence upon himself." Peirce. See Rom. xv. 19, 1 Cor. xv. 10.

that would soon fail me. But supported by that energy which he who called me to the office communicated to me, to qualify me for the honourable and successful discharge of it, and the powerful efficacy of which I continually experience, to strengthen me for every labour, and to carry me triumphantly through every conflict. Ch. I. Ver. 29.

SECTION II.

THE APOSTLE urges the Colossians to persist in their adherence to the genuine doctrine of Christ, and cautions them against the corruption of it by the intermixture of pharisaic tradition, of false philosophy, and of Jewish ceremonies. Ch. ii. 1—iii. 4. Ch. II.

1. The apostle expresses his earnest desire that those Christians who had not enjoyed the benefit of his personal ministry, might nevertheless be fully instructed in the doctrine of Christ, ver. 1—3.

Therefore[3], *I am desirous that you should know what earnest care*[4] *I have for you, and* for Ver. 1.

[3] *Therefore*, &c.] Dr. Macknight justly observes, "that as this verse does not contain a reason for what goes before, but is an inference from it, γαρ in this passage is an illative and not a causal particle."

[4] *Earnest care.*] "See Thess. ii. 2." Newcome; who observes, "that the word αγωνα here refers to αγωνιζομενος, ch. i. 29. The word properly signifies *conflict*." "It expresses,"

Ch. II. Ver. 1. *those of Laodicea, and* for *as many as have not seen me in person*[1].

Being thus solicitous to discharge the duties of my apostolic office, I am anxious that you should be apprized, that if I did not visit you in person when I preached the gospel in the cities that are in your neighbourhood, it was not because I was indifferent to your spiritual welfare, but because my journeys were under an immediate divine direction, and I was not permitted at that time to visit Colossæ or Laodicea, nor indeed any of the cities in the proconsular Asia. But I can truly aver that I feel as earnest a desire for your and their instruction and improvement as if you had been converted by my personal ministry.

2. *That their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together*[2] *in love, and in all the riches of the most*

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says Peirce, "the great solicitude and concern St. Paul had upon his mind for them, the pains he took to preach the gospel, and to assert their liberty against such as opposed, the troubles and difficulties he now underwent upon this account, and the earnestness with which he prayed for them."

[1] *Have not seen,* &c.] It is plain that the apostles were under a divine guidance in the progress of their mission, and were not permitted to go where they pleased. See Acts xvi. 6, 7. It appears from the passage referred to, that Paul and Silas were expressly prohibited from preaching the gospel in the proconsular Asia, and though they were allowed to pass through Phrygia, they might be restrained from preaching at Laodicea and Colossæ.

[2] *Being knit together.*] "συμβιβαζειν, *conjungere ut duæ trabes et similia conjunguntur et compinguntur.*" Rosenmuller. Peirce observes, that "St. Paul thought that the hearty love which Christians bore to one another would be a good means to fortify them against any ill impression from seducers. See Eph. iv. 14—16."

fully assured understanding[3], even *in the complete knowledge*[4] *of that mystery of God*[5], *in which*[6] Ch. II. Ver. 3.

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[3] *All the riches of the most fully assured understanding.*] εις παντα πλουτον της πληροφοριας της συνεσεως. See Newcome's margin. Dr. Doddridge translates the clause, "*the richest and most assured understanding*:" and observes, "that the original phrase is extremely emphatical, more agreeable to the Hebrew than to the Greek idiom, and it is one of the many instances of that strong manner of speaking with which the writings of our apostle abound." "The manner," says Peirce, "in which he speaks of this mystery, and heaps up expressions concerning it, shows how necessary he apprehended the knowledge of it to be." "Ut ad plenissimam, quæ esse potest, intelligentiam perveniant, πλουτος *ut sæpe, magnitudinem rei exprimit.* πλ. συν. *plenitudo, vel certitudo intelligentiæ, summa certitudo.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *Complete knowledge.*] "επιγνωσις, *hic ut sæpe, est exactior cognitio.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *Mystery of God.*] The words "and of the Father, and of Christ," which appear in the received text, are wanting in many copies and versions of good repute, and are omitted in Griesbach's edition.

"This mystery," as Peirce observes, "is that mentioned before, ch. i. 26, 27. Had he here meant any other, he would certainly have told us what it was." Newcome also explains it, of "preaching the gospel to the Gentiles." Philalethes neatly translates the passage, "that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and in all the precious and full capacity of comprehending the mystery of God, in which are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." "The sense is," says Peirce, "that they might all concur in a full and certain persuasion and public profession of this doctrine."

[6] *In which.*] εν ῳ. If the received text is admitted, these words are properly translated *in whom*; i. e. in Christ. "When we consider ch. i. 27, and ch. ii. 2, we shall be induced to think that the words in the verse before us are very applicable to the *mystery of God*; that is, to the gospel preached among the Gentiles. But as the words expunged from Griesbach's text may well be supplied, it remains doubtful whether *mystery*, or *God*, or Christ, be the antecedent." Newcome. If *in whom* be referred to Christ, the meaning will be the same: *q. d.* in the doctrine of Christ. See Rosenmuller.

Ch. II. Ver. 3. *are laid up*[1] *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

The primary object of my solicitude for those with whom I have had no personal intercourse is, that they may be so firmly united to each other in the bonds of Christian affection, that they may be proof against every insidious attempt to introduce contentions and divisions among them. Thus united, they will encourage one another to persevere in the purity of the faith, notwithstanding the unjust censures and unfounded denunciations of those who would pervert your minds. And being thus united in affection, may they also be united in the pursuit of Christian knowledge, and especially in the attainment of that most valuable of all knowledge, the complete comprehension of that glorious truth, which, though long concealed in the counsels of the Most High, is now clearly and distinctly revealed to mankind; and which contains in itself a rich treasure of all that is most important for man to know: namely, that all mankind without distinction are admitted by faith into the privileges of the gospel, by which life and immortality are brought to light,

2. Being as nearly interested for them as if he were present with them, he warns them not to be misled by the specious harangues of false teachers,

[1] *Are laid up.*] αποκρυφοι *quum dicit, similitudinem sumit ab arcâ, in qua pecuniæ servantur, indidem promendæ, ubi opus est.*" Rosenmuller.

but thankfully to abide in the doctrine which they had already learned, ver. 4—7. Ch. II.

Now I say this, lest any man should deceive you by plausible discourses[2], Ver. 4.

I give you this advice, to love one another, to understand your principles, and to be true to the doctrine of Christ, that you may be upon your guard against the specious harangues of false teachers, who would corrupt your faith. Nothing will so effectually counteract their artifices as being well acquainted with the grounds and reasons of the Christian doctrine.

For though I be absent in person, yet in spirit I am with you[3], *rejoicing at the sight*[4] *of your order, and the stedfastness of your faith*[5] *in Christ.* 5.

Though I am now in chains at Rome, and cannot personally visit you, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing as much in the account which Epaphras has given me of the decency and good order which prevail in your public assemblies, and of your faithful firm adherence to the pure doctrine of

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[2] *Plausible discourses.*] πιθανολογια. See Doddridge. "specious doctrines." Wakefield. "persuasive words." Newcome. "*Ne quis vos speciosa oratione decipiat.*" Schleusner.

[3] *In spirit.*] Peirce observes that "as *spirit* here stands opposed to *flesh*, εν σαρκι, it is most reasonable to understand it of St. Paul's own spirit and not of the holy spirit."

[4] *Rejoicing at the sight.*] χαιρων και βλεπων, hendiadys. *Lætabundus observans rectum quem tenetis ordinem.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *Stedfastness of your faith:*] *i. e.* in opposition to those who submitted to the ceremonial law. Gal. v. 1, 2. See Peirce.

Ch. II. Christ, as if I were actually an eye-witness to every thing that passes in your society.

Ver. 6. *As, therefore, ye have received Christ Jesus* as
7. your *master* [1], so *walk in him, rooted and built up in him, and confirming yourselves in the faith* [2]: *and as ye have been taught, abounding in thanksgiving* [3].

Since, then, you profess to acknowledge Jesus as your master, and to admit no doctrine as of divine original but what you receive from him, and as you have learned this from your pious instructors, let me entreat you to act in character, and to govern your conduct solely by a regard to his authority. Let Christ be the root upon which you grow, and the foundation upon which you build. Acknowledge and bow to no other authority whatever, but firmly adhere to the Christian doctrine. And, as you have been taught by those who have given

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[1] *Received*, &c.] "As therefore ye received Jesus from *me to be* the Christ, *and* the Lord." Wakefield.

[2] *Rooted and built up, confirming yourselves.*] "*Eadem res ter dicitur.* ἐῤῥιζωμενοι *radicibus hærentes,* ἐποικοδομεμενοι *in fundamento ædificati, ergo firmi:* βεβαιεμενοι, *firmi. Firmi et fundati et constanter in religione.*" Rosenmuller. "As ye have received from me the plain doctrine of the gospel, free from the specious subtleties of your present teachers, continue in it. Here it is exceedingly evident that by *Christ* we are to understand the doctrine of Christ, or, Christianity. To receive Christ, to walk in Christ, to be rooted and built up in Christ, is here explained by the phrase 'established in the faith.'" Dr. Priestley.

[3] *Abounding in thanksgiving.*] The words εν αυτῃ, *therein*, are wanting in the Alexandrine and Ephrem manuscripts, and are marked as doubtful by Newcome. The sense is clearer without them. See Griesbach. Mr. Wakefield for καθως reads και ὡς, with the Æthiopic translator; which seems preferable.

competent proof of their mission from him, rejoice abundantly in the blessings of the gospel, and in the liberty of the Gentile church: and receive these invaluable gifts with a grateful heart. Ch. II. Ver. 7.

3. The apostle warns them against those who, for their own unworthy purposes, would blend Jewish ceremonies and the dreams of a false philosophy with the doctrine of Christ; and reminds them, that being united to Christ as their head, they are subject to no authority but his, ver. 8—12.

Beware lest any man make a prey of you by a vain deceitful philosophy[4], *according to the traditions of men*[5], *according to the shadows of this world*[6], *and not according to Christ.* 8.

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[4] *Vain deceitful philosophy.*] "through philosophy and empty deceit." Newcome; who observes that the words are a hendiadys. The philosophers here alluded to were probably Jewish believers, who were zealous for the ceremonial law, and who added some idle speculations of their own to the doctrines of revelation. This indeed has been the primary source of all the corruptions of the Christian religion. It is plain from what the apostle says of these teachers, that they were plausible and selfish. What the erroneous speculations were which they dignified with the name of philosophy is uncertain; perhaps some groundless notions concerning the existence, powers, and worship of angels, and other unintelligible subjects, which the apostle justly stigmatizes as false and vain (see ver. 18), and foreign to the Christian doctrine. See Peirce's note, and Newcome.

[5] *Traditions*, &c.] Probably the pharisaic traditions, or those of other philosophic and perhaps platonizing Jews, such as Philo and others.

[6] *Shadows of this world:*] so, after Le Clerc and Peirce, and upon the authorities they produce, I render στοιχεια by which are to be understood the Jewish ceremonies, which were types and shadows of the doctrine of Christ, which is the body or substance to which the type refers. Στοιχεια properly signifies

Ch. II. Ver. 8. The reason why I so strenuously insist upon your firm adherence to the purity of the Christian faith is, that I am well informed that there are some who from interested motives are taking no small pains to seduce you from it. Be, then, upon your guard against those men who set themselves up as philosophic teachers of Christianity, and who profess to add many refined and subtle speculations to the plain word of Christ. Be assured that theirs is a vain and false philosophy, the teachers of which have nothing in view but to promote their own interest, and to make their advantage of your credulity. The doctrines they profess are mere human inventions; the rites they would impose are mere Jewish ceremonies or pharisaical mummery. At best they are the mere types and shadows of a better dispensation, and are not in the least degree obligatory upon the Gentile convert to the faith of the gospel. In a word, the doctrines which they circulate, and the servitude which they enjoin, are quite foreign to the doctrine of Christ, utterly unauthorized by him, and subversive of the freedom of the Gentile church.

9. *For in him resideth substantially*[1] *a fulness of divine communications*[2].

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elements or *first principles*; and in this sense the word is to be understood Gal. iv. 3, 9, where it also expresses the ritual law. Most expositors give it the same signification here, and it cannot be denied that it makes a good sense. The Jewish dispensation is called *the world* because its objects and sanctions are of a worldly nature. See Peirce on the place, and Locke on Gal. iv. 3.

[1] *Substantially.*] σωματικως *bodily*, in opposition, if Mr. Peirce's and Le Clerc's interpretation be true, to στοιχεια *sha-*

I do not deny that the rites and ceremonies of the law were of divine original; but, as I have just observed, they were only shadows, mere rudiments, the occupations of children, which must now be laid aside since Christ has appeared; for in him the law is fulfilled. He is the body of which the law is the shadow; and in him reside all those communica- Ch. II. Ver. 9.

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dows: the manifestations of the divine will, under the law, to those under the gospel, were as the shadow to the substance.

[2] *Fulness of divine communications.*] παν το πληρωμα της θεοτητος. "all the fulness of the godhead." This text is the strong hold of what is called the *indwelling* scheme of the doctrine of the Trinity, of which Dr. Thomas Burnet, Dr. Watts, and Dr. Doddridge are the most considerable advocates: the latter of whom would translate the text, "in whom the whole fulness of deity substantially dwells." See Burnet's *Script. Doct. of the Trinity*, p. 173, 174. But, unless the advocates for this hypothesis mean to assert that the substance and consciousness of the Father is so united with the substance and consciousness of the created Logos as to become one conscious intelligent agent called the Son, who is distinct both from the uncreated Father and the created Logos, which is too absurd to be maintained, they mean nothing: for in any other sense of indwelling, this famous hypothesis is compatible with Arianism, and even with perfect Unitarianism; for it can mean nothing more than that God inspired Christ with the knowledge of his will, and enabled him to work miracles in confirmation of his mission. The apostle's expression lays no foundation for any such erroneous conclusion. Eph. iii. 19 the apostle prays that they may be filled with all the fulness of God; but who supposes that the divine substance is intended? The expression is universally understood of *divine communications;* and such no doubt is the sense of θεοτης in this passage, which no one will say is a stronger expression than θεος· and to argue from the word σωματικως is arbitrary in the extreme. "All those blessings which proceed from Godhead, and wherewith we are filled, dwell in Christ truly and substantially." Peirce.—"Nam ipsi insunt omnes thesauri sapientiæ divinæ reverâ. *Θεοτητος non intelligitur de ipsa natura Dei, tanquam de eo quod habitet in aliquo, sed de illo quod sit a Deo profectum, ab eoque originem ducat.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. II. Ver. 9. tions of knowledge and power which are necessary either for the instruction or the conviction of mankind.

10. *And ye are complete in him*[1], *who is the head of all principality and power*[2].

You are the body: Christ is the head; a junction with whom is necessary to form the complete mystical person. And as the body derives from the

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[1] *Ye are complete in him.*] πεπληρωμενοι εν αυτῳ· *q. d.* you are his πληρωμα, Eph. i. 23, or he is yours; you are complements to each other, as the head and the body make the perfect man; and from him as the head of vital influence you are supplied with all that you want to advance you individually to perfect manhood, or to complete your proportion as limbs of Christ's mystical body; for the apostle does not always keep the ideas distinct. ver. 10, εν αυτῳ, "in him ye are filled;" ver. 11, εν αυτῳ, "in him ye are circumcised;" ver. 12, αυτῳ, "with him you are buried;" *ibid.* "in him you are raised to life."

[2] *Who is the head of all principality and power.*] Mr. Locke, in his excellent note upon Eph. iii. 10, has made it appear so probable that by these expressions the apostle means, the rulers and teachers, the priests, scribes and pharisees of the Jewish nation, that there can be no reasonable doubt that they are to be taken in the same or a similar sense here. Christ is the head of all principality and power, of all the rulers and teachers of the church, whether under the old dispensation, or the new; under the law, or under the gospel; there is no authority but from him: his disciples are to receive no doctrine but what is taught by his authorized ministers; and upon no account to listen to those who would impose upon them judaical rites.

It is surprising that learned men, who interpret these expressions of the superiority of Christ to angelic beings, should not be aware how improbable it is that the Divine Being, (who in his all-wise administration, is so severely œconomical in the communications of his will, as to reveal nothing but what is of the utmost practical necessity, nothing to gratify idle curiosity,) should reveal facts concerning ranks and orders of angels; which are at best useless, and in general unintelligible to mankind.

head all its supplies of vital influence, so you derive from Christ all that is necessary to the spiritual life; all that instruction which is requisite to your becoming perfect Christians. You need not look elsewhere: Christ is the head of the apostles, evangelists, prophets, and teachers of the Christian dispensation: they have no authority but what they derive from him. And as to the priests and rabbis of the Jewish œconomy, they are completely superseded, and their authority, so far as you are concerned, is null and void. Ch. II. Ver. 10.

In whom ye were circumcised[3], *by a circumcision not made with hands, by the putting off the fleshly body by the circumcision of Christ*[4]. 11.

And to continue the allegory, the circumcision

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[3] *In whom ye were circumcised;*] *q. d.* as constituting Christ's mystical body, what was done by him as necessary to fulfill all righteousness, may be considered as done in or by you. As, therefore, he was circumcised, you may be considered as circumcised in him; not indeed literally, according to the Jewish manner, but in a sublime and spiritual sense. Your circumcision consists in having cast off your heathen idolatries and impurities, and having consecrated yourselves to God.

[4] *By the circumcision of Christ.*] εν τη περιτομη· or, "in the circumcision of Christ;" a repetition of the first clause not unusual with the apostle. Others understand the clause *q. d.* in the Christian circumcision: *i. e.* in baptism, which, under the Christian dispensation, is substituted for circumcision, by which initiatory rite you publicly professed your faith in Christ, and renounced all the impurities and idolatrous practices of your heathen state. This is a very good sense, and seems to be supported by the succeeding words, which allude to the mode of baptism. But it is a singular phraseology, and hardly to be paralleled in the writings of the apostle. See Whitby, Peirce, &c. The fleshly body, or the old man, ch. iii. 9. The received text reads, των αμαρτιων, *sins of the flesh*, which is wanting in the best copies, and dropped by Griesbach.

Ch. II. Ver. 11. of Christ may be considered as the circumcision of his mystical body, of which you are a part. This mystical circumcision means that you have entirely laid aside the vanities and impurity of your heathen state, and are now consecrated to God through Christ; and this circumcision is all that is now required of those who profess faith in Christ, and who submit to the rite of baptism, which may not unaptly be called the Christian circumcision.

12. *Being buried with him in baptism*[1], *in which ye were also raised with* him *through faith in the operation*[2] *of God who raised him from the dead.*

And such was the effect of your solemn renunciation of heathenism, by the public profession of the Christian doctrine, that it may even be considered as death to your former state, as Christ died

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[1] *Buried with him in baptism.*] This seems to imply that he had alluded to baptism as the initiatory rite, the Christian circumcision in the preceding verse. In the word *buried* it is generally admitted that the apostle alludes to the mode of baptism by immersion; but allowing this, it does not prove that immersion was universal, much less indispensable. See Newcome. This allusion is pursued by the apostle more at large, Rom. vi. 4, &c., where the apostle represents heathenism as a prior state of existence: professing Christianity is death to that state; immersion is burial; emerging from the baptismal water a resurrection to a new life, similar to the resurrection of Christ; and as Christ never dies again, so believers are never to return to their old state of heathenism, but like Christ are to consecrate their renovated powers to God.

[2] *Faith in the operation*, &c.] "ενεργειας, *the mighty working of God.*" Newcome. Observe here, that it is faith in the resurrection of Christ which constitutes a man a Christian, a disciple of Christ, one of the Christian community, saved and holy. See Rom. x. 9.

upon the cross; and your baptismal immersion resembles his temporary residence in the tomb. But as he was soon raised to life by the power of God, so likewise you emerge from the baptismal water into a new and happy state of existence, in consequence of your assured belief in that wonderful operation of divine power by which Jesus rose from the dead. So that, in consequence of this resurrection with Christ, you have no more to do with heathenism or judaism than if you were inhabitants of a new world. Ch. II. Ver. 12.

4. The believers at Colossæ having become dead to their former state of heathen idolatry, and being raised to a new and better life, are under no obligation to submit to that yoke of ceremonies which their new teachers were desirous of imposing upon them, ver. 13—15.

And you who are dead to the trespasses[3] *and to the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath* God *raised to life with him*[4]*; having freely forgiven you all* 13.

[3] *Dead to the trespasses,* &c.] The received text reads εν τοις κ. τ. λ. "*in* trespasses;" εν however is wanting in several manuscripts: and with Mr. Wakefield I adopt this reading, as better suiting the apostle's train of ideas, and confirmed by Eph. ii. 1. By faith in Christ they die to trespasses and circumcision, *i. e.* to heathenism and to the law; by immersion they are buried with Christ, by emersion they are raised with him to a new life under the heavenly dispensation of the gospel. Dr. Harwood also omits the particle εν: he renders the clause, "you who are now dead *to* your vices," &c.; and refers to the editions of Erasmus, Aldus, Colinæus, Strasburg, and Basil, as supporting the same reading.

[4] *Raised to life with him.*] συνεζωοποιησε. In the parallel

Ch. II. Ver. 14. *those trespasses; having cancelled the bond*[1] *which was* in the book *of ordinances*[2] *against us, which was contrary to us, and taken it from between us*[3],

15. *nailing it to the cross*[4]*; and having stripped principalities and powers*[5]*, he made them a public spectacle, leading them in triumph by him*[6].

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passage Eph. ii. 6, believers are represented as raised with Christ, and sitting with him in heavenly places: that is, according to Mr. Locke, "made partakers of his heavenly kingdom;" or, in other words, put into possession of the privileges of the gospel.

[1] *Cancelled the bond.*] This is the proper sense of the word χειρογραφον. See Peirce and Schleusner. It is a writing from the debtor to the creditor, acknowledging the debt. The law of Moses was this handwriting; by which the Jews were bound to observe the law, as the condition of receiving the promise. This handwriting was against us, and contrary to us: it was the means of preventing the union between Jew and Gentile; it was the wall of partition which separated the holy place from the court of the Gentiles. Eph. ii. 14, 15. Newcome thinks that the words *contrary to us* have "the appearance of a marginal explanatory note."

[2] In the book, &c.] So Mr. Wakefield. "Having entirely cancelled and vacated that bill, consisting of such a variety of ceremonial articles, which we were liable to discharge." Harwood.

[3] *From between us.*] ηρκεν εκ μεσου, *he took from between us*: "a Hebrew change of construction," says Dr. Newcome, "instead of αφας. See Eph. i. 20, John i. 32." He did not suffer this bond to continue between us and the Jews, to separate us from one another. Eph. ii. 14, 15, he calls the ceremonial law the middle-wall of partition, and the cause of enmity between Jews and Gentiles. See Peirce.

[4] *Nailing it to the cross.*] Grotius observes: "*mos est quibusdam in locis, clavis transfigendi edicta antiquata. Is tunc etiam in Asia videtur fuisse, et ad eum alludere Paulus.*" This allusion to the custom of cancelling a bond by driving a nail through it is adopted by Hammond, Doddridge, and Newcome.

[5] *Having stripped principalities and powers.*] τας αρχας και τας εξουσιας, "these principalities and these powers:" namely, those which have been before alluded to ver. 10, and which

I repeat it, my Christian friends, as a circumstance deserving your utmost attention: you are now dead and buried to your former state of heathenism and alienation from God, and in consequence of your baptismal profession your connexion Ch. II. Ver. 15.

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were there shown to mean the Jewish hierarchy, the priests and rulers; the crucifixion of Christ, which sealed and ratified the gospel dispensation, completely divested the teachers and rulers of the Jewish dispensation of every species of authority over those who were admitted into the community of believers. And by the extraordinary success of the gospel, they were in a manner led in triumph every where, and exhibited as captives whose power was now at an end.

Dr. Harwood's translation is, "having pulled down those religious establishments which were supported by the great and powerful." But this seems wide of the apostle's meaning.—"By the powerful means used to subdue vice, God showed openly that he triumphed over evil spirits." Newcome. "God hath made us victorious over the formidable spirits of darkness, having spoiled these principalities and powers of the trophies which they had gained by drawing us into the grand apostasy." Doddridge. But what reason is there to suppose that any spirit either good or evil is alluded to in this expression? Mr. Peirce's interpretation is very peculiar, viz. "Having taken from good angels their authority, he subjected them to Christ, and proposed them publicly as an example of cheerful obedience to him, causing them to triumph in Christ." Such a hypothesis surely needs no confutation: it is indeed wonderful that a man of so much talent and learning could indulge himself in these wild reveries, or could imagine that a revelation was communicated to mankind to instruct them in the useless tale of a revolution in the celestial hierarchy. "*Hostes, quos Christus contumeliæ publicæ exposuit, sunt defensores illius chirographi de quo sermo fuit, legis Mosaicæ. Defensio enim hujus legis fuit maximum impedimentum religionis Christianæ propagandæ. Christus autem morte sua effecit, ut isti hostes potentissimi, Judæorum principes et sacerdotes, nihil amplius valerent.*" Rosenmuller.

[6] *By him:*] *i. e.* by Christ. God is the agent in view throughout the whole context. See Peirce. Dr. Newcome renders it, "*by the cross,*" and refers to the ancient versions in the Polyglot in confirmation of his interpretation. Origen read εν τῳ ξυλῳ, *by the tree:* i. e. the cross.

Ch. II. Ver. 15.

with idolatry is as completely dissolved as that of a dead corpse with the living world. Nevertheless, God has raised you to a new, and holy, and happy life, by the same power by which he raised up Jesus from the dead. And as you were before in a state of sin and alienation from God, you are now, in consequence of your admission into the Christian covenant, in a state of reconciliation and forgiveness. And this communication of evangelical blessings is perfectly gratuitous; it is the free, unmerited, unsolicited gift of God. And whereas your new teachers insinuate that you must submit to the yoke of ceremonial institutions: I earnestly advise you to give no credit to their insinuations. For God has himself cancelled that obsolete bond contained in the writings of Moses, which imposed the severe conditions of acceptance and reconciliation under the former dispensation; keeping Jews and Gentiles at an inaccessible distance from each other. And as it is common to cancel a covenant by driving a nail through the instrument which contains it, so the Mosaic covenant may be said to be nailed to the cross of Christ, being vacated by that event, which ratified the new and liberal dispensation of the Messiah; a dispensation by which all who believe are admitted without distinction to all the privileges of the family of God. Thus, putting an end to the Mosaic covenant, he divested the ministers and officers of the Jewish church of all authority to impose the yoke of the law upon believers in Christ; and by the mission and doctrine of Jesus, by the

power and energy of the spirit with which it is attended, and by its triumphant success, he has plainly and publicly transferred the authority, which was once vested in the Jewish priesthood, to the apostles and teachers of the Christian dispensation, who alone are now authorized to declare the terms of acceptance with God. Ch. II. Ver. 15.

5. Upon these grounds the apostle earnestly dissuades the Colossian Christians from paying any regard to the censures of those false teachers who would either subject them to the yoke of the ceremonial law, or mislead them by plausible but erroneous tenets, repugnant to the doctrine of Christ, ver. 16—19.

Let no one, therefore, call you to account[1] *about meat or drink*[2], *or with respect to a festival, or a new moon, or sabbaths*[3], *which are a shadow of things to come, but the body* is *Christ's*[4]. 16. 17.

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[1] *Call you to account.*] μη κρινετω. Dr. Macknight argues, that as they could not prevent others from judging them, it might be more proper to translate the words, "Let no man *rule* you." In the writings of the Jews it is said of their rulers, that they *judged* Israel. The sense, however, is obvious upon the common interpretation. See Rom. xiv. 3. "decide for you." Philalethes. "*Contemnite ista judicia, nec istis diris perterreamini, quas obnuncient, qui sanctè servari, hæc instituta, a vobis velint.*" Rosenmuller. *q. d.* regard them not.

[2] *Meat or drink.*] Macknight observes that there was no law which forbade any kind of drink except to the Nazarites: he conjectures, therefore, that abstinence from wine and strong drink might be forbidden by tradition to those who aimed at superior holiness.

[3] *Sabbaths.*] Nothing can be more explicit than the apostle's declaration of the entire abolition of the Jewish sabbath, which

Ch. II. Ver. 17. Being thus completely released from all the restraints of the ceremonial law, do not voluntarily

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is plainly no more obligatory upon Christians than the institution of the passover, or the rite of circumcision. The fourth commandment, therefore, is a precept which has no place in the Christian law, and ought never to be appealed to as an argument for a sabbatical institution. And it behoves those who think the observation of a day of sabbatical rest is of such high importance under the Christian dispensation, and who are so loud in their charges against those who deny, or who, as they call it, *profane* the sabbath, to show what authority they have for this imposition. I see none. The old sabbath is expressly repealed, and no new one is enjoined in its stead: always, however, keeping in mind the very obvious and important distinction between the Lord's day as a *weekly religious festival*, in joyful commemoration of the resurrection of Christ, in which way it has been universally observed from the beginning; and as *a day of sabbatical rest* from the common employments and innocent amusements of life, for which there is no precept in the New Testament, and no example in the primitive age; the practice of which was universally discountenanced in the primitive church, and which, to this day, prevails only in a small proportion of the protestant churches in Europe, and among their descendants in America. In Justin's Dialogue with Trypho, the Jew objects to Christians that, "pretending to excel others, they observe no sabbaths:" Justin replies, "The new law will have you keep a perpetual sabbath. You, when you have passed a day in idleness, think you are religious. The Lord our God is not pleased with such things as these. If any one is guilty of perjury or fraud, let him reform; if he be an adulterer, let him repent; and he will then have kept the kind of sabbath truly pleasing to God. You see that the elements are never idle, and keep no sabbath. There was no need of the observation of sabbaths before Moses, neither now is there any need of them after Jesus Christ." Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho*, p. 227, 229, 241, edit. Par.; Evanson *on the Sabbath*, p. 92, 93.

The emperor Constantine was the first who established by law the sabbatical observation of the Lord's day: but he limited this injunction to the inhabitants of towns; a plain proof that he did not regard it as a divine command. The emperor Leo in the fifth century enjoined universal cessation from labour on the first day of the week; but this decree having no force in the

resign your Christian liberty. And if any one assuming airs of authority, or setting himself up for Ch. II. Ver. 17.

West, the Council of Orleans in the sixth century abolished all restrictions of this nature, as savouring more of Judaism than Christianity; only prohibiting husbandmen from working in the field during the time of divine service. The first day of the week, therefore, has never been observed with that strictness which the decree of Leo requires in any country of Europe but our own, and that, only since the reign of Charles II. Evanson's *Lett. to Priestley*, p. 138—140, 153—155.

As the law of the country requires suspension from labour on the Lord's day, it is the duty of subjects to obey it. But surely this sabbatical observation of the day can never be of that high moral importance which many apprehend; otherwise Christ and his apostles would never have been so totally silent upon the subject. But will-worship was not confined to the apostolic age; and the censures passed upon those who do not *sabbatize* like others, are as loud and as bitter *now* as they were seventeen hundred years ago. Let those, therefore, who understand their Christian emancipation, and who determine to stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made them free, while they sanctify every day as a sabbath, by abstaining from all evil, as advised by the holy Martyr, encourage themselves at the same time by the exhortation of the apostle, and suffer no man to judge them with respect to the sabbath-day. Regard no man's censure, of whatever rank, or degree, or pretensions, for not receiving as of divine authority, institutions which Christ our sole head, who possesses all authority and power in the church, hath not required.

Dr. Priestley, in his note upon this passage, remarks, that "the Gentiles were under no obligation to observe the seventh day for the purpose of *rest*, as the Jews were; but as the apostles had always been used to *offices of public worship* one day in the seven, and the propriety and use of the custom was never questioned, it cannot be supposed that they would voluntarily abandon so useful an institution, or that they would not recommend it to their disciples." And no doubt it has been the uniform practice from the earliest age of Christianity, and sanctioned by the apostles, to observe the Lord's day as a religious festival; to consecrate it by *offices of public worship*, but not to solemnize it as a day of *sabbatical rest*. Dr. Priestley adds: "It is obvious that a day *devoted* to public worship should not be a day of *worldly business*, or of *public diversion*; because these

Ch. II Ver. 17. a person of extraordinary sanctity, should take upon himself to condemn you for neglecting the ceremonial distinctions of clean and unclean in articles of food, for not observing the annual festivals of divine appointment, paying no religious respect to the

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things, though innocent in themselves, are of so different a nature from the proper business of the day, that they will be apt to interfere with one another." But may it not be asked, How much of the day is to be *devoted* to public worship? How the rest of the day can be better employed than in useful labour or innocent amusement? What can be expected from the mass of the people when they are forbidden both to work and to play? and finally, Whether, in fact, there be not more mischief done, and more crimes committed, on the first day of the week, than on all the other days put together?

This, however, is not the question. The sabbatical observation of the Lord's day is by this learned writer, and by many others, placed upon the ground of expedience ALONE. And if it be expedient, let it be observed; but in the name of all that is sacred, let not *expedients* of *human device* be substituted as *injunctions* of *divine authority*. The plain question is: Whether the sabbatical observation of the Lord's day is enjoined by divine authority? If it be, let the order be shown, and it shall be obeyed. In the New Testament I see the Jewish sabbath plainly abrogated; I see no new sabbatical institution appointed in its place; and I know that the primitive church explicitly disavowed any such institution. I conclude, therefore, that Christ, our only Master, saw no necessity for appointing an institution, without which, as many now think, the Christian religion could not exist. In whose judgement may we most safely confide?

How, then, it may be asked, is the Lord's day to be observed? Answer: Let a reasonable proportion of it be devoted to Christian worship and instruction; and let the remainder be spent in useful employment or innocent amusement.—They who thus keep the Lord's day, need *not regard any man's judgement concerning sabbaths.*

[4] *The body* is *Christ's.*] "As the body stands opposed to the shadow, it must signify the reality, truth, or substance. See ver. 9. This body or substance is of Christ. that is, belongs to him, is his, is only to be found or sought in him, and not in the law." Peirce.

day of the new moon, and even making no distinction between sabbaths, and other days, regard them not. The gospel knows no such distinction. Under the new dispensation all meats are pure, all days are equal. These ceremonial distinctions were indeed well adapted to the infant state and puerile conceptions of the Jewish church; and were intended to prefigure that improved and liberal state of things which was to take place under the Christian dispensation, which is the manhood and maturity of religion; and is the substance, of which the rites of Moses were merely the shadows. We are taught by Christ that all the creatures of God are good, and consequently that one species of food will not recommend us to God more than another; also that every day is to be devoted to the service of God, and therefore that no one day, either in the week, the month, or the year, is more holy than another. And if any persons presume to teach a different doctrine, and to condemn your conduct, let them know that, acknowledging no master but Christ, you equally disregard their authority, and despise their censures. Ch. II. Ver. 17.

Let no one defraud you of your prize[1], *by affecting humility in the worship of angels*[2], *in-* 18.

[1] *Defraud you,* &c.] So Newcome. Mr. Peirce translates καταβραβευετω, *condemn.* The word is used in both senses. See Schleusner.

[2] *Affecting humility,* &c.] "Θελων," says Archbishop Newcome, "seems equivalent to θελητης, εθελοντης, 'a voluntary in humility,' as in the margin of the bible." Literally it may be rendered "a volunteer in humility in the worship of angels."

It

Ch. II. Ver. 19.

truding into those things which he hath not seen[1]; *rashly puffed up by his carnal mind*[2], *and not adhering firmly to the head*[3], *from which the whole body being supplied and compacted by connecting joints, increaseth with a very large increase*[4].

I have cautioned you against some who would infringe your liberty by bringing you under the yoke

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It alludes to those who, from pretended humility, applied to angels as mediators to render their prayers acceptable to God. That the Jews regarded the angels as mediators, is evident from Tobit, ch. xii. and from a passage in Philo quoted by Peirce.—It seems highly probable that the apostle here refers to the Essenes, a sect of the Jews who practised great austerities, and who boasted that they knew and preserved with great care the names of angels. See Joseph. *De Bell. Jud.* l. ii. c. 7. § 12., and Aldrich's note. Vide Peirce *in loc.*

[1] *Intruding into,* &c.] "*Ingrediens in ea.*" Bos. See also Elsner, that the word signifies "*immiscere se, ingerere, rebus non ad se pertinentibus.*" Newcome. "boldly prying into, and dictating about, matters which he knows nothing of." Peirce.

[2] *Carnal mind.*] "And this he is led to by his Jewish temper." Peirce; who observes, "that this is the sense in which the apostle often uses the words σαρξ and σαρκικος, and refers to Gal. iii. 3, 2 Cor. xi. 18. See Locke. Phil. iii. 3, 4; Heb. vii. 16, ix. 10.

[3] *The head.*] "Christ. The expression has a reference to ver. 10." Newcome. "κρατειν τινα, *sectari aliquem, eique tenacissime inhærere.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *With a very large increase.*] "In the original, 'with the increase of God,' a well known form of the Hebrew superlative degree." Harwood. "Upon the whole, the thing which the apostle cautions against is the worshiping of angels: the pretence by which this was endeavoured to be ushered in was, that this was most agreeable to humility: what St. Paul says of their intruding into things they had not seen, their being puffed up by a fleshly mind, and not holding the head, is his censure upon their conduct; and when he says, 'Let no man judge or condemn you in this respect,' he means that the Colossians should not be moved with, or at all regard, any such judgement. Compare ver. 16." Peirce.

of the ceremonial law; but there are others against whose doctrines and practices I must enter a still stronger protest. They are so radically inconsistent with the essential doctrines of Christ, that to embrace them would be to renounce the profession, and with it the rewards, of Christianity. Guard strictly, then, against the plausible insinuations of those teachers who, making loud pretensions to superior humility, and representing it as unpardonable pride in sinful man to address his supplications immediately to a holy God, inculcate the worship of angels as mediators to intercede with God for us. This doctrine and the teachers of it are reprehensible in the highest degree. It is an arrogant intrusion into things which are not revealed, and of which, therefore, it is impossible that these pretended teachers can have the least knowledge. And, while they boast of their humility, they are in fact conceited to a high degree with this groundless notion, which they vainly regard as a profound philosophical speculation annexed to the doctrine of Moses. But the most important consideration of all is, that by this doctrine they entirely separate themselves from Christ, the only mediator between God and man, the only head and law-giver of the church, which is his mystical body, vitally united to him, and which lives, and grows, and thrives, only as it derives from him the nourishment of pure and unsophisticated truth. If, therefore, under any pretence whatever, you become worshipers of supposed invisible and created spirits, you are no longer

Ch. II. Ver. 19.

Ch. II. Ver. 19. the disciples of Christ, nor true and accepted members of his visible church.

6. The apostle, addressing himself particularly to those converts who were disposed to submit to the yoke of the ceremonial law, argues strongly against their subjecting themselves to a ritual to which they were by profession dead, ver. 20—23.

20. *Seeing*[1] *that ye are dead with Christ from the rudiments*[2] *of the world, why, as though living in the world*[3], *are ye imposing upon yourselves*[4] *or-*

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[1] *Seeing.*] "ει for ειγε· see ch. iii. 1." Wakefield, Harwood. The apostle alludes to ver. 12 and 13.

[2] *Rudiments,*] or, *shadows*; στοιχειων, *i. e.* from the Jewish ritual; see ver. 8: *q. d.* you have renounced all expectation of being benefited by the observation of rites and ceremonies. Mr. Peirce thinks this paragraph is addressed to the Jewish converts only, for they alone were attached to Jewish rites, and were dead by profession to Jewish ordinances, under which the Gentile converts, whom through the epistle he continually praises for their stedfastness in the faith (see ch. i. 4, 6, 7, ii. 5, 6, 7) had never lived. But the apostle seems to represent the heathen converts as dead by profession, not only to their heathen idolatrous state, but to all expectation of benefit from any other system than Christianity; and though the majority of heathen converts might be stedfast in their adherence to the faith, yet some might, and probably did, incline to listen to their judaizing teachers; and no doubt it was chiefly to obviate the impression made by them, and to preserve purity of faith in the heathen converts, that the apostle wrote this and its concomitant epistles to the Ephesians and Philippians. At any rate, the advice is addressed to those who were disposed to impose Jewish rites upon themselves or others.

[3] *In the world.*] "under the Jewish dispensation, ver. 8." Newcome.

[4] *Imposing upon yourselves.*] See Wakefield and Macknight. "Why do ye still dogmatize? *i. e.* require compliance with the injunctions of the law?" Peirce.

dinances (*eat not*[5], *taste not, touch not, all which* meats[6] *are* made *to be consumed by the use of* them), *according to the commandments and the doctrines of men*[7]: *which, having*[8] *indeed a pretence of wisdom*[9] *in will-worship*[10], *and humility of mind,* Ch. II. Ver. 21, 22. 23.

[5] *Eat not.*] μη ἁψῃ. Mr. Wakefield refers to 2 Cor. vi. 17, as a passage in which the word bears the same sense. Dr. Harwood confirms it by passages from Diogenes Laertius and Oppian, and Schleusner by the authority of Xenophon and Homer. Dr. Doddridge observes, "that the quick succession of these precepts, without any copulatives between, happily expresses the eagerness with which the seducing teachers inculcated those things." Kypke and others observe a climax in the apostle's words, "do not eat, do not taste, do not touch."

[6] *All which* meats.] In this interpretation of the clause I agree with Peirce, Newcome, Rosenmuller, and others. "*Sensus est, hi omnes cibi, tantum abest ut polluant vescentem, ut potius ipso usu pereant, et conficiantur.*" Rosenmuller. "All these things are to be consumed by a temperate use of them." Peirce. αποχρησει is wanting in the Æthiopic, and omitted by Wakefield. "It denotes the use of such things as are consumed in using, in opposition to the use of such as are not consumed; viz. houses, land," &c. Bowyer.

[7] *Doctrines of men.*] The Jewish sectaries, the Pharisees, Essenes, &c. carried their traditional precepts far beyond the rigour of the written law. To these the apostle appears to allude, rather than to the Pythagorean precepts, as Macknight supposes; or to the worship of angels, which is Peirce's opinion, and in which Newcome follows him. Perhaps he includes all the extravagances of the Essene opinions. "*Videtur Paulus non simpliciter contra Judæos, Mosis legem defendentes disputare, adeo contemptim de opinionibus eorum loquitur; sed, contra Judæos magnam vanarum opinionum copiam, ad Mosis legem, adsciscentes.*" Rosenmuller.

[8] *Which, having,* &c.] This verse is obscure; but by the punctuation suggested by Peirce and others, the sense is made plain. Include in a parenthesis from λογον to σωματος, and place a comma after τινι, supplying the adversative particle αλλα before προς. "Which precepts, though pretending to wisdom, are not in any estimation, but serve to satisfy the flesh." See Peirce, Newcome, Griesbach, and Barrington *apud* Bowyer.

[9] *Pretence of wisdom.*] λογον amongst many other senses

Ch. II. Ver. 23.

and corporal severity, are in no estimation[1], but serve *to the gratification of the flesh*[2].

Let me speak freely to those among you who are disposed to submit to that yoke of useless rites which the Jewish sectaries endeavour to impose. Remember, my brethren, that by your baptismal profession you are dead, not only to a state of heathenism, but of Judaism also; and that you have no more concern with the ritual law than a dead man with the living world. Why, then, do you disgrace the gospel by acting as if you were living under the Jewish polity, and subject to all the burdensome rites, not only of Moses, but of the Jewish sectaries? Why do you impose upon yourselves and others harsh restrictions concerning different kinds of food? do not eat this, do not taste that, do not touch the other? Be assured that the gospel pronounces all the creatures of God to be equally good, equally lawful; and its generous spirit

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of this word, Schleusner gives the following, which he supports by authorities from Chrysostom, Sophocles, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus: "*Species apparens, et externa alicujus rei, quæ rei ipsi et veritati opponitur.*" The Essenes, who are here probably alluded to, pretended to be adepts in a superior and sublime philosophy. See Peirce, and Prideaux's *Connexion*, part ii. book v. p. 343—361. 8vo. Also Joseph. *Antiq.* l. xviii. 2. *De Bell. Jud.* ii. 7.

[1] *Will-worship.*] worship of angels; compare ver. 18.

[1] *In no estimation.*] "ουκ εν τιμη τινι· τιμη signifies both *honour* and *profit*." Peirce.

[2] *Gratification of the flesh.*] "Gratifying persons of a fleshly or Jewish disposition, ver. 18." Peirce. The word *flesh*, in the apostle's writings, is continually used for the *law*, in opposition to *spirit*, which signifies the *gospel*. See Rom. viii. 4—8.

disdains to prescribe any rules concerning articles of diet and daily consumption, but those of temperance and gratitude. Nor indeed did the law of Moses itself extend to those burdensome restrictions which the Jewish sectaries now prescribe. They are mere human inventions and impositions, of no authority whatever, even in respect to Jews, much less with regard to Christians. They are indeed proposed to you under the specious form of a sublime philosophy, of a superior wisdom; which enjoins a purity and perfection of worship beyond what the law of God itself requires; which promotes humility and self-abasement; and which recommends itself to God by voluntary austerities, and severe corporal abstinences and penances. But all this voluntary service and mortification is irrational and unauthorized. It is of no account in the sight of God, and of no practical or moral use to the misguided man who submits to it. And it is but too true that many who make the loudest pretensions to mortification and humility, and who are most rigorous in ceremonial services, are prompted to it by spiritual pride, and an absurd opinion that, by such practices, they shall attain a peculiar share of the divine favour, while they neglect the proper duties of life. Ch. II. Ver. 23.

7. As risen with Christ to a new life, the apostle exhorts them to act up to the free and liberal spirit of the gospel, in full assurance of an ultimate and everlasting reward, ch. iii. ver. 1—4. Ch. III.

Ch. III. Ver. 1. *Seeing*[1], *therefore, that ye have been raised up with Christ, seek those things* which are *above*[2], *where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God*[3].

2. *Set your minds*[4] *on things above, not on those on the earth.*

As by your baptismal immersion you are dead and buried to the heathen and the Jewish state, and to all their laws and rules; so by your return from that ordinance you are figuratively raised with Christ to another life, you are introduced by your profession of Christianity into a new world; you are become members of that holy community of which Jesus is the exalted chief; you are introduced into new connexions, new privileges, and new ex-

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[1] *Seeing*, &c.] Compare ch. ii. 20. As dead, they were to renounce all expectation from rites of the law: as raised to life, they were to act conformably to the principles and expectations of the gospel. See ch. ii. 12.

[2] *Things* which are *above*.] Calvin justly understands this of the sublimer parts of Christianity, as opposed to Jewish ceremonies and rudiments of the world. See Doddridge on the text. It is plain that the apostle, by things *above*, means that superior state into which we are introduced by Christ, *i. e.* the gospel dispensation.

[3] *Where Christ*, &c.] This expression has misled expositors to imagine that the apostle is here alluding to a local heaven. Whereas the expression, *sitting at the right hand of God*, can mean nothing more than advancement to great dignity in the church, of which Christ is appointed by God to be Lord and Head.

[4] *Set your minds*, &c.] φρονειτε, an advance upon ζητειτε in the preceding verse. *Things on earth:* "such poor matters as meats and drinks." Peirce. This ingenious expositor perceived that "things on earth" signified the "requisitions of the law;" but it does not appear to have occurred to him that its opposite, "things above," must therefore signify "the precepts and the spirit of the gospel."

pectations, and are subject to new laws. You are, in a manner, translated from earth to heaven. Let your whole conduct, therefore, be worthy of your exalted situation; and behave in all respects as becomes members of that community over which Christ is appointed by God to exercise supreme authority. Let me press it upon you to practise and to devote yourselves wholly to the moral duties of your Christian profession, and to pay no attention whatsoever to Jewish rites. To you they are as insignificant and worthless as the toys of earth to an inhabitant of heaven. Ch. III. Ver. 2.

For ye have died[5], *and your life is treasured up*[6] *with Christ in God. When Christ*, who is *your life, shall be manifested, then ye also shall be manifested with him in glory.* 3. 4.

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[5] *Ye have died.*] See Gal. ii. 20, where the same thought occurs. Christians are dead to all expectations from the world, and from the law; yet they possess a life with Christ; they are raised with him to a life of holiness, and to the hope of immortal life. This life is treasured up in God; secure in his purpose and promise. It is also concealed; for the blessings promised are not known to the world, nor even to believers themselves. But the time will come when the divine purpose shall be made manifest. Christ, their life, the preacher of life, whose resurrection is the proof and pledge of theirs, and who is their living head, whose life is inseparably connected with theirs, shall appear to fulfill his glorious mission, and then they shall be publicly manifested as the heirs of immortal happiness.

[6] *Treasured up.*] "laid up in store with Christ in God: as in a store-room, ready for future use. κεκρυπται is equivalent to τεθησαυρισται. See Col. ii. 3; Matt. xiii. 44; 2 Tim. i. 12. Hence light is thrown upon Luke xx. 38, Matt. vi. 1." Wakefield. Newcome observes, that "κεκρυπται, ver. 3, is opposed to φανερωθη, ver. 4; and is explained by it *q. d.* as Christ is invisibly with God, so your life is with God, concealed, deposited, or treasured up with him, to be bestowed on you in his

Ch. III. Ver. 4.

And why, my brethren, am I so much in earnest in urging you to neglect ceremonial services, and to confine your attention to the moral duties of the gospel? It is because you have no concern whatever with the Jewish institutes. You are, by the profession of Christianity, become dead to all expectation of benefit by a ritual service. Nevertheless you live: you have entered upon a new and glorious life; a life of holiness, and faith, and virtue here, preparatory for, and introductory to, a life of happiness hereafter. This life is treasured up in God, in his purposes, his councils, and his promises; it is at present concealed; it does not yet appear what we shall be. And though you will shortly moulder in the dust, you will still live with Christ, your instructor, your fore-runner, and your pledge of immortality. His renewed life is the security for yours. Nor shall this great distinction remain for ever veiled in obscurity. When the appointed season arrives, Christ, your Redeemer from the grave, shall appear in his own and his Father's glory, to raise the dead and to judge the world. Then shall you be publicly acknowledged by him as his faithful and approved disciples, and be admitted to share with him in his glorious and everlasting triumph.

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good time." "The life of the Christian," says Dr. Doddridge, "is here represented as an invaluable jewel, and under a double security, secure as the abode of Christ with the Father, or, as the fidelity and immutability of the Father himself could make it." ver. 4. *your life:* this is the reading of the Ephrem and other MSS. The received text reads ἡμων, *our*.

PART THE SECOND.

THE APOSTLE IN THE PRACTICAL PART OF THE EPISTLE INSISTS UPON PERSONAL DUTIES, UPON THE DUTIES WHICH CHRISTIANS OWE TO EACH OTHER, UPON RELATIVE DUTIES, AND FINALLY, UPON THE CONDUCT WHICH OUGHT TO BE OBSERVED TO UNBELIEVERS. Ch. iii. 5—iv. 6. Ch. III.

SECTION I.

THE APOSTLE presses the duty of self-government, and the indispensable necessity of utterly forsaking the vices of their former heathen state. Ch. iii. 5—7.

Put to death[1], *therefore, your members, which* were *upon the earth*[2], *fornication, impurity,* dis- Ver. 5.

[1] *Put to death.*] So Macknight. *Mortify* is always used in a figurative sense, and does not convey the apostle's idea. The heathen *self* is supposed to be dead by the profession of Christianity; if, however, there should be in any of its members any remains of life, they are to be resolutely put to death. By this the apostle means, that if any of those disorderly passions, those impure affections, which were not only tolerated but encouraged by heathen idolatry, and to which the Colossians themselves had been addicted in their unconverted state, remained in their hearts, they must resolutely resist and exterminate them, as absolutely inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity.

[2] *Which* were *upon the earth:*] *i. e.* which belonged to you

Ch. III. Ver. 5. orderly *passion, evil desire, and exorbitant lewdness, which is idolatry* [1].

I have said that, by the profession of Christianity, you are become new creatures, and have entered into a new world. Your former persons, your heathen selves, are dead. It is, however, possible that some parts or limbs of this former self may not be quite extinct, but may still possess life and motion. If this be the case, I strictly charge you to put them to death without delay and without reserve. The meaning of this allegory, I doubt not, you well understand. The impure abominable rites of heathenism were intended and calculated to inflame the passions. The most odious debaucheries often constituted a part of idolatrous worship. These crimes are strictly prohibited by the Christian law; all tendency to them must be guarded against with the utmost vigilance and resolution: and all irregular affections must be completely suppressed.

6. *For which the anger of God is coming upon the*
7. *sons of disobedience* [2]*; in which ye also formerly walked when ye lived among them.*

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in your heathen state. You are now raised to life with Christ, and elevated with him to an upper region. See ver. 1, 2.

[1] *Exorbitant lewdness, which is idolatry.*] πλεονεξια· that this word is used in the writings of the apostle for those abominable impurities to which the heathen were so notoriously addicted, is sufficiently proved by Mr. Locke, after Dr. Hammond, in his note upon Eph. iv. 19, which is quoted at length by Peirce. Mr. Wakefield translates it "inordinate desire." It is called idolatry, as being authorized and countenanced by the rites and practices of idolatrous nations. The infamous state of the Gentile world in this respect is well known, and is strongly and justly represented by the apostle, Rom. i.

[2] *Sons of disobedience:*] *i. e.* the heathen, who were disobe-

These criminal excesses are highly offensive in the sight of God, and he will in due time manifest his displeasure by overturning the heathen idolatry from its foundations. But if he is justly incensed against the uninstructed and unconverted heathen on this account, how much more offensive must such conduct be in professing Christians! Nor will you think my caution useless, when you recollect that many of you, while in your heathen state, were as culpable in these respects as others. Ch. III. Ver. 7.

SECTION II.

THE APOSTLE insists upon the duties which believers owe to each other. Ch. iii. 8—17.

1. He cautions them against giving way to intemperate passion; and to abstain from falsehood and deceit, ver. 8—11.

But now, do ye also lay aside all these: anger, animosity, malice, evil-speaking, reproachful words[3] *from your mouth.* 8.

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dient, not only to the gospel revelation, but to the light and law of nature, Rom. i. 20—28. The anger of God, which is here denounced, may signify the calamities which were impending over the Roman empire; but more probably the utter extermination of the then prevailing system of heathen superstition, by the success of the Christian religion.

[3] *Reproachful words.*] αισχρολογιαν. Dr. Whitby observes, from Hesychius, Phavorinus, and Julius Pollux, that the word is used in this sense; which also best suits the connexion. It

Ch. III. Ver. 8. As it is your duty to maintain the strictest government over your appetites and passions, so likewise you are required to set a guard upon your tempers. You are not to imagine, as the heathen do, that you are at liberty to indulge implacable animosity, resentment, and rage, for every offence, and to give vent to your angry and malignant passions in calumnious and reproachful language. Such a conduct as this would be a disgrace to your profession.

9. *Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the*
10. *old man*[1] *with his practices, and have put on the new* man; *who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of his creator*[2].

Let no consideration induce you to utter a wilful falsehood with an intention to deceive and injure others. How innocent soever such conduct may be deemed among ignorant heathen, it is utterly inadmissible among professing Christians. Remember, you are dead to your old heathen state, and by

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is generally rendered *filthy talking* or *conversation*, and is understood as a prohibition of all licentious discourse. See Eph. iv. 29.

[1] *The old man*, &c.] *i. e.* your heathen state, your former self, with his deeds, and particularly the habit of *lying*. Many of the philosophers thought lying lawful when it was profitable. See Leland *on the Necessity of the Christian Revelation*, vol. ii. p. 219, 220.

[2] *The new* man, &c.] Your Christian state; your new self. New in all respects: particularly as to the knowledge of right and wrong. *According to the image of his creator:* i. e. Jesus Christ. See Col. i. 16. Believers by the new creation are formed after the image of Christ their creator, as man was originally formed after the image of God in the natural creation. Gen. i. 26, 27.

embracing the doctrine of Christ you are become new persons, living in a new state, possessing new apprehensions and feelings, subject to new laws, and influenced by new views and hopes. You are created anew by Jesus Christ, and you bear the stamp and image of your Creator. And particularly you resemble him in knowledge, and in the power of discriminating justly between right and wrong, so as not to be in danger of confounding good and evil like your heathen neighbours; who are involved in the most pernicious errors upon moral subjects. You, I say, are of that new creation, Ch. III. Ver. 10.

Wherein there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor *free-man, but Christ* is *all and in all*[3]. 11.

In this new state into which you are introduced by the gospel, all ceremonial and civil distinctions are overlooked. The believing Gentile is as acceptable to God as the believing Jew; the barbarian has the same title to the privileges of the gospel as the

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[3] *Christ* is *all, and in all.*] Christ, *i. e.* a resemblance to Christ, *is all,* i. e. is the only thing attended to: *in all,* i. e. in all believers, of whatsoever rank, profession, or country. The only qualification necessary for a participation of the blessings of the gospel is Christ, a belief of his doctrine, and a conformity to his image. All other distinctions, whether ceremonial or civil, are in this view of no use. Hence we see how very frivolous and inconclusive the argument is which is drawn from this text to prove that Christ is truly God: viz. that he is here called *all and in all*; and that the same words are applied to God, 1 Cor. xv. 28, that God may be all in all. The expressions in the two passages are used in senses widely different. The same mode of reasoning would prove Adam to be God; for he was the Father of all mankind, and so likewise is God.

Ch. III. Ver. 11. polite, and the Christian slave as the Christian freeman. In a word, the only circumstance of any importance in this new state into which believers are introduced is, their resemblance to Christ in all the excellencies of his character. In proportion as they bear his image, they are entitled to participate in his glory.

2. The apostle earnestly recommends the practice of various social virtues, and particularly the exercise of a gentle and forgiving spirit, ver. 12—15.

12. *Put on*[1], *therefore, as chosen, holy, and beloved of God*[2], *the tenderest pity*[3], *kindness*[4], *humility*
13. *of mind, meekness, long-suffering, (bearing with each other, and freely forgiving each other if any*

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[1] *Put on,* &c.] The heathen man, the former self, being dead, his garments also were to be laid aside, viz. *anger, wrath,* &c. ver. 8, 9; *i. e.* the vices of the heathen state. And the *new man,* the Christian self, the image of Christ, being assumed, a becoming dress must be put on with it, such as pity, kindness, and the other virtues of the Christian character; which are all to be made fast with the girdle of love. Gal. iii. 27.

[2] *Chosen,* &c.] These are epithets which express their present privileged and Christian state as distinguished from their former state of heathenism when they were excluded from the privileges of God's professing people. They were *chosen* by God from the rest of the heathen world; they were *holy,* as being separated from the rest of mankind by their profession of Christianity: they were *beloved,* as being favoured with peculiar privileges. See Taylor's *Key to the Romans.*

[3] *Tenderest pity.*] In the Greek, "bowels of pity." See Macknight.

[4] *Kindness.*] χρηστοτητα "properly signifies," says Dr. Macknight, "that sweetness of disposition which leads men to comply with the innocent inclinations of others, and to speak to them courteously."

one *have a complaint against another, even as the* Ch. II.
Lord freely forgave[5] *you, so also do ye,) and over* Ver. 14.
all these put on love, which is the band of perfection[6].

In your new created state, if you all bear the image of Christ in profession and spirit, you are all equally dear to God, whatever your previous local, civil, or ceremonial distinctions may have been; and you are all equally entitled to those high and honourable epithets which were once limited to the chosen descendants of Abraham. But in your new state you must also wear a new dress: instead of clothing yourselves in robes of anger, resentment, and revenge, when any injury has been received, or

[5] *The Lord freely forgave.*] The Alexandrine and Clermont manuscripts, and the Italic and Vulgate versions, read Κυριος instead of Χριστος. God is said to have freely forgiven the sins of their heathen state, by having gratuitously admitted them to a participation of the privileges of the gospel, upon the profession of their faith in Christ. This, in the apostle's language, is being justified freely by his grace. Rom. iii. 24. This seems to indicate, that Christians are not to wait till overtures of reconciliation are made by the offending party; but, though justly offended, to be the first in proposing offers of peace.

[6] *Over all these,* &c.] Love is the Christian's girdle. See Macknight. Τελειοι are *perfect Christians;* believers eminent in knowledge and virtue: see 1 Cor. ii. 6; Eph. iv. 13; Col. i. 28, iv. 12: τελειοτης, therefore, is that which constitutes perfection, viz. the virtues of the Christian character. Love is the band of these virtues: it comprehends them all. When love exists, no other social virtue will be wanting. Love is the fulfilling of the law. Rom. xiii. 10. The Clermont and some other copies read ενοτητος. Love is the band of *unity:* it is this which preserves harmony and union among the different members of the Christian church. See Schleusner and Griesbach. This sense does not seem quite so well to suit the connexion, where love is represented as the girdle of the Christian dress, binding together the various articles of which it is composed.

Ch. III. Ver. 14. apprehended, you must, as the chosen servants of God, put on the garments of pity, of kindness, of forbearance and forgiveness; bearing with each others infirmities and imperfections. And even where offence has been wantonly given, you ought to be ready to forgive the penitent offender without always waiting for complete compensation for the injury received: in this respect imitating the great example of God himself, who has gratuitously, and without any solicitation on your part, overlooked the sins of your heathen state, and imparted to you the inestimable blessings of the gospel. Let this illustrious instance of divine mercy be the model of your conduct. And finally, let the social virtues be bound to your heart by the cincture of love; of love, which comprehends in itself all social duty, and is the great bond of union among the disciples of Christ.

15. *And let the peace of Christ*[1], *unto which ye have been called in one body, preside*[2] *in your hearts; and be thankful.*

Let that peace which you enjoy as members of

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[1] *Peace of Christ.*] Χριστε. Such is the reading of the Alexandrine and other approved copies; which is adopted by Griesbach, Newcome, and Wakefield. *The peace of Christ* is that state of peace with God and with each other into which we have been introduced by Christ. See Eph. ii. 14—16. This peace is accomplished by uniting all believers in one body, of which Christ is the head. Eph. iv. 4.

[2] *Preside in your hearts.*] βραξευω is, to assign the prize to the conqueror in the games; and in general, to *preside* or *rule*. The apostle's advice is, that they should act by their fellow-Christians consistently with that state of harmony and concord into which they have been introduced by Christ.

Christ's mystical body, peace with God, and reconciliation to each other, animate you to live at peace one with another, and to love each other. Let mutual love and harmony be the great prize of your holy and Christian ambition: and maintain a thankful spirit for the blessings which you enjoy by the gospel revelation. Ch. III. Ver. 15.

3. The apostle further recommends a cheerful, thankful, pious spirit as the best evidence of an intimate knowledge of the gospel, ver. 16, 17.

Let the doctrine of Christ dwell in you richly[3]. *With all wisdom teaching and admonishing yourselves*[4] *by psalms, and hymns, and spiritual odes*[5]; *singing with thankfulness*[6] *in your hearts to God*[7]. 16.

Study the instructions of Christ with attention suited to their importance; and make yourselves very familiar, both with the precepts and the doctrines of Christianity. And in this view you will find it of great advantage to commit to memory psalms and hymns and other pious poetical compositions which are easily remembered and recol-

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[3] *Richly.*] I follow the punctuation of Griesbach and Macknight.

[4] *Yourselves.*] ἑαυτοις. So Wakefield. "one another." Newcome. "yourselves and others." Macknight.

[5] *Psalms, &c.*] It is not easy to distinguish the different kinds of poems to which the apostle alludes. See Eph. v. 19. Dr. Macknight says that ωδαι, *odes*, are poems which were composed to be sung with a lyre or other musical instrument.

[6] *With thankfulness.*] εν χαριτι. See Wakefield and Newcome. Rom. vi. 17; 1 Cor. xv. 57; 2 Cor. ii. 14.

[7] *To God.*] Θεῳ. This is the reading of the most approved manuscripts and versions. See Griesbach and Newcome.

Ch. III. Ver. 16. lected, and which convey important truths in impressive language. These impressions will also be more permanent and useful, if the repetition of the words is accompanied with music vocal or instrumental. Only let me remind you, that when you sing you must exercise devout affections; and particularly, a grateful spirit, without which the most sublime language accompanied with the most exquisite harmony would be nothing more than a contemptible jargon of unmeaning sounds.

17. *And whatsoever ye say or do*[1], *do all in the name of Jesus Christ*[2]; *giving thanks to God, even the Father, through him.*

To conclude: I earnestly press it upon you, in every state and circumstance of life to act agreeably to your Christian profession; in obedience to the authority, and in conformity to the example, of your master Jesus: and, like his, let your whole lives be a continued act of devotion, and an uninterrupted expression of gratitude to God.

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[1] *Say or do.*] this is Mr. Wakefield's version.

[2] *Jesus Christ.*] Such is the reading of most of the ancient copies. The received text reads, "Lord Jesus." See Griesbach. "Let your whole minds be occupied by Christian sentiments. Let your great object be to recommend the principles of your religion to others, by acting upon them yourselves; and always consider yourselves as under the greatest obligation to God for this invaluable gift." Dr. Priestley.

SECTION III.

THE APOSTLE briefly insists upon relative duties. CH. IV. Ch. iii. 18—iv. 1.

1. He urges the duties of the conjugal relation, ver. 18, 19.

Wives, be subject[3] *to your husbands, as it is fit in the Lord*[4]. *Husbands, love* your *wives, and be not bitter toward them.* Ver. 18. 19.

Let Christian wives yield that deference to their unbelieving husbands which the laws and customs of society require: for such conduct is highly agreeable to the principles of the Christian religion, which, whatever change it may introduce into men's moral state, makes no alteration in their civil relations. And let Christian husbands behave kindly and tenderly to their unbelieving wives; and not think themselves authorized to deal harshly with them

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[3] *Wives, be subject,* &c.] Dr. Chandler has satisfactorily shown that the precepts concerning relative duties Eph. v. 22 *et seq.* evidently relate to persons of different religions; and as these are a brief recapitulation of the same advices, there can be no doubt that they relate to persons in the same circumstances. The apostle might not think it necessary to insist more particularly upon the subject, as he directs the Colossians to send for and to read the other epistle in the church. See ver. 16.

[4] *It is fit in the Lord.*] "*In the Lord.* Among those who are Christians." Newcome.

Ch. III. because they have not yet embraced the faith of Christ.

2. He states the duties of children and parents, ver. 20, 21.

Ver. 20. *Children, obey* your *parents in all things*[1]; *for*
21. *this is acceptable in the Lord*[2]. *Fathers, do not irritate*[3] *your children, lest they be discouraged.*

Let not the believing children of unbelieving parents imagine that the profession of Christianity releases them from the obligation of filial duty; but let them be assured that they are then acting a part most acceptable to God and most suitable to their Christian profession, when they yield that entire subjection to paternal authority which the established order of society requires, and even excel others in filial duty, where the superior obligations of religion do not interfere.

And let not believing parents animadvert with too much severity upon the errors and the faults of their unconverted children, lest young persons often and harshly reproved, and despairing of coming up to that high standard of perfection which the parent has established, should be tempted to

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[1] *In all things.*] Christianity does not diminish that authority which the laws and customs of the country have placed in the hands of the parent. An exception, however, must be made to those precepts which are plainly repugnant to the laws of God.

[2] *Acceptable in the Lord.*] εν Κυριῳ is the true reading. See ver. 18, and Griesbach.

[3] *Irritate.*] παροργιζετε is the reading of the most authentic copies. See Griesbach.

throw off every restraint, and to abandon themselves to vice and ruin. Ch. III.

3. He insists more particularly upon the duties of servants and masters, ver. 22—iv. 1.

Bond-servants, obey your *earthly masters*[4] *in all things; not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but with simplicity of heart revering the Lord*[5]: Ver. 22.
and whatsoever ye are employed in, perform it from the soul[6] *as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing* 23.
that from the Lord ye will receive the reward of the inheritance, for Christ indeed *is the master whom ye are serving*[7]. *Moreover, he that doeth* 24. 25.

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[4] *Earthly masters.*] In the original, "masters according to the flesh." "*temporal* masters." Dr. Harwood. The apostle is evidently addressing himself to the Christian servants, or rather slaves, of unbelieving masters; who probably might believe, and by their false teachers be told, that being emancipated from all former connexions by faith in Christ, they were no further bound to obey their masters than while they were under their immediate inspection and in danger of punishment for neglect of duty; but that they were at perfect liberty to neglect their master's service if they could do it with impunity. The apostle teaches them that the profession of Christianity relaxed no civil obligations; that obedience to their masters was a duty they owed to Christ; and that, however unjust or oppressive the conduct of their masters might be, it was their duty to be faithful and active in their service, whether under their master's eye, or not, and to look for their reward in a future life. See Eph. vi. 5—8, and Chandler's notes.

[5] *Revering the Lord.*] τον Κυριον is the true reading: the received text reads "God." See Griesbach. Simplicity of heart in the preceding clause is opposed to that double-dealing for which slaves were remarkable.

[6] *From the soul.*] See Wakefield. εκ ψυχης. Comp. Eph. vi. 6.

[7] *For Christ* indeed, &c.] This is Mr. Wakefield's version, and expresses accurately the true meaning of the apostle.

Ch. III. Ver. 25. *wrong shall suffer for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons* [1].

I must be a little more particular in my advice to Christian slaves, who, having been regenerated into that new creation in which in a moral view there is no distinction but what arises from real worth, may be inclined to believe, and are indeed by their false teachers instructed, that they are released from all obligation to serve heathen masters; and that they are in duty bound to do nothing more than what they are compelled to do under their master's eye. Let me assure you, that these principles are very remote from the spirit of the gospel; which enforces all civil duties by new and most efficacious motives.

Instead, therefore, of neglecting the service of your heathen masters, I call upon you to obey them with alacrity in all their lawful commands: and that not only when their eye is upon you, and from a desire to recommend yourselves to them, but perform your work honestly as a Christian duty, and from regard to the authority of Christ. Do all that is required of you, and do it cheerfully; as if you were working, not for an earthly master, but for Christ himself. In a word, always consider yourselves as the servants of Christ; and whatever you are ordered to do, do it with the same alertness and zeal as if Christ had given you the com-

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[1] *No respect of persons.*] This observation is applied to the conduct of masters Eph. vi. 9.

mand. For he is your true master; and whether your heathen masters reward you or not, he will give you ample recompense for your fidelity, and will admit you to the relation and privileges of children in the great family of which he is the head. But on the contrary, if any one neglects his proper duty, and under any pretence whatever does injury to another, he shall certainly suffer condign punishment from his impartial judge; whether he be a believer or an unbeliever, a master or a slave. Ch. III. Ver. 25.

Masters, give unto your *bond-servants what is just and equitable*[2], *knowing that ye also have a master in heaven.* Ch. IV. Ver. 1.

Christian masters, see to it that ye do not treat your heathen slaves as if they were not entitled to common humanity and common justice. Require nothing from them but what is reasonable, and give them the encouragement and recompense which is their due. Remember that you are by profession the servants of Christ; and though he is now invisible, he will another day appear in judgement, and as you have acted by your slaves and dependants, so you may justly expect to be treated by your Master when he comes.

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[2] *Just and equitable.*] το δικαιον, και την ισοτητα. Comp. Eph. vi. 9. τα αυτα ποιειτε, *do the same things.*

SECTION IV.

Ch. IV. *THE APOSTLE recommends piety and devotion towards God, and prudence in their conduct towards their heathen neighbours.* Ch. iv. 2—6.

1. The apostle recommends prayer and thanksgiving, and desires an interest in their intercessions, ver. 2—4.

Ver. 2. *Persevere in prayer*[1], *and watch therein with*
3. *thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us also, that God would open to us a door of utterance*[2], *to declare the mystery of Christ, for which*

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[1] *Persevere in prayer,* &c.] From the connexion in which this exhortation is introduced, Mr. Peirce argues that the apostle had a particular reference to the perilous circumstances of Christians at that time. This observation is corroborated by comparing this passage with its parallel, Eph. vi. 18—20. "The duty of prayer," says Dr. Priestley, "is constantly urged upon Christians: and to have God continually in our thoughts, in which state of mind it will be impossible not to address ourselves to him in thanksgiving and petition, is the great object of all the means of religion. When we have attained to this habitual devotion, so that, as the Psalmist says, God shall be in all our thoughts, we shall be prepared for all the events of life, and secure against all temptations to sin. And without this habitual devotion, or constant regard to the presence and government of God in all our actions, all the prescribed means of religion signify nothing."

[2] *A door of utterance.*] θυραν τε λογε, *a door for the word.* Wakefield and Macknight. *i. e.* a favourable opportunity of preaching the gospel with success; and that he would remove every obstruction out of the way. The former signification best

indeed I am in bonds[3], *that I may make it manifest by speaking as I ought*[4]. Ch. IV. Ver. 4.

You are in the midst of dangers, and surrounded by temptations, either to corrupt the doctrine or to desert the profession of Christianity; pray, therefore, to be preserved from apostasy, and as your dangers are incessant, let your prayers be constant; and amidst the business and avocations of life, watch for and embrace every favourable opportunity for this purpose. And let your prayers for perseverance be joined with devout thanksgivings for the blessings and privileges of the gospel.

And in your prayers, as a testimony of affection, remember me, and pray for me that God would grant me an opportunity to preach the gospel, and

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agrees with the corresponding passage Eph. vi. 19. *q. d.* "a large opportunity of declaring the mystery of the gospel to the Gentiles, and their equal participation of its privileges with the Jews." Newcome.

"It is very observable," says Dr. Priestley, "that all the apostle wished for from the prayers of his friends was, his having a more open field for preaching the gospel. This appears to have been his only great object: to life or death he seems to have been indifferent. Could such a man as this, whose epistles are so much the language of nature, be an impostor, carrying on some artful design, the object of which must have been his interest or fame? They know nothing of human nature, or the natural expressions of human sentiments, who can suspect any such thing."

[3] *The mystery of Christ*, &c.] This mystery was the admission of the Gentiles into the church, Eph. iii. 8, 9. For preaching this doctrine the apostle was arrested at Jerusalem, and sent a prisoner to Rome.

[4] *Speaking as I ought.*] So Wakefield. Gr. "as it behoves me to speak." "that I may declare it as plainly and fully as it becomes me to do, who have been so peculiarly intrusted with the revelation of it, and a commission to preach it." Peirce.

Ch. IV. Ver. 4. to make known that gracious purpose which was so long concealed in the counsels of heaven, that the Gentiles should be admitted to the privileges of the chosen people. A glorious discovery, for bearing testimony to which I am now in bonds. But so far am I from being discouraged by persecution, that I request your prayers to be united with those of other churches for my release for no other purpose, but that I may be more at liberty to publish the joyful tidings with a zeal and activity worthy of the cause, and of the unspeakable obligation I am under to him by whose mercy I was selected and commissioned for this important embassy.

2. The apostle recommends prudence in conduct and conversation towards their unbelieving neighbours, ver. 5, 6.

5. *Behave wisely towards those that are without*[1];
6. thus *gaining time*[2]. *Let your conversation be always courteous*[3], *seasoned with discretion*[4], *that ye may know how ye ought to answer every one*[5].

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[1] *Those that are without*:] *i. e.* "the unconverted heathen." Newcome.

[2] *Gaining time.*] See Dan. ii. 8, LXX. Eph. v. 15, 16. "gaining as much as you can, prolonging your own tranquillity, and the opportunity of spreading the gospel." Peirce.

[3] *Courteous.*] εν χαριτι. "well-pleasing, mild, becoming, good, making you gracious to and favoured by your hearers." Newcome. See Peirce on ch. iii. 17.

[4] *Discretion.*] In the original, *salt.* Mr. Peirce observes, that "*salt* is put for *wisdom* both in sacred and profane authors."

[5] *That ye may know*, &c.] Mr. Peirce supposes that the apostle here has particular respect to the heathen magistrates, who had it in their power to call them in question for their religion. See

Be prudent in your conduct towards your heathen neighbours; and do not by any impropriety of behaviour, and particularly by acting as though, by the profession of Christianity, you were released from the obligation of social duties, give any unnecessary offence. Your principles are themselves sufficiently obnoxious; and let your conduct be ever so correct and benevolent, they will probably, some time or other, expose you to persecution; but circumspection and an inoffensive behaviour will delay the storm, and prolong the season of security and tranquillity. Ch. IV. Ver. 6.

Do not excite prejudice by unguarded and unbecoming language. Be courteous, be discreet: observe the characters and manners of those with whom you associate; and, without sacrificing your principles, or your integrity, endeavour so to adapt your conversation to your company, that none may be disgusted, and that, if possible, all may be pleased, instructed, and edified.

See 1 Pet. iii. 15. But it does not seem necessary to limit the apostle's advice to this case. Mr. Wakefield's version is, "knowing the proper answer for every person." "This," says Dr. Priestley, "is an admonition to avoid whatever is offensive, and to study whatever is civil and agreeable in conversation; and also that address which will qualify a man to defend his principles, whether they be attacked by argument or ridicule. Good sense is never employed to more advantage than in this way. And to persons who see much of the world, there is continual occasion for it."

CONCLUSION.

Ch. IV. *THE APOSTLE expresses his solicitude that the Colossian Christians should be informed of his present situation, for which purpose he sends Tychicus to visit them. He closes his epistle with salutations and a benediction.* Ch. iv. 7—19.

1. The apostle refers the Colossians to Tychicus and Onesimus for a complete account of his affairs, ver. 7—9.

Ver. 7. *Tychicus*[1], *that beloved brother and faithful minister, and* my *fellow-servant in the Lord, will*
8. *make known to you all things concerning me; whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that ye might know our situation*[2], *and that he might com-*
9. *fort your hearts: together with Onesimus, that*

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[1] *Tychicus.*] Tychicus was one of the Christian evangelists who accompanied the apostle in his travels, and who now ministered to him in his imprisonment. He and Onesimus were commissioned by the apostle to carry his epistles to the Ephesians or Laodiceans, vi. 21, 22, to the Colossians, and to Philemon; and to communicate all the intelligence respecting himself and his affairs at Rome, which his friends might be desirous to hear. *In the Lord, i. e.* "under our common Lord, in the church of Christ." Newcome.

[2] *That ye might know,* &c.] ινα γνωτε τα περι ημων. This is the reading of the Alexandrine and other manuscripts, and literally coincides with Eph. vi. 22. It is marked as of good authority by Griesbach, and adopted by Dr. Harwood.

faithful and beloved brother, who is one *of you*[3], *they will inform you concerning all affairs here.* Ch. IV. Ver. 9.

I know, my brethren, that you are under great solicitude on my account, and perhaps you apprehend my situation to be more inconvenient and hazardous than it really is. To alleviate your anxiety, therefore, and to comfort your spirits, I have sent Tychicus, my beloved fellow-Christian, and my faithful fellow-labourer in the gospel ministry, to represent to you the exact state in which I am. That you may know that, though a prisoner for the cause of truth, I am neither discouraged, nor inactive, nor useless; and that I am not without hope of obtaining a speedy release. And with Tychicus I have sent Onesimus, whom you know as your countryman, and whom I have now the satisfaction to announce to you as your Christian brother; of whose sincerity and faithfulness I have had much experience, and who is dear to me, and will, I trust, be so to you in the bonds of Christian affection. These two excellent men will give you the most satisfactory information concerning me, and the affairs of the believers at Rome.

[3] *Onesimus*—one *of you.*] He was the fugitive slave of Philemon, an inhabitant of Colossæ; he had been converted to Christianity by the apostle at Rome, and was now sent back to his master with a letter of recommendation from the apostle. The apostle, no doubt, ordered Onesimus first to deliver his epistle to Philemon, and presumed upon the success of his intercession, before he would allow him to join with Tychicus in delivering the epistle to the Colossians.

Indeed the epistle to Philemon is so connected with that to the Colossians, that I have taken the liberty of transposing that short epistle and annexing it as an appendix to the other.

Ch. IV. 2. The apostle sends the salutations of his companions and fellow-labourers, some of whom were also his fellow-sufferers at Rome, ver. 10—14.

Ver. 10. *Aristarchus* [1], *my fellow-prisoner, and Mark* [2], *the nephew of Barnabas* [3], *concerning whom ye have received instructions, (if he come unto you en-*
11. *tertain him,) and Jesus called Justus* [4], *salute you. These are the only* persons *who, being of the circumcision,* have been *my fellow-labourers in the kingdom of God,* and *have been a comfort to me.*

Of these eminent persons, my friends and fellow-labourers who send their salutations to you, one is Aristarchus, to whose merit you are probably no strangers, who has been the companion of my journeys, and of my dangers, both in Thessalonica and Judea, and who is now my fellow-prisoner at Rome. Another of them is Mark, (the near relation of my first beloved associate Barnabas,) whose timid con-

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[1] *Aristarchus, my fellow-prisoner.*] He was a Macedonian of Thessalonica, Acts xix. 29, xx. 24, but a Jew by descent. He went with St. Paul into Asia, and was seized by the mob at Ephesus. He afterwards accompanied the apostle to Rome, Acts xxvii. 2, where he was his fellow-labourer, (Philem. 24,) and perhaps his fellow-prisoner. See note on ver. 10.

[2] *Mark.*] This evangelist, though he had formerly deserted the apostle, Acts xiii. 13, and for that reason had been rejected by him as an associate, Acts xv. 38; yet was now perfectly reconciled to him, and held in high estimation by him. See Philem. ver. 24, 2 Tim. iv. 11.

[3] *Nephew of Barnabas.*] ανεψιος· "cousin." Wakefield.—"sister's son," in the Public Version, &c. "*Aut patrueles, aut amitini, aut consobrini. His tribus vocibus Græca illa vox in Glossis vertitur.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *Jesus called Justus.*] This name had probably been given him at Rome, as sounding less uncouth to a Roman ear than his proper Hebrew name *Jesus*.

duct produced a temporary separation between us, but who has long since resumed his courage and zeal in the cause of truth, and is now one of my most active supporters and best friends. He is soon setting off from hence upon an important mission; if he should come to Colossæ in his way, receive and entertain him with the respect due to his character and office. To the honour of these two enlightened and liberal-minded persons, together with that of Justus, who desires that his name may be united in the salutation with theirs, be it known that, though they are Jews by descent, and strict observers of the law themselves, they are far from being desirous to impose the yoke upon Gentile believers. Being well instructed in the liberal genius and spirit of Christianity, they have cheerfully co-operated with me in preaching the gospel to the heathen, and have comforted and encouraged me in all my difficulties. And to say the truth, they are the only Jewish believers in this place from whom I have derived any assistance, or any consolation; such is the violence of prejudice against me for teaching fully and clearly the liberty of the Gentiles from the yoke of the ceremonial law. Ch. IV. Ver. 11.

Epaphras[5], *who is* one *of you, a servant of* 12.

[5] *Epaphras,* one *of you.*] He appears to have been a citizen of Colossæ, and to have instructed them in the doctrine of Christ; also from him the apostle received a favourable account of the state of the church in that city. See Col. i. 6—8. In the epistle to Philemon, ver. 23, he is mentioned as *the fellow-prisoner* of the apostle, and Aristarchus not. The Æthiopic version omits the words "my fellow-prisoner," verse 10, to which

Ch. IV. Ver. 12. *Christ, saluteth you, always earnestly striving for you in* his *prayers, that ye may stand perfect and*
13. *complete in the whole will of God*[1]. *For I bear him witness that he has a great concern*[2] *for you, and for those in Laodicea, and in Hierapolis.*

Epaphras also sends his salutations to you. You know him well as a faithful servant of Christ, by whom many of you were converted to the Christian faith; who diligently and successfully performed the office of a teacher among you when divine Providence restrained me from making you a visit, and employed my labours elsewhere. From him I have lately received the acceptable tidings of your stedfastness and improvement; and his zeal and assiduity, even in this place, have endangered his personal safety. Though he cannot personally address you, he still bears you upon his mind, and he earnestly prays for you and for the neighbouring churches in which his labours have been employed, that as you are at present so well informed and so eminently distinguished in faith and virtue, you may firmly adhere to the principles in which you

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Mill accedes. See Bowyer. Perhaps that clause should be introduced after Epaphras in this place; for it seems extraordinary that, if Epaphras was in prison, the apostle should not mention it to the Colossians.

[1] *Whole will of God.*] Peirce observes, that "he has here a respect more especially to that part of the will of God which was so much upon his heart, their maintaining their Christian liberty, and not submitting to Jewish ordinances."

[2] *Great concern.*] Griesbach, upon the authority of the Alexandrine and other manuscripts, reads πολυν πονον, *great concern*, instead of πολυν ζηλον, *great zeal*, which is the reading of the received text. See Newcome.

have been instructed, and not suffer yourselves to be corrupted by the artifices of seducing teachers, either in doctrine or in practice. Ch. IV. Ver. 13.

Luke[3] *the physician, and beloved* brother, *and Demas*[4]*, salute you.* 14.

These my brethren and fellow-labourers, who have accompanied me in my missionary journeys, and one of whom has been my faithful companion, my kind friend, during the whole of my long and perilous confinement here, desire me to assure you of their affectionate regards.

3. The apostle sends salutations to Laodicea; directs that both his epistles be read in both the churches, and gives a solemn charge to Archippus, ver. 15—17.

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[3] *Luke.*] It is generally allowed that the person here mentioned is Luke the evangelist and historian, and the associate of Paul in his travels and his labours. From comparing this with ver. 11, where the apostle says that he had no fellow-labourer of the circumcision, but those whom he had named, Lord Barrington concludes that Luke was a proselyte of the Gate before he was converted to Christianity; and Dr. Doddridge thinks it may be fairly concluded that he was not a Jew.

[4] *Demas.*] If we admit with Dr. Lardner, what appears highly probable, that the second epistle to Timothy was written not long after the apostle's arrival at Rome, it will follow that Demas, whom the apostle in that epistle accuses of deserting him and of going off to Thessalonica, had, like Mark, recovered his courage, returned to Rome, and been received into favour; and had, with the rest of the brethren, united in sending his salutations to Philemon and the Colossians in those epistles, which were written a short time before the apostle's release. See 2 Tim. iv. 9, 10; Philem. ver. 22, 24. It appears from the passage in the epistle to Timothy, that Titus was one who deserted the apostle upon that occasion, leaving him with

Ch. IV. Ver. 15. *Salute the brethren that are at Laodicea, and Nymphas* [1], *and the church which* assembleth *in his* 16. *house. And when this epistle has been read among you, cause it to be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that ye also read that* which ye will receive *from Laodicea* [2].

Convey my salutations and kind wishes to the Christians of Laodicea, and particularly to Nym-

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Luke only for his companion. Nor does it appear that Titus ever returned. Can this be the reason why Luke never mentions the name of Titus in his history? It is observable that Demas withdrew to Thessalonica, where the distinguished piety and fortitude of the believers, and their marked affection to the apostle, so much extolled by him in his epistles to the Thessalonians, would be very likely to bring the fugitive to himself, to rouse his courage, to rekindle his affection, and to induce him to return to the apostle.

[1] *Nymphas.*] Of this excellent person, who probably lived at Laodicea, we know nothing but what is here hinted to his honour; that, being probably like Philemon a person of property, he allowed the Christians at Laodicea to assemble for social worship in his house, as Philemon did those at Colossæ, Philem. ver. 2.

[2] *From Laodicea;*] not, as some suppose, an epistle written by the Laodiceans, but an epistle written by Paul to the Christians at Laodicea, which the Colossians would receive from them. την εκ Λαοδικειας, *that of the Laodiceans.* "that written to them by me." Wakefield; who refers to Luke viii. 27. See Bowyer, Grotius, Knatchbull, and Newcome. This epistle is by many supposed to be lost; but it seems highly probable that the epistle which is now inscribed to the Ephesians is the letter referred to by the apostle, and that it was originally sent to the Laodiceans. There can be no doubt that this epistle was written and sent at the same time with that to the Colossians; the train of thought and the phraseology are the same in both; they are excellent commentaries upon each other, and in order to be understood should be read in connexion with each other. Compare Col. i. 26 with Eph. iii. 9; Col. ii. 13 with Eph. ii. 1, &c.; Col. iii. 11 with Eph. i. 10, &c.; Col. iii. 18, 19 with Eph. v. 22—33. See Doddridge's excellent note upon this text.

phas, that excellent man, who, in a season of exigency and peril, permits the disciples to assemble for religious worship at his house. Ch. IV. Ver. 16.

Let the epistle which I have written, and which I now send, be read with great seriousness and attention before the whole congregation of believers at Colossæ; and when you have finished it, send it forward to Laodicea, that it may be read to the congregation of believers there. I have written another letter to that church, which I send by the same messengers who are the bearers of this to you. They are upon the same subject; and, when attentively compared together, they will greatly elucidate each other. Borrow, therefore, that letter from the church of Laodicea, and let it be read to the believers at Colossæ. Both societies will be better instructed, edified, and comforted, by this mutual communication of what I have written to each.

And say to Archippus[3], *See that thou fully discharge that ministry in the Lord, which thou hast received.* 17.

Archippus, who, in consideration of his mature age and eminent wisdom, has been chosen and approved as the regular instructor and officiating minister of the church at Colossæ, is no doubt duly

[3] *Archippus.*] This eminent person, who was probably the officiating minister of the church at Colossæ, is mentioned in terms of such high respect in the epistle to Philemon (ver. 2), that it is not at all probable that the apostle intended, as some have imagined, by this advice, obliquely to insinuate that Archippus had been negligent in the discharge of his official duties. See Macknight.

Ch. IV. Ver. 17. apprized of the importance of the office, and of the nature of the duties that are incumbent upon him. It may, however, tend to make a useful impression upon his mind, and to excite and encourage his zeal, if you will give him a solemn charge in my name, that he studiously fulfill, to the best of his abilities, the duties of his sacred office, without fear, and without disguise; animated by a tender concern for the welfare of his fellow-creatures, and by the awful expectation of the great account.

4. The epistle concludes with the apostle's general salutation and benediction, written with his own hand, ver. 18, 19.

18. *The salutation of* me, *Paul, with my own hand. Remember these my bonds*[1]. *Favour be with you*[2].

To this letter, written by the hand of a friend, and to these good wishes, I here subscribe my name

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[1] *Remember these my bonds.*] Μνημονευετε μου των δεσμων. Remember these bonds of mine." Wakefield. The apostle, writing the salutation with his own hand to authenticate the epistle, 2 Thess. iii. 17, casts his eye upon the chain by which his hand was bound to that of the soldier by whom he was kept in the *custodia militari*, and gracefully alludes to it in the close of his epistle, in order to leave a deep impression of the fact upon the minds of the Christians at Colossæ, and to excite their zeal in adherence to and in the defence of those rights and privileges for which he was then suffering. See Eph. vi. 20, Acts xxviii. 16. A similar beautiful allusion to his chain is found in his speech to king Agrippa, Acts xxvi. 29.

[2] *Favour be with you.*] " the favour of God." Newcome. Or perhaps of Christ, meaning the blessings of the gospel. See Phil. iv. 23. The most ancient manuscripts omit the word *Amen*, and likewise the postscript; which, however, truly relates that the epistle to the Colossians was written from Rome by Tychicus and Onesimus.

with my own hand, as a testimony to its genuineness and authenticity, and that you may not be imposed upon by spurious productions passing under my name. I write to you with a chain upon my wrist. Do not you, my friends, forget it, nor the cause of this confinement. It was for preaching up boldly the liberties of the Gentile church. Value, then, and improve your privileges as you ought; and may the blessing of God be with you! Farewell. Ch. IV. Ver. 18.

THE EPISTLE

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

PHILEMON.

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

PHILEMON was an inhabitant of Colossæ [1]. He appears to have been a man of property and distinction, from the hospitality which he exercised and which the apostle here commends, and from the respectful manner in which the apostle addresses him. He had been converted to the Christian religion by the apostle himself (ver. 19) [2], but in what manner,

[1] *Of Colossæ.*] This is apparent from Colossians iv. 9, where it is said of Onesimus the slave of Philemon, that he was of that city. Archippus, who is included in the salutation to Philemon (ver. 2), was also a minister of the gospel at Colossæ, Col. iv. 17. These evidently undesigned coincidences, as Dr. Paley well observes, *Hor. Paul.* 290, 369, strongly support the genuineness of the two epistles. Theodoret in the fifth century says that Philemon's house was still remaining at Colossæ.

[2] *Converted by the apostle himself.*] Dr. Benson infers from

or at what time and place, does not appear. As Paul had not visited Colossæ, Philemon had perhaps attended his ministry during his long residence at Ephesus.

Onesimus was the slave of Philemon. Having deserted [1] his master, he had fled to Rome; where, having happily met with the apostle, and been converted by him, he had become a sincere and conscientious Christian. For some time after his conversion, the apostle appears to have retained him in his service; but after having had sufficient proof of his fidelity and good conduct, though his services were very acceptable and useful to him, he thought it right to send him back to Philemon, with a letter of recommendation and intercession for his pardon. Tychicus upon this occasion accompanied Onesimus, and they were both charged with the Epistle to the Colossians [2]; after the delivery of which Tychicus was perhaps directed [3] to go on

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ver. 5, where the apostle only speaks of having heard of Philemon's faith, that he had never seen him; but the expression ver. 19, "thou owest to me thy own self," is so very emphatical, that it must surely allude to his having been converted by the apostle, who might afterwards have heard of his perseverance and his benevolence.

[1] *Deserted*, &c.] Some infer from ver. 18 that he had also robbed his master: but this is not certain. See Macknight's Preface to the epistle.

[2] *Both charged.*] See Col. iv. 7—9.

[3] *Tychicus was directed.*] Eph. vi 21, where Tychicus only is mentioned. Colossæ lay about twenty-eight miles north-east of Laodicea. Probably Onesimus was directed to deliver his letter first, and having obtained forgiveness from Philemon, he would then be authorized to join Tychicus in delivering the letter to the church at Colossæ. The apostle would scarcely

with that which was addressed to the Laodiceans, and which is commonly called the Epistle to the Ephesians [4].

THIS EPISTLE, the genuineness of which is unquestionable, is a private letter [5] from the apostle

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have thought it expedient to make a runaway slave the bearer of a letter to the church of which his master was a member, till after a reconciliation had taken place. Perhaps the more probable supposition may be, that Tychicus sent Onesimus forward with the letter to Philemon, while he remained at Laodicea to deliver his letter there; after which he went forward to Colossæ and joined Onesimus, who had been previously reconciled to Philemon, in delivering the apostle's letter to the church at Colossæ.

[4] *Commonly called,* &c.] See the Preface to the Epistle to the Ephesians.

[5] *A private letter,*] which the apostle probably never intended nor expected to be preserved; any more than St. John intended that his letters to Gaius and to the elect lady should be regarded as inspired writings. It is sufficient for the credit of these epistles that they are genuine productions of the apostles, and that they contain many valuable sentiments and advices. Whether these epistles are canonical or not, is a verbal controversy. If "canonical" means *inspired*, neither these nor any other of the apostolic writings are so. The apostles always possessed a complete knowledge of the gospel revelation, and whatever they say or write upon this subject is of the highest authority; but there is no reason to suppose that they were inspired to deliver every discourse, or to indite every epistle. If no epistles are to be deemed canonical but those which are addressed to Christian churches, the epistle to Philemon is not canonical; but if the question is simply this, Whether this epistle ought to be received as of equal authority with the other genuine writings of the apostle? there can be no hesitation in answering in the affirmative. See Benson's *Hist.* of the Epistle, sect. ii.

"There is not much," says Dr. Priestley, "of what may be called apostolic dignity in this epistle, no article of Christian doctrine being discussed in it; yet it has great propriety and beauty as a private letter; and it clearly shows the apostle to

to his friend upon a particular occasion; and it is written with the spirit of a Christian, the authority of an apostle, the politeness of a gentleman, and the affection of a friend. It would be puerile to suppose that such a letter as this was dictated by any other inspiration than that of philanthropy and friendship. The apostle probably wrote many such;

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have been no wild enthusiast, but one who was well acquainted with mankind, and with human nature, and who governed himself by that knowledge. It therefore shows us that inattention to these things is no recommendation of a Christian."

Dr. Benson very ingeniously specifies the following doctrines and precepts of Christianity, as expressed or insinuated in this epistle: *v. g.* 1. In a religious view all Christians are upon a level: Onesimus the slave, upon becoming a Christian, is the apostle's dear son and Philemon's brother. 2. Christianity makes no alteration in men's civil affairs: by Christian baptism a slave did not become a freedman. 3. Servants, *i. e.* slaves, should not be taken or detained from their own masters, without their masters' consent. 4. We should love and do good to all men: we should not contemn persons of low estate. The apostle has here set an example of benevolence, condescension, and Christian charity, which it behoves us to follow. 5. We should not utterly despair of those who are wicked, but use our best endeavours to reclaim them. 6. Restitution is due where an injury is done. 7. We should be grateful to our benefactors. 8. We should forgive the penitent and be heartily reconciled to them. 9. The apostle's example teaches us to do all we can to make up quarrels and differences, and to reconcile those who are at variance. 10. A wise man chooses sometimes to address in a soft and obliging manner, even in cases where there is authority to command. 11. The bishops and pastors of the Christian church, and all teachers of religion, have here the most glorious example set before them to induce them to have a most tender regard to the souls of men of all ranks and conditions. 12 Here is a most glorious proof of the good effect of Christianity, where it is rightly understood and sincerely embraced. It transforms a worthless slave into a pious, virtuous, amiable, and useful man." Benson's *History of the First Planting of the Christian Religion*, book iii. ch. x. sect. 10.

which, however they might be valued by the persons to whom they were inscribed, have long since been lost; but which no doubt all breathed the same spirit of piety, benevolence, and wisdom.

I. The apostle begins his epistle with expressing his good wishes for Philemon, his family, and friends, ver. 1—3.

II. He declares his great satisfaction in the tidings which he had received of the faith and the benevolence of his friend, and of his kindness to Christian strangers, ver. 4—7.

III. Waving his authority as an apostle, he urges him, upon the ground of personal friendship, and of the affection and regard due to him as the imprisoned ambassador of Christ, to receive Onesimus again into his family, and to forgive him his great offence, ver. 8—12.

IV. Desirous as he was to retain Onesimus at Rome, he regarded himself as bound in honour and justice to send him back to his lawful master; hoping that Philemon would no longer treat him as a slave, but as a Christian brother, and as the apostle's friend, ver. 13—17.

V. He promises to pay whatever Philemon had lost by Onesimus's dishonesty or misconduct; and expresses his firm confidence in the ready compliance of his friend, ver. 18—21.

VI. The apostle concludes the epistle with expressing his hope that he should soon be at liberty to make him a visit, and with the usual salutations and benediction, ver. 22—25.

We have no account of the success of this earnest and powerful intercession in behalf of a fugitive slave; but there can be no reasonable doubt that Philemon would be eager to testify his veneration and gratitude to the apostle by a compliance with his desires to their utmost extent.

This epistle is supposed to have been written A.D. 62, a little before the close of the apostle's first imprisonment.

POSTSCRIPT.

I have annexed this short but eloquent epistle as a sort of Appendix to the Epistle to the Colossians, the two epistles having been written at the same time, and conveyed by the same person to the same place; and being mutually illustrative of each other. These reasons I hope will be accepted as a sufficient apology for the transposition.

THE
EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

1. THE apostle introduces his epistle with expressions of good-will to Philemon and his family, and to other Christian friends, ver. 1—3.

PAUL a prisoner[1] *of Jesus Christ, and Timothy* our *brother, to Philemon our beloved* brother *and fellow-labourer*[2], *and to* our *beloved* sister *Appia*[3], *and to Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to* Ver. 1. 2.

[1] *A prisoner.*] Archbishop Newcome observes, that δεσμιος is a reading better supported than δουλος or αποστολος, and preferable on account of its delicacy. Dr. Benson in his note enumerates the various modes of introduction to the epistles of Paul, and shows the propriety of each.

[2] *Fellow-labourer.*] Some have inferred, from this expression, that Philemon was a bishop or minister of the Christian church at Colossæ. This is not improbable, though Archippus was undoubtedly such, Col. iv. 17; for it is certain that several elders or bishops were sometimes appointed to one church. See Acts xx. 17, 28. Dr. Benson, however, justly observes, that there is no necessity of drawing this conclusion: for, whoever contributed any way towards helping forward the gospel, are called the *apostle's helpers* and *fellow-labourers*, whether men or women. See ver. 24; Rom. xvi. 3, 9, 21.

[3] *Appia.*] Gr. "Apphia." Dr. Benson observes that this is a Roman name, and that Paul writes it after the Hebrew manner. Appia is asserted by Chrysostom and Theodoret to have been the wife of Philemon; which, as she is mentioned next to

Ver. 3. *the church in thy house*[1], *favour be to you and peace from God our Father, and* from *the Lord Jesus Christ.*

1 Paul, who am not only a teacher of the gospel but a sufferer for it, and who have now been some years a prisoner for having preached the doctrine of Christ to the Gentiles, and Timothy the faithful and affectionate companion of my labours and sufferings, unite in our friendly salutations to Philemon our dear Christian brother and fellow-labourer in the same honourable cause, and to his faithful consort Appia our beloved sister in Christ, and to Archippus, who has voluntarily accepted the important office of a Christian minister, and is ready to share with us in all the difficulties, conflicts and dangers of this arduous service; and to all the other Christian friends, whether members of your family or otherwise, who occasionally or statedly assemble for religious worship and instruction under your hospitable roof: May the favour of God our common Father, and the unspeakable blessings of the gospel of Jesus Christ our common master, abide

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Philemon and before Archippus, is not improbable. Many manuscripts of the best authority read *sister* instead of *beloved*; and some of the ancient versions read both.

[1] *The church in thy house.*] It is doubted whether this means the family and friends of Philemon only, or whether the body of Christians at Colossæ, assembled for Christian worship at Philemon's house. The former is the general opinion, and it may be true; but Dr. Benson's argument, that the apostle upon other occasions where he salutes the church in a particular house, afterwards sends salutations to individuals, does not decisively prove it. See Rom. xvi. 5, 1 Cor. xvi. 19.

with and enrich you all! We cannot form a better wish for you, nor give you a stronger testimony of our Christian affection. Ver. 3.

2. The apostle expresses his great satisfaction in the faith and benevolence of his friend, and in his kind sympathy with the suffering brethren, of which he had received the most favourable accounts, ver. 4—7.

I thank my God[2], *continually making mention* 4.
of thee in my prayers, (having heard[3] *of thy faith* 5.
towards the Lord Jesus, and of thy love to all the saints,) that the faith of which thou partakest may 6.
operate[4] *in the acknowledgement of every* thing

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[2] *I thank my God,* &c.] Mr. Wakefield makes the construction clearer by transposing the clauses of the fourth and fifth verses. His version is, "I thank my God for the accounts which I receive of thy firm belief in the Lord Jesus, and thy love towards all the saints, making mention of thee always in my prayers, that thy fellowship in the faith," &c. I adopt the suggestion of Bowyer and Newcome, including the fifth verse in a parenthesis.

[3] *Having heard,* &c.] It has been before observed, that the expression "having heard" does not necessarily imply that the apostle had never *seen* Philemon. Six manuscripts, and the Syriac version, read *faith and love.* See Mill and Newcome. There can be no doubt that the apostle meant, and perhaps dictated, the same or similar words which occur Eph. i. 15, Col. i. 3, 4; which were written nearly at the same time. The expression might be varied by the mistake of an early transcriber. In the original, as in the common version, it stands thus: "Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints."

[4] *May operate.*] "that thy partaking of the faith may become effectual, in the knowledge of every good thing which is among us as concerning Christ Jesus: *i.e.* in giving thee knowledge and experience of every good thing which God bestows

Ver. 7. *good that is among us concerning Christ Jesus. For we are greatly rejoiced and comforted on account of thy love, because the bowels* [1] *of the saints have been refreshed by thee, brother.*

I have heard much from Epaphras your fellow-citizen, who is now with me, and from others, of your faith in Christ, of your firm adherence to the pure doctrine of Christianity, and of that which is indeed the necessary consequence of true faith, your kindness to all who bear the Christian name. I continually bless God on these accounts; and I earnestly pray that the vigour of your faith may discover itself more and more in your zeal for good works, and in your increasing knowledge of the unspeakable blessings which we derive from the gospel of Christ. And truly, my dear brother, I am delighted to hear with what tender sympathy you have behaved to your afflicted and suffering brethren, and how much their broken spirits have been soothed, and cheered, and comforted, by your seasonable ad-

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upon us as Christians." Newcome. Similar to this is Mr. Wakefield's version: "that thy fellowship in the faith may have its effect in an acknowledgement of every thing good in Christ Jesus."

The best copies read ἡμιν, *us*, for ὑμιν, *you*; which the Primate properly notices, *every good thing among us*, i. e. us believers, *concerning Christ*.

"*Optans ut fides quam nobiscum habes communem, magis magisque se manifestet (per opera bona) tuque cognoscas magnitudinem beneficiorum, quæ debemus Christo.* εν επιγνωσει, *una cum cognitione.*" Rosenmuller.

[1] *Bowels*:] *i. e.* affections. Col. iii. 8. "the minds of the saints are soothed in thee." Wakefield. "*Multorum pauperum Christianorum animos recreasti dum ex opibus tuis eorum necessitatibus tempestive subvenires.*" Rosenmuller.

vice and benevolent aid. The very report of your extraordinary kindness to the persecuted and impoverished brethren, cheers my spirit even in prison. Ver. 7.

3. Waving his authority as an apostle, he urges Philemon, upon the ground of affection and the tender respect due to his character, to receive his penitent slave into his house again, ver. 8—12.

Therefore, though I might use great freedom in 8.
Christ to enjoin thee[2] *what is fit, I rather, for* 9.
affection's sake[3], *intreat, being such an one as*
Paul the ambassador[4], *and now, even the prisoner*

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[2] *To enjoin thee.*] Mark the delicacy of the apostle's address: waving his authority as an apostle of Christ, he rather chooses to appeal to his friend's affection, to his benevolence, to his tender respect to the suffering ambassador of Christ. Nor does he mention Onesimus's name till after he has described him in the most endearing characters; and then recommends him to be received into Philemon's house as if he had been the apostle's own darling son. Nothing can be conceived more delicate, tender, and appropriate, than the apostle's language upon this occasion.

[3] *For affection's sake.*] Literally, "for love's sake." "because of *my* love." Newcome.—"because of my love for thee." Wakefield. "by that love which thou bearest to the saints and to me." Macknight. Perhaps the apostle included both: *q. d.* because of our mutual affection to each other.

[4] *Paul the ambassador.*] Παυλος πρεσβυτης. The apostle was called a young man when Stephen was stoned, about A.D. 36, Acts vii. 58. He could not well be less than thirty, considering the commissions with which he was charged: see Acts ix. 1, 2. If, therefore, this epistle were written A.D. 62, the apostle would be about fifty-six or fifty-seven; and could not with propriety call himself *aged*. Dr. Benson observes, that the apostle upon no other occasion alludes to his advanced years, but frequently to his character as an ambassador of Christ in bonds, and particularly in the epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, written nearly at the same time with this to Philemon. Eph. vi. 20. He

Ver. 10. *of Jesus Christ. I intreat thee in behalf of a son*
of mine[1], *whom I have begotten during these my*
11. *bonds, Onesimus; who was lately of no value*[2] *to*
thee, but will now be of great value to thee, even
12. *as* he has been *to me*[3]. *Whom I have sent back:*

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admits that the proper word for *ambassador* is πρεσϐευτης, but he remarks that the LXX. have used πρεσϐυτης for an ambassador, 2 Chron. xxxii. 31, and that it is so used 2 Macc. xi. 34; and if it is contended that these instances are slips of the pen, he desires that the same allowance may be made in the present case. The Doctor adds that Theophylact read πρεσϐευτης.

Dr. Bentley maintains, not only that the adversative particle δε requires πρεσϐευτης as opposed to δεσμιος, but that it is highly probable that the original reading was παλαι, instead of Παυλος, which would properly correspond with νυνι δε, so that the proper translation would be, "for affection's sake I intreat thee: being one who, having long been an ambassador, am now even a prisoner of Jesus Christ." See Bowyer. These conjectures are very plausible, though not supported by the authority of manuscripts or versions. Dr. Priestley says, "that Paul could not, at this time, have been much more than fifty-four or fifty-five years old; but through his incessant labours he might be infirm." But there is not the slightest reason for this supposition. Paul never complains or alludes to the infirmities of age; and what man of fifty-four or fifty-five ever speaks of himself as *the aged?* Unsupported as the conjecture is by authorities, I think that, from the connexion, it is almost impossible to doubt that the apostle speaks of himself as "Paul the *ambassador*," and not "Paul the *aged*."

[1] *A son of mine,* &c.] "This, which is the order of the original," Dr. Doddridge observes, "keeps the mind in an agreeable suspense, and has a fine effect, which every reader of taste will quickly perceive."

[2] *Lately of no value,* &c.] So Mr Wakefield. Observe in what gentle language the apostle speaks of the fault of Onesimus, that he might not irritate the feelings of Philemon. See Benson and Macknight. Doddridge remarks, that "Paul evidently refers to the etymology of the word Onesimus, which signifies *profitable.*" This is more evident in ver. 20, where he alludes to his name.

[3] *Even as* he has been, &c.] Macknight translates the words,

do thou, therefore, receive him as my own beloved son[4]. Ver. 12.

I have a favour to request; which, indeed, as an apostle of Christ, I should be fully authorized to enjoin as a duty; but, knowing your regard for me, I would rather solicit it as an act of kindness, of kindness to myself personally; a gratification which you will not refuse to your friend under the peculiar circumstances in which he writes to you, having long been employed by Jesus Christ our common Lord as his ambassador to the heathen world, and having now, as you well know, for some years suffered a tedious confinement for his sake. Relying, therefore, upon your friendship and sympathy, I prefer my request in behalf of a dear convert of mine, my own son in the faith of Jesus, whom I have brought over to the profession and practice of the Christian religion since I have been a prisoner at Rome; and who, by his virtuous conduct and kind attentions, has endeared himself to me beyond expression, as if he were my own child. And this is no other than Onesimus, your fugitive slave; from whom, of late, you have derived little satisfaction and little profit, but who, I trust, will here-

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" but now will be very profitable to thee, even as to me." See Benson.

[4] *My beloved son :*] literally, " ' my own bowels,' *i. e.* my son, a part of me." Macknight. Dr. Benson remarks, that " there are many passages in the classics in which children are called the bowels of their parents," and refers to Le Clerc and Pricæus upon the text. He observes how the apostle rises in his expressions; ver. 10, he calls Onesimus his *son*, here his *bowels, i. e.* his beloved son; and ver. 17, his *very self*.

Ver. 12. after redeem his character, and prove a most valuable assistant to you, as he has indeed been to me, ever since his conversion. By my advice and direction he is returned to you; receive him, my dear friend, into your family again, and admit him into your house with the same readiness, with the same tenderness, with which you would entertain a favourite son of mine, if I had sent him to visit you.

4. Desirous as he was to have retained Onesimus, the apostle, nevertheless, felt himself bound in justice to send him back to his master, confident that he would be treated by him in the kindest manner, ver. 13—17.

13. *I was indeed desirous to keep him with me, that he might, in thy stead, have ministered to me in*
14. *these bonds for the gospel. But without thy consent I would do nothing, that thy goodness might not be, as it were, from constraint, but voluntary.*
15. *For perhaps he therefore was separated*[1] from thee *for a short time, that thou mightest receive him*
16. *back for ever*[2]. *No longer as a slave, but above a*

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[1] *Was separated.*] Dr. Benson remarks, that "the apostle here uses a soft expression, which seems to ascribe the separation of Onesimus from his master to the over-ruling providence of God for the accomplishment of his great and good purposes, as the bondage of Joseph is represented, Gen. xlv. 5.

[2] *For ever:*] *i. e.* to the end of life. "This," says Dr. Benson, "is one instance in which the phrase *for ever* must stand for a finite or indefinite duration, and there are other instances in scripture. The apostle probably alludes to the case of the Hebrew servant, who voluntarily consented to serve his master for life, Exod. xxi. 2, 6; Deut. xv. 17. See also Lev. xxv. 46." "Αιωνιον *possumus vertere*, semper, perpetuò; *ut sensus sit*, ut

slave, as *a brother beloved very much by me, but how much more by thee, both as a man and as a* believer *in the Lord*[3]. *If, therefore, thou regard me as a friend*[4], *receive him as myself.* Ver. 16. 17.

The services of Onesimus were so very useful to me, that I should have been glad to have retained him with me to have performed those offices of kindness and sympathy for me in my imprisonment, which your tender friendship would have been eager to have performed had you been present with me; and which I am fully persuaded that you would have been well pleased that Onesimus should have remained to have executed in your stead. Nevertheless, as I had no opportunity of obtaining your consent, I would not keep him without it, lest it should be suspected by those who knew not the liberality of your spirit, that I detained your servant against your will.

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eum retineas perpetuo, *servum bonum, tibique utilem; quæ sententia præferenda esse videtur*." Rosenmuller.

Observe, that the apostle does not order Philemon to set his slave at liberty; nor did Onesimus's conversion emancipate him from the yoke. Christianity makes no alteration in the civil states of men. See 1 Cor. vii. 20, and Mr. Locke's note; also Benson *in loc.*

[3] *As a man*, &c.] In the original it is "in the flesh, and in the Lord." Mr. Wakefield's version is, "as a man, and as a Christian;" which is undoubtedly the true meaning of the words. Nevertheless, as the word *Christian* was in use in the apostolic age, and yet the apostle never adopts it, but constantly uses in lieu of it οἱ εν Κυριῳ, or εν Χριστῳ, or some equivalent phrase, I think it not proper to use the word *Christian* in translating his writings, but rather to adopt his own phrase, supplying the words that are understood.

[4] *Friend.*] κοινωνος· a joint partaker with him in the blessings of the gospel. See Doddridge and Benson.

Ver. 17. And perhaps the intention of divine Providence in this temporary separation might be, that your fugitive slave, being in this interval converted to the Christian faith, might be restored to you to be a comfort, and to be useful to you as long as you live. Not indeed in the capacity of a slave, but in the nobler character of a friend, a brother, a fellow-Christian, very dear to me, who am his spiritual father, and who have been greatly benefited by his services; and still more dear to you, who have known him longer, who will feel a peculiar interest in the conversion of the penitent fugitive, and who will, for a much longer period, enjoy the benefit of his faithful and tender attentions. As a slave, you will be pleased with his dutiful behaviour; as a Christian, you will acknowledge and love him as a brother. If, then, you love me, treat Onesimus with kindness; receive him as my representative and harbinger, and entertain him as myself.

5. The apostle promises to make good whatever loss Philemon might have sustained from Onesimus; and continues to urge his suit in full confidence of success, ver. 18—21.

18. *But if he have done thee any wrong*[1], *or owe*

[1] *Any wrong.*] Some have inferred from this expression that Onesimus had robbed his master; but of this fact there is no proof. The apostle means to obviate every possible objection to the re-admission of Onesimus; and therefore offers to pay whatever might be due to Philemon, whether from the loss of his slave's service, or on any other account. "*Quæ Paulus huc usque scripserat plena erant* humanitatis; *reliqua plenissima sunt*

thee any thing, charge it to my account. I, Paul, Ver. 19.
have written[2] it *with my own hand, I will repay*
it; *not to say unto thee, that thou owest even thine*
own self to me. Yea, brother, let me enjoy this 20.
satisfaction[3] *from thee in the Lord; gratify my*
tender feelings[4] *in Christ. In full assurance of* 21.
thy compliance, I have thus *written to thee, know-*
ing that thou wilt do even more than I ask.

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urbanitatis. Ει τι κ. τ. λ. *non ad virum resecanda, eleganter potius et facetè dicta esse quum mutua inter Paulum et Philemonem officia, tum sequentia satis declarant.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *I, Paul, have written* it.] This is a promissory note, which the apostle writes with his own hand. "*Dubitari potest, scripseritne Apostolus totam hanc epistolam manu propria, an hanc tantum ejus particulam, literis forte, ut Hieronymus conjiciebat, majusculis, quod omnino augeret facetam orationis urbanitatem, quam nemo non agnoscat in eleganti quæ sequitur præteritione; ἵνα μὴ κ. τ. λ.*" Rosenmuller. The learned writer thinks that the apostle means to be facetious; but is not the subject too grave to admit of that supposition? It must, however, be allowed that the apostle, in the next verse, puns upon Onesimus's name. "It is not certain," says Dr. Priestley, "that Onesimus had robbed his master of any thing. All that Paul alludes to might be the loss of his service for so long a time as he had been absent from him."

[3] *Let me enjoy this satisfaction:*] or, let me be benefited by thee. ὀναιμὴν, an allusion to the name of Onesimus: *q. d.* Be you an Onesimus to me. *In the Lord; q. d.* let me enjoy that Christian satisfaction in you in this particular, which you will derive from the pious and dutiful services of Onesimus as long as you live. "Fac ut hunc fructum percipiam ex te, ut homine Christiano. *Paulus fortassis alludere voluit ad Onesimi nomen; nam Paronomasiæ usus non abhorret a stilo Paulino.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *Gratify my feelings.*] Gr. "refresh my bowels."—"refresh my feelings." Wakefield. *In Christ:* This is the reading best supported. The received text reads "in the Lord." See Benson.

The allusion in the expression *refresh* or *soothe my bowels,* is not to the relief of hunger; but to the gratification of the kind

Ver. 21. Let it not be any objection to the pardon of Onesimus that he is in your debt, or that he has injured you in any shape, either by dishonesty or neglect. Set this to my account. I, Paul, poor and prisoner as I am, will undertake to satisfy every just and legal claim, though Onesimus should not have it in his power to do so. This hand-writing of mine shall be your warrant for the demand. Nor, if you choose to urge it, will I bar your claim by reminding you of the far greater obligation you are yourself under to me, who have been the means of redeeming you from a much heavier bondage, and saving you from a severer condemnation. Yes, my dear Christian brother, waving all considerations of this kind, let me prevail upon you to gratify my most earnest wishes, in a case which so loudly appeals to your humanity and Christian benevolence. And I am confident that I shall not solicit in vain; for I know so well your generous spirit, that I am persuaded your kindness to Onesimus will even exceed what I request on his account.

6. The epistle closes with the expression of the apostle's hope that he should soon have it in his power to make his friend a visit, and with the customary salutations and benediction, ver. 22—25.

22. *At the same time also prepare me a lodging* [1],

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and tender affections. "*Mentem meam, metuentem ne quid acerbius in eum consulas, tranquillam redde. Proprie, ad quietem redige viscera mea.*" Rosenmuller.

[1] *Prepare me a lodging.*] Dr. Doddridge remarks, that "Theo-

for I hope that through your prayers I shall be Ver. 22.
mercifully restored to you. Epaphras[2] *my fellow-* 23.
captive in Christ Jesus, Mark[3], *Aristarchus, De-* 24.
mas, Luke, my fellow-labourers, salute thee: the 25.
favour of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all[4].

I entertain great hopes that your prayers, in concurrence with my own, and those of other Christian churches, will obtain the blessing of a speedy release from my present confinement: in which event I propose soon to make you a visit, to take up my residence at your hospitable mansion, and to thank you in person for your attention to this letter. Let an apartment be prepared for me, as you know not

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doret justly observes, that Paul's mentioning his purpose of coming to lodge with Philemon quickly, would naturally add greater weight to his interposition in favour of Onesimus."

[2] *Epaphras.*] Grotius and Brenius think that Epaphras is an abbreviation of Epaphroditus, Phil. ii. 25, iv. 18; and Dr. Benson allows that the epistle to the Philippians was written after this to Philemon, because he there says that he trusted he should come to them *quickly*, Phil. ii. 24; which is an expression which he does not use to Philemon. Epaphras is mentioned in the epistle to the Colossians, i. 7, iv. 12, 13. Dr. Benson thinks he was a different person from Epaphroditus. He is called by Paul his fellow-captive (συναιχμαλωτος), and he might have been in custody at Rome some time before; but Benson assigns plausible reasons for supposing that he was not a prisoner when this letter was written. He also observes, that "by calling Epaphras his fellow-captive, the apostle a fifth time put Philemon in mind of his bonds." See ver. 9, 10, 13.

[3] *Mark,* &c.] These are the same persons, with the exception of Justus, who were mentioned in the salutations at the close of the epistle to the Colossians, ch. iv.

[4] *You* all.] In the original "your spirit:" the pronoun is plural, which indicates that the salutation extends to Philemon and his friends. *Your spirit:* i. e. yourselves. The word *Amen* and the postscript are wanting in the best copies.

Ver. 25. how soon I may be with you. Epaphras, whom you know as a highly respected minister of Christ, and my fellow-captive in this holy war, sends his affectionate salutations to you. Mark and Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, the two former, countrymen of my own and observers of the law; the two latter, converts from the heathen world, all of them harmoniously co-operating with me in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles; unite in transmitting to you their friendly salutations. With theirs, accept my own best wishes for you and for your friends; that you may continue to possess in its purity, and to experience in its power, the inestimable blessings of the gospel of our great master Jesus Christ, the rich, unsolicited, efficacious gift of God for the recovery and restoration of an apostate world.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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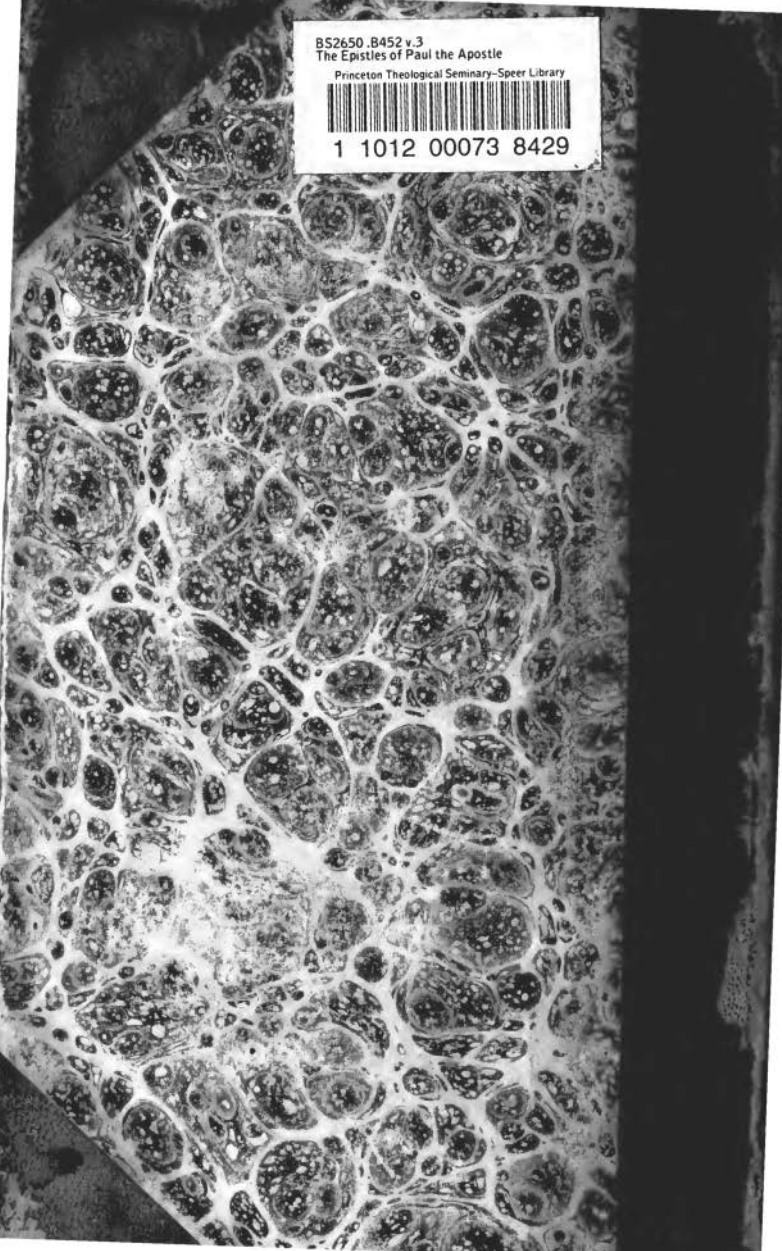
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THE EPISTLES

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TRANSLATED.

VOL. IV.

THE EPISTLES

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TRANSLATED,

WITH

AN EXPOSITION, AND NOTES,

BY THE REV. THOMAS BELSHAM,

MINISTER OF ESSEX-STREET CHAPEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

"*Affer animum rectum et simplicem, veritatis supra cætera amantem, præjudiciis vacuum. Ne protinus tanquam nova, tanquam inaudita et absurda damnaveris, quæ tibi nova, tibi inaudita, et absurda occurrent. Ea quæ dicimus, non cum aliorum judiciis, non cum vulgi inveteratis opinionibus compone, ut inde rem æstimes, sed cum autoris divini verbis, scopo, ipsoque rationis filo. Hinc tibi veritas petenda est: hinc de nobis ferenda sententia. Equidem nos sicubi lapsi, aut D. Autoris mentem non satis assecuti sumus, amice admoniti, ultro manus dabimus, gratesque insuper accumulabimus.*" SLICHTINGIUS Præf. ad Heb.

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THE FIRST EPISTLE

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

THE THESSALONIANS.

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

THESSALONICA was a very considerable maritime town, a place of great trade and opulence, and the metropolis of Macedonia. Its ancient name was Thermæ, and it stood upon the Thermæan Bay; but having been rebuilt and enlarged by Philip King of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great, he gave it the name of Thessalonica, in commemoration of a great victory which he had obtained over the Thessalians. It is now called Saloniki; and is to this day a place of considerable trade, and in possession of the Turks.

A.D. 51, while Paul and Silas, with Luke, Timothy, and other associates, were engaged in preaching the gospel in the Lesser Asia, a vision appeared

to the apostle, inviting him into Macedonia. Regarding this as a divine suggestion, Paul and his companions immediately crossed the sea to Neapolis, and thence advanced to Philippi, a considerable city of that district of Macedonia, where they preached the gospel with great success, and converted many. But Paul having restored to her senses a young woman who was insane, her keepers, who had exhibited her as inspired, and who had enriched themselves by vending her supposed oracles, enraged at their loss, excited the indignation of the magistrates and populace against the apostles, who were severely beaten and imprisoned, without being heard in their own defence. This transaction is related by Luke, who was an eye-witness, and probably a fellow-sufferer, Acts xvi.

After they were set at liberty, and the magistrates, at the requisition of the apostle, had made proper concessions for their illegal and brutal behaviour, Paul and his associates passed on to Thessalonica; and in that city they resumed their ministry with undaunted courage. Three sabbath days they reasoned with the Jews in their synagogue, arguing from the scriptures the Messiahship of Jesus. And not wholly without success; for some even of the Jews believed: but their principal success, at least at the beginning, appears to have been amongst the devout Gentiles and the pious women, who were worshipers of the one true God, Acts xvii. 1—4.

From Luke's history it would be natural to con-

clude, that the apostle and his companions continued no longer than three weeks or a month at Thessalonica; but as it appears from the first epistle to the Thessalonians that the church consisted chiefly of converts from the idolatrous Gentiles, of whom the evangelist makes no mention; also that during the apostle's residence in that city he and his party maintained themselves chiefly by manual occupations, concerning which Luke is also silent; and, further, it being evident from the epistle to the Philippians that these generous converts sent more than once a supply for his relief while he continued at Thessalonica, there can be no doubt that he resided in that city a considerable time, probably some months. At last, the Jews, envying the apostle's success, excited a tumult against him amongst the lower classes of the people, and accused him and his associates, before the magistrates, of treason against the Roman emperor. And though the magistrates, upon inquiry into the case, had the good sense to dismiss the charge, it was found advisable to send away Paul and Silas by night to Beræa, to screen them from the fury of the populace, Acts xvii. 10.

At Beræa the apostle found among the Jews, hearers more candid and inquisitive than those at Thessalonica; and continued prosecuting his ministry with considerable success, both among the Jews and heathen, till a fresh tumult was excited against him and his companions by certain malicious emissaries from the Jews at Thessalonica; in conse-

quence of which Paul immediately left the city, and was conducted to Athens, leaving Silas and Timothy behind, with a strict charge to follow him with all convenient speed, Acts xvii. 15.

With this direction Timothy soon complied; but, for what reason does not appear, Silas did not join the apostle at Athens. During the residence of Paul in this city, and while Timothy was with him, it was the apostle's intention to have visited Thessalonica again in person, and more than once he was upon the point of carrying his resolution into effect, but was prevented by some unknown obstruction; perhaps by the information that it would not be safe for him to return at present. Being, however, impatient to receive intelligence of his persecuted friends, he sent Timothy, his only associate at Athens, to Thessalonica, to bring him some account of their state. In the mean time, the apostle, not meeting with much success at Athens, removed to Corinth about the latter end of the year A.D. 51, Acts xviii. 1; and here he resided and exercised his ministry with great success for nearly two years. Nor was it till after the apostle had been for some time at Corinth that Timothy came to him from Thessalonica in company with Silas. The intelligence which Timothy communicated to the apostle was in the main agreeable, but in part otherwise. Their faith continued firm; but they had fallen into some errors of doctrine, and were imperfect in the practice of Christian morals. And it was in this view of their case, in order to confirm

what was right, and to rectify what was amiss, that the apostle indited this epistle, probably in the spring of A.D. 52[1]; joining with his own the names of Silas and Timothy, who were well known to the Thessalonians as his associates in the ministry of the gospel.

This short but excellent epistle is one of those the genuineness of which has never been called in question. The apostle inscribes it with his own name; and it has from age to age been cited as his, without any hint or suspicion that it could have been the production of any other author. The internal evidence of its authenticity is likewise very strong. The undesigned coincidences with Luke's history, the light which that history and the epistle mutually reflect upon each other, and the consequent support which they afford to each other's authority, are stated very pointedly and forcibly by Dr. Paley[2]. The history illustrates the strong expressions and representations of the epistle, and the epistle supplies the omissions in the history. And the solemn charge at the close of the epistle, "that it should be publicly read to the whole church," is a convincing proof that the writer was no impostor.

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[1] *In the spring of* A.D. 52.] "This epistle," says Dr. Priestley, "was written A.D. 52, and is therefore the oldest writing of any Christian. Being undoubtedly authentic, and not written after, but during the time of the transactions it alludes to, it supplies a most indisputable evidence of the certainty of those facts which necessarily imply the truth of the whole Christian history."

[2] *Horæ Paulinæ*, chap. ix.

To which may be added, that the state of things alluded to in the epistle could only have existed in the infancy of the Christian church; and that the pious and benevolent spirit which breathes in every sentence of the epistle, and the tendency of the whole to promote piety and virtue, and the love of truth and goodness, cannot fail to impress upon the mind of the reader the most favourable sentiments of the character of the writer.

It appears from the epistle, that the Thessalonian converts had adhered with great firmness to the Christian faith amidst many dangers and persecutions; that they entertained a great affection for the apostle and his associates, and lived in love and harmony with each other. It nevertheless also appears that they had fallen into some considerable errors concerning the state of the dead; and that the characters of some among them fell very short of the evangelical standard of purity and universal virtue. The main design, therefore, of the apostle in this epistle is, to establish their minds in the profession of the Christian faith; to rectify their errors in points of doctrine; to remind them of the perfection of the Christian morality, and to enforce the practice of universal virtue.

In the prosecution of this design, the apostle, having INTRODUCED the epistle in his usual form, joining likewise the names of Silas and Timothy with his own,

In the FIRST place returns thanks to God for the

great success of the gospel at Thessalonica, in consequence of the miraculous energies by which it was confirmed. He bears witness to the exemplary fortitude and zeal of the Thessalonian converts, and to the high reputation which they had acquired through all the adjacent regions by the astonishing and happy change which they had undergone, in their conversion from heathen idolatry to the belief and profession of the doctrine of Christ. Ch. i. 2—10.

Secondly, The apostle makes a solemn and affecting appeal to the Thessalonians with regard to his own character and conduct during his residence among them. He particularly alludes to the courage with which he exercised his ministry at Thessalonica after the infamous treatment which he had experienced at Philippi: He asserts his absolute freedom from all corrupt motives in preaching the gospel, and particularly from self-interest and ambition: He reminds them of the gentleness of his manners, of his affectionate solicitude for their improvement, of the example of honourable industry which he had set before them, in supporting himself by his own manual labour, and finally, that as he had himself exhibited a just pattern of Christian virtue, so he had strongly inculcated upon them the indispensable necessity of maintaining a character correspondent to their Christian profession. Ch. ii. 1—12.

Thirdly, The apostle thanks God for their cordial reception of the gospel of Christ, and for their

inflexible adherence to it under the persecutions which they endured, which were similar and equal to those which the believing Hebrews suffered from their unconverted countrymen, of whose abandoned character, and approaching doom, he gives an affecting delineation and an alarming warning. Ch. ii. 13—16.

FOURTHLY, The apostle relates, that having been prevented by the violence of persecution from gratifying his earnest desire of making a visit to Thessalonica, and of enjoying the society of friends whose final happiness was the object of his most ardent wish, he had at last determined to send Timothy, his only associate at Athens, to Thessalonica, to visit, to encourage, and to comfort them. And the apostle assures them, that it was a particular object of this evangelist's mission to remove any ill impression which might have been made upon their minds by the persecutions to which he was himself exposed. And being anxious to hear of their state, he expresses the joy he felt at the good tidings which Timothy had brought of their perseverance in the faith, and their affectionate remembrance of him; which he assures them was on his part reciprocal. He earnestly prays that he may be permitted to make them a visit; and in the mean time he expresses his fervent desire that they may improve in mutual affection, in general benevolence and in universal virtue. Ch. ii. 17—iii. 13.

FIFTHLY, The apostle earnestly cautions the Thessalonians against those vices to which the hea-

then were most addicted; and particularly warns them against every species of impurity, as utterly inconsistent with the profession of Christianity.—He also recommends mutual affection and habitual industry. Ch. iv. 1—12.

SIXTHLY, The apostle corrects some erroneous opinions which they appear to have entertained concerning the state of the Christian dead. And having assured them that the great design of the mission of Christ was to reveal the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, of which his own resurrection was a pattern and a proof; he informs them that believers who will be found alive at the final appearance of Christ, will enjoy no advantage over those who are dead. For that the dead will be raised, while those who will then be living are undergoing a necessary change in the constitution of their bodies: and that the whole human race shall bear their part, at the same time, upon this solemn occasion. Ch. iv. 13—18.

SEVENTHLY, The uncertainty of the time of the second appearance of Christ, is urged by the apostle as a powerful motive to vigilance and activity in the discharge of duty. Ch. v. 1—11.

EIGHTHLY, The apostle closes the epistle with practical exhortations. Particularly, he recommends respect and affection to their Christian instructors; a peaceable spirit; tender vigilance over each other; reciprocation of mutual good offices; prayer and thanksgiving; a proper estimation of spiritual gifts, and particularly of prophecy; caution

in judgement, and abhorrence of vice. He then expresses his earnest wish for their perfection in virtue; assuring them, that God will impart every necessary aid for this purpose. And having sent his salutations, and enjoined the public reading of this epistle in the church, he takes leave with his usual apostolical BENEDICTION.

THE FIRST EPISTLE

TO

THE THESSALONIANS.

THE APOSTLE'S INTRODUCTION.

THE apostle Paul, joining with his own the names of Silas and Timothy, inscribes the epistle to the church at Thessalonica, ch. i. 1. Ch. I.

PAUL and Silvanus, and Timothy[1], *to the church of the Thessalonians,* who believe *in God the Father*[2], *and in the Lord Jesus Christ, favour be to you, and peace*[3]. Ver. 1.

[1] *Paul and Silvanus, and Timothy.*] Silvanus was unquestionably the same with Silas, and was with the apostle at Corinth when he wrote this epistle, Acts xviii. 5. Indeed the introduction of his name, and that of Timothy, is a proof that the epistle was written from Corinth, and not, as the postscript says, from Athens. Dr. Chandler observes, that "though Paul joins the names of Silas and Timothy with his own, he is far from meaning to represent them as of equal rank and authority." See ch. iii. 2, iv. 2, v. 27. Dr. Benson accounts for Paul not assuming, in the inscription to this epistle, the title of an apostle, by the supposition that his authority had not been called in question at Thessalonica.

[2] *To the church* who believe *in God the Father,* &c.] Dr.

Ch. I. Ver. I. This epistle is indited by Paul, who is the messenger of Jesus Christ to preach the gospel to the idolatrous heathen, and who lately incurred great persecution and hazard in exercising his mission at

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Benson observes, that "the two fundamental articles of Christianity are, that *there is only one living and true God*; and that *Jesus is the Christ*, or the great prophet and saviour of the world. The idolatrous Gentiles believed neither; the Jews and devout Gentiles believed the first; the Christians believed both, and without it they could not have been entitled to Christian communion." To be in God and Jesus Christ, is to believe in God and in Jesus Christ. See 1 John v. 20. Dr. Benson, in his note upon this verse, has given the various senses in which the word *church* is used in the New Testament. He observes, that "the word εκκλησια sometimes signifies any assembly whatever, Acts xix. 32, 39, 40; but is most commonly used in a religious sense. It signifies, 1. All who profess the Christian religion, Acts v. 11, 1 Cor. xii. 28, and other places. 2. Only true and faithful Christians, Eph. i. 22, 23, v. 25, 29; Col. i. 18, 24. This has been called the *true* or *invisible* church, as the preceding is sometimes called the *visible*, the *universal*, or the *catholic* church. 3. Most commonly one assembly or congregation, such as statedly meet together for the worship of God. 4. A family joined together in worshiping God through Jesus Christ. 5. The professed people of God on earth called the church *militant*; and sometimes good men in a state of happiness called the church *triumphant*. Comp. Eph. v. 27 with Eph. v. 23. 6. Qu. Whether *churches*, 1 Cor. xiv. 34, may not signify the *assemblings* of the same Christians at different times for Christian worship? Dr. Benson adds from Le Clerc on 1 Cor. xvi. 19, that using the word "church" for *a place*, was a signification of it wholly unknown in the times of the apostles; in which the word εκκλησια was always used for an *assembly*, as well among the Christians as by the Greeks."

[3] *Favour*, &c.] The words "from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ," which conclude the sentence in the received text, are omitted in some ancient manuscripts and versions, and are not noticed by the Greek commentators; with Mr. Wakefield, therefore, I leave them out. It is observed that bishops and deacons are not mentioned in this inscription by the apostle, probably because such officers did not then exist among them. See Grotius and Benson.

Thessalonica. With his, are joined the names of Silas and Timothy, his beloved and faithful associates in the ministry of the gospel, and who were also his fellow-labourers and fellow-sufferers in that great and opulent city; who are, therefore, well known to the believers there, and who feel, and are in this way anxious to express, their sympathy and affection for them. And it is inscribed in our united names to the body of professing Christians at Thessalonica, who are distinguished from their heathen neighbours by the knowledge and worship of the one true God, the Father of all mankind, and from both Jews and heathen, by an acknowledgement of Jesus of Nazareth as the true Messiah, and a professed subjection to him as their teacher and master. And for the dear friends for whose instruction and salvation we have exerted our earnest and united efforts, the best wish that we can form is, that they may enjoy that inward and unspeakable peace and satisfaction which is the genuine fruit of a practical belief in the gospel, that free and precious donation of God to man.

Ch. I. Ver. I.

SECTION I.

Ch. I. *THE APOSTLE expresses his joy and gratitude for the success of the gospel at Thessalonica, and for the great and extensive reputation which the new converts from heathenism had acquired by their fortitude and zeal.* Ch. i. 2—10.

1. The apostle assures them of his grateful and affectionate remembrance of them in his devout addresses to God, ver. 2, 3.

Ver. 2. *We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you without ceasing*[1] *in our*
3. *prayers, remembering in the presence of our God and Father*[2], *your active faith, your laborious love*[3], *and your patient expectation of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

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[1] *Making mention of you without ceasing.*] Benson, Wakefield, and many other versions and commentators ancient and modern, join ἀδιαλειπτως (*without ceasing*) to ver. 2. See Rom. i. 9, 10, 2 Tim. i. 3.

[2] *Remembering in the presence*, &c.] So Benson and Chandler. "He remembered these things before God," says Dr. Chandler, "thankful to him that they were wrought in them, and earnestly praying to him that he would continue and establish them."

[3] *Laborious love.*] "the laboriousness of your love." Wakefield. Dr. Chandler observes, that "the original word κοπος signifies difficulties and troubles, and that the apostle means those difficulties and afflictions and dangers to which either their love of Christianity or their peculiar affection to the apostle ex-

Such, my brethren, is our affection for you, and so deeply do we interest ourselves in your conversion to the Christian doctrine, and in your adherence to your profession, that we continually bear you upon our hearts in our daily exercises of devotion. And in the awful presence of that Great Being who vouchsafes to acknowledge the high and endearing relations of a God and Father to the converted Gentile, as well as to the believing Jew, we often reflect with heartfelt satisfaction upon your Christian virtues; upon that faith which is in you a powerful and operative principle productive of good works; upon that love which grudges no toil, and which shuns no dangers for the good of others, and to the generous efforts of which we have ourselves been so much indebted; of that firm expectation of the second appearance of our master Jesus Christ to judge the world and to reward his true disciples, which induces you to undergo with fortitude and cheerfulness the losses and sufferings to which you may now be exposed for his sake. And when we call to mind these distinguished virtues of our Thessalonian brethren, our hearts overflow with gratitude

Ch. I. Ver. 3.

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posed them." It is supposed that the apostle here particularly alludes to the care which they took to screen his person when the Jews excited a tumult at Thessalonica, and to their sending him away privately to Berea. Acts xvii. 10. Gr. *work of faith, labour of love, patience of hope.* "Remembering without ceasing before our God and Father, your effectual faith, your laborious painful love, and your patient hope or expectation of the Lord Jesus Christ." Chandler. This construction is not uncommon. Col. i. 22. *The body of his flesh:* i. e. his fleshly body. See also Col. iii. 14, Eph. vi. 12.

Ch. I. Ver. 3. to God, and our lips abound in praises and thanksgivings on your account.

2. The apostle declares that when he first preached the gospel to them, he soon became assured of their right of admission into the family of God, by the proofs which he was enabled to give of his divine mission, and by the success of his ministry; of which facts they were themselves witnesses, ver. 4, 5.

4. *We know*[1], *brethren, beloved of God*[2], *that he*
5. *hath chosen you, because the gospel preached by us came to you, not in word only, but also in power, and in the holy spirit*[3], *and with great conviction*[4],

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[1] *We know,* &c.] *i. e.* we are assured that you are equally with the Jews the beloved and chosen people of God; because our doctrine was confirmed by the holy spirit, and was received by you with full conviction. "The election spoken of," says Dr. Chandler, "is evidently their election to be the church and people of God, to all the privileges and advantages, and means of salvation by Christ, and to eternal life and blessedness, as the great end of their faith. The great question in these early days was, not about any particular secret choice of persons, unconditionally and absolutely to eternal life. This controversy the primitive church knew nothing of; the debate was of another nature, and precisely this: Whether circumcision and the observation of the law of Moses, as well as faith in Christ, were necessary to render the Gentiles equally partakers of the privileges of the kingdom or church of God with the Jews themselves? This the Jews pleaded and persecuted for; and the apostle Paul as strenuously and constantly denied."

[2] *Beloved of God.*] This is the proper arrangement of the words; and not, as in the common version, "your election of God." See Benson, Chandler, Wakefield, Newcome.

[3] *In power, and in the holy spirit.*] "If we did only and barely affirm it, then might our enemies the Jews have reproached and denied it. But it was *in power:* we confirmed it by miraculous

as ye know what kind of persons we were among you for your sakes. Ch. I. Ver. 5.

My dear brethren ; for such I may now justly call

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works. And *in the holy ghost:* we conferred on you the extraordinary gifts of the holy spirit, as the sure evidence of your being made children of God." Chandler. This is unquestionably the apostle's meaning. He constantly refers all his success to his miraculous powers, 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5, without which it would have been quite impossible that a doctrine so hostile to the prejudices and to the passions of mankind should have made so rapid and extensive a progress. One is grieved, therefore, that such a critic as Rosenmuller should endeavour to explain away the obvious meaning of the words. " δυναμις και πνευμα ἁγιον, vis *et* spiritus sanctus : *i.e. dotes divinæ, quæ se exserebant in Paulo, dum ea docuit quæ ab hominibus excogitari non poterant. Alii* εν δυναμει *vertunt* miraculis *patrandis: Sed miracula Paulus Thessalonicæ non videtur patrasse. Lege historiam* Act. xvii." Rosenmuller. But Luke's account is very brief. The epistle shows that the apostle's residence and success at Thessalonica far exceeded what is reported in the history.

And let me here be permitted to observe, that whatever learned or speculative men may think or say, a belief in miracles, that is, in certain deviations from the established course and order of nature, or what is sometimes sneeringly called *supernaturalism,* is absolutely indispensable to a belief in the Christian religion. Christianity is itself a miracle ; it is a doctrine supernaturally communicated to the first teachers of it, and it is supported altogether by miracles ; by the resurrection of Jesus, and by the gifts of the holy spirit to him and his apostles. Whoever denies the resurrection of Jesus, or his miraculous powers, must believe him to have been an impostor, and his apostles the wilful abettors of an impious fraud. And for men who cast this imputation upon the first teachers of the gospel to assume the name of Christians is an abuse of language, whatever veneration they may profess for the morality of the gospel, or for the character of its founder, or whatever may be the respectability of their own character.

But, let it be remembered, that though Christianity requires a belief in miracles, it by no means challenges implicit faith. On the contrary, it offers in behalf of its two great miracles, The resurrection of Christ, and The gifts of the holy spirit, a

Ch. I. Ver. 5.

you, since God our common Father has selected you from the idolatrous heathen, has favoured you equally with ourselves with the privileges of the gospel, and has adopted you into his family, and given you his spirit; I assure you that when I first came with my fellow-labourers to preach the gospel at Thessalonica, I entertained great hope of success, and was fully convinced that great numbers in that opulent and populous city would become converts to the Christian doctrine. For whereas, in some places where this doctrine was published, few miracles were permitted to be wrought, and few spiritual gifts were communicated; and whereas I was restrained by a divine impulse from exercising my apostolic mission in other places where I intended to preach, I met with no such discouragements nor

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kind and a degree of historical evidence which never existed in the world before, which exceeds the evidence of any fact recorded in ancient history; which is fully proportioned to the extraordinary nature, the antecedent improbability, and the unspeakable importance of the facts to be proved, and the fallacy of which would be a violation of the laws of the human mind, as real and far more incredible than any of the miracles essential to the support of Christianity are of the laws of matter and the course of nature in the external world.

[4] *With great conviction.*] πληροφορια, ἀ πληροφορεω, *plene fero, metaphora desumta de navibus, cum ventis implentur vela secundis.*" Schleusner. "It signifies," says Dr. Chandler, "the full motion of a ship, with all her sails:" and he understands it "either of the abundant confirmation of the Christian doctrine by the gifts of the holy spirit, or of the full conviction produced by this evidence." "Their readily embracing the gospel," says Dr. Benson, "upon the apostle's preaching and working miracles, and their having thereupon received the spirit, was the surest proof of their election. God imparted the spirit unto none but those who believed; *i. e.* only to his professed people, who were called and chosen."

obstructions when I came to you. But on the contrary I not only plainly taught you the doctrine of Jesus, and argued the divinity of his mission from the prophecies of the Old Testament, which ought to have been satisfactory to the unbelieving Jews; but I was also enabled, in confirmation of the doctrine which I had in charge, to work various splendid miracles by power communicated to me from above; and to impart to the new converts those gifts of the holy spirit, which were to themselves and to others the most satisfactory evidence of a divine authority. And by these means the gospel did, as might naturally be expected, triumph over the opposition of its enemies; and in a short time, like a vessel in full sail and with a prosperous breeze, it made its way with astonishing rapidity and success. Nor is it necessary for me to enter into particular details: you well remember what we were, what we taught, and what wonderful powers we exhibited, in order to excite your attention and to bring you to a proper conviction of the truth of the gospel.

Ch. I. Ver. 5.

3. This happy conviction of their acceptance with God was fully confirmed by the exemplary conduct of the Thessalonians after their conversion, ver. 6, 7.

And ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord[1], *having received the word amidst great* 6.

[1] *And of the Lord.*] Mr. Wakefield, upon the authority of the Æthiopic version, leaves out και (*and*), and joins τȣ Κυριȣ

Ch. I. Ver. 7. *affliction with joy in the holy spirit*[1], *so that ye became examples to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia*[2].

The success of the gospel among you was proportioned to the means employed for your conversion. Some among my own countrymen, and many of the Gentiles who had before been worshipers of the true God, and who might therefore be expected to listen to the discoveries of his will, embraced the gospel. And, what is still more worthy of admiration and joy, great numbers even of idolatrous heathen were deeply impressed with the tokens of divine interposition, and became sincere converts to the Christian faith. Yes, my brethren, you became not only proselytes to my doctrine, but imitators of my example; for I once like you was alienated from the gospel. But why do I speak of myself? you became imitators of Jesus himself, your master and mine, our great ensample, our glorious chief. He was a sufferer before he triumphed; and in the pro-

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to the next clause, which he renders, "receiving the doctrine of the Lord." Griesbach does not notice this various reading.

[1] *Joy in the holy spirit.*] The gifts of the spirit were a proof of their being the children of God, or his chosen people; and were likewise the pledge of their title to immortality. "Well, therefore," says Dr. Benson, "might it cause them to rejoice, even in the midst of persecution, Acts v. 41; Rom. xii. 12; Eph. i. 13, 14; Col. i. 11; Rom. viii. 14—17." "Cum gaudio magno, *cum lætitia quæ esset a spiritu sancto effecta, sive, nata ex evangelio quod Paulus Thessalonicensibus tradidisset.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *Macedonia and Achaia.*] The whole of the countries possessed by the Greeks in Europe were by the Romans reduced to two provinces, Macedonia and Achaia. See Dr. Macknight.

spect of the reward set before him, he bore the cross and despised the shame. You are his faithful followers: you profess his doctrine amidst dangers and persecutions. But, possessed of those gifts of the holy spirit, which are a sure pledge of the truth of the gospel, and of the accomplishment of your glorious expectations, you rejoice even in tribulation. So that you are yourselves become shining examples to the neighbouring churches of the excellence and energy of Christian principles. Ch. I. Ver. 7.

4. The apostle expresses great satisfaction in the high reputation which the Thessalonian converts had gained by their faith, their fortitude, and zeal, ver. 8—10.

For, from you hath the word of the Lord resounded[3], *not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith towards God hath spread abroad, so that we need not to say any thing* concerning it: *For they themselves declare concerning us*[4] *what kind of entrance we had among you; and* 8. 9.

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[3] *Resounded.*] Grotius observes, that many of the Thessalonians were merchants who travelled into foreign parts for the sake of commerce, and who would naturally spread the intelligence of the extraordinary events which had happened at Thessalonica, of the impression which had been made upon the minds of many of their countrymen, and of the great change which it had produced in their conduct.

[4] *They themselves,* &c.] "that is," says Dr. Chandler, "those of Macedonia and Achaia, and other places who know of your conversion: they show of us, απαγγελλουσι, publish and declare concerning us to others, in what manner and with what evidence we preached the gospel to you." "Those who were

Ch. I. Ver. 10. *how ye turned to God*[1] *from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to expect his Son from heaven whom he raised from the dead; even Jesus, who is our deliverer from impending wrath*[2].

The beneficial influence of your example has diffused itself far and wide. For truly, my Christian brethren, the extraordinary change produced in you by the preaching of the gospel, has not only excited the astonishment of your heathen neighbours and your fellow-citizens of every description, but it has been proclaimed abroad through all the adjacent countries, and is become the topic of general conversation and wonder. In our progress from place to place, in the accomplishment of our apostolic mission, it is our usual practice to relate in the towns and cities to which we come, and where we are about to open our ministry, the success which we have met with in those regions through which we have already passed. But with regard to Thessalonica this is quite unnecessary. The report of

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with us declare what kind of an admission," &c. "αυτοι περι ἡμων." Philalethes.

[1] *And how ye turned to God.*] Dr. Benson observes, that "the two fundamental articles of Christianity are here again repeated."

[2] *Impending wrath.*] της οργης της ερχομενης. "impending anger." Philalethes. "the punishment which is to come." Newcome. "who shall hereafter save us (ῥυσομενον is the reading of some copies) from that wrath that shall finally come upon all who do not believe nor obey the gospel." Chandler. N.B. Griesbach takes no notice of the various reading which Dr. Chandler suggests. "*Hic præsens pro futuro, bis.* ῥυομενον *pro* ῥυσομενον, *deinde* ερχομενης, *pro* venturæ." Rosenmuller.

your conversion to the Christian faith has every where anticipated our intelligence. For whithersoever the citizens of your opulent and populous metropolis are led, either by the affairs of government, or the concerns of commerce, or upon their own private business or amusement, they are all eager to relate the wonderful events which have lately taken place among you. And in particular they recount our appearance in your city, our public teaching, and our extraordinary works; to which they subjoin the amazing change of views, principles, and conduct which this new doctrine and these surprising works have produced upon their fellow-citizens; so that great numbers have been prevailed upon to forsake the religion of their country, and the customs of their ancestors, to abandon the worship of the heathen gods, and the deified heroes, in order to devote themselves to the worship and service of the one true God: of that glorious and eternal Being, who is the maker of heaven and earth, and all things therein, and who is the only proper object of religious adoration. And they further report, as a remarkable singularity in the character of these new proselytes, that they all profess to live under the awful expectation of the speedy appearance of a glorious person whom they call their Master and Lord, who, having suffered a violent death as a witness to the truth, was by the power of God raised from the grave, and thus declared to be his first-born Son; who afterwards ascended to the right hand of God, and is constituted

Ch. I. Ver. 10.

Ch. I. Ver. 10. by his heavenly Father the judge both of the living and the dead; and that the name of this holy and exalted person is Jesus of Nazareth; who will also most assuredly rescue all who receive and obey his gospel from that vengeance which will in due time inevitably fall upon those who are immersed in the gross and odious vices which prevail in so lamentable a degree in the heathen world. This, my Christian brethren, is the report which is every where circulated concerning you; a report which is highly to your credit; and which affords us, your teachers, and your affectionate faithful friends, the most heartfelt satisfaction. And I now mention it to you, that you may be stimulated by it to support the honourable character which you have so justly acquired, and to persevere in your adherence to the Christian faith, and in the practice of Christian virtue.

SECTION II.

Ch. II. *THE APOSTLE asserts the fidelity, the purity, the affection, and disinterestedness with which he and his associates had preached the gospel at Thessalonica, and he appeals to the Thessalonians, and to the Supreme Being himself, to attest the veracity of his declaration.* Ch. ii. 1—12.

1. He reminds them of the courage with which

he and his associates opened their ministry at Thessalonica, after the injurious and contumelious treatment which they had endured at Philippi, ver. 1, 2. Ch. II.

For yourselves, brethren, know that our entering in among you was not in vain[1]. *But though we had before suffered, and had been ignominiously treated*[2], *as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God*[3] *to declare to you the gospel of God*[4], *amidst great opposition*[5]. Ver. 1. 2.

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[1] *In vain.*] "κενη, without influence on your belief, ch. i. 9; and on your practice, ch. i. 7, 8, ii. 13, 14." Newcome. Chandler observes that the word signifies either fruitless or deceitful: in the former sense it connects with the last verses in the foregoing chapter, and in the latter sense with the verse immediately following.

[2] *Ignominiously treated.*] ὑβρισθεντες, "had suffered bodily injury." Wakefield. The history of this infamous usage is given, Acts xvi., and the judicious reader will observe how the history and the epistle illustrate and confirm each other. It was considered as the highest indignity to beat a Roman citizen with rods, and the Porcian law expressly exempted them from it. One of the heaviest charges of Cicero against Verres is the frequent inflicting of this disgraceful punishment upon Roman citizens. See Chandler on the text.

[3] *Bold in our God.*] επαρρησιασαμεθα. "This word," says Dr. Chandler, "sometimes signifies, 'to speak with courage, and void of fear;' sometimes, 'to speak openly and plainly, without ambiguity or disguise;' sometimes, 'to speak in the most public manner before others;' and sometimes, 'to speak with full persuasion and confidence of encouragement and support;' and the word seems to take in all these kindred senses, which the history also justifies, Acts xvii. 1—3." *In* our *God.* "The gods of the heathen," as Dr. Benson observes, "were not able to inspire their votaries with such courage and constancy in promoting religion and virtue."

[4] *We were bold in our God to declare the gospel of God.*] "The repetition of the word *God* is truly emphatical, and with the highest elegance and propriety." Chandler.

[5] *Amidst great opposition.*] εν πολλω αγωνι. "with much

Ch. II. Ver. 2.

You cannot, my friends, be surprised that the circumstances of our mission among you, and of the extraordinary success which attended it, should have become, as I have just mentioned to you, the topics of general conversation through all the neighbouring countries; for you yourselves well recollect all the circumstances of it, both with respect to the character and conduct of the teachers, and the number and zeal of the converts to their new and sublime doctrine. You know that we neither came with false pretences to a divine authority, nor were our labours among you ineffectual and fruitless. You had heard of the savage cruelty with which we had been treated at Philippi; and how, though we were Roman citizens, the magistrates had presumed to violate our sacred privileges by inflicting stripes upon us, and that even without hearing what we had to say in our own defence. And when, sensible of their misconduct, they requested us to depart, we came immediately to Thessalonica; and, while we were yet smarting with the wounds we had received at Philippi, we boldly, publicly, and without any artifice or disguise, as became the messengers of the God of truth, taught at Thessalonica the same novel and obnoxious doctrine for which we had lately suffered so much at Philippi. And in the exercise of our ministry among you we

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earnestness." Newcome. "in so great a struggle." Wakefield. "in much danger." Chrysostom, Erasmus, Grotius, Benson, Raphelius. "The word signifies 'great opposition,' or, 'great hazard.' Phil. i. 30." Chandler.

met, as usual, with great opposition: first from the Jews, and afterwards, at their instigation, from the heathen rabble; in consequence of which we were exposed to great hazard, and ultimately obliged to withdraw from the city. And you cannot but have remarked that the part which we have acted is very different from that which the boastful teachers of the heathen philosophy would have done in similar circumstances. The reason is, that we placed our confidence not in senseless idols, but in a God who is omnipotent to protect his faithful servants; and in publishing to you the joyful tidings of salvation we were conscious that we were acting in obedience to his authority, and fulfilling the high commission with which we were intrusted. Ch. II. Ver. 2.

2. The apostle asserts the competency, the purity, and the veracity of himself and his associates in the ministry of the gospel, ver. 3, 4.

For, our exhortation was *not of error*[1], *nor of impurity*[2], *nor with deceit*[3]. *But as we were ap-* 3. 4.

[1] *Of error.*] πλανης. "we ourselves being deceived." Newcome. Dr. Chandler observes, that "in these and the following verses the apostle plainly refers to certain teachers who were chargeable with these immoral views and practices;" and he supposes that the heathen philosophers are principally, if not solely, alluded to, both as the Thessalonian Christians, being chiefly converted heathen, must be ignorant of Jewish controversies, and because "these words are the plainest description that can be of the generality of the heathen philosophers, who were chargeable with every one of the corrupt and the mean practices which the apostle disclaims."

[2] *Nor of impurity.*] "nor with impure and sensual doctrines or views. See 2 Pet. ii. 10, 14; Jude 4, 8; Rev. ii. 6, 15. Ham-

Ch. II. Ver. 4. *proved by God*[4] *to be intrusted with the gospel, we speak accordingly, not to please men*[5], *but that God who approveth our hearts*[6].

The characters of those who profess to teach the fashionable systems of heathen philosophy are sufficiently notorious. Many of them are themselves bewildered in the labyrinths of error. Many of them, both by their instruction and their conduct, countenance the most licentious and abominable practices; and many, to please their hearers, teach

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mond, Wall." Newcome. "The philosophers were in these respects infamously criminal." Chandler. Some by ακαθαρσιας understand *insincerity* only, and Bentley conjectures that the true reading is ανθρωπαρεσκιας, *men-pleasing*, as better suiting the connexion; but this reading is unauthorized, and the preceding interpretation is unusual, and both are unnecessary. See Benson and Bowyer.

[3] *Nor with deceit.*] εν δολω, "not with an intention to deceive others." Newcome.—"Lucian says of the philosophers, that the impudence of their hypocrisy was intolerable." Chandler.—"They used no craft or artifice; did not artfully conceal some parts and adulterate others; did not assert the necessity of the Gentile Christians observing the law of Moses in order to please the Jews; did not model Christianity according to the old heathen religion, or contrive methods to make them easy in their vices, to draw in the Gentiles." Benson.

[4] *Approved by God.*] δεδοκιμασμεθα. "This word," says Dr. Chandler, "has a stronger signification than that of mere allowance, and denotes fully to approve." See Rom. i. 28, xiv. 22.

[5] *To please men.*] "St. Paul strove to please men as far as he could honestly, and for their real good, Rom. xv. 2, 1 Cor. x. 33; but he never studied to please men, when thereby he must have been unfaithful, and displeased God. Gal. i. 10; 1 Cor. iv. 1, vii. 25." Benson.

[6] *Who approveth,* &c.] "The word is the same as before, and should be rendered, *who approveth our hearts:* who knows the simplicity of our views, and approveth them." Chandler.

doctrines which they themselves do not believe. In short, they are influenced by the most selfish motives, and consider themselves as accountable to no one for their conduct. But this, you well know, was not our character. Whatever our enemies may believe or report concerning us, we are conscious that our doctrine is of divine authority. No indulgence was granted by us to that dissoluteness of manners which is so prevalent in the heathen world. Nor did we dare to conceal or to disguise any part of the message which we had in charge, in order to make it more palatable to our hearers. But having had the unspeakable honour of being selected by God himself, as proper instruments to be employed by him in publishing the joyful tidings of peace and good-will to mankind, we strenuously exert ourselves to maintain this honourable character, and to perform, with the strictest fidelity, the duties of our important office. And with this object fully and continually in view, though we do not desire to give unnecessary offence, and are even anxious, as far as may be consistent with duty, to gratify the taste and to conform to the innocent prejudices of our hearers; yet, upon the whole, we feel little solicitude for human applause, and are supremely desirous of approving ourselves to Him who is witness to all the thoughts and purposes of the heart; who is the only infallible judge of character, and in whose sight we cheerfully hope that our conduct is regarded with complacency, however we may be censured and condemned by men.

Ch. II. Ver. 4.

CH. II. 3. The apostle further affirms that neither he nor his associates were influenced by pride, covetousness, or vain-glory, in preaching the gospel at Thessalonica, ver. 5—7.

Ver. 5. *For neither at any time*[1] *did we use flattering*
speech[2], *as ye know, nor a pretence for covetous-*
6. *ness, God is witness*[3]. *Nor from men sought we*
7. *glory; neither from you, nor from others*[4]. *When*

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[1] *For neither at any time.*] Dr. Benson supposes, that the apostle had been charged by his enemies with the faults of which he clears himself in the beginning of this chapter, viz. of imposture, impurity, guile, flattery, covetousness and vain-glory.

[2] *Use flattering speech.*] εν λογῳ κολακειας εγενηθημεν· "a very correct and emphatical manner of writing. It signifies, either to use flattering speeches, or to be reported of as given to flattery: *q. d.* you neither heard me doing it, nor ever charged me with it." Chandler. Benson's interpretation is preferable; which he says "is the sense usually given by all commentators, ancient and modern." And he justly asks, "what occasion there was for his solemn appeal to the Thessalonians themselves (*as ye know*) if some persons had not suggested such accusations." He does not say, as Dr. Chandler (who is unaccountably prejudiced against Dr. Benson) insinuates, that the construction given by Hammond, Le Clerc, and Chandler, is bad Greek; but he has said and proved that the passages they quote do not justify the sense they give to the apostle's language. And surely, when the words of the text admit of two senses, Dr. Chandler's usual method of attributing both to the apostle cannot generally be correct.

[3] *As ye know—God is witness.*] How far the apostle had flattered his hearers, they themselves could testify; but how far he was influenced by avarice and self-interest, while he pretended to have no object in view but the benefit of his hearers, could be known only to God.—"προφασις," says Dr. Chandler, "is a *pretence*, or *colour* to cover over, and more securely carry on, any secret design. The philosophers were notorious and infamous for their covetousness."

[4] *Neither from you, nor from others.*] "If his enemies objected," says Dr. Benson, "'Though you sought not glory from

we might have assumed authority[5] *as apostles of Christ, we were gentle*[6] *among you.* Ch. II. Ver. 7.

There are some teachers who are desirous at any price to secure the applause and the favour of their hearers; there are others whose object is to enrich themselves at their expense; and there are some who are ambitious of the reputation of superior talents, and the pride of rank and dignity; and there are not wanting those who have accused us of being governed by a similar spirit. These charges we repel with indignation; and we appeal to you, and to God himself, to attest our innocence. Much as we loved you, and earnestly desirous as we were to gain your attention and your affection, you will bear us

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the Thessalonians, yet you love the admiration and applause of mankind,' to such an objection the apostle replies by denying the charge. And indeed that would have been but a poor reward for all their astonishing labours, and great fatigues, their cold, hunger and nakedness, their buffetings and scourgings, their insults, dangers, and the many and grievous sufferings to which their faithful and assiduous preaching of the gospel exposed them."

[5] *Assumed authority.*] εν βαρει ειναι. Dr. Benson and Dr. Chandler have shown that βαρος is used by classical writers to express gravity, dignity, and authority; and this sense is unquestionably best suited to the connexion. Dr. Chandler remarks that the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses are ill pointed; "and by this means (says he) one of the most beautiful and moving passages I ever met with in the whole course of my reading is almost quite kept out of the reader's view." He rectifies the punctuation, which is also adopted by Griesbach, and which I have followed.

[6] *Gentle.*] ηπιοι· "This word," says Dr. Chandler, "signifies *humane, indulgent.* Profane writers make it the epithet of a father, to signify the most indulgent and affectionate father. Helena, speaking of Hector, says of him, πατηρ ὡς ηπιος αιει. *Iliad.* Ω. ver. 770.

Ch. II. Ver. 7. witness that we never attempted to secure this object by any mean compliances with your humours and prejudices, or by flattering you in your errors and your vices. And that we did not, under pretence of instructing you in the Christian doctrine, and teaching you the way of salvation, mean to make a gain of you, and to become rich by your liberality, God is witness, who knows the disinterested spirit with which we have embarked in this glorious service. And we were equally clear of the imputation of ambition and the desire of applause. We did not court the admiration either of you or the public. We were above such unworthy motives. Indeed, as an apostle of Christ, who received my commission immediately from him, who possessed supernatural gifts and powers in a degree equal to the very chief of the apostles, and who was particularly designated to the high office of apostle of the Gentiles, I might very consistently have claimed the respect due to my superior rank. But this was not my ambition. I chose to associate among you as an equal and a friend, or rather, as an indulgent father. And, instead of affecting airs of superiority, I was mild and gentle in my behaviour to you all.

4. The apostle reminds the Thessalonians that his whole conduct towards them was, in the highest degree, affectionate and kind, ver. 7, 8.

8. *As a nursing-mother*[1] *cherishes*[2] *her own chil-*

[1] *As a nursing-mother.*] So Mr. Wakefield; and it is evident,

dren, so we, affectionately loving you[3], *would with pleasure*[4] *have imparted to you, not the gospel of God only, but even our own lives, because ye were dear to us*[5].

Ch. II. Ver. 8.

Indeed, my friends, so far was I from desiring to usurp any undue authority over you, that I felt no emotions towards you but those of kindness and compassion. I even felt for you as a tender mo-

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as all must observe who consult the original, that the apostle is speaking of a mother who nurses and suckles her own child. See Benson and Macknight.

[3] *Cherishes.*] θαλπῃ. "The Greek," says Dr. Chandler, "is more emphatical than our translation, 'cherishes and suckles her own children, warms them in her bosom, and feeds them with her milk.'"

[3] *Affectionately loving you.*] ἱμειρομενοι. "ἱμειρει, επιθυμει, θελει. *Hesych. Non tantum a poetis usurpatur, ut vult Grotius. Vid. Raphel.*" Chandler.

[4] *Would with pleasure.*] ευδοκημεν. See Chandler.

[5] *Ye were dear to us.*] "How tender, how engaging (says Dr. Chandler) are these expressions of this divine apostle! The fondness of an indulgent father to his children is very great: the tenderness of a mother is yet stronger. It is peculiarly strong to their tender infants, but strongest of all to them when they cherish and warm them in their bosoms, and especially when they hang upon the breast, and are suckled with their milk. Nature cannot furnish out an image of greater tenderness than this: such was our apostle to his Thessalonians. He considers *them* as in the infancy of their conversion; himself as the tender mother nourishing and cherishing them; *the gospel of God* as the milk with which he fed them; his *very soul and life* as what he was willing to part with for their safety and benefit. He could die for them, if their preservation and welfare required it. Could the fondest passion of the tenderest mother carry her further, or prompt her to do more for the helpless infant drawing in life and warmth and nourishment from her breast? I think nothing can exceed the elegance, the strength, the tender passion, the moving affection of this description; and that a man must have no bowels that does not find them moved, by so fine, so lively, and warm a scene."

Ch. II. Ver. 8.

ther for the helpless infant at her breast; who not only delights to impart to her beloved babe the warmth and nourishment that it needs, but would also, with pleasure, sacrifice her own life for the preservation of her child. So, likewise, did I, animated with equal tenderness and affection for you, first impart to you, in the midst of difficulties and dangers, the sincere milk of the gospel, the word of truth and salvation; and with equal pleasure would I now, for your sakes, sacrifice life itself, if this should be necessary, to secure your interest in the invaluable blessings of the Christian covenant. Believe me, then, when I assure you that I feel the strongest attachment to you; and suffer not the injurious calumnies of our enemies to excite in your minds any unfavourable suspicions concerning me.

5. The apostle suggests to their recollection the example of industry which he had set them, in labouring for his own subsistence while he was employed in preaching the gospel to them, ver. 9.

9. *Moreover*[1], *ye remember, brethren, our labour and toil*[2]; how, *working night and day that we might not be burthensome*[3] *to any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.*

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[1] *Moreover.*] γαρ, introducing a collateral observation.

[2] *Labour and toil.*] The apostle is here evidently speaking of the pains which he and his companions took in working for a subsistence. See Chandler.

[3] *That we might not be burthensome.*] Dr. Benson observes here, that "ministers have a right to a maintenance from the

In an opulent and commercial city like yours, the enemies of the gospel are disposed to calumniate the serious professors of the Christian religion, as men who neglect their secular concerns; and to upbraid the teachers of it as encouraging idleness, both by their doctrine and example. But you recollect, my brethren, that our conduct while we exercised our ministry among you gave no countenance to this foul aspersion. For though, while we devote our time to the instruction of others, we have a right to a decent maintenance from those

Ch. II. Ver. 9.

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people to whom they preach; and it is not their duty in all cases to labour for bread with their own hands. This appears both from reason and from scripture. St. Paul often gave up his just rights, either, 1.) That he might give no occasion to charge him with covetous and worldly views; or, 2.) That he might cut off all occasion from false apostles to claim a maintenance from his example; or, 3.) That idle and slothful Christians might not pretend from his example to vindicate their idleness." Dr. Benson adds, that it was the custom of the Jews to teach their children a trade, even though they gave them a liberal education. Acts xviii. 3.

To these observations of Dr. Benson's I would take leave to add what appears to be at least equally just: that where the persons who enjoy the benefit of a minister's instructions either cannot or will not raise a competency to support his family, it is neither criminal nor disgraceful in a minister to use any honourable means for his own support; and that it would be neither improper nor undesirable that young men who are educating for the ministry should also acquire the knowledge of some profession or occupation, by which they might maintain themselves and their families in a decent and reputable manner. Dr. Benson also remarks the propriety and decorum of the apostle's not noticing to the Thessalonians, who were probably poor, the supplies which he and his associates occasionally received from Philippi during their residence at Thessalonica; and which he very properly mentions with gratitude in his letter to the Philippians, Phil. iv. 16.

Ch. II. Ver. 9. for whose benefit we labour, yet we were far from insisting upon this right while we resided among you. And indeed you cannot but remember, that while we employed the greater part of the day in teaching both publicly and privately the important truths of divine revelation, the remainder of our time was usually spent in hard labour for our own subsistence; and that to this end we encroached even upon the hours of necessary repose; that so we might not put you to inconvenient expense in maintaining us, and that we might preclude the cavils of those who were disposed to represent us either as idle or as mercenary.

6. He reminds the Thessalonians of the piety and sanctity of the preachers of the gospel, and how earnestly it had been recommended to them to follow the example of their teachers, ver. 10—12.

10. *Ye* are *witnesses, and God*[1] is witness, *how holily, and righteously, and unblameably, we behaved*
11. *ourselves among you that believe*[2]*: as ye know how we exhorted*[3]*, and comforted, and charged every*

[1] *Ye* are *witnesses, and God.*] "A very solemn appeal this," says Dr. Chandler, "upon a very important occasion; and a noble period, full of majesty and grace."

[2] *How holily,* &c.] "*holily* towards God, *righteously* towards men, *unblameably*, i. e. without giving any just occasion of complaint in the manner of our instruction, or in the methods we made use of to bring you to the acknowledgement of the truth." Chandler.

[3] *Exhorted.*] ημεν is to be understood after παρακαλεντες. Grotius mentions it as a Hebrew idiom; but Benson and Chandler, and before them Blackwall, notice it as an ellipsis not uncommon in the best Greek authors.

one of you, as a father his children, that ye should walk in a manner worthy of God, who inviteth you into his glorious kingdom[4]. Ch. II. Ver. 12.

We are very sensible that there are many who are disposed to traduce our characters, and to represent us as impious and wicked men, who, under a pretence of a divine commission, are accomplishing their own base and sinister designs. But of

[4] *Worthy of God*, &c.] "How affectionate, how engaging, how powerful," says Dr. Chandler, "this manner of instruction! The character of a father implies tenderness and authority. As such he exhorts them, he comforts them, he charges them; μαρτυρόμενοι, *beseeching* and *conjuring* them in the most solemn manner; and testifying to them the absolute necessity that they should walk worthy of God." "*Kingdom* and *glory*," says Dr. Benson, "are put by a usual hendiadys for *glorious kingdom*. The glory in God's temporal kingdom was the shechenah, that refulgent cloud which resided between the two cherubim, overshadowing the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies, Exod. xiii. 21, 22. To that the apostle seems here to allude; but the Christian church has no such external visible glory. Its glory is truth, charity, and holiness." He adds, that "Two motives are here suggested to induce the Christians at Thessalonica to live a holy life. 1.) The nature and character of the true God whose worshipers they now were. 2.) This holy God had called them into his glorious kingdom, the Christian church, from a state of ignorance, idolatry, and vice, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God."

"If the most unquestioned indications of an upright mind in this epistle," says Dr. Priestley, "be properly attended to, (and I will venture to say there is no instance upon record of any hypocrite writing in this manner,) and it be compared with the equally unquestionable zeal of the apostle in preaching the gospel, and the marks of a *sound mind* in conducting himself with the greatest prudence and judgement, a conviction of the truth of Christianity will be the necessary result. Let any unbeliever account for the character, the conduct, and the mode of writing of this apostle, upon any other supposition, if he can. If any person thinks that he can, I will venture to say he either has not duly attended to all the circumstances, or has little knowledge of human nature."

Ch. II. Ver. 12.

such criminal views and conduct our consciences acquit us; and you, my friends, amongst whom we lately resided, and who were witnesses to our whole conduct, will give your verdict in our favour. But you could only witness our external conduct. There is a Being who searches the heart; and to him we humbly but confidently appeal for the purity of our motives, and the sanctity of our conduct. He knows the reverence of our hearts with regard to himself, the rectitude of our behaviour to our fellow-creatures, and our entire freedom from every thing deserving of censure, whether in doctrine or practice, in our intercourse with you, who received the Christian doctrine. And you remember, my dear friends and children in the gospel, what paternal vigilance and tenderness we exercised over you: exhorting some, comforting others, and earnestly pressing it upon all to regulate your conduct agreeably to your Christian profession. You have renounced idolatry, and are become worshipers of the true and living God: act always as in his presence, and make it your supreme concern to serve and please him. He has invited you, though heathen, to become subjects of that glorious kingdom which he has established in the world: a kingdom not dignified, indeed, with external splendour, but glorious in knowledge, in holiness, and in peace: you have accepted the heavenly call. Prize highly your inestimable privilege; and show by your whole conduct that you are true and approved members of this holy and honourable community.

SECTION III.

THE APOSTLE expresses his gratitude to God for the fortitude and zeal of the Thessalonian converts, in a season of severe persecution; and denounces the approaching judgements of God upon the Jewish nation. Ch. ii. 13—16. Ch. II.

1. The apostle gives thanks to God for the success of the gospel at Thessalonica, and the good effect it produced upon those who were converted to the faith, ver. 13.

For this cause also we give thanks to God continually[1], *that when ye received the doctrine concerning God which ye heard from us*[2], *ye accepted* Ver. 13.

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[1] *For this cause,* &c.] See ch. i. 2. The apostle having stated his own views and conduct, and those of his associates, when they first introduced the gospel at Thessalonica, now enlarges upon the effect which it had produced upon the Thessalonians, and shows that their mission had not been in vain. Ch. ii. 1. See Benson.

[2] *Doctrine of God,* &c.] λογον ακοης παρ' ἡμων τυ Θευ, *the word of the report of,* or *concerning God.* Comp. Heb. iv. 2, Matt. xiv. 1; the doctrine which they heard concerning God from the apostles. This Dr. Chandler thinks to be the true critical meaning of the place. The word *received* occurs a second time improperly in the common version; the words in the original being different. "The first word, παραλαβοντες, signifies 'taking any thing proposed into consideration, so as to pass a proper judgement upon it.' The second, εδεξασθε, signifies 'to approve and embrace in consequence of serious examination.'" See Chandler and Benson.

Ch. II. Ver. 13. *not a doctrine of men, but a doctrine of God*[1], *as in truth it is; which also powerfully operateth in you who believe.*

And now, my brethren, having reminded you of the circumstances in which we first preached the gospel at Thessalonica, and of the temper and spirit which we manifested among you, I rejoice in the recollection of your own conduct upon the same interesting occasion. To many, indeed, our arguments were unavailing, and upon their minds the miraculous powers which we exercised made no valuable impression: but we bless God that this neglect of the gospel was not universal. We can never forget the candour and seriousness with which you listened to our instructions, as messengers of God; and in our daily devotions we never omit to offer up our thanksgivings to God, for your firm conviction of the truth, and for your public fearless profession of the doctrine which you heard. And we also bless God that you had good reason for your conduct. The doctrine you embraced is not the invention of man; it is, and will most assuredly appear to be, the truth of God, and a truth of the greatest practical importance. You are yourselves, my friends, the living proofs of it: no other doc-

[1] *Not a doctrine,* &c.] Dr. Chandler thinks that the particle *as* in the common version is twice inserted without any reason; the sense being much better without it. "The apostle," he observes, "had double reason of thankfulness to God: that the doctrine he preached concerning God was really from him; and that he had been instrumental to persuade the Thessalonians to embrace it."

trine could have inspired that fortitude and zeal, and cheerful hope, which you have experienced and manifested in the trying circumstances in which you have been placed. Ch. II. Ver. 13.

2. The apostle traces a resemblance between the circumstances of the Thessalonians and those of the Jewish converts in Judea; and after describing the character of the unbelieving Jews, he concludes with a solemn denunciation of the approaching judgements of God upon that perverse and incorrigible people, ver. 14—16.

For ye, brethren, are become like[2] *the churches of God in Judea which are in Christ Jesus*[3]*: inasmuch as ye also have suffered from your own countrymen*[4] *the same things which they* have *from the Jews.* 14.

That the gospel of Christ has been cordially embraced by you, and has produced its genuine effect upon you, is evident from the firmness and forti-

[2] *Are become like.*] μιμηται. So Wakefield. Gr. *imitators.* "*Cœtus Christianorum Judaici sc. Palæstinenses, Judæorum odia magis experti sunt, quam ecclesiæ regionum ceterarum Asiaticarum, et Europæarum; nam Judæi præcipue erant ii, qui Christianos persequebantur.*" Rosenmuller. "as you yourselves are a plain instance." Pyle.

[3] *Which are in Christ Jesus.*] which believe in Christ, which profess the Christian religion: "a defective form of expression which must be supplied in some such way. They worship one God and believe in Christ Jesus." Chandler.

[4] *Your own countrymen.*] The heathen idolaters considering the Christians at first only as a sect of Jews, did not give themselves any trouble about them till they were instigated by the Jews. This was particularly the case at Thessalonica and Berea, &c. Acts xvii. 5, 13.

Ch. II. Ver. 14. tude which you have discovered under the persecutions which you have endured. For your situation at Thessalonica bears a very near resemblance to that of the Christian converts in Judea. Your fellow-citizens, though heathen, and as such in general indifferent to the rise and progress of new opinions and sects, have been instigated by the Jews to persecute you with as much rancour as the Jews in Judea persecute the believers there. And indeed I am constrained to bear a sad and reluctant testimony to the wickedness and the ruin of my unhappy countrymen.

15. *Who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets*[1], *and have persecuted us, and who please not*
16. *God*[2], *and are against all men*[3], *not suffering us*[4]

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[1] *The prophets.*] The word ἰδιους, *their own*, is omitted in the manuscripts of best authority, and in the Vulgate and other ancient versions. It was probably a marginal gloss. See Griesbach.

[2] *Please not God.*] A *meiosis*, by which much more is understood than the words express. The apostle means that the conduct of the Jews was in the highest degree displeasing to God. See Chandler and Benson.

[3] *Are against all men.*] "ἐναντίοι denotes *enemies*; in a state of hostile opposition." Chandler. This was the character which the Jews bore among the heathen, whom it is well known that they regarded with hatred and contempt.

Non monstrare vias, eadem nisi sacra colenti;
Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos.

JUVENAL. *Sat.* xiv.

Adversus alios omnes hostile odium. Tacitus. See Elsner.—"against Gentiles, whether converted or unconverted; and against converted Jews." Newcome. This severe description of the Jews is confirmed by Josephus, who frequently calls them θεοστυγεις, *haters of God*; and who, in a passage which has often been cited from his *Jewish War*, b. vi. c. 13. § 6. declares that "he thinks that if the Romans had delayed to take

to declare salvation to the Gentiles: thus continually filling up the measure of their sins[5]. *But wrath is overtaking them*[6] *to utter destruction*[7]. Ch. II. Ver. 16.

With regret I say it; but truth compels me to declare, that the crimes of my deluded countrymen have now nearly reached their utmost limit, and that their ruin is impending and inevitable. For they have been the murderers of Jesus, our lord and

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vengeance on these wretches, they would either have been swallowed up by an earthquake, or that the city would have been swept away by a deluge; or that they would have partaken of the thunders of Sodom; for that they were a more impious generation than those who suffered these calamities." See Chandler.

[5] *Not suffering us.*] κωλυοντων. So Wakefield. *forbidding, hindering.* "The meaning is, "not forbidding us to preach in order to their salvation, but to preach the doctrine of the possibility of their salvation by faith alone." Chandler.

[5] *Filling up,* &c.] "This," says Dr. Benson, "is an allusion to filling up a vessel to the brim. The vessel was filled a great way before, but this filled it up quite. A similar allusion is used Gen. xv. 16, Matt. xxiii. 32."

[6] *Is overtaking them.*] εφθασε· "literally, *hath overtaken,* on account of its nearness and certainty." Wakefield. "That desolation was drawing nigh when the apostle wrote this epistle; and the destruction of their temple, city, and nation, happened within twenty years after." Benson.

[7] *To utter destruction.*] εις τελος. "finally, at last." H. Stephens, Grotius, Knatchbull, Benson. "to consummation, to utter destruction." Newcome, and others. So LXX. Numb. xvii. 13; Josh. vii. 24, x. 20; Job vi. 9; Amos ix. 8; 2 Chron. xii. 12. "wrath is coming on them to the full. Such wrath as shall perfect and consummate their destruction." Chandler. This epistle was written A.D. 52. The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple happened about twenty years afterwards. This event the apostle foreknew either by inspiration, or by the recorded prophecy of Jesus previous to his crucifixion. Mr. Wakefield translates the words, "complete punishment is overtaking them."

Ch. II. Ver. 16.

master, whom they ought to have received as their promised Messiah, and who gave the most ample proof of his divine legation: yet even him they delivered up to the Roman power, under a false charge of treason and blasphemy, and insisted upon his public crucifixion. The prophets who foretold the mission of Christ, had been treated by their predecessors with similar cruelty. And if we, the apostles and messengers of Jesus, and the authorized witnesses of his resurrection, have hitherto escaped, it has been owing to want of power, not of inclination on their part: for they have beaten and imprisoned us, and forbidden us to teach the doctrine of Christ; and some of our number have even been put to death. Thus they are acting in a manner most highly offensive to the Supreme Being, whom they profess to venerate, while they oppose his will and destroy his holy and authorized messengers. They are the enemies of the human race; holding all mankind in contempt and abhorrence, though equally with themselves the creatures and children of God. And this malignity of spirit they evince in a way which renders it doubly odious, by giving every obstruction in their power to the promulgation of the gospel among the Gentiles, and refusing them admission into the kingdom and family of God. Thus they add crime to crime, without any interruption or remission, till, the measure of their iniquities being full, divine justice will no longer forbear to strike. And dreadful indeed will their approaching catastrophe be. The denunciations

of the crucified prophet will be literally fulfilled. The ruin of the nation will be complete. And the awful consummation is at hand. CH. II.

SECTION IV.

THE APOSTLE, having been disappointed in his intention of making the Thessalonians a visit, and having sent Timothy to Thessalonica to learn the state of their affairs, expresses the highest satisfaction in the report which that evangelist had made concerning their perseverance in the faith, and their affection to him: and he concludes with testifying his earnest desire to visit them, and his best wishes for their establishment in faith and holiness. Ch. ii. 17 —iii. 13.

1. Having been compelled to leave them abruptly, he was earnestly desirous of seeing them again, but had hitherto been prevented from executing his purpose, ver. 17, 18.

Now we, brethren[1], *having been bereaved of you*[2] *at an hour's warning*[3], *in person, not in* Ver. 17.

[1] *Now we, brethren.*] Dr. Benson observes that "the apostle has called his converts at Thessalonica, *brethren, beloved,* or *beloved brethren,* no less than seventeen times in this epistle: whereby he not only testified his very ardent affection for them, but acknowledged the Gentile as well as Jewish converts for Christian brethren."

[2] *Bereaved of you.*] αποροφανισθεντες. See Wakefield. "Ορ-

Ch. II. Ver. 18. *heart, have earnestly endeavoured with great desire*[1] *to see your face. Accordingly, we intended to come to you, even I Paul, more than once, but Satan hindered us*[2].

My dear brethren, you recollect how suddenly, and with how little previous notice, I was torn from you as a father from the children of his affection, in consequence of the tumult which was raised at the instigation of the Jews. But though I was personally compelled to withdraw from you, my heart still remained with you, and my tenderest affections are fixed upon you: so that ever since I left you I have never ceased to devise the means of gratifying my ardent desire to visit you again. Hitherto, however, my efforts have been fruitless: for though I Paul, your teacher and apostle, have re-

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φανος, ὁ γονεων εσηρημενος, και τεκνων." Hesychius. "He compares the uneasiness he was under," says Dr. Chandler, "to the distress of a father robbed of, and torn from, his children, at an hour's warning, and forced to leave them in circumstances of the most helpless danger."

[2] *At an hour's warning.*] προς καιρον ὡρας. So Dr. Chandler, and unquestionably right; though this sense is overlooked, as he observes, by almost all interpreters. Mr. Wakefield's version is, "at a moment's warning." It is not true that the apostle was separated from them for a short time only, for it was six years before he saw them again; and if it had been fact, it would have been beside the apostle's purpose to have mentioned it.

[1] *Earnestly endeavoured,* &c.] The apostle expresses with great emphasis his earnest desire to see the Thessalonians again. "The word," says Dr. Chandler, "signifies, 'I diligently endeavoured.' To raise the idea, he adds, 'I more abundantly endeavoured;' and to make his diligence appear as strong as words could do it, concludes, 'I more abundantly endeavoured to see you with great desire.'" "*Amat Paulus, vocabula per se augentia, amplius augere.*" Grotius.

peatedly intended and endeavoured to take a journey to Thessalonica, some impediment or other has always occurred to prevent me; and particularly the malignity of the Jews, and the peculiar enmity which they harbour against me, and which would lead them to sacrifice my life, if they could once get me into their power. Ch. II. Ver. 18.

2. The apostle states the delight he felt in the prospect of meeting his Thessalonian converts at the coming of Christ, ver. 19, 20.

For what is *our hope*[3] *or joy, or crown of triumph*[4], *in the presence of our Lord Jesus*[5] *at his* 19.

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[2] *Satan hindered us.*] "wicked men, the instruments of Satan." Newcome. The word Satan signifies *adversary*, and in the Old Testament is constantly used in this sense. In the New Testament it occurs thirty-three times; and commonly expresses, the principle of opposition personified, whatever be the cause or the object of the obstruction. Paul's paralytic disorder is called Satan, 2 Cor. xii. 7, because it obstructed his preaching the gospel. Peter is called *Satan*, Matt. xii. 26, because he contradicted what Jesus had just declared. *Satan* sometimes signifies the heathen power, and sometimes the persecuting power; but it never signifies what it is usually understood to express, the chief of apostates and fallen angels.—Dr. Priestley explains it, "one adversary or other has prevented me." "*Impedivit autem hoc Satanas, injectâ ei necessitate disputandi sæpius cum Stoicis et Epicureis qui Athenis erant.*" Grotius. "The enemy here intended," says Dr. Benson, "was evidently the unbelieving Jews at Thessalonica." It was some unknown impediment.

[3] *For what* is *our hope.*] Dr. Chandler observes that it is "uncertain whether the apostle here refers to the crown of triumph worn by the conqueror, or to the garland of victory in the games." Dr. Benson remarks, that "as Paul expected to know his own converts in the great day, we may therefore hope to know our friends in a future state."

[4] *Or crown of triumph.*] καυχησεως. So Wakefield. "a

Ch. II. Ver. 20. *coming? Are not even ye*[1]*? Ye are indeed our glory and our joy*[2].

If it should be in my power, I will make another effort to visit you soon; but I may perhaps be again disappointed; and possibly in this world I may never have another opportunity of seeing you again. But there is a day advancing when we shall be sure to meet: it is the day of our Lord and Master Jesus, when he shall return to raise the dead and to judge the world. And to what think ye that I look forward with delightful anticipation, as the brightest crown, the most transporting bliss of that triumphant day?—It is to the happiness of meeting you, my beloved brethren, my dear Thessalonian converts, my joy and pride, at the tribunal of our honoured Lord and judge—approved, acknowledged, and rewarded by him. Yes; it is to meet, never to part any more. This will be happiness indeed. And of this triumph, blessed be God, it is not in

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crown of which a man boasts." Le Clerc. "*Vocatur corona, non quotidiana, sed quæ diebus summæ lætitiæ ad eximium ornatum sumitur. Sic Paulum ornabant tam præclaræ per Macedoniam structæ ab ipso ecclesiæ.*" Grotius.

[3] *In the presence of our Lord Jesus.*] The received text adds *Christ*; but this word is wanting in the Alexandrine, Clermont, and Corbey manuscripts, and in the Syriac, Vulgate, and other versions. See Griesbach; who however retains it in his text.

[1] *Are not even ye?*] "*Construi hæc sic debent.*" Grotius. See also Chandler and Benson.

[2] *Ye are indeed,* &c.] So Mr. Wakefield. The old English version is, *Yes, ye are indeed our glory and joy.* "The particle γαρ, which we render *for*, should have been translated *even*. For this use of the particle, see Herodotus *Hist.* I. i. 8, V. iii. 12." Chandler.

the power of our worst and most inveterate enemies either to hinder or to deprive us. Ch. II. Ver. 20.

3. The apostle, moved by the tender anxiety which he felt on their account, had sent Timothy from Athens, to visit, to console, and to encourage them, ch. iii. 1—3.

So then, being no longer able to refrain[3], *we willingly acquiesced*[4] *in being left at Athens alone, and sent Timothy, our brother, and a fellow worker with God in the gospel of Christ*[5], *to support and encourage you*[6] *concerning your fidelity*[7]; *that none of you*[8] *may be moved*[9] *by these* our *afflic-* Ch. III. Ver. 1. 2. 3.

[3] *Refrain.*] "στεγω properly signifies *to cover:* here it signifies, to suppress the impatience of our desires." Chandler. "being able to endure no longer." Wakefield.

[4] *Willingly acquiesced.*] See Chandler. "we have submitted." Wakefield. "I cheerfully preferred." Benson. The word ευδοκησαμεν expresses the readiness with which the apostle acquiesced in being left by himself at Athens.

[5] *Timothy,* &c.] The copies read these clauses variously: I adopt the reading of Griesbach.

[6] *Support and encourage.*] So Wakefield. Παρακαλεσαι signifies both to *exhort* and *comfort:* the apostle might intend to include both significations.

[7] *Your fidelity.*] See ver. 5: not concerning their faith, but their firm adherence to their profession.

[8] *That none of you.*] τω μηδενα. The best copies read το μηδενα for εις το κ. τ. λ. Griesbach: see ver. 13. Benson and Newcome.

[9] *Be moved.*] "σαινεσθαι, *proprie adulor, blandior, pellicio, non solum de canibus caudam blande moventibus,* σαινει, κολακευει. Hesychius. *Hinc, quatio, concutio, et metaphorice, commoveo, turbo.*" Schleusner. The word is commonly understood as a metaphor, taken from a dog's moving his tail, either from joy or fear; but more frequently in the former sense. And Dr. Chandler supposes that "the apostle meant that Timothy was to caution the Thessalonians against being fawned and flattered

Ch. III. Ver. 3. *tions, for ye yourselves know that we are appointed to this* [1].

So solicitous was I, my brethren, on your account, so apprehensive lest something amiss might have happened in consequence of our abrupt departure from Thessalonica, of the persecutions which we endured, and of the perils to which you were yourselves exposed, that I could no longer refrain from taking some steps to relieve my own anxiety, and to fortify your principles. And as it was not

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out of their faith and hope, by views of security and other worldly advantages." The common, and perhaps the more probable, interpretation is, that they should not be deterred from their profession by the persecution of the teachers of the gospel.

[1] *Appointed to this.*] "This is the natural lot of us apostles." Acts ix. 16. Newcome.—"In those early ages," says Dr. Priestley, "men were not tempted by any honours or emoluments of this life. They were apprized that they were not to expect any advantage from the scheme in this world, but that all their hopes of reward were to be in another. Now what could induce men in the cool possession of themselves, as the apostles evidently were, and thousands of others, naturally lovers of life and of the pleasures and advantages of it, as well as other men, to entertain these great and distant prospects, and to sacrifice every thing else to them, but the most well-grounded faith in the gospel, or such evidence as could not but command the assent of men in their circumstances, who had every possible opportunity of judging; and which therefore ought to satisfy us?" "This word," says Dr. Chandler, "is very justly translated. I see no reason to soften the meaning of it so as to exclude the positive order and appointment of God. The word is used both in sacred and profane writers to denote something fixed and determined. Luke ii. 34, Philip. i. 17. Nor is there any thing unworthy of God in such an appointment. He called them out to be public examples of faith, patience, and constancy. He appointed them to the honour of being martyrs and confessors for the truth, that hereby he might spread the Christian doctrine, approve their fidelity, and render them worthy the crown of victory."

in my power to visit you, I very cheerfully proposed to remain at Athens by myself, in a situation of considerable difficulty, and amongst persons who were perfect strangers, many of whom were insolent and prating sceptics, and dispatched Timothy, my faithful and beloved associate in the ministry of the gospel, and indeed I may add, a fellow-worker with God himself in the same glorious cause, to Thessalonica, to confirm your faith, and to administer those advices and consolations which would be most effectual to encourage you to persevere in your Christian profession. And I particularly charged him to caution you against being warped from your integrity by the consideration of those sufferings to which the most eminent of the preachers of the Christian doctrine are exposed; for you cannot but recollect what you so often heard me declare, that ease and interest were not the objects we had in view in the exercise of our ministry; that suffering was as familiar to us as teaching, and was, in fact, a part of our ministerial and apostolic office. It was the divine appointment, and we knew from the beginning what we had to expect. Ch. III. Ver. 3.

4. The apostle, though he had distinctly forewarned them of what was to happen, yet being anxious for their stedfastness, had sent to inquire after their state, ver. 4, 5.

For, indeed, when we were with you, we told you beforehand, that we should suffer trouble, even as it came to pass, and ye know. For this cause, 4. 5.

Ch. III. Ver. 5. *being no longer able to endure, I sent to know your fidelity*[1], fearing, *lest by some means the seducer*[2] *might have seduced you, and our labour might be in vain.*

I did not flatter you, my brethren, when you first embraced the Christian religion, that either you or your teachers would lead an easy and quiet life in the open profession of this novel and obnoxious doctrine. While I was yet with you, before the storm burst, previously to any offence which was taken at us or at our doctrine, and while we were even held in admiration in consequence of the display of our miraculous powers, I told you that this tranquillity would be of short duration, and that sorrow and suffering would speedily overtake us; and so it proved, as you well recollect. These sufferings, therefore, which we so distinctly foretold, can constitute no reasonable objection against the authority of our mission. Knowing, however, the advantage which the artful enemies of the gospel would make of the persecutions of its ministers, I was eager to send my beloved colleague to inquire into your state, fearing lest the terrors of persecution should have alarmed you, or the artifices of

[1] *Your fidelity.*] "By profane authors," says Dr. Chandler, "this word πιστις is frequently used to signify the 'fidelity of subjects to a prince,' and of 'one man to another in the performance of promises;' and should have been rendered *fidelity* or *constancy*." See ver. 7, where Mr. Wakefield renders it *perseverance*. Compare ver. 8.

[2] *Seducer.*] πειραζων "one that solicits and persuades another to a criminal action, by whatsoever methods it may be. This is the sense of it also in profane authors." Chandler.

the enemy have seduced you from your allegiance to the gospel, and should have made void our labours and our hopes. Ch. III. Ver. 5.

5. The apostle expresses the utmost satisfaction in the report which Timothy had made of their adherence to Christianity, and of their affection to him, ver. 6—8.

But Timothy, being lately returned[3] *from you to us, and having brought us good tidings of your fidelity and affection, and of the kind remembrance which you constantly have of us, being as earnestly desirous to see us, as we* are to see *you*[4]; *for this cause, brethren, we were comforted concerning you, in all our affliction and poverty*[5], *by your fidelity. For now we live* indeed[6], *seeing that ye stand firmly in the Lord.* 6. 7. 8.

[3] *Timothy being lately returned.*] "Timothy having come back to us just now from you." Wakefield. The expression seems to indicate that the epistle was written soon after Timothy's return; who, together with Silas, came to the apostle at Corinth, from which city, therefore, this epistle was dated. See Acts xviii. 5.

[4] *As earnestly desirous to see us,* &c.] "These words are part of Timothy's report, who assured the apostle that their affectionate remembrance of him was such, that they had as warm and passionate a fondness for seeing him, as he could have for seeing them." Chandler.

[5] *Affliction and poverty.*] αναγκη· "this word signifies a *necessity* and *pressure* of any kind but particularly the distress of *poverty*, which seems to be the meaning of the word in this place." Chandler. The apostle was now at Corinth, where he refused to accept supplies from the new converts, and chose to maintain himself by his own manual industry. Acts xviii. 1—4; 2 Cor. xi. 9, 10, xii. 13—18. He was assisted by contributions from Macedonia, 2 Cor. xi. 9, and probably found it difficult to procure subsistence.

Ch. III. Ver. 8. And now, my brethren, with unspeakable satisfaction I acknowledge that my solicitude is relieved, and that my fears concerning you have been happily dispelled by the return of Timothy, and the pleasing intelligence which he has brought. Having left Athens, and being now at Corinth, Silas and Timothy have lately joined me here. And though, as you perceive, I am destined to wander from place to place, and am but poorly provided with the necessaries of life, having determined to accept of nothing from these opulent Corinthians; yet, amidst poverty and distress, I am soothed and cheered with the favourable report which my faithful associate has made of your firm adherence to your Christian profession, of your love to each other, and of your affectionate attachment to me, your instructor and friend. For Timothy has informed me that you long as earnestly to see me, as I do to see you. Whatever, therefore, may be the disadvantages of my external condition, I am far from meaning to complain. No, my brethren, since this evangelist is come back with the joyful tidings of your firm adherence to the doctrine of Christ, I feel myself a

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[6] *We live* indeed, &c.] εαν does not always imply that the case is dubious. See 1 John iii. 2. "How does this generous and benevolent apostle," says Dr. Benson, "treat his converts like his children, and with the bowels of a father overlook all his own persecutions and distresses as long as things went well with them! If they had not persevered, it would have greatly troubled and afflicted him. But it was joy, it was transport, it was life worth enjoying, to hear of their perseverance and stedfastness in the Christian faith. Here is a pattern for all the pastors of the Christian church."

happy man: to be assured of your continual progress in faith and holiness, this is life indeed; life worth enjoying: it is health, wealth, and happiness. Ch. III. Ver. 8.

6. The apostle expresses his devout gratitude to God for the satisfaction which he felt on their account, and his earnest prayers that he may be permitted to visit them soon, ver. 9—11.

For what thanks are we able[1] *to render to God concerning you, in return for all the joy with which we rejoice on your account before our God? Night and day*[2] *praying most earnestly that we may see your face, and make up what is wanting to* insure *your fidelity*[3]. *But may our God and Father him-* 9. 10. 11.

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[1] *For what thanks are we able to render in return.*] ανταποδουναι. "the word signifies, 'to give something in return as an acknowledgement for favours received.' The interrogation increases the vehemence and warmth of the sentiment. His gratitude was stronger than he was able to express." See Chandler, whose translation I have followed.

[2] *Night and day.*] "An allusion to the computation of the Jews, who began their day at sunset." Benson.

[3] *Wanting to* insure *your fidelity:*] "*i. e.* to impart some spiritual gift. Rom. i. 11. Grotius." Newcome. "It is an imagination of some interpreters, (says Dr. Chandler, alluding to Dr. Benson and others,) that when the apostles first planted a church, they taught them only the plain and fundamental articles of Christianity, and the necessity of repentance and new obedience; and when the converts had digested these, then they instructed them in the more minute doctrines of Christianity. But I think this is a mistaken observation; nor do I well comprehend which of the real articles of Christianity are properly minute; I would hope no articles of the Christian doctrine deserve this character. The true meaning of the Greek expression is 'those things which are yet wanting *towards your fidelity*;' their constancy in the faith had not yet attained its

Ch. III. Ver. 11.

self[1], *and our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way*[2] *unto you.*

So delighted am I with the intelligence I have received concerning you, that I am at a loss for words to express my gratitude to the Father of mercies for the joy and transport which I feel on your account, when, in the hour of retired devotion, I bear you upon my heart before God. And indeed it is the constant theme of my earnest solicitation,

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full establishment and support; not that they had received but an imperfect knowledge of Christianity from the apostle, but that there was yet something wanting to confirm them in the faith they had embraced, which even Timothy could not supply. What these things were, Grotius hath with great judgement pointed out, Rom. i. 11, that he might impart some spiritual gift either upon greater numbers, or in larger abundance."

Dr. C. supposes another alternative: that the apostle alludes to moral precepts, in which he had imperfectly instructed them. But surely this supposition is to the full as objectionable as Dr. Benson's *minute doctrines.*

[1] *Our God and Father.*] "Here, as upon all occasions," says Dr. Priestley, "the title of God is appropriated to the Father, and Christ is not entitled to that appellation, but is quite distinct from God, as much as any other man can be."

[2] *And our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way.*] Dr. Benson, Dr. Chandler, and other expositors understand this text as a prayer to Christ, and as authorizing what they call *mediatorial worship* of him. Dr. C. adds, that "*Lord* in the next verse unquestionably signifies *Christ*, and that the prayer is with great propriety addressed to him." But Dr. Priestley, with much greater propriety, observes, that "though God and Christ are here joined together, it is by no means a proper example of prayer to Christ; but as all power is given to Christ, with respect to his church, and he frequently appeared to Paul, and directed the course of his apostolical journeys, it was natural for him to desire to have the same direction to go where he wished himself." *To direct us*, &c. The word signifies *to make straight:* i. e. to remove impediments and obstructions. The apostle visited Macedonia twice after this, but not till six years after this epistle was written. See Benson.

morning and evening, to be permitted to visit you again, and to administer those instructions and encouragements, and those additional supplies of the holy spirit which may be requisite to your perfection in faith and holiness, and to your resolute perseverance in your Christian profession. And may that God who, in the gospel covenant, vouchsafes to acknowledge himself as common Father to Jew and Gentile; and may Jesus Christ, our gracious Master, who superintends my mission, and directs my course, be pleased to remove every impediment which obstructs our mutual wishes, and speedily to open a free passage for me to visit you again. Ch. III. Ver. 11.

7. The apostle further prays that the Thessalonians may improve in mutual affection and general benevolence, and that they may persevere in the practice of duty till the coming of Christ, ver. 12, 13.

And may the Lord[3] *cause you to increase and* 12.

[3] *May the Lord cause you to increase.*] ὁ Κυριος. This word is wanting in the Syriac: the Alexandrine copy reads ὁ Θεος, *God*; and the Clermont, with three other uncial manuscripts, reads ὁ κυριος Ιησους, *the Lord Jesus*. With these conflicting authorities, it cannot be ascertained which is the true reading; nor whether the word *Lord* signifies Christ, or God his Father. I incline to the former sense, and think the prayer is addressed to Christ; who during the apostolic age maintained a personal intercourse with the church, which since that period has been withdrawn: which intercourse laid a foundation for personal applications to him, especially on the part of the apostle Paul, all whose motions were directed by him, which applications in other individuals, and in succeeding times, would be unautho-

Ch. III. *abound in love*[1] *toward each other, and toward all*
Ver. 13. men, *even as we* do *toward you*[2]: *so as to esta-*

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rized and idolatrous. The apostle prays that the Lord would *cause them to increase and abound in love*; perhaps not by any immediate operation upon the heart, but by supplying them with means and opportunities of improvement in the doctrine and spirit of the gospel. Archbishop Newcome cautiously observes upon ver. 13, that "we have here a repetition of the antecedent, if we suppose Κυριος in ver. 12 to be genuine, and rightly understood of the Lord Jesus."

"In these two verses," says Dr. Benson, "the apostle first prays to God the Father, and then unto our Lord Jesus Christ." And he introduces a note discussing the question of prayer to Christ, in which he comes to this conclusion: "That supreme and ultimate worship is due to God, and to him alone: mediatorial worship is due to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to him alone." He adds, "If we follow the scripture model, we shall very seldom address our Lord Jesus Christ directly; and when we do, we should always remember to address him as mediator." Of which mode of address, however, the learned expositor has supplied us with no example from the New Testament. Dr. Chandler expresses himself with even more confidence upon the subject than Dr. Benson. Upon ver. 11 he observes, that "the prayer is directed with great propriety and dignity to God our Father, who is styled God peculiarly and emphatically, and who is the original, eternal, supreme, and indefectible source of all good; and to our Lord Jesus Christ, the mediatorial secondary source, the Father's eternal repository of good, in and by whom he enriches the whole rational creation, and especially his church on earth, with all necessary blessings." And he observes on the words ver. 12, *May the Lord cause you to increase*, "The Lord here unquestionably signifies Christ; and the prayer is with great propriety addressed to him because he had so loved them as to give himself as a propitiation for their sins." And he introduces a long paragraph at the end of his paraphrase upon this chapter, in which he vindicates at large the propriety and expedience of the mediatorial worship of Christ.

Thus it appears that these two learned and pious Arians regarded it as a duty to pray to Christ; and, together with Clarke, Emlyn, and other eminent Arian divines of the age in which they lived, they saw nothing in what they called *mediatorial* and *secondary worship*, inconsistent with the doctrine of the unity and sole supremacy of God the Father: whose crea-

blish your hearts unblameable in holiness in the presence of our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all his saints[3]. Ch. III. Ver. 13.

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ture Jesus is, and his delegate, as they believed, in the formation, support, and government of the universe. And in this conclusion they were completely justified, if their premises were true: for what impropriety can there be in addressing a friend who is known to be present and within hearing, whether he is seen or unseen? and who can be a proper object of worship, if the Lord our Maker is not? The practice of worshiping Christ prevailed very generally among the Arians of the last century; and had they lived in the present day, they would have thought it very hard to be denied the name of Unitarians, as the small remnant of their successors, who worship Jesus, now do. Nor can I see any reason for extending that epithet to all Arians of all descriptions, even to those who, like Dr. Clarke, actually exclude the agency of the Deity from his works, and who represent him as merely the silent spectator of the operations of the Logos, with the exception only of those who, very consistently surely with their own views of the case, address prayer to this omnipotent, omnipresent Logos, their Maker, Supporter, and Lord. This arbitrary limitation was never thought of till the time of Dr. Price, who first introduced it, and defined an Unitarian to be one who does not worship Christ: a definition which excludes Chandler, Benson, Emlyn, Peirce, and almost all the learned and pious Arian divines who were Dr. Price's predecessors, and at least his equals in theological learning. Yet, since the time of Dr. Price this modern definition has become a great favourite with many. Names do not alter the nature of things, and are of no use any further than they convey distinct ideas. Dr. Lardner, for the sake of perspicuity, limited his use of the word Unitarian to those who believe the proper humanity of Jesus Christ; or rather to those who do not ascribe to a created being either the *attributes*, the *works*, or the *worship* which is appropriate to the Great Supreme. In this definition he is followed by Mr. Lindsey, Dr. Priestley, and many others. And the consequence of using the word constantly in this sense is, that none of their readers can mistake their meaning. Others, however, choose to use the word in a laxer sense, including all Arians under the name of Unitarians excepting those who pray to Christ. And after defining their terms, they have no doubt a right, as all writers have, to use them in the sense so defined. But this change of signification

Ch. III. Ver. 13. In the mean time, my dear Christian brethren, my earnest and affectionate prayers are daily offered

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has been attended with the inconvenience which might naturally be expected; it has introduced a lamentable degree of obscurity and confusion into many publications in other respects excellent. But let this pass. What is most extraordinary in the case is, that many who adopt Dr. Price's definition, and whose zeal is more conspicuous than their logic, value themselves highly upon it as if it were some great discovery in theology, and are by no means backward in challenging for themselves a superior degree of candour and liberality; while, with a warmth of indignation not justified by the occasion, they animadvert upon those of their brethren, who prefer Dr. Lardner's old and strict definition of Unitarianism to Dr. Price's new and lax one. Just as if there were a moral merit in a verbal difference; or, as if a writer were not at liberty, out of two definitions of the same term, to adhere to that which to his judgement appears the most correct.

The truth is, that Arianism, whether high or low, and by whatever name it is called, is in every shape erroneous and unscriptural. Carried to the extreme of Dr. Clarke, who maintains that the Logos is the Creator, Preserver, and Sustainer of the universal system, it sets up another God in the place of the Supreme, and excludes the Deity from his works; it deposes God from his throne. And so far as Arianism ascribes to a creature the attributes and works of God, it is erroneous and pernicious, it leads to polytheism and idolatry. It has no foundation in reason or in revelation, it tends to distract the mind, and to alienate the heart from God, who is the only Creator and Lord of all, and the only proper object of worship. With sentiments most friendly to the *persons* of those who are involved in this ancient error, it is the indispensable duty of every one who is enlightened in the truth as it is in Jesus, to enter his protest against their *doctrine*, and to detect and expose its fallacy and pernicious tendency to the utmost of his power. Truth can enter into no compromise with error. What fellowship hath light with darkness?

[1] *Abound in love.*] "The first affection due from them was to one another as brethren and friends; but Christianity teaches, and the love of God and Christ inspires, a more diffusive charity, love to human nature, as such: yea, to our very enemies." Chandler.

[2] *Even as we.*] "How did the apostle love them? He loved

up to God for your stability and improvement; that your conduct may be in every view worthy of your Christian profession. May God grant, and by the powerful operation of the genuine principles of the gospel may he bring it to pass, that your love to each other as fellow-Christians, exposed to the same difficulties, and heirs of the same immortal hopes, may increase and abound exceedingly. Also, that you may feel a warm benevolence to your fellow-creatures, to all who are partakers of the same nature, and capable of the same improvements in knowledge and virtue. And as our love and compassion to you was manifested in our exertions for

Ch. III. Ver. 13.

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them as a father his children: so as to be solicitous and intent upon promoting their salvation; so as to be content to be persecuted, and to live in perpetual straits to do them good; yea, so as to give up his life, if that were necessary, to secure their constancy and happiness. Generous apostle! How like the master he served! It is thus, Christians, you should love one another." Chandler.

[3] *Saints.*] ἁγιων. Some copies of little account read αγγελων, *angels.* See Grotius and Griesbach. Dr. Chandler says, "the word signifies both." It is of no practical consequence. Christ being represented under the character of a sovereign and a judge: in consistency with this symbol celestial beings are represented as his attendants and officers, to add to the dignity and pomp of his appearance. How far such descriptions are to be understood in a literal sense the awful event only will explain. And this will probably be widely different from our present imperfect and confused conceptions of it.

Dr. Benson concludes his notes upon this passage with the following reflections: "1. The apostles often put their converts in mind of Christ's coming to judgement, to excite them to the practice of universal righteousness, to prepare for that important and decisive day. 2. Our religious virtue must hold out to the end of life, if we would be prepared for the coming of Christ. 3. Our Christian course ends when we die, and terminates in the coming of Christ."

Ch. III. Ver. 13. your conversion, be you equally solicitous for the conversion of others.—This cordial, tender, universal benevolence, discovering itself in generous and habitual exertions to promote the happiness of all around you, is in fact the best means of fulfilling the duties which the gospel enjoins. In the practice of universal virtue may your hearts be firmly established, and amidst difficulties and temptations may you faithfully and honourably persevere, till that day, the arrival of which may be more speedy than we are aware, when our Lord and Master shall appear again, accompanied by all his faithful followers redeemed from the grave; whom he will present before his Father and our Father, his God and our God, as those who shall be entitled to the promises and the rewards of the gospel. In that chosen company, and upon that awful occasion, may it be your honour and happiness to appear as his approved disciples, and to participate in his glorious triumph.

SECTION V.

THE APOSTLE earnestly exhorts the Thessalonians to the practice of universal virtue, and particularly to chastity, benevolence, prudence, and industry. Ch. iv. 1—12.

1. The apostle strictly enjoins by the authority of Christ, that in the whole of their conduct it should

be their chief and growing concern to please God, Ch. IV. ver. 1, 2.

Finally, therefore, brethren, we intreat and we Ver. 1. *exhort you*[1], *in* the *Lord Jesus*[2], *according as ye have received from us how ye ought to walk and to please God, and as* indeed *ye do walk*[3], *that ye would excel*[4] *still more. For ye know what charges* 2. *we gave you by* the authority of *the Lord Jesus*[5].

In the sequel of this epistle I shall take the liberty of giving you some plain hints of advice respecting your conduct as professors of the Christian religion; which from the report of Timothy appears to be particularly requisite. And first of all, I earnestly request as a favour conferred upon myself, and as a teacher of the Christian doctrine I se-

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[1] *We intreat and we exhort you.*] *We intreat.* "we request and desire it of you as a favour done to ourselves. *We exhort* implies superiority: it supposes both the capacity and the right of admonition." Chandler.

[2] *In* the *Lord Jesus.*] "in his name, by your regard to him; and as you would approve yourselves to him as your judge." Chandler. Newcome, who translates "*by* the Lord Jesus," observes, "Some render '*in* the Lord Jesus:' that is, as professors of faith in him." This appears to be the true sense of the phrase. *To be in Christ* is constantly used in the apostle's writings to signify being a Christian. See Rom. xvi. 7, 9, 11.

[3] *And as* indeed *ye do walk.*] This clause is found in the Alexandrine, Clermont, and many other manuscripts, and in the Æthiopic, Italic, and other versions. It is much in the apostle's style; who is always desirous to commend where he can, and especially previous to the introduction of a reproof. See Griesbach.

[4] *Excel.*] περισσευητε. "It expresses, having abundance or plenty of any thing: hence it denotes to *exceed* or *excel*. See Eccles. iii. 19, Apocryp. Syr. xi. 12, xix. 24." Chandler.

[5] *By* the authority of *the Lord Jesus.*] δια τȣ Κυριȣ. So Newcome and Wakefield.

Ch. IV. Ver. 2.

riously exhort you, that you will remember and reduce to practice the advice which I gave you while I was present with you. I taught you, that as disciples of Jesus it must now be your governing principle to please God, and in the whole of your temper and conduct to approve yourselves to his all-penetrating eye. And I taught you how this was to be done; namely, by the love and practice of universal virtue. It gives me great satisfaction to hear that this is indeed your general character; and that with regard to most of you the efficacy of the doctrine of the gospel is apparent in the holiness of your lives. My desire is, that you should not rest satisfied with present attainments, but that you should continually endeavour to excel, not only your heathen neighbours, but even yourselves and one another; and that in this generous emulation you should make rapid advances towards perfection of character. For this you know was the purport of those solemn and often-repeated charges which I delivered to you as the apostle of Jesus Christ, in the name and by the authority of my Master, and yours; who will acknowledge none as his disciples but those who obey his laws, and follow his perfect example.

2. The apostle strongly insists upon the necessity of chastity, and solemnly warns the Thessalonians against those impurities which were the disgrace of the heathen world, ver. 3—8.

3. *For this is the will of God,* even *your sanctifica-*

tion[1]*: that ye should abstain from fornication*[2], Ch. IV.
that every one of you may know how to preserve 4.
his body[3] *in sanctity and honour, not in lewd pas-* 5.
sions like the heathen[4]*, who know not God; and* 6.
that no one *may transgress against*[5]*, nor injure*[6]

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[1] *Sanctification.*] "ἁγιασμος, καθαρευσις, Hesychius: separation from the pollutions of the world, and consecration to the purposes of eligion and virtue." Chandler.

[2] *Fornication.*] "πορνειας, every species of *lewdness:* so it is used by the best Greek writers." Chandler.

[3] *To preserve his body.*] σκευος, his *vessel.* "*Quippe etenim corpus, quod vas quasi constitit ejus.*" Lucr. iii. 441. See Newcome, Benson; and Chandler, who considers it as an allusion to vessels of the temple consecrated to God, and entitled to respect and reverence.

[4] *Lewd passions, like the heathen.*] εν παθει επιθυμιας. "The first word signifies the passions in general, the other signifies *desire* in general, particularly after riches, empire, pleasures, and especially after criminal lusts." See Chandler. Archbishop Newcome renders the words, "the passion of desire;" Mr. Wakefield, "lustful passions." Dr. Whitby, Dr. Benson, and Dr. Chandler, quote many passages from ancient writers, to show the extreme profligacy and shameless debauchery of the heathen world. Dr. Priestley remarks, "We may be surprised that the apostle should think it necessary to animadvert at all upon such vices as are recited in this address to Christians; but till men were apprized of the purity of the Christian precepts, they had no idea of much blame in very gross vices. But in a short time after, such things were not heard of among Christians. It is proper that these things should be observed, in order to give us a just idea of the value of Christianity, and how great a blessing it has been to mankind in a moral respect."

This excellent author, after noticing, upon ver. 3, some of the abominable practices which were used among the Egyptians, adds, "As the apostle observes, fleshly lusts war against the soul, and debase the mind. It is, however, the utter and manifest inconsistency of these vices with the Christian character, that gives many persons of the present age a dislike to it. For in these respects the maxims of modern unbelievers are as loose as those of the ancients."

[5] *Transgress against.*] υπερβαινειν a stronger word than

Ch. IV. Ver. 6. *his brother*[1] *in this concern*[2]; *for the Lord* will *punish all such* offences[3], *even as we formerly declared and testified to you.*

And in the first place, my brethren, I cannot conceal my apprehensions that, having lately been converted from gross idolatry, you are not sufficiently apprized of the great stress which the gospel lays upon purity of character. You are required to live so as to please God, and I assure you that there is nothing which he more explicitly commands as an indispensable requisite to the attainment of his favour than an entire separation from the vices and abominable practices of your heathen state; and particularly from impurity in every degree and in every shape, in thought, word,

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ἁμαρτανειν; and signifies *to transgress* in a bold and aggravated manner. See Chandler, from Eustathius.

[6] *Nor injure.*] πλεονεκτειν. See Wakefield's *Silva Critica*, P. i. p. 106. "*to covet*, or *circumvent*." See Benson. "by craft and violence to defraud a man of his property." Chandler. Πλεονεξια is unquestionably used by the apostle to express *inordinate lusts*. In that sense it is probably used here. The apostle, to express himself decently, expresses himself obscurely. See Locke on Eph. iv. 19.

[1] *His brother:*] *i. e.* his fellow-Christian; but it would be equally criminal to act in the same manner with respect to heathen. Dr. Benson, therefore, conjectures that the apostle alludes to some particular fact which had been communicated to him by Timothy.

[2] *In this concern.*] εν τω πραγματι. See Wakefield, Newcome, &c. Raphelius and Chandler produce several quotations from ancient authors to show that the words have this sense. See 2 Cor. vii. 11.

[3] Will *punish all such* offences.] "will punish all these things." Wakefield. "εκδικος he who punishes another justly for his crimes." Chandler. "is an avenger of all such." Newcome.

and deed. To please God you must be well skilled in the art of governing yourselves, and restraining your passions within the limits of virtue and honour. You must utterly forsake those lascivious practices which are so common amongst your heathen neighbours, and so disgraceful to their character. They, indeed, have an apology which you have not. They have no just conceptions of the character and attributes of God, of his word and will; they worship deities of their own invention, whose example encourages, and whose rites require the most odious impurities. The true God whom you have learned to worship is of a very opposite character. He is purity itself. He strictly prohibits every violation of the law of chastity, and has solemnly declared that such offences shall be visited with condign punishment. And this doctrine we inculcated upon you when we were with you, though I fear that some of you have almost forgotten it; and we at the same time solemnly assured you that what we delivered to you upon this subject was dictated by the highest authority. Ch. IV. Ver. 6.

For God hath not called us to impurity, but to holiness: he, therefore, who scorneth[4], *scorneth not* 7. 8.

[4] *He who scorneth.*] "ὁ αθετων, αθετει, ατιμαζει." Hesychius. "Proprie, *loco suo moveo, contemno et contumeliose tracto.*" Schleusner. "to reject any thing with contempt as false and groundless; or to throw it away with dishonour and scorn." Chandler. Gal. ii. 21; Jude ver. 8; comp. 2 Pet. ii. 10; Luke x. 16; John xii. 48. Dr. Benson observes, that "as the apostles honestly informed their converts that they must expect persecution, so they told them the truth notwithstanding their

Ch. IV. Ver. 8. *man but God, who hath given his spirit, that holy* spirit [1], *unto us.*

I speak and write by the authority of God, who hath invited us to participate in the privileges of the gospel, not to indulge ourselves in the uncontrouled gratification of the inferior powers of our nature, but to separate and distinguish us from the rest of mankind by purity and self-government. I fear that some of you, who are but imperfectly converted from the immoralities of your heathen state, may dislike the restrictions of the gospel, and may even be disposed to sneer and scornfully to reject my advice as unreasonable and impracticable, and contrary both to the doctrine and example of the most celebrated sages of the heathen world. But, let the presumptuous scorner know, that his contempt falls not upon weak and fallible men, but upon that God whose ministers and messengers we are; who, whatever they may think, has inspired us by his own spirit, the spirit of holiness and purity, to denounce in his name the most awful judge-

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prejudices, and did not draw in converts by the baits of sensual pleasure." He further adds, "that perhaps some of the younger or the more gay and thoughtless converts might be apt to smile at the apostle's strictness, considering how their heathen neighbours judged and acted, and the principles in which they had been educated. The apostle, therefore, here puts on an air of uncommon seriousness and gravity, and lets them know that the ridicule and contempt reached higher than they imagined." Dr. Chandler gives an excellent summary of the apostle's advice.

[1] *His spirit, that holy* spirit.] το πνευμα αὐτὸ το ἁγιον. See Macknight.

ments against those who violate the laws of chastity; and who will, another day, assuredly vindicate the honour of his word. Ch. IV. Ver. 8.

3. The apostle commends the affectionate and benevolent spirit of the Thessalonian believers, and exhorts them to cherish and extend it, ver. 9, 10.

Now, concerning brotherly kindness, we have no occasion to write[2] *to you, for ye are yourselves divinely instructed to love one another*[3]; *and indeed ye do this toward all the brethren throughout Macedonia: but we exhort you, brethren, to excel* therein *still more.* 9. 10.

I lament that the corrupt habits of your former life, and the imperfection of your views of that sublimity of character to which the gospel is intended to elevate us, has made it necessary for me to insist so much at large upon the virtue of chastity. It is with pleasure that I now advert to another duty in which you are known to excel, the duty of sympathy and kindness to your brethren in the faith, who are also, generally speaking, your brethren in affliction. To your honour be it spoken, you readily learned that divine lesson which is one of the first

[2] *We have no occasion to write.*] Dr. Benson observes, that this form of speaking plainly supposes that there was great need to write to them, to recommend purity and chastity. Some of the most approved manuscripts and versions read εχομεν. See Griesbach.

[3] *Divinely instructed,* &c.] *i. e.* "by the precepts of God in the gospel." Newcome. Benson remarks, "that the expression implies that they had not only been taught, but that they had also followed divine instruction." See Isai. liv. 13.

Ch. IV. Ver. 10. that is taught in the school of Christ, to love and to be kind to one another. And this lesson I rejoice to hear that you have practised, not only in your own city, but throughout your whole province: so that there is not a Christian brother in all Macedonia who needed your assistance to whom that assistance was denied. Go on, my brethren, in this honourable course. Aspire after yet greater excellence in this godlike virtue. The spirit of kindness and good-will is the genuine spirit of the gospel of Jesus.

4. The apostle exhorts them to prudence, peace, and industry, and to a conduct which might be creditable to their profession, ver. 11, 12.

11. *And that ye be ambitious*[1] *to be quiet*[2], *and to mind your own* concerns[3], *and to work with your*

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[1] *That ye be ambitious.*] So Wakefield. "that ye earnestly strive." Newcome. "φιλοτιμεισθαι 'to be actuated by the love of praise and honour;' hence it denotes great diligence and vigour in any affairs whatsoever. This is the true import of the word in the place before us; and it should have been rendered, 'that ye *diligently* or *earnestly* study.'" Chandler.

[2] *To be quiet.*] ἡσυχαζειν. "to live an orderly, quiet, and peaceable life; not to intermeddle with affairs which did not belong to them. Timothy had probably informed him that the Thessalonians were too much given to this busy, impertinent spirit, 2 Thess. iii. 6, which was too much the temper of the Grecians in general." Chandler. Perhaps some of the Christians at Thessalonica boasted that they were ambitious to manifest a public spirit, and were willing to neglect their own private affairs in order to become benefactors to the public; whereas the apostle's advice is, that they should be ambitious to be quiet, and to let other men's business alone.

[3] *And to mind your own concerns.*] πρασσειν τα ιδια· "to

own hands[4], *as we* formerly *charged you, that you may walk creditably*[5] *towards those* who are *without*[6], *and may want nothing*[7]. Ch. IV. Ver. 12.

I have reason to fear that some of you abuse the privileges of your profession to idleness and impertinence; and that in expectation of being maintained out of the common stock, and under pretence of zeal for the gospel, you neglect your proper

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confine themselves to their own particular affairs, without officiously meddling with the concerns of others." Chandler.

[4] *To work*, &c.] "The original word denotes *labouring* and *working* of any kind, and is particularly used of agriculture, and the employments which fall to the lot of the poorer sort of mankind." Chandler. It should seem that the converts at Thessalonica consisted chiefly of persons who maintained themselves by their industry.

[5] *Creditably*.] *ευσχημονως*. "Hesychius says, the word signifies those who move gracefully in dancing. Hence it signifies *decently* in general." Chandler. "becomingly." Newcome.

[6] *Without*:] *i. e.* the heathen who are without the pale of the church, Mark iv. 11; 1 Cor. iv. 12; Col. iv. 5.

[7] *And may want nothing*.] *μηδενος χρειαν εχητε, or may have need of no man*. Dr. Chandler observes, that "these admonitions were necessary in the beginning of Christianity, to prevent the reproach, that it took persons off from their labours and employments, and encouraged idleness in those who professed it." "Perhaps," says Dr. Benson, "under pretence of spreading Christianity, and of a zeal for the spiritual good of others, they neglected their own affairs, and brought on poverty. This led them to frequent the houses of those who were richer, by base flatteries to court their favour, pragmatically and officiously to concern themselves in their affairs, and to live upon their substance. Upon the rise of new sects such idle busy-bodies are more common. But they are out of the way of their duty, and bring up an ill report of religion; even though they should be daily and hourly talking upon religious subjects, or at every body's table, and in all companies, proclaiming their zeal against errors and heresies, and for promoting truth and purity. They are a common nuisance, and ought to be discouraged if the churches would have peace."

Ch. IV. Ver. 12. business, and officiously obtrude yourselves into the houses and company of persons with whom you have no concern, and thus, in a busy commercial city like Thessalonica, you expose the Christian religion to the scoffs of unbelievers, as though it encouraged an idle, intrusive, meddlesome disposition. Let such persons remember the advice we gave them when we were ourselves at Thessalonica. Let it be their ambition not to obtrude themselves where they are not wanted, and to proffer advice where it is not asked, but to live quietly at home; to attend to their own business, to maintain themselves and their families by their own industry: and thus to procure themselves an honourable independence, and to recommend Christianity to their neighbours, as a religion which not only insures future felicity, but which, by enjoining prudence and diligence, contributes likewise to the temporal advantage of its consistent professors.

SECTION VI.

THE APOSTLE forbids all extravagant lamentations over deceased Christians; and comforts the Thessalonians, by representing to them the Christian doctrine concerning the resurrection of the dead. Ch. iv. 13—18.

1. The apostle forbids extravagant lamentations

over the Christian dead, because of the assured expectation that God by Christ would raise them from the grave, ver. 13, 14. Ch. IV.

Now, we[1] *would not have you ignorant, brethren,* Ver. 13.
concerning those who are fallen asleep[2], *that ye*
grieve not[3] *even as others who have no hope*[4].
For as[5] *we believe that Jesus died and rose again,* 14.

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[1] *We would not, &c.*] Θελομεν. This is the reading of the best manuscripts, and is adopted into the text by Griesbach and Newcome.

[2] *Fallen asleep.*] Dr. Chandler observes, that "under this image of *sleep* death is frequently represented in the ancient writings both of Greece and Rome; and he produces some beautiful passages to this purpose. He adds, that "it is with unspeakably greater propriety that revelation speaks of death under the similitude of sleep; not only on account of its being release from all the labours and afflictions of life, but because it is to be succeeded by a resurrection to new life and vigour."

[3] *That ye grieve not.*] Dr. Benson justly remarks, that "Christianity aims not at rooting out the affections, but to moderate and duly regulate them. The apostle does not forbid them to sorrow at all, but to sorrow like those without hope.

[4] *Others who have no hope:*] i. e. the heathen world. The wisest philosophers spoke very doubtfully upon the subject. And the generality of the heathen world had no hope whatever concerning the dead: for if they believed them to exist at all, it was, even though in Elysium, in a state far inferior to what they enjoyed on earth. See Dr. Chandler, and the references in his notes. Lucian, in his treatise on *mourning*, gives an account of the popular belief concerning the dead; who were supposed to be confined in a deep place under the earth, void of all light. He also describes the extravagance of their mourning and lamentation upon the death of any of their valuable friends: "All were dissolved in tears, and nothing was to be seen but beating of breasts, pulling their hair, tearing their cheeks, rending their garments, throwing dust upon their heads, rolling upon the earth, and beating their heads against the ground; uttering the bitterest complaints, and breaking out into the most passionate lamentations."

[5] *For as we, &c.*] "εἰ signifies 'seeing that,' Rom. v. 10, 15;

Ch. IV. Ver. 14. *even so* we believe that *God through Jesus*[1] *will bring with him those who are fallen asleep.*

It gives me pain to learn that some valuable members of your society have been removed by death; and the more so as I hear that you have allowed yourselves in some extravagant expressions of grief upon the occasion which were quite unworthy your profession and expectations as believers in the gospel: especially as your sorrow was in a considerable degree enhanced by some erroneous opinion which you had taken up concerning the solemn appearance of Christ to judgement. Such passionate expressions of despair only become those who are utter strangers to the hope of the gospel. Allow me, then, to repeat, what you have so often heard before, the doctrine which the gospel teaches concerning the state of departed believers: who are not so properly speaking *dead*, as fallen into a deep, sound sleep, from which they are soon to be awakened, refreshed and vigorous, to a new and heavenly life. And with these views you will easily see how unreasonable it is for you to indulge in the same extravagance of grief which is pardonable in your

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1 Cor. xv. 11; Gal. iv. 7." Benson. Dr. Chandler observes, that the sentence is evidently defective; and ought to be thus translated: "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, so we also believe," &c.

[1] *Through Jesus.*] So Wakefield and Newcome. Chandler also prefers it, though it is allowed that διὰ with a genitive sometimes signifies *in*. Rom. ii. 27, iv. 11; 2 Cor. v. 10; 1 Tim. ii. 15. Observe, the apostle consoles his friends with the hope of a resurrection: he says nothing of their present happiness in an intermediate state.

heathen neighbours, who have no hope of a future life. Recollect then, my brethren, that the fundamental article of the Christian faith is, that Jesus died and rose again; that he did not suffer in appearance only, but in reality; and that he really, and in very deed, rose to a new and immortal life. If we do not know and firmly believe this fact, we are not the disciples of Jesus. But if we do believe, there is another equally important fact, which is inseparably connected with it; namely, that God by Christ will raise all those who now are, or who at his final appearance will be, asleep in their graves. And that he will return again for this glorious purpose is as certain, and as firmly believed by us, as that he himself is risen and is now alive. We cannot believe one without the other; for the event which has already taken place is the proof and pledge of that which is to succeed. When Jesus appears, God will by him raise the Christian dead, and introduce them into a state of glory and happiness with him, their revered and beloved master and Lord. Ch. IV. Ver. 14.

2. The apostle consoles them with the assurance that believers who are living when Christ returns will have no advantage over those who will then be dead; but that these likewise will be raised in time to bear their part in the awful solemnities of the scene, ver. 15—18.

Moreover, this we declare to you by the command 15.

Ch. IV. Ver. 15. *of the Lord*[1], *that we who are left alive*[2] *at the coming of the Lord shall not anticipate*[3] *those who are fallen asleep.*

I am informed that some of you apprehend that your dead friends will sustain some peculiar disadvantage, and in particular, that they will be deprived of that glorious and interesting spectacle which will be exhibited to the astonished world at the final awful appearance of Jesus Christ; when he

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[1] *By command.*] εν λογῳ. See Macknight; and Chandler, who observes, that the subject was of such a nature as could not be known without express revelation.

[2] *We who are left alive,* &c.] Grotius observes here, that Paul thought it possible that he might live to the time of the general judgement. To this opinion Dr. Chandler accedes, upon the principle "that the time of the general judgement is absolutely uncertain, and that it will come suddenly and unexpected." Our Lord expressly says, that the times and seasons the Father has reserved in his own power, Acts i. 7; and Mark xiii. 32 he declares, that the day and the hour when the Son of Man should come was concealed even from himself. It is of importance to remember, that the prediction of an event does not necessarily imply either the knowledge of the event, or of the season when it was to happen; and it seems not improbable that the apostles and primitive converts expected that the day of judgement would take place before the end of the generation then living. Most interpreters, however, understand the apostle in this passage as speaking of all Christians in all ages as constituting one body or people. See Deut. xxvi. 6—9; Ps. lxvi. 6; Matt. xxiii. 35. Benson, Newcome.

[3] *Shall not anticipate.*] ου μη φθασωμεν· "shall not be before, or go before." Newcome.—Mons. Saurin's conjecture, in his note upon this text, may possibly be just. The Thessalonian Christians were earnestly desirous of seeing the splendid spectacle of Christ's appearance to judgement, and bitterly lamented that their departed friends would be deprived of this grand exhibition: to alleviate these apprehensions, the apostle communicates to them the information in this paragraph. See Doddridge's note *in loc.*

returns to raise the dead and to judge the world, of which those of us who shall be then living will be the admiring witnesses: and I hear that this is the excuse which you offer for the extravagant tokens of your grief. But for this suspicion I assure you that there is no foundation. I am authorized by Jesus our revered Master himself, to declare that those of us, whosoever they may be, who may happen to live to the awful period of his second coming, shall in this respect have no advantage over our sleeping brethren; and that we shall not be introduced to this magnificent scene a moment sooner than those who will be at rest in the tomb. Ch. IV. Ver. 15.

For the Lord himself[4] *will descend from heaven* 16.

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[4] *For the Lord himself,* &c.] This pompous representation of the descent of Christ to raise the dead and to judge the world, is intended to excite in the mind of the reader an awful sense of the solemnity and importance of that great event. How far it is to be accomplished in any thing like a literal sense the event itself can alone explain. The representation seems to be that of a conqueror advancing in a triumphal procession, attended with the acclamations of the spectators: a herald proclaiming his commission, and trumpets announcing his approach. Some suppose that the shout is the voice of Christ himself; but the word more properly expresses the acclamation of numbers. The word *archangel,* or principal messenger, seems to mean nothing more than the officer appointed for the purpose; as we say "the principal herald at arms." And the *trump of God* is a loud-sounding trumpet, alluding probably to the trumpet on Mount Sinai. Mr. Evanson thinks that the apostle here refers to the sound of the archangel's trumpet in the Apocalypse, Rev. xvi. 17; and infers from it that this epistle was written after the Apocalypse, and that the apostle bears testimony to it as divinely inspired; but the argument, though ingenious, does not appear to be so conclusive as the learned writer seems to apprehend. See Evanson.—*With acclamation.* Worsley.

Ch. IV. Ver. 16. *with acclamation, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ will rise first.*

A most magnificent and awful spectacle it will indeed be; such as no human tongue can tell, no human heart conceive. Jesus, who was once dead, but is now alive and ascended into the highest heavens, will then descend from his throne of glory in all the pomp of a conqueror in a triumphal procession. His followers and friends will joyfully greet him, and with loud acclamations will hail his approach: celestial heralds will proclaim his commission; and a trumpet, far louder and more energetic than that which once sounded upon Mount Sinai, will rouse the astonished universe, will even penetrate the tomb, and summon the whole race of mankind to appear at the dread tribunal. Under such imagery, though infinitely short of the sublime reality, may some faint conception of the grandeur and solemnity of the scene be conveyed to the mind. One fact, however, is literally true; that is, that all who have died in the faith of Jesus shall be raised to life before any change takes place in those who will then be the living inhabitants of the earth.

17. *Afterward, we who are left alive will be caught up*[1] *together with them into the clouds, to meet the*

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[1] *Caught up:*] literally, "snatched up;" it expresses not a voluntary act of their own, but an effect suddenly, forcibly, and supernaturally produced. See Chandler. What will really happen, in this as in the former case, the event alone can disclose.

Lord in the air; and so we shall ever be with the Lord[2]. Ch. IV. Ver. 17.

Immediately after this astonishing event, and not, as you apprehend, before it, we whose lives may be prolonged to this awful period, shall undergo a great and instantaneous change; for we shall be exempt from the stroke of death, and shall be suddenly transformed into the resemblance of our glorified Master. And then, in company with those who have been raised to life, we shall be at once, by a divine energy, transported into the clouds to meet our descending Lord in the regions of the atmosphere; and after having been acquitted at his

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[2] *And so we shall ever,* &c.] Dr. Priestley observes, that "the phrase 'being with the Lord' evidently refers to the state after the resurrection. It is after the meeting of the Lord in the air, and not before, that any persons are said to be with him. On the hypothesis of the dead being supremely happy, and continuing to be so till the resurrection, it would have been so far from being necessary to have informed them, that those who should be alive at the coming of Christ would have no advantage over those who had been dead; that these would have had a great and manifest advantage over their brethren, having enjoyed the greatest happiness in the presence of God and of Christ many ages before them. All that the apostle was able to say was, that they who are now dead shall not be upon the whole in a worse condition than those who shall be alive, because they would be raised to immortal life before any change should take place in the living." It is evident that the apostle is here speaking only of the resurrection of the just: the dead in Christ, true believers. His subject did not lead him to treat of the resurrection of the wicked. It is a very unjust insinuation of Orobio the Jew, in his controversy with Limborch, and afterwards of Mr. Gibbon, that the apostle made proselytes to Christianity by persuading men that believers should be translated to a state of happiness without dying. See Doddridge and Macknight; also Limborch's *Coll.* p. 75.

Ch. IV. Ver. 17. bar, and acknowledged by him as his friends, we shall be admitted to his society, and shall spend a happy eternity with him and with each other, in the best company and in the most delightful and useful employments.

18. *Wherefore comfort*[1] *ye one another with these declarations.*

These important facts, which I have thus stated, you may firmly depend upon as a revelation from God, which it will be your wisdom to improve both for exhortation and comfort. Exhort one another, my Christian brethren, to be diligent and unwearied in your preparation for this awful scene, that when your Lord cometh, whether it be sooner or later, you may be in a proper posture to receive him, and may not be ashamed in his presence. Also, console one another with these glorious truths. When you lose your pious friends by death, remind each other that they are only fallen into a sound and undisturbed repose, from which they will soon awake, refreshed and vigorous, to a happy and immortal life. And, in the prospect of your own speedy dissolution, let not your spirits be unreason-

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[1] *Comfort ye,* &c.] The word signifies both to *comfort* and to *exhort;* and, as Dr. Chandler observes, "the apostle might intend to be understood in both senses." Dr. Priestley remarks, "This is abundant consolation. It may, indeed, appear more desirable to enter upon a state of happiness immediately after death; and this may be a reason why Christians are so ready to adopt this opinion. But we ought to be satisfied with the happiness which God has promised us, and which will be revealed in due time: viz. at the resurrection of the just."

ably depressed. Jesus, your pattern and your chief, Ch. IV.
died and rose again; and because he lives, we shall live also.

APPENDIX TO SECT. VI.

THE interpretation which is given to this passage by the late learned and ingenious Newcome Cappe, in his *Essays on Sacred Scripture*, vol. ii. is so extraordinary, and so remote from the common interpretation, that it would not be doing justice to the reader not to state it.

He supposes that the Thessalonian Christians expected that Christ would soon return to establish a temporal kingdom in the world, from the privileges and blessings of which those would of course be excluded who were not converted to the Christian faith. That on this account many were in distress because of their unconverted friends, who, in the language of the apostle, are said to be asleep. And that the design of the apostle is to console them with the hope that many of their friends who were now heathens and idolaters would be converted, not in time to become subjects of the temporal reign which was never to take place, but in time to enter nearly at the same time with them, that is, at death, upon their future everlasting reward in the presence of Christ.

"Ver. 13. Your concern for those friends who are not yet awakened to receive Jesus and his go-

Ch. IV. spel, is indeed to be commiserated, yet it is not altogether a hopeless case.

" 14. The coming of Christ is not a personal but a figurative advent. Personally, Jesus is in heaven. The awakening of these sleepers is not beyond the power of him who brought Jesus from the dead. The power to which Jesus is exalted encourages some hope that by means of Jesus, that is, through the holy spirit, many who have hitherto been insensible to his call, God will collect and unite to him, to partake in the glories of the heavenly state.

" 15. For this I must tell you εν λογῳ, *in the language of the Lord*, that we who are already Christians shall not be beforehand with them who are yet unawakened, if, in the end, they be recovered, and brought to the acknowledgement and obedience of the truth.

" 16. Christ will indeed come from heaven while many are yet living; as heretofore by the holy spirit, so by and by in many signal and alarming events. But this coming does not promise to those who *are* Christians any advantage over those who hereafter may be such. The resurrection of the friends whom we are now lamenting may happen first.

" 17. And it will not be till after that, together with them, and not before them, or without them, we and they indiscriminately, as we are summoned out of this world, shall be conveyed in clouds to dwell with Christ in heaven. *Thus*, not otherwise; *then*, not sooner; *there*, not elsewhere,

shall we be with the Lord, and with each other, for ever. Ch. IV.

"18. Wherefore, comfort one another concerning the spiritually dead, whom ye lament and love, with considerations such as these."

I am almost tempted to say that, if such an interpretation is admissible, it is impossible for words to convey distinct ideas. But I correct myself: for it often happens that interpretations which appear most natural to one, appear the reverse to another. And, as Dr. Price says, we are apt to wonder at one another. I have no doubt that the pious and ingenious author was fully satisfied of the justness of his interpretation; and it helped him over a great difficulty in his hypothesis, that the resurrection takes place immediately after death. But it may be permitted to ask, if this be the true sense of the text, how came it to escape every preceding interpreter, ancient and modern?

SECTION VII.

THE APOSTLE exhorts the Thessalonians to prepare for the appearance of Christ, arguing particularly from the uncertainty of the precise time when this great event shall take place. Ch. v. 1—11. Ch. V.

1. He reminds them that Christ will appear at

Ch. V. a season when he is least expected by the unbelieving world, ver. 1—3.

Ver. 1. *But concerning the exact time*[1], *brethren, there is no occasion*[2] *that I should write to you.*

With respect to that awful event which is the subject of our discourse, the final appearance of Jesus Christ to raise the dead and to judge the world, I have already stated all that is necessary to confirm your faith, to govern your practice, and to administer to your consolation; and particularly to remove the apprehensions you entertained with respect to the superior advantages of the living believers above the dead at that interesting crisis. As to the exact period when this important event will take place, I have nothing to add to what I mentioned to you while I resided among you, and which you no doubt recollect.

2. *For ye yourselves know perfectly*[3] *that the day of the Lord*[4] *is coming*[5], *even as a thief by night*[6].

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[1] *The exact time.*] So Wakefield. Literally, "the times and seasons;" χρονοι, *times*, denotes large periods; καιροι, *seasons*, particular times when particular events were to take place. See Chandler. Acts i. 7; Eccles. iii. 1; Dan. ii. 27.

[2] *There is no occasion.*] Some good copies read χρεια εστι. See Griesbach. "it need not be written to you." Wakefield.

[3] *Know perfectly.*] "from the tenor of my instructions." Newcome. See also Benson and Chandler.

[4] *The day of the Lord.*] Hammond interprets this phrase, "of the destruction of Jerusalem." Dr. Benson believes him to be singular in this interpretation, and confuted by Le Clerc and Whitby; the latter expositor thinks that the apostle is treating of both events.

[5] *Is coming.*] So Wakefield. Macknight remarks, that "the verbs are in the present tense in this paragraph, to denote the

You cannot have forgotten what I taught you by the authority of Christ himself: that the awful crisis is rapidly advancing, and that it will eventually come upon us when least expected; just as a thief breaks into a house at midnight, when all the family are asleep and secure, not entertaining the least apprehension of so disastrous an event. In fact, the hour of our Lord's appearance is absolutely unknown to all of us; nor will he give notice of the precise time of the event, any more than a thief gives notice of the hour when he intends to rob the house. Ch. V. Ver. 2.

While men *are saying peace*[7] *and security, then sudden destruction is coming upon them, as pangs upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.* 3.

The event of Christ's coming to judgement will be as sudden and as calamitous to the generation

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certainty and instantaneousness of the event." This might lead to the mistake which gave occasion to the second epistle.

[6] *A thief by night.*] By this comparison our Lord himself illustrates the unexpectedness of his coming, Matt. xxiv. 43; see also 2 Pet. iii. 10, Rev. iii. 3. "to denote," says Dr. Chandler, "the uncertainty of the time, the unexpectedness of the event, and the state of security and fearlessness in which mankind should be involved." "The apostle's expressions of uncertainty as to the precise time of this event are so far (says this learned writer) from being any reflection upon his authority, that it is rather a proof of his integrity and prudence, in that he plainly acknowledges that he had no revelation in this article."

[7] *While saying peace,* &c.] This circumstance is taken notice of by our Lord himself, "from whom (says Dr. Chandler) I doubt not but the apostle had it." Matt. xxiv. 39, 40; see also 2 Pet. iii. 4.

Ch. V. Ver. 3. then living, as the deluge to the generation which were overwhelmed by it. Men will be thinking of nothing less than the catastrophe that is approaching; they will be immersed in vanity and pleasure, and will ridicule the expectation of Christians as a weak and unmanly superstition. But in an hour when they least expect it, the awful catastrophe will burst upon them, like the pangs of child-birth, and will overwhelm them in universal and inevitable ruin.

2. Christians being forewarned of this event, ought to hold themselves in a state of habitual preparation for it, ver. 4—6.

4. *But ye, brethren, are not in darkness* [1], *that the day should overtake you as a thief.*

The heathen world do not know, and will not believe, that such a catastrophe will ever take place: whenever it shall come, therefore, it must be to them a day of surprise and terror. But you, my brethren, are better informed: you are assured that this event is actually approaching, though you know not the exact hour of its arrival: it ought not, therefore, to be an object of surprise or dread to you; you ought to be, and I trust you are, in a state of habitual preparation for it.

5. *Ye all are sons of light* [2], *and sons of day; we*

[1] *In darkness.*] "Darkness," says Dr. Benson, "does not here mean *wickedness*, but gross ignorance in matters of religion. John iii. 20, Eph. v. 8." "καταλαβῃ, should surprise you." Wakefield.

are not sons *of night and of darkness: therefore* C. IV. Ver. 6.
let us not sleep[3] *as others* do, *but let us keep watch*[4] *and be sober.*

The idolatrous and unbelieving world are involved in midnight darkness; they see nothing before them, and they sleep or riot in the midst of danger and on the verge of destruction. But you, my brethren, who are believers in the doctrine of Christ, are brought out of darkness into broad daylight: you see your true state, you know what important events are at hand. You have learned how you may best prepare for them; so that what will to others be a season of terror and dismay, will to you, if you improve your knowledge, be a time of joy and triumph. From us believers the thick veil of ignorance and of prejudice has been removed: we are no longer under the dark and dangerous

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[3] *Sons of light*, &c.] "A usual hebraism, which implies that one thing is in some respect the cause of another. *Light* is properly the parent and original of every Christian as such: they are formed as Christians in their principles, tempers, and lives, by the heavenly light of gospel truth." Chandler. "*υἱος, hebraismus: sæpe dicitur de eo qui* studiosus, *vel* particeps *est alicujus rei.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Let us not sleep.*] "Sleep is here taken in the figurative sense, to denote the thoughtless, indolent, careless, secure and fearless temper of mind, which is the condition of persons oppressed with natural sleep." Chandler.

[4] *Let us keep watch,*] "that we may guard against surprise, and prevent danger." Chandler; who adds, that "Christians are to consider themselves as engaged in a hazardous warfare against subtle and powerful enemies; in which the want of vigilance and sobriety would be as truly criminal, and as certainly destructive, as in a soldier to be dissolved in sleep, or enfeebled by drunkenness."

Ch. V. Ver. 6. delusion of idolatry and superstition. Our conduct, therefore, ought to correspond with our advantages. We have not the same excuse that others have for negligence and vice. Enlightened as we are by the cheering beams of the gospel, let us avoid the indolence, the false security, the criminal excesses, of our idolatrous neighbours: let us rouse ourselves to the active discharge of duty, and, like soldiers upon guard, let us by vigilance, fidelity, and temperance, approve ourselves to our exalted Chief.

3. It is the indispensable duty of those who profess themselves the faithful disciples of Christ, to gird on the armour of the gospel, and vigorously to perform the duties of their post, in expectation of the promised reward, ver. 7—10.

7. *For those who sleep, sleep by night; and those who are drunken, are drunken by night*[1].

The darkness of heathenism affords some plausible excuse for indolence and indifference; and countenances, or shelters, the most licentious practices: as the shades of the night are by some allotted to repose, and by others they are made the screen for intemperance and excess, of which they would be ashamed in open day.

8. *But let us who are of the day be sober, putting*

[1] *Drunken by night.*] "Raphelius produces passages from Polybius, to prove that it was regarded as disgraceful by the heathen to be seen intoxicated in the day-time." Dr. Chandler; who adds, "I wish this was universally true in our times."

on the breastplate of faith and love, and for *a helmet the hope of salvation*[2]. Ch. V. Ver. 8.

Let us then, my brethren, who have emerged from the dark gloom of heathenism and prejudice, and who enjoy the glorious light of the gospel-day, renounce the disgraceful deeds of darkness, and carefully avoid all intemperance and excess. As faithful and vigilant sentinels upon guard, let us gird on the armour of the gospel. And, in particular, let us defend the heart, and guard against all unreasonable and criminal affections by a steady and practical faith in the discoveries of the gospel; and by ardent active love to God and man. And let the glorious hope of immortality, founded on the promises of the gospel, be a helmet to defend us from the poisoned arrows of popular superstition, and to preserve the intellect ever calm and clear for the investigation of moral and Christian truth.

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[2] *Putting on the breastplate,* &c.] The apostle here pursues the allegory of a soldier upon duty; and gives the Christian suitable armour for the parts most exposed, and where the wounds would be most dangerous. I have adopted Dr. Chandler's explanation of the fitness of the armour for the part to which it is applied: "*faith* and *love* for the breast, the seat of the affections; and *hope of salvation* for the head, the seat of reason." I am not, however, without some doubts whether this be not carrying the allegory further than the apostle intended; who perhaps meant nothing more than that faith, and love, and hope, were the best defence of a Christian against the superstitions and the vices of the heathen world. "*Ostendit quomodo præparare se debeant Christiani ad diem illum, nempe* fide, amore, spe. *Instructus his virtutibus, paratus est quandocunque ille dies venerit.* Πιστις, *firmissima persuasio Jesum esse Messiam, auctorem nostræ salutis.* αγαπη, *benevolentia erga omnes homines.* ελπις, *spes æternæ salutis.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. V. Ver. 9. *For God hath not appointed*[1] *us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ;*

10. *who died for us*[2], *that whether we be awake or asleep*[3] when he appears, *we may live together with him.*

It is with good reason that I remind you of the hope of salvation; for though the appearance of Christ will be for the destruction of the unbelieving world, it will issue in the final triumph of his faithful disciples. For let me assure you, God does not intend our punishment, but our deliverance from sin and death, at that awful season, when his son shall return to raise the dead and to judge the world. He once appeared in a humble form, and suffered death to ratify that covenant which imparts to us the blessings of life; and which insures final and everlasting felicity in the presence of God and

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[1] *God hath not appointed,* &c.] See John iii. 15; to which there is perhaps an allusion here.

[2] *Who died for us.*] "Christ died for us men, and for our salvation; inasmuch as by his blood he sealed and established that new covenant, wherein pardon of sin, and a resurrection to eternal life, are promised to all sincere penitents, and prevailingly holy persons." Benson.

[3] *Asleep.*] We have here a remarkable instance of the apostle's custom of changing the ideas which he annexes to his words, without previous notice to the reader. In this passage the word *sleep* is used in no less than three different senses: ver. 7, it signifies natural rest; ver. 6, it expresses remissness and negligence in the practice of duty; and here, ver. 10, it is unquestionably used to express the sleep of death. See Benson. —"*Sensus est, ut sive superstites, sive mortui deprehendamur die illo extremo, pariter omnes beate cum Christo vivamus.* ἅμα, *pariter omnes,* ut Rom. iii. 12." Rosenmuller. *q. d.* we may all live with one another, and with him.

Christ to every sincere believer, whether it be his lot to be found alive or dead at the season of the great consummation of all things. Ch. V. Ver. 10.

4. The apostle closes the subject with a suitable exhortation, ver. 11.

Therefore encourage[4] *one another and edify*[5] *each other, as indeed ye do*[6]. 11.

Upon the whole, therefore, considering the certainty and importance of the second advent of Christ, the uncertainty of the time when it shall take place, and your own interest in it, let me earnestly exhort you seriously to reflect upon it, and to apply these weighty considerations to the best purposes. Encourage one another in the practice of duty; comfort one another under suffering and bereavement: improve each other in faith and love, in fortitude and piety. But I need not enlarge upon this topic. It is with great satisfaction that I hear how solicitous you are to promote each others advancement in Christian virtue; and I am persuaded that you are making rapid progress towards Christian perfection.

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[4] *Encourage.*] παρακαλειτε. The word is the same as that which is used ch. iv. 18; which shows that the apostle is still insisting upon the same subject. It signifies either *to comfort* or *to exhort.*

[5] *Edify:*] or, build up. "improve each other." Wakefield.

[6] *As indeed ye do.*] Dr. Benson observes that "the apostle took every opportunity of speaking well of them where there was a foundation for it;" and adds that "praise mixed with exhortation renders it both more agreeable and of greater efficacy."

SECTION VIII.

Ch. v. *THE APOSTLE concludes with some appropriate exhortations, with a general salutation, and with the apostolical benediction.* Ch. v. 12—28.

1. The apostle recommends respectful and affectionate behaviour to their faithful teachers and superintendants, ver. 12, 13.

Ver. 12. *Now we intreat you, brethren, to acknowledge those who labour*[1] *among you, and preside over*
13. *you in the Lord*[2]*, and admonish you: and to*

[1] *Acknowledge those,* &c.] As no mention is made of bishops and deacons in either of the epistles to the Thessalonians, it is conjectured that the church was not then completely organized, and that its officers had not, at the time when the apostle wrote, assumed those names. But when a church was formed in any city, it was customary, and indeed absolutely requisite for the good order of the society, to select a few of the most intelligent and experienced persons to superintend the affairs of the society and to conduct public worship. These, whether regular presbyters or temporary officers, are the persons of whom the apostle is here speaking; and their office, as Dr. Chandler observes, was threefold: they were labourers in the ministry of the word, see 1 Cor. xv. 10, 1 Tim. v. 17; they presided in the meetings of the society, 1 Tim. *ibid.*; and they admonished, *i. e.* they exhorted and reproved, their hearers. The word denotes, says Dr. Chandler, affection and authority. The duties enjoined upon the Thessalonians towards their teachers were also threefold: they were to *know*, i. e. to reverence and respect them; to love them exceedingly; and to live in peace with them. See Chandler and Benson.

[2] *In the Lord.*] "in things relating to Christianity." Newcome.

love them exceedingly on account of their office; and live in peace with them[3]. Ch. V. Ver. 13.

I now proceed to offer a few hints of advice, as to your conduct towards the officers of the church. I mean those respectable persons who on account of superior age, experience, wisdom, and piety, were selected from among you to labour in the ministry of the gospel, to preach the doctrine of Christ to their unbelieving countrymen, and to preside in your Christian assemblies, to preserve order and decorum when you meet together for public worship; whose duty it is to instruct the ignorant, to admonish the irregular, and to maintain discipline and order in the church. Their office, while it is exercised with prudence, fidelity, and kindness, is both honourable and laborious, and in a high degree useful: it also exposes them to peculiar hazard. I intreat and I charge you therefore, my Christian brethren, to acknowledge these your superintendants under the character with which they are invested; to submit to their authority, to listen to their instructions, and to receive with humility and thankfulness their just and faithful animadversions and reproofs. Treat them with respect, provide liberally for their subsistence. Love them exceed-

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[3] *Live in peace with them.*] αυτοις. This is the reading of the Clermont and other manuscripts, and of many of the ancient versions. The common reading, ἑαυτοις, is also well supported, and gives a very good sense; though the other seems more agreeable to the connexion, and is marked by Griesbach as probable. "to live in peace with them, because of their office." Wakefield.

Ch. V. Ver. 13. ingly, as indeed you ought, for the firmness and faithfulness with which they discharge the hazardous and painful duties of their station. Do not resent the freedom of their reproofs; and do not put them into competition with each other, and split yourselves into parties under different leaders.

2. He reminds the presidents of the Christian society of the duties of their office, ver. 14.

14. *But we exhort you, brethren*[1], *admonish those who are disorderly*[2]; *comfort the feeble-minded*[3],

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[1] *We exhort you, brethren.*] "I think," says Dr. Benson, "with the Greek and Latin interpreters, that the apostle here turned his address from the people to their spiritual guides and teachers; and that he exhorted them to do what in the preceding verses he had intimated to be their peculiar work and office." Dr. Hammond thought these officers to have been the bishops of the several churches subject to the metropolitan church of Thessalonica. "But," says Dr. Benson, "what may we not say if we indulge to fancy, or give way to warm imagination? The scripture is an utter stranger to metropolitan bishops with their suffragans, or to metropolitan churches with their subordinate churches: every congregation was a Christian church, and none of them subject to any other." Macknight agrees with Benson, that this exhortation is addressed to the teachers.

[2] *Disorderly.*] ατακτους. "This," says Dr. Chandler, "is a military term, and denotes a soldier that breaks his ranks, deserts his post, or neglects his duty." It here alludes to that impertinent intrusion into other men's affairs, upon which the apostle insists more at large in the second epistle. 2 Thess. iii. 11, 12.

[3] *Feeble-minded.*] ολιγοψυχους, *those of little souls.* It is used in the Old Testament as a translation of what in the Hebrew signifies *the humble in spirit.* Isa. lvii. 15. Dr. Chandler, from Aristotle, explains it of a person "who has a mistaken opinion of himself, and indulges worse thoughts of his own condition than he ought to do." Some of the Thessalonians might be oppressed with a sense of guilt, and others with a dread of per-

succour the weak[4], *be of a patient spirit toward all*[5]. Ch. V. Ver. 14.

And as to you, my brethren in the ministry, I earnestly beseech you to persevere faithfully in performing the duties of your office, even such as require no small share of resolution and self-denial. Remind those who neglect their own concerns to meddle with the affairs of others, that the Christian religion requires that every man should attend to his proper business. Administer comfort to the dejected and desponding mind that distrusts its own resolutions, despairs of its final safety, and always bodes the worst. Afford needful assistance to those whose faith is feeble and wavering; who do not enter thoroughly into the liberal spirit of the gospel, and are in bondage to former superstitions. Teach them the rational and manly simplicity of the doctrine of Christ, and help them to throw off the yoke

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secution. These were men who needed consolation and encouragement. "*Eos qui in adversis animo sunt dejecto.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *Succour the weak.*] αντεχεσθε. It signifies, to assist a person who is holding a burden at one end, by laying hold of it at the other. *q. d.* lend a helping hand, &c. See Rom. viii. 26. The *weak* were probably persons of scrupulous consciences, who laid stress upon rites and ceremonies, distinctions of food, and observance of days, &c.; being ignorant of the liberal spirit of the gospel. The superintendants of the church were to bear with their prejudices, and gradually to instruct them in the liberal spirit of the gospel. See Rom. xiv., xv., I Cor. viii. Benson and Chandler.

[5] *Of a patient spirit.*] So Worsley. μακροθυμειτε. "The prejudices of some, the stupidity and want of capacity of others, and the infirmities of mankind in general, call for tenderness and great patience." Benson.

Ch. V. Ver. 14. of servitude. Finally, bear patiently with those who are ignorant and dull, and even with those who are obstinate and refractory, and do not hastily give up your attempts to be useful, nor relax your exertions to instruct or to reclaim.

3. The apostle recommends mutual forbearance and universal good-will, and presses the duties of habitual cheerfulness, prayer, and thanksgiving, ver. 15—18.

15. *Beware*[1] *that none render evil for evil to any* one; *but always pursue kindness to each other and to all* men.

Acquire, my brethren, (and I now address you all,) the magnanimous and forgiving spirit of the gospel. Among your heathen neighbours it is accounted as honourable to avenge yourselves upon an enemy, as to requite a friend. Be you vigilantly upon your guard against this revengeful spirit. On the contrary, make it your study and your ambition to do good, and to show kindness to all men, upon all occasions; not only to Christians, but to unbelievers; not only to friends, but even to enemies:

[1] *Beware.*] "Ὁρατε," says Dr. Chandler, "often denotes, *take heed, beware.*" The apostle, now addressing the society at large, forbids the retaliation of injuries; which was a practice very common, and much approved both by Jews and heathen. Matt. v. 43. "But the words," as Dr. Chandler observes, "are to be understood of private revenge only, not of seeking to the magistrate for protection from injury and violence. This is often necessary to the preservation of the public peace. But Christianity entirely forbids all private malice, enmity, and revenge: the instruction is absolute and universal."

bless those who curse you, and pray for those who persecute you. Ch. V.

Be always joyful[2]. Ver. 16.

Let no losses, persecutions, or bereavements, depress your spirits, and produce unreasonable dejection. Your relation to God as your Father, your expectation of the speedy appearance of Jesus Christ, and your assured hope of living for ever with him in glory and happiness, may well comfort your darkest hours; and inspire you with an habitual joy and triumph, which the vicissitudes of life can neither destroy nor interrupt.

Pray without ceasing[3]. 17.

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[2] *Joyful.*] "The advice means, Ever maintain a cheerful, easy, happy disposition in every condition and circumstance of life; not only in peace and plenty, but under affliction and persecution for righteousness' sake." Chandler. See Matt. v. 11, 12; 1 Pet. iv. 13, 14; Rom. v. 2.

[3] *Pray without ceasing.*] Prayer is a direct address to God: but it is not at all essential to prayer that it should consist wholly or chiefly of petition. Adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and the like, are at least equally becoming and equally important. The apostle could not mean to advise the Thessalonians to be always actually engaged in prayer, for that would be impossible. But he might mean to recommend an habitual impression of God upon the mind, and a spirit of habitual devotion. "This," says Dr. Priestley, "it is our duty and great happiness to cultivate. It is the perfection of the religious temper and character." The apostle is generally and justly thought to allude to the morning and evening sacrifice in the temple, which is called the continual burnt-offering, Exod. xxix. 38—42, Numb. xxviii. 24—31. The hours of sacrifice were nine in the morning and three in the afternoon; and these were the hours of prayer to the devout Jews, either in the temple or in private. And it is in allusion to this custom that the expressions, "dwelling in the house of God for ever;" "serving him day and night in his temple;" "Anna departed not from the temple," Luke ii. 37; "the apostles were in the tem-

Ch. V. Ver. 17. Let your lives be scenes of habitual uninterrupted intercourse with God. Meditate upon his character; adore his attributes; rejoice in his government; confide in his care; submit to his will; aspire after his favour; and express these grateful and joyful emotions of your hearts in suitable and appropriate language in the proper stated seasons of secret or of social worship, which will be more acceptable to God than the morning and the evening sacrifice. And let the fear and love of God possess and govern your hearts.

18. *At all times*[1] *give thanks, for this is the will of God, through Christ Jesus, concerning you.*

Possessed of the privileges, and animated by the hopes of the gospel, it becomes you, my Christian friends, at all times to maintain a grateful spirit. Be thankful, therefore, in adversity as in prosperity; in sickness as in health; in persecution as in a season of peace and liberty; under losses and bereavements as in the enjoyment of wealth and friends; in death as in life. This is the true spirit of the gospel; this is the spirit which God expects and requires of you, and for which the mission and doctrine of Christ lay a just and ample foundation.

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ple continually," Luke xxiv. 53; &c. are to be understood. In this view the apostle is understood to recommend praying constantly, morning and evening. See an excellent note of Dr. Benson's on the text.

[1] *At all times.*] So Mr. Wakefield; who thinks καιρῳ, or χρονῳ, to be understood here, as in 1 Tim. iv. 8, and elsewhere. "For every thing give thanks." Newcome. "Upon all suitable occasions, and in all the various events of life." Chandler.

4. The apostle offers advice concerning spiritual gifts, ver. 19—22. Ch. V.

Quench not the spirit[2]. Ver. 19.

Extinguish not that holy fire which has been kindled amongst you. Neglect not those gifts of the spirit with which you are severally endowed; use them not upon improper occasions; apply them not to improper purposes; interrupt not each other in the exercise of them; value them in proportion to their real importance; tempt not God to withdraw them from you; improve them to promote the knowledge and the success of the gospel.

Undervalue not prophesyings[3]; *but* (like good money-changers) *prove all things*[4]; *hold fast the best*[5]; *abstain from every kind of evil*[6]. 20, 21. 22.

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[2] *Quench not*, &c.] A beautiful allusion to Acts ii. 3, 4, where the descent of the holy spirit is said to have been accompanied with the appearance of tongues or spiral forms of flame, and to have resided upon each of the disciples present. A similar allusion is made by the apostle, 2 Tim. i. 6. "The spiritual gifts," says Dr. Benson, "like the fire upon the altar, could be kindled only from heaven; but might be stirred up, fed with fuel, or quenched by men."

[3] *Undervalue not*, &c.] ἐξουθενειτε· "the word signifies," says Dr. Chandler, "a supercilious contempt of another, arising from pride and haughtiness, and overvaluing one's own qualifications.'" προφητειας, *prophecy*; which was of two kinds: foretelling future events, or public instruction; sometimes, probably, by supernatural suggestion. It appears from 1 Cor. xiv. that this gift was greatly undervalued in comparison with the gift of tongues, which, though more showy, was of less use. That chapter is a complete commentary upon this text; which, as is usual in epistolary writings, would otherwise have been totally unintelligible to us, though easily understood by those to whom the epistle was addressed. See Benson *in loc.*

[4] *But* (like good money-changers) *prove all things.*] δε (*but*) is found in the best copies, and is admitted by Griesbach. It

Ch. V. Ver. 22. There is a diversity in spiritual gifts. Some are more showy, and therefore more coveted, than others. To be enabled to instruct others in the doctrine of Christ is, however, a gift more useful than any of the rest, even though it may not be accompanied with the graces of elocution. Let not, then, this gift be undervalued and made light of; but let it be most highly esteemed by you. I do not, however, mean to say that you are to admit as

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connects this with the preceding verse. "*Paulus dicit, γινεσθε φρονιμοι τραπεζιται, be skilful money-changers, prove all things.*" Cyril. This sentence is also cited by Origen, Chrysostom, and many other ecclesiastical writers, as a text of scripture; some ascribing it to Christ, and others to Paul. It is not, however, to be found in any copy or version of the New Testament now extant. Perhaps, therefore, Lardner is right in the conclusion, that "a passage so often quoted, if it had ever been in the New Testament, could never have been lost out of it." The writers, therefore, who cite it, could in this case only mean that the advice was to be found in sense, but not in words: *q. d.* as dealers in money take great pains to distinguish the genuine from counterfeit coin, so do you take pains to distinguish between true and false doctrine. See Lardner's *Credib.* part ii. vol. iii. p. 376. It may, however, reasonably be suspected that the words would not have been so often quoted had they not been found in some ancient copies, and believed to be genuine. Upon the authority of Cyril, therefore, I introduce them in this place, where they suit the connexion; but I introduce them with much hesitation. Dr. Whitby very justly observes, that "the apostle does not here bid the guides of the church try all things, and the people hold fast what they deliver unto them; but gives an injunction common to all Christians."

[5] *The best.*] "το καλον, a hebraism for το καλλιστον." Wakefield.

[6] *Abstain*, &c.] With Dr. Chandler, I connect this advice with the preceding. The word ειδος signifies *sort* or *kind*, as well as *appearance*. "*q. d.* have nothing to do with such kind of prophecies as, after examination, do not appear to proceed from the spirit of God."

true whatever any teacher may advance without due and diligent examination. No, my brethren, there is much error and false doctrine abroad, which assumes to be the doctrine of Christ. You must act like cautious dealers in the precious metals; you must learn, like them, to examine and to weigh; to distinguish counterfeit from sterling gold; rejecting what is spurious, and retaining, holding fast, and treasuring up, only that which is pure and genuine. But as to that doctrine which will not bear the process of trial, whatever pretensions it may make to the character of sound and evangelical Christianity, after due examination, reject it without hesitation, as worthless dross. Ch. V. Ver. 22.

5. The apostle prays that God would preserve and complete the virtues of their character, ver. 23, 24.

And may the God of peace[1] *himself sanctify* 23.

[1] *The God of peace.*] This expression, in comparison with 1 Cor. xiv. 33, seems to imply that some confusion and altercation had already taken place in the church at Thessalonica, in consequence of a competition and rivalship of spiritual gifts, which the apostle was desirous to suppress. Dr. Chandler considers the same subject as continued from ver. 19—23: viz. "'Quench not the spirit:' improve and exercise his gifts. 'Despise not prophesyings:' neither undervalue the gift, nor those who possess it. 'Prove all things:' bring all prophesyings to the test. 'Hold fast that which is good:' such as appear worthy of the spirit embrace and adhere to. 'Abstain from all appearance of evil:' what is not consistent with truth and holiness reject. And that you may do all this with temperance and candour, may God himself, who is the God of peace, who loves, approves, and commands it, sanctify you wholly, keep you pure and unmixed from the disorders and vices of the

Ch. V. Ver. 23. *you entirely. And may your entire* person [1], *the spirit, and the soul, and the body, be preserved unblameable unto the coming of our Lord Jesus* 24. *Christ. Faithful* is *he who invited you, and he will perform* his promise [2].

For the credit of the gospel, and for your own credit and improvement, I am anxious that you should live in peace; that there may be no unpleasant rivalry or jealousy with respect to your spiritual gifts; and that your examination of doctrines may not be a source of personal animosity. And to this end, may that God, who is the author of the gospel of peace and the lover of concord, preserve you entirely in this, as in other instances, from the contamination of the unbelieving world. And O that every one of you might, in every respect, both as to

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world; a peculiar separate people, devoted to his service and worship."

[1] *Your entire* person.] See Chandler's note. The apostle here alludes to the philosophy of the Stoics, Platonists, and others, who represented man as consisting of three distinct parts: the spirit, or rational mind; the sensitive soul, the seat of the affections; and the body, the mansion of both. It is universally allowed that the apostle does not, in this passage, mean to countenance, much less authoritatively to teach, the philosophy to which he here alludes. The same principle is applicable to other similar cases, *v. g.* to the doctrine of an intermediate state, and to those of apparitions and of demoniacal possessions, which were probably borrowed from the oriental philosophy. The apostles and evangelists were plain men, who were authorized to teach the plain doctrine of a future life, and a judgement to come; but who were not inspired to settle any nice questions in metaphysics or philosophy. See Benson *in loc.*

[2] His promise.] So the ellipsis is supplied by Mr. Wakefield: "He who called you may be relied on for the performance of his promise."

mind and body, in thought, in inclination, and in outward action, be preserved perfectly innocent, and pure, to that day when you will be summoned to the tribunal of our common Master, Lord, and Judge! And be assured, my brethren, that the merciful God, who invited you to participate in the invaluable blessings of the gospel, will prove faithful to every promise that he has made. Be you true to yourselves and to your profession, and you need not doubt that your best wishes will be fulfilled, and your highest expectations will be exceeded. Ch. V. Ver. 24.

6. The apostle requests an interest in their prayers; he sends his affectionate salutations; he requires the epistle to be publicly read, and concludes with a solemn benediction, ver. 25—28.

Brethren, pray for us. 25.

My Christian brethren, those of you especially who are engaged in the work of public instruction, and who can, therefore, sympathize with us in our labours, our difficulties, and our perils, pray for us; that we may be duly qualified for our work, and successful in it; and that we may be delivered from the malice of unreasonable and wicked men. To know that we are the object of your prayers will be a source of comfort and encouragement to us.

Salute all the brethren with a holy kiss[3]. 26.

[3] *A holy kiss.*] This was an ancient eastern custom, Gen. xxvii. 26, Prov. xxiv. 26. In the Jewish synagogues the men and women had seats in different parts of the synagogue; and

Ch. V. Ver. 26. Assure my Christian brethren of my affectionate salutations and cordial good wishes for them.

27. *I adjure you by the Lord*[1], *that this epistle be read to all*[2] *the holy brethren.*

This epistle, though addressed to the whole church at Thessalonica, will of course be delivered into the hands of you, my brethren, who are the

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this custom was adopted by Christians in their places of worship. See Benson on 1 Pet. v. 14.

[1] *I adjure you.*] Ὁρκίζω ὑμᾶς· *I lay you under the solemn obligation of an oath.* There were two forms of taking an oath among the Jews: when a man pronounced the oath himself, and when he was adjured by another. In all cases an execration was supposed to attend the oath. Our Lord answered upon oath before the high-priest. And the example of the apostle in this instance shows that oaths are not unlawful upon solemn occasions. Matt. xxvi. 63. See Benson and Whitby. Beza supposes this and the two preceding verses to have been addressed to the elders of the church. "προεσ-ωσι, *sive presbyteris primum epistola in manus tradebatur. His salutem cæteris Christianis dicendam injungit apostolus, eosque monet, ne sibi solis epistolam servent, sed cum reliquis de plebe Christianis, prælegendo communicent.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *Be read to all.*] Dr. Benson remarks, that "the epistle was to be read publicly to all the church. St. Paul was not for having the scriptures locked up from the common people; neither did he recommend it to them, before they read the scriptures, first to read a system of divinity drawn up by uninspired and fallible men." "St. Paul, by adjuring them in so solemn a manner to read this epistle, might perhaps design to introduce the reading of his epistles into the Christian churches. They would thereby be led to regard them as the rule of their faith and practice as Christians." "How easy was it," adds this learned expositor, "for the primitive Christians to distinguish Paul's genuine epistles from any counterfeit ones? when he sent them to the several churches by trusty and well known persons? when he ordered them to be read publicly upon the receipt of them? when he wrote them with his own hand, or took care to affix the salutation written with his own hand? And if the genuineness of them was once ascertained, how easy was it to transmit them to posterity!"

superintendants of the church; and, as it contains some things which may possibly give offence to some professed believers, you may perhaps be unwilling to incur the odium of communicating it to the society. But to save you from that difficulty, I now enjoin it as a solemn charge, and require you, as you will be responsible for your conduct to our Lord and Master at his final appearance, that you do cause this letter to be publicly produced and read when every member of the society is present; that all may hear, and that each may apply the admonitions and precepts to his own case; and so that all may be instructed, warned, and edified. Ch. V. Ver. 27.

The favour of our Lord Jesus Christ[3] be *with you. Amen.* 28.

I conclude with expressing my earnest desire and prayer for you all, that you may all participate in the everlasting blessings of that gospel which is the free gift of God by Jesus Christ; and that you may be numbered amongst the faithful friends and followers of our great Master at his second coming. Amen.

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[3] *The favour*, &c.] "The original word signifies both *favour* and the effect of it; the apostle doubtless included both." Chandler.

THE SECOND EPISTLE

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

THE THESSALONIANS.

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

THE apostle in his first epistle to the Thessalonians had expressed himself so strongly concerning the second coming of Christ, the near approach of the day of judgement, and the serious interest both of himself and them in this awful event, that he seems to have excited a very general expectation in the minds of the Thessalonian Christians, of the immediate arrival of that solemn event; which excited great consternation and alarm. This alarm having been reported to the apostle, perhaps by the person who was employed to carry the letter, he thought it necessary to write immediately to check their unfounded apprehensions. This letter, therefore, he wrote from Corinth, while Silas and Ti-

mothy were still with him; whose names he joins with his own in the introductory salutation: and it is generally agreed that this epistle was written A.D. 52.[1]

Of the genuineness of this epistle no doubt has ever yet been entertained. The original was authenticated by the concluding salutation, which was written with the apostle's own hand. It is a public epistle, addressed to a considerable body of Christians, to whom no doubt it was publicly read, and by whom it would probably be preserved with great care. And though it is the shortest of Paul's public epistles, yet it contains several passages in which the apostle alludes to discourses which he had delivered when he was at Thessalonica, or to events which happened at the time: which allusions, though necessarily obscure to a modern reader, would be well understood by the persons to whom the epistle is addressed, and would never

[1] Grotius is singular in supposing that this epistle was written previously to the former, that it was dated in the second year of Caligula, about A.D. 39, in whose extravagance and impiety the prophecies of the second chapter were fulfilled, according to Grotius's interpretation, who was very unwilling to allow that any of the predictions in the New Testament received their accomplishment in papal Rome. He supposes the epistle to have been addressed to a small number of believing Hebrews who escaped from the persecution which followed Stephen's martyrdom, and who settled at Thessalonica. But he conjectures that the epistle was not sent till the reign of Vespasian. His arguments are trifling in the extreme; one is, that ch. iii. 17, he notes the manner of identifying his epistle: ch. ii. 13, he speaks of them as chosen to salvation from the beginning. The probability is, that this great man was influenced by his hypothesis more than he was himself aware.

have occurred to one who had attempted to forge an epistle in the apostle's name. Also the language and sentiments of the epistle harmonize with the apostle's character and professions as represented in Luke's history, or in the other acknowledged writings of Paul[2]. Finally, this epistle is inserted in all the ancient catalogues of undisputed canonical books; it is found in all the best and most ancient manuscripts without exception, and in all versions; and it has been received and cited from age to age without dispute as the genuine production of the apostle Paul.

A more decisive proof, perhaps, of the genuineness of this epistle is the prophecy which it contains of the man of sin, chap. ii., so palpably fulfilled in the corruptions and usurpations of the antichristian church, and particularly in papal Rome.

It has been doubted whether the mistake of the Thessalonians originated in their misunderstanding the apostle's first letter, or whether some person had not forged a letter in the apostle's name, which he here disavows. The former supposition is probably the true one. No person who reads the first epistle to the Thessalonians can be surprised that the

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[2] See Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, chap. x. The ingenious writer argues from the apostle's referring to his conversations with the Thessalonians for an explanation of the language of his letter, ch. ii. 5; from his refusal to accept a subsistence from the Thessalonians, and maintaining himself by his own labour, ch. iii. 8 (comp. Phil. iv. 15, Acts xx. 34); and from his correction of the mistake made by the Thessalonians of the annunciation of Christ's appearance in the first epistle.

Christians to whom it was written should expect the speedy advent of Christ to judgement: though certainly the apostle gave no room for the expectation which they seem to have taken up, that this event would arrive in less than a year.

It has been judiciously remarked, that as the apostle in this letter does not repeat his cautions against impurity, nor his exhortations to respect their spiritual superintendants, there is great reason to believe that the advice he suggested in his former epistle had in these cases produced its proper effect. But the hints which he had given to officious and idle persons who neglected their own concerns to intrude into those of other men, to the great discredit of their Christian profession, not having been properly regarded by them, he animadverts upon them in the second letter with greater severity.

THE APOSTLE INTRODUCES the epistle with his usual evangelical salutation, joining the names of Silas and Timothy with his own, Ch. i. 1, 2. He then,

FIRST, Thanks God for the constancy and fortitude with which they suffered persecution; and comforts them with the assured expectation of the appearance of Christ to reward their fidelity, and to punish their enemies and persecutors; and prays that God would enable them to persevere to the end in their adherence to the gospel, ver. 3—12.

SECONDLY, He corrects the error into which they had fallen concerning the coming of Christ: He

denies that he himself, or any person authorized by him, had ever declared that this event would take place immediately: He assures them that previously to this event a great and general apostasy would take place, the characters of which he particularly describes; but that even this apostasy would not happen till some great obstruction was removed. Ch. ii. 1—12.

THIRDLY, The apostle expresses his gratitude for their election to gospel privileges, and his hope that they will, by the grace of God, be preserved from the apostasy. He requests that they would pray for his success, and for his deliverance from persecution; and expresses his confidence that they will comply with his advice, and persevere in faith and virtue. Ch. ii. 13—iii. 5.

FOURTHLY, He enters a strong protest against the character and behaviour of those impertinent, idle, and disorderly persons who infested the church at Thessalonica, and disgraced the Christian profession. He earnestly admonishes such persons to reform their conduct; and he exhorts the rest to mark and shun the society of those who are incorrigible by other means, that they may be brought to shame and repentance, ver. 6—15.

FIFTHLY, The epistle concludes with the salutation and benediction written with the apostle's own hand, ver. 16—18.

"The sum of what has been said," says Dr. Benson, "comes to this: viz. That this epistle may be

looked upon as a supplement to the former; that the main point about which he wrote this second epistle was to rectify a mistake into which they had fallen concerning the speedy coming of Christ. But he has also added many other things of considerable importance: comforting the Thessalonians under their persecutions, and reprehending the idle and disorderly among them. These three things the apostle hath more especially laboured, that he might prevent the ruin or great decay of the Christian religion at Thessalonica. And it is to be hoped that he succeeded in his design. For we find from the *fathers* that there was a Christian church at Thessalonica many ages after this."

THE SECOND EPISTLE

TO

THE THESSALONIANS.

SECTION I.

THE APOSTLE, after a suitable introduction, gives thanks to God for the increase of their faith and love, and for their fortitude under persecution; he encourages them with the assurance of an ample recompense at the appearance of Christ, and concludes with affectionately commending them to the powerful protection of God. Ch. i. throughout. Ch. I.

THE APOSTLE'S INTRODUCTION.

THE apostle introduces his epistle with the usual salutation, joining the names of Silas and Timothy with his own, ver. 1, 2.

PAUL and Silvanus, and Timothy[1], *to the* Ver. 1.

[1] *Paul*, &c.] The opening salutation is the same with that

Ch. I. Ver. 2. *church of the Thessalonians,* believers *in God our Father, and* our *Lord Jesus Christ: Favour be unto you, and peace from God our Father*[1], *and* from our *Lord Jesus Christ.*

We, who lately addressed an epistle to the church at Thessalonica, even I, Paul, with my associates Silas and Timothy, now unite in writing a second epistle to the body of Christians in that opulent and populous city; to those who distinguish themselves from heathen idolaters on the one hand, and from prejudiced Jews on the other, by believing in the unity and paternal love of God, and by a professed subjection to Jesus of Nazareth as their Master, and acknowledgement of him as the true Messiah. And as a testimony of our affection for them, we repeat our earnest wish that they may enjoy an abundant participation of the blessings of the gospel, which is, through Jesus Christ, the best gift of God to man.

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of the former epistle, which, as Dr. Benson observes, may be regarded as a presumptive argument that the two epistles were written by the same person.

[1] *God our Father.*] "It cannot but be observed," says Dr. Priestley, "that, in the usual tenor of scripture language, God and Christ are carefully distinguished; the appellation of God being given to the Father only, exclusively of Christ, as well as of all other beings."

Dr. Benson very pertinently observes, that "when the apostle says εν Θεω—και Κυριω, *in God our Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ,* it plainly shows that St. Paul did not design to say, ver. 2, 'God the Father of us and of the Lord Jesus Christ;' though our Lord did use an expression like that, John xx. 17. In this text, and in 1 Thess. i. 1, εν is to be understood before Κυριω, and απο before Κυριε. See 2 Thess. ii. 16; 1 Tim. ii. 2; 2 Tim. i. 2."

1. The apostle thanks God for their increasing faith and love, and for their fortitude under those severe persecutions, the existence of which was a decisive proof of a future retribution, ver. 3—5. Ch. I.

We ought to thank God[2] *always concerning you, brethren, as it is fit; because your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all toward each other is increasing.* Ver. 3.

The report which we have received of your character and conduct since we wrote our last epistle fills us with joy and gratitude. And as we have been accustomed in our daily exercises of social worship to give thanks to God for your profession of the Christian faith, and your exercise of Christian love, it is now our duty to express our gratitude for that distinguished improvement which you have made in these fundamental principles of Christian virtue, of which we have heard so favourable an account.

So that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God, on account of your patience and fidelity under all the persecutions and afflictions which ye endure; which are *a proof*[3] *of the right-* 4. 5.

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[2] *We ought to thank God,* &c.] "In the former epistle the apostle thanked God for the beginnings of their faith, love, and patience, 1 Thess. i. 3, 6—10, ii. 14, iv. 9, 10; in this and the following verses he mentions their increase in these virtues. This is another confirmation of this being a second epistle to the Thessalonians." Benson. It seems not unlikely that the messenger by whom the former letter had been sent had brought back to the apostle a favourable account of the improving character of the Thessalonian converts.

[3] *A proof,* &c.] "ενδειγμα, *argumentum firmum unde colligi*

Ch. I. Ver. 5.

eous judgement of God, that ye may be accounted worthy[1] *of that kingdom of God*[2]*, for which ye even suffer.*

With much regret we hear that the cruelty of your persecutors does not yet relent. But having been also informed of the fortitude with which you undergo the severest sufferings, and of your faithful adherence, notwithstanding, to the profession and to the promises of the gospel, we cannot but con-

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tuto possit, aliquando Deum gravissimas pœnas, ab adversariis religionis Christianæ sumpturum, et Christianos oppressos felicitatis æternæ, præmio ornaturum esse." Schleusner. "ενδειγμα, αποδειξις." Hesychius. "I know of no stronger proof," says Dr. Benson, "of a righteous judgement to come, than the persecutions of good men, and the present triumphs of the wicked."

[1] *Accounted worthy.*] "καταξιωθηναι, *dignum habeo, dignum reddo, nancisci aliquid, consequi, ut consequamini felicitatem æternam.*" Schleusner. "A proof of the just appointment of God in vouchsafing to you that kingdom of God." Wakefield. "*Counted worthy of the kingdom of God for which ye suffer.* The sufferings you endure, you bear on account of it; animated by the hope of attaining it, and because you will not renounce your inheritance of it: and hereby God will manifest his own righteousness, and demonstrate the equity of his procedure in your being accounted worthy to be made possessors of it. For what can be a greater instance of equity in God, than that, as they bore their sufferings with constancy, he should reward their patience and fidelity, and approve himself faithful to his own engagements, by conferring the promised kingdom upon them?" Chandler.

In short, their worthiness consisted not in possessing a merit which might claim the reward as a *right*; but in acquiring those qualifications to which the promise was annexed.

[2] *Kingdom of God.*] "Not the 'Christian church,' but the 'state of future happiness intended for virtuous believers.' The profession of the faith and hope of the gospel was the reason, both why their enemies persecuted them, and of their own amazing patience." See Benson.

gratulate you upon your heroic conduct; and we are continually boasting of you wherever we go, and holding up your example to other Christians, for their encouragement under similar trials. And be assured, my brethren, that such sufferings as yours, borne with such a temper and in such a cause, cannot fail of their proper recompense. They are themselves a proper proof of a future judgement under the righteous government of God; and are preparing you for a glorious station in that blessed and immortal state, the lively expectation of which supports you under all your sufferings. Ch. I. Ver. 5.

2. God himself regards it as an act of justice, that sufferers should be rewarded, and persecutors punished; and it is his will that this awful distinction should take place at the final appearance of Jesus Christ, ver. 6—10.

Forasmuch as it is *just in the account of God*[3] *to recompense affliction to those who afflict you, but to you who are afflicted rest with us*[4], *when the Lord Jesus shall be manifested from heaven*[5]. 6. 7.

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[3] *Forasmuch as* it is *just.*] "ειπερ is not a note of doubting but of confirmation. See Rom. viii. 9." Benson. "Forasmuch as it is a righteous thing with God; *i. e.* in his judgement and estimation." Chandler.

[4] *Rest with us:*] *i. e.* "the apostles and preachers of Christ." Chandler; who observes, that "the word we render *rest* sometimes signifies 'exemption from labour and hazard,' particularly of war; sometimes, 'remission from hard usage;' sometimes, 'the cheerful indulgence which is the effect of liberty:' *q. d.* being partakers with us in Christ's sufferings, you shall be partakers with us of his glory."

[5] *When the Lord Jesus,* &c.] "that is," says Dr. Chandler,

Ch. I. Ver. 7. And I can assure you, my brethren, from the highest authority, that we are not deceived in the conclusions we draw from the persecutions of the virtuous and faithful, that there is a judgement to come. For the righteous God himself regards it as an equitable thing, and as that which the honour of his government requires, to protect the innocent sufferer, and to inflict a just retaliation upon their cruel persecutors. And the gospel revelation teaches us when this awful distinction shall take place.

" when he shall leave for a season those heavenly mansions in which he now resides." " Jesus is now," says Dr. Benson, " in the third heavens, hid from mortal eyes." That there is some place in which Jesus now resides invisible to men, is an undoubted fact; and that this place may be called *heaven*, if by heaven be meant a state of honour, activity, and happiness, is equally indubitable. But that there is any such place above the clouds which corresponds with the popular notion of heaven, where God manifests his peculiar glory, and where Jesus dwells at an inconceivable distance from this world and from all human concerns, is highly improbable; it is contrary to every correct idea of the structure of the universe, and is altogether destitute of proof. The apostles express themselves upon the subject according to the popular notions of the Jews; but they never profess that they were authorized to give a *sanction* to those notions, which were crude and unphilosophical in the extreme. The apostle Paul probably knew nothing more and meant nothing more than that, as Christ had ascended into the atmosphere, into the region of the clouds, and had there disappeared, Acts i. 9; so, at his last coming, he will again appear in the clouds, from whence he will descend to the seat of judgement. But as to his present local residence, as he knew nothing, so he says nothing about it. Dr. Priestley well observes, that " we see here, as in the former epistle, that these persecuted Christians are referred for their reward to the second coming of Christ to raise the dead and to judge the world. No hint is given them of any recompense between the time of death and the resurrection, which the apostle could never have overlooked if he had known of any such state."

Your oppressors shall be punished; and you, together with us, who, like you, are exposed to continual persecution for the sake of Christ, shall enter upon your final and everlasting reward, on that day, when Jesus, our exalted chief, will appear again in the clouds of heaven. Ch. I. Ver. 7.

With the angels of his might, in flaming fire[1], *executing vengeance on those who know not God, and who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*[2]. *These shall suffer punishment,* even *everlasting destruction*[3], *from the presence of the Lord,* 8. 9.

[1] *Angels of his might, in flaming fire.*] Angels are any instruments, animate or inanimate, by which divine Providence executes its purposes. *Maim. de More Nevochim,* part. ii. c. 6. 42. The apostle uses these expressions perhaps in allusion to the appearance upon Mount Sinai, to heighten the ideas of his readers with respect to the solemnity and grandeur of the scene. How far they are to be understood literally, the event only can explain, and it would be fruitless to inquire.

[2] *Who know not,* &c.] Dr. Benson thinks, that "by 'those who know not God,' the apostle means *heathen persecutors;* and by 'those who obey not the gospel,' *Jews.*" He adds, "There is no doubt but Christ will at last punish professed Christians who have not obeyed the gospel, as well as infidels; but I do not apprehend that that is said here." The word Χριστῶ is omitted in some of the most ancient manuscripts and versions.

[3] *These shall suffer punishment,* even *everlasting destruction.*] Dr. Priestley observes, "that these terms, literally interpreted, would imply that the wicked are to be finally destroyed. But the term *destruction* is often used in scripture to denote calamity in general, and such as has its period; and if the wicked be raised from the dead and continue to exist, it is not possible, unless the constitution of their natures be entirely changed, but that their sufferings will in length of time work a favourable change in the state of their minds, so that after an adequate punishment their sufferings may be remitted." Dr. Chandler says, "The word ὀλεθρος never implies an entire extinction of the thinking principle; but that in this connexion it expresses

Ch. I. Ver. 10. *and from the glory of his power*[1], *when he shall come in that day to be glorified by his saints, and to be admired by all those who have believed, and* by you particularly[2], *because our testimony among you hath been believed.*

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the entire extinction of that life which they receive at the resurrection by the reunion of the soul and body." "This destruction," says he, "this second death, shall be final and irreversible." But what is to become of the thinking principle, the soul, after it has been thus finally separated from the resurrection body he does not say, nor how long its connexion with that body is to continue.

The apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 22, assures us, that all who die in Adam shall be made alive in Christ. But no one can doubt that the resurrection here announced is a resurrection to happiness: all mankind, therefore, will be raised to a life of ultimate happiness. But in the text we are told, that they will be punished with everlasting destruction; which, however, as Dr. Chandler well observes, does not signify extinction of being. To reconcile the apostle to himself, therefore, it must mean *a suffering that will end in happiness:* q. d. The wicked shall be punished till he ceases to be wicked, till wickedness is destroyed. Or, perhaps, till he himself is weary of existence: he shall seek for death and it shall flee from him.

[1] *From the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power:*] i. e. to an exclusion from his presence: or, this punishment will be inflicted by an act of the glorious power of Christ, who will then be visibly present.—"which destruction shall proceed from the Lord, and the fearful exertion of his glorious power." Newcome.

[2] *When he shall come in that day, and* by you particularly.] This is Dr. Benson's construction of this obscure passage, and it appears to me the most eligible. He observes, that the trajection of the words *in that day* is exactly similar to Rom. ii. 12, 16; also that supplying the ellipsis by the words *by you particularly,* saves the parenthesis and makes the sense clear Others, however, think this construction harsh and inadmissible.

The apostle declares that the wicked shall be punished at the same time when Christ shall be glorified and admired in and by all true believers, and consequently in and by the Thessalonians, who will then, and not before, be admitted to their final

Ch. I. Ver. 10.

He will then appear in the awful pomp of a sovereign and a judge, amidst lightnings and thunders, armed with divine power to execute the just judgements of God upon the enemies and persecutors of his church, whether heathen or Jews. These shall, in their turn, be dragged to the bar of eternal justice, and shall hear that sentence of condemnation passed upon themselves which they have been so eager to pass upon you. And this awful sentence to a punishment worse than death, the intensity and duration of which will be far beyond all thought and expectation, will most assuredly be executed upon them to its utmost extent, by their offended Judge, in the exertion of those great powers which will be communicated to him for that purpose. And in that tremendous day when he shall thus inflict vengeance upon persecutors, he shall be celebrated, with transports of joy and anthems of praise, by his chosen friends, for the faithful performance of all his promises; and the hearts of those who have believed in his doctrine shall exult with grateful admiration, when they see how far the displays both of his mercy and his justice exceed their highest ex-

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triumph. Grotius and Chandler take επιστευθη in the sense of πιστευθησεται· *q. d.* Because in that day our testimony concerning you shall be believed, or will be evidently confirmed. Believers will admire when they see the accomplishment of the divine word. One copy reads επιστωθη· this reading Mr. Wakefield approves, and renders the passage thus: "When he is come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired on that day by every believer of our testimony which was established among you by proof."—"*eo quod doctrina nostra vobis proposita certa reperietur illo die.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. I. Ver. 10. pectations. In this solemn and magnificent scene I rejoice to think that you, my friends, will bear an honourable and glorious part, because you gave credit to the doctrine which we taught you, and in circumstances of great difficulty and danger you have faithfully adhered to the profession of the gospel.

3. The apostle prays that God would enable them to carry into effect all their pious and benevolent purposes; by which they would do honour to the gospel, and promote the interest of Christianity in the world, ver. 11, 12.

11. *To which end we also pray for you always, that our God would make you worthy of this calling, that he would execute with power every kind pur-*
12. *pose of generosity*[1] *and work of faith, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified by you*[2] *and ye by him, according to the grace of our God, and of* our *Lord Jesus Christ.*

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[1] *Every kind purpose of generosity.*] Dr. Chandler observes, that "the word αγαθωσυνη, though several times used in the New Testament, is never applied to God, but always to men; and signifies the virtue of *beneficence*, or goodness of disposition. He therefore renders the passage thus: "that God would fulfill every kind intention of generosity." Mr. Wakefield's translation is, "that our God would make you worthy of this call, and fully execute with power every intention of goodness and work of faith."

[2] *That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified by you,* &c.] viz. "that when their enemies saw their exemplary charity, their fortitude and patience, &c. they might have a high veneration for him by whose name they were called, and be prevailed on to embrace his religion." Chandler.

The address of the apostle in this first part of his epistle appears to me to have escaped the notice of most expositors. The

Ch. I. Ver. 12.

And that you may not be disappointed of this glorious hope, it is the subject of our earnest and daily prayer for you, that God would in his great mercy increase and perfect your qualifications for that divine reward, to the expectation of which you are invited by the gospel. And we further pray that he will by his efficacious energy enable you to carry into complete effect all the kind and generous purposes of your hearts, and to produce those fruits of benevolence and good works which are the genuine result of a well-grounded faith in the Christian doctrine. Thus by your excellent example the Christian religion will be recommended to the notice, the esteem and love of your heathen neighbours; and in return you will yourselves derive unspeakable benefit and everlasting honour from the profession and practice of this divine religion: a recompense which indeed neither you nor we can claim upon the ground of merit and of right, but which is the free gift of the infinite mercy of God, abounding to

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main design of the epistle is to correct the error of the Thessalonians, in supposing that the day of judgement was very near at hand. This error appears to have excited in their minds the greatest terror and alarm, and the correction of it would have a tendency to lead them to the contrary extreme of carelessness and security. To guard against this danger, the apostle states in the strongest language the certainty and solemnity of the event, and affectionately reminds them of their own interest in it. Archbishop Newcome has a similar remark: "This epistle," says he, "furnishes a remarkable instance of St. Paul's manner. The Thessalonians appear to have concluded that the day of judgement was approaching. The apostle wrote to correct that error; and he shows in this chapter how full his mind was of the subject, which he does not directly enter on till the beginning of the second chapter."

Ch. I. Ver. 12. true believers through Jesus Christ our Lord, whom he has constituted the messenger of his grace to a sinful world.

SECTION II.

Ch. II. *THE APOSTLE states and rectifies the error into which they had fallen concerning the immediate appearance of Christ to judgement; and foretells a great apostasy which would previously take place.* Ch. ii. 1—12.

1. The apostle cautions them against supposing that he had ever intended to affirm that the day of judgement was to take place immediately, ver. 1, 2.

Ver. 1. *Now we intreat you, brethren, concerning*[1] *the*
2. *appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our assembling unto him*[2], *that ye be not hastily shaken from your right mind*[3], *nor greatly alarmed*[4], *as*

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[1] *Concerning,* &c.] This is very generally allowed to be the proper interpretation of ὑπερ in this connexion, where it seems to be used for περι, which is indeed the reading of two manuscripts. See Griesbach.

[2] *Our assembling,* &c.] "our being raised from the dead to stand before his tribunal." Newcome. This is not exactly the idea: the Thessalonians expected the immediate appearance of Christ, and consequently that they should be summoned into his presence without dying.

[3] *Shaken from your right mind.*] Σαλευω is used of ships that are tossed by the waves: either "be not so agitated as to lose

though we by the spirit had taught or written[5] *that the day of the Lord is instantly coming*[6].

Ch. II. Ver. 2.

I am concerned to hear that you have by some means fallen into a very great mistake with respect to that most solemn and certain event, the public appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ to raise the dead, and to convene all the tribes, and every individual of mankind, to his tribunal, to receive their final and awful sentence from his lips; and that you expect this great event to happen in the course of a few months. I am further informed that it is reported among you that I am the author of this persuasion, and that it is in consequence of something which I have said, or written, under the immediate influence of inspiration, that this alarming expectation has been excited. It is by no means

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the quiet possession of your minds, or to be moved from the true sense of my words in a former letter." Chandler.

[4] *Greatly alarmed.*] Θροεισθαι, *to speak, to sound, to be struck with terror.* Hesychius.—" *strepitu percellor, ac perterrefio, a* Θρυος, *clamor tumultuantium.*" Schleusner. " It expresses surprise and trouble at the report of disagreeable news. Matt. xxiv. 6, Mark xiii. 7." Chandler.

[5] *As though we by the spirit had taught or written.*] Literally, *neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us. Spirit* is often used for *inspiration*, 1 John iv. 1, 6. This was the report which alarmed them, that the apostle by inspiration had declared or written, &c.

[6] *That the day of the Lord is instantly coming.*] The best copies read *Lord* for *Christ:* see Griesbach. *Will come instantly:* " ενεστηκεν, *quasi instet dies Christi: nempe hoc anno: instare dicitur quod jam præsens est.* Rom. viii. 38; 1 Cor. iii. 22, vii. 26; Gal. i. 4; Heb. ix. 9." Grotius. " that the day was now instantly coming." Chandler. " They might possibly apprehend that Christ would come in a few months, weeks, or days; and it was of very great moment to rectify that mistake." Benson.

Ch. II. Ver. 2. surprising that such intelligence should have excited in your minds the utmost consternation. But I intreat you, my brethren, to calm your spirits; for I solemnly assure you, that how firmly soever I may believe, and how earnestly soever I may desire to inculcate, the certainty, the solemnity, and the speedy approach of the appearance of Christ, and whatever strong expressions I may have used in my last epistle, which you may have interpreted in too literal a sense, or whatever reports may have been circulated by others concerning me, I never did declare, or believe, that this great day was so near at hand as you now apprehend.

2. He assures them that a remarkable apostasy would first take place, the characteristic symptoms of which he particularly describes, ver. 3, 4.

3. *Let no one deceive you*[1] *by any means; for the apostasy must first come*[2]*, and the man of sin*[3] *be*

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[1] *Let no one deceive you.*] It is possible that the error of the Thessalonians might have originated in a misconception of the apostle's own strong language in his first epistle, ch. iv. 15, v. 2—4; and that rumours once propagated might be exaggerated without any intention to deceive. But the advice here, connected with the particular direction at the close of the epistle, ch. iii. 17, how to distinguish a genuine from a spurious letter, may perhaps justify the suspicion that some one had forged an epistle in the apostle's name. See Benson.

[2] *The apostasy must first come.*] See Mr. Wakefield. The expression in the original is elliptical: ὁτι εαν μη ελθῃ ἡ αποστασια πρωτον. "For, *that day will not come*, unless there come a falling away first." So Archbishop Newcome. *The* apostasy. The article seems to imply that it was an event which he had mentioned to the Thessalonians before, ver. 5. "The word signifies," says Chandler, "'a hostile separation

revealed, that son of perdition who setteth himself in opposition to, and exalteth himself above, every Ch. II. Ver. 4.

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of one part of a nation from another,' 'rebellion against a prince,' or, 'a mutinous revolt of soldiers against their general.' In this place it apparently means a revolt from God." Rosenmuller, in his notes upon this chapter, after having stated the opinion of Hammond, who considered Gnosticism as the great *apostasy*, and Simon Magus as the *man of sin*—of Schoetgenius, who understood the revolt of the Jews as the *apostasy*, and the pharisees and rabbis who provoked the revolt as the *man of sin*—of Grotius, who believed Caligula to be the *man of sin*, and the wickedness and impiety of his reign to be the *apostasy*—of Wetstein, who interprets the *apostasy*, of the civil wars of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, and the *man of sin*, of Titus Vespasian, and the Flavian family—and of Koppe, who supposes that the apostle alludes to Dan. xi. 36, and to prophecies then current of calamities which should precede the reign of the Messiah, declares his own judgement to be in favour of Noesseltus, who interprets the *day of the Lord*, as referring to the destruction of Jerusalem, the *apostasy*, to the revolt of the Jews, and the *man of sin*, to the false prophets and Messiahs, who urged them on to revolt; and particularly to the *zealots*, of whose impieties and cruelties during the siege of Jerusalem, Josephus has given so affecting a description. And he supposes that he who *restrained* the *apostasy*, was Claudius, during whose reign the Jews remained quiet. This whole doctrine it is believed that the apostle learned from the prophecy of Christ in the evangelists. That the apostle alluded to Christ's more awful appearance to judge the world, this critic does not deny; especially as it appears that our Lord's prophecy in Matthew terminates with a description of the final judgement. But he makes no distinction between the two events in this passage, either because the Thessalonians did not distinguish them, or that he himself confounded them. "*Conjungit Paulus mentionem utriusque adventus sive quod sciret utrumque a Judæis, quales fuerunt Thessalonicenses, nullo modo discerni, sed unum in tempus conjici, sive quod ipse tempus nesciret.*"

The great objection to this hypothesis is, Why need the Thessalonians give themselves so much concern about the revolt of the Jews and the destruction of Jerusalem? He answers, that all their trouble and persecution came from the Jews: "*habebatque maximam vim ad animos Thessalonicensium Christianorum tranquillandos denunciatio, fore ut Romani Ju-*

Ch. II. Ver. 4. *one that is entitled divine or august*[1], *so that he placeth himself in the temple of God, exhibiting himself as a god*[2].

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dæorum furore lacessiti horum seditionem ulciscerentur, contra Christiani, labefactata Judæorum impotentia liberarentur a perpetuâ Judæorum vexatione."

But why then regard this event with terror rather than exultation? The answer to this will hardly be deemed satisfactory: "*quum id quod inopinatum accidat, celeriterque opprimat animum, terribile videri soleat.*" The suddenness of the event, however desirable, excited consternation. The words διὰ πνεύματος, ver. 2, Noesseltus and Rosenmuller refer to our Lord's prophecy, Matt. xxiv.

[1] *The man of sin.*] Dr. Benson, in his admirable *Dissertation upon the Man of Sin*, has stated and well confuted various interpretations which have been given to this prophecy, and in common with most protestant expositors, he explains it *of the papal power*. His arguments are irrefragable as far as they go. But I agree with Mr. Evanson, in his Letter to the Bishop of Worcester, that the antichristian power is by no means limited to the church of Rome, but that it extends to all civil establishments of a corrupt Christianity, of which the papal power forms only one, though a very conspicuous, feature. The eastern as well as the western, the protestant as well as the popish churches, are included in this comprehensive symbol; and, if I am not mistaken, it will easily appear to an attentive observer, how much more correctly and literally the prophecy is accomplished when applied to this object, and explained upon this large scale, than upon any other interpretation. *The man of sin:* "one who was to commit all sort of wickedness himself, and to lead others into sin." So Dr. Chandler, from a Greek commentator, which is the sense adopted by almost all expositors; but I conceive without sufficient reason. In the language of the New Testament, *sin* signifies *heathenism;* and *sinners* are *heathen idolaters*. *Publicans* and *sinners* are *tax-gatherers* and *heathen*. The woman who washed and anointed our Lord's feet was a *sinner*, Luke vii. 37: *i. e.* probably a notorious idolater. See Gal. ii. 15, "*sinners* of the Gentiles." The words *man of sin*, therefore, are probably intended to express that the apostate church would be an idolatrous power.

"There have been various interpretations," says Dr. Priestley, "of this famous prophecy; but I cannot help thinking that the application of it to those corruptions of Christianity

Let no person mislead you intentionally, or otherwise, by pretending to any authority from me to contradict the doctrine which I plainly taught you from the first. For I now repeat the assurance which I then gave you, that near and certain as the appearance of our Lord is, it will be preceded by another very remarkable event: a general and al-

Ch. II. Ver. 4.

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that we call *popish*, and to that astonishing usurpation of power by the bishops of Rome, is by much the most easy and natural. That the apostles had an historical knowledge of the fulfilment of this prophecy, is not probable. The real use of prophecy respects those who see the accomplishment of it."

[1] *Who exalteth himself above every one entitled divine or august.*] Θεον η σεβασμα, *god* or *emperor*. " Σεβασμα, omnem rem sacram, quæ sanctè et cum religione colitur, *significat*, 2 Thess. ii. 4. *Deorum omnium, omnisque divini cultus, superbus contemtor, ut Koppius recte transtulit. Quem Wetstenius (N. T. T.* ii. p. 310.) *Titum, sive domum Flaviam, non autem ut aliis visum est Pontificem Romanum, aut Caium, aut Simonem Magum, esse arbitratur.*" Schleusner.

Civil magistrates are called *gods*; *august*, σεβασμα, alludes to the title of the Roman emperor, Acts xxv. 25. It means that the antichristian power should set up itself as a rival to, and even claim superiority over, the civil power, not even excepting that of the emperor himself. A fact sufficiently notorious in the history of mankind.

[2] *So that he placeth himself in the temple of God.*] The received text reads, " he places himself *as God*; but the words ὡς θεον, *as a God*, are not found in the most ancient manuscripts and versions, and are properly omitted by Griesbach and Newcome. The *temple of God* is the *Christian church*, 1 Cor. iii. 9, 16, 17; 1 Tim. iii. 15; 1 Pet. ii. 5; Rev. iii. 12. Such was the interpretation of the ancient Christian writers. See Benson. *Exhibiting himself as God: i. e.* though professing to be an ecclesiastical power, he usurps and exercises civil authority. " The word καθισαι," says Chandler, " should have been translated *he seateth* or *placeth himself*; it denotes insolent and violent intrusion. And the word that we render *show*, should have been translated *publicly declaring himself that he is a God*, contrary to all law, reason, and truth."

Ch. II. Ver. 4. most total apostasy from the purity of the Christian faith, and from the meekness and humility of the Christian spirit. Little as you may expect it, a formidable idolatrous power will make its appearance; which, after having proved the ruin of multitudes, will itself in the end be totally exterminated. This singular power will set itself in violent opposition to, and will upon every occasion exalt itself above, the civil, and even the imperial authority. And in the temple of the true God, in the Christian church itself, in which none but spiritual authority, the authority of reason and revelation, ought ever to be exercised, this wicked demon will insolently intrude itself, usurping and openly and avowedly exercising civil authority, for purposes the most unjust and oppressive.

3. The apostle reminds them that he had communicated this information to them before he left them, and that he had likewise told them by what circumstances the immediate appearance of this apostasy was prevented, ver. 5—7.

5. *Remember ye not, that whilst I was yet with you I told you these things?*

Do you not recollect, that while I was personally labouring among you, I plainly stated all these things upon divine authority? and could you suppose it possible that I should now teach a different doctrine?

6. *And ye know what restraineth now*[1], *that he*

[1] *Ye know what restraineth now.*] The apostle means the *Roman power.* This he had explained to the Thessalonians when

may not be revealed till his proper time[2]. *For the mystery of iniquity is already inwardly working*[3], *only till he who now restraineth it shall be removed out of the way*[4]. Ch. II. Ver. 7.

And if you recollect yourselves, you will remember that I told you what that other power now existing is which prevents the immediate appearance of this antichristian power, and keeps it back till the time destined for the public manifestation of it. For, to say the truth, much of this corrupt and overbearing spirit already exists in the church, but at present it works privately, and is kept under restraint; and so it will continue to be, till the abolition of that power which at present keeps it in check.

4. The apostle mentions some further particu-

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he was with them. At present he only hints at it; that he may not lay himself open to the charge of disloyalty and disaffection to the Roman government. See Newcome. "This," says Dr. Benson, "was the opinion of all the ancient commentators both Greek and Latin."

[2] *That he may not*, &c.] "Literally, 'to the end that he may be revealed in,' &c." Newcome.

[3] *Is already inwardly working.*] So Macknight. Even in the apostolic age the Christian doctrine began to be corrupted by the Gnostics and Docetæ, and an ambitious spirit began to show itself very early; but it was, in a great measure, kept under, while Rome was under heathen emperors.

[4] *Only till he*, &c.] So Dr. Chandler; who maintains that there is no ellipsis. Mr. Wakefield's version is, "but he who now hindereth must be removed, and then," &c. Chrysostom says, When the Roman empire shall be taken away, then shall the *man of sin* come; when that shall be overthrown, he shall invade the vacant seat, and attempt the empire both of man and God." Benson.

CH. II. lars concerning the character, the progress, and the termination of the apostate power, ver. 8—10.

VER. 8. *And then shall that lawless one be revealed*[1], *whom the Lord Jesus will consume with the breath of his mouth, and will disable with the manifestation of his presence*[2].

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[1] *That lawless one,* &c.] ὁ ἀνομος. "who sets himself up above all laws, human and divine." Chandler. Grotius, who interprets the *man of sin,* of the emperor Caligula, understands the person here predicted of Simon Magus. He is singular in his opinion. Expositors almost universally regard the whole description as relating to one and the same object, the antichristian power. Protestant interpreters commonly apply the description to the church of Rome; but it is more applicable to the establishment of a *a corrupt and persecuting Christianity* by the civil power, in the reign of Constantine the Great. This took place, agreeably to the language of the prophecy, immediately upon the downfall of the Pagan empire, whereas popery, properly so called, did not commence till some centuries afterwards, as protestants themselves allow. And why, indeed, should one apostasy be foretold rather than another? why the corrupt, persecuting, idolatrous establishments of the West, rather than those of the East? Aye, why the apostate, usurping, oppressive Catholic, rather than the apostate, persecuting, Protestant church, of every description, almost without exception? for all, when in power, have been equally intolerant; all have made themselves drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; all have bound upon the necks of those whom Christ made free, an iron yoke grievous to be borne; all have enforced their respective creeds by pains and penalties; all have propped up their disjointed fabrics by fraud and falsehood, by fine and imprisonment, by torments and death; and if Popery has slain its ten thousands, Protestantism may at least boast of having slain its thousands.

Wherever, therefore, a church professing Christianity exists, wielding the power of the state to establish and support its own corrupt, unscriptural, and idolatrous system, there is a limb of the great *apostasy;* there, in the temple of God, sits the *man of sin,* exalting himself above all that is called God's, whose coming is according to the operation of Satan, and whom the Lord Jesus will destroy with the breath of his mouth, and consume with the brightness of his appearance.

When this restraining power shall be overthrown, then, as I before told you, that apostate power which will act in opposition to the laws both of God and man, will immediately discover itself. But be assured, that whatever character it may affect, or whatever tyranny it may exercise, its duration shall be limited. It may prevail to a degree of enormity beyond what could possibly have been expected, but error, idolatry, and violence, shall gradually recede before the progressive influence of the doctrine of Christ, and this formidable phantom shall vanish and disappear before the glorious and irresistible

Ch. II. Ver. 8.

[2] *Whom the Lord Jesus will consume,* &c.] The word *Jesus* is inserted by Griesbach upon the best authorities. αναλωσει "This word," says Dr. Chandler, "is generally used of a gradual consumption: viz. 'the waste of time;' 'the consumption of an estate;' or, 'being devoured by worms;' by 'the breath of his mouth,' he understands, 'the doctrine of the gospel,' which first dooms him to destruction, and then gradually accomplishes it. Rev. xix. 15, Isa. xl. 4." καταργησει, he explains, *to render ineffectual,* to strip him of his authority and power by means of a superior force. See Ezra iv. 21, 23, v. 5, vi. 8; and by the *coming of Christ* he understands, "the clear manifestation of his doctrine, and the prevalence of it among mankind." This interpretation appears to be very rational, and has been adopted in the paraphrase. It may perhaps be thought an objection to it that the best copies for αναλωσει read ανελει, which expresses rather a sudden and forcible, than a gradual removal. See Griesbach. See Grot. in ver. 7. Some understand the expression, of the facility with which Christ will destroy the *man of sin* at his appearance. Comp. Ps. xxxiii. 6, 9. So Benson. "This may refer to some signal overthrow of the papal dominion before the day of judgement." Newcome. See Rev. xviii. xx., which many suppose to refer to the same event. Others again think that the apostle refers to the coming of Christ to judgement, and that the *apostasy* will continue to that time. The event alone will fully explain the prophecy. Dr. Benson observes, that "the latter part of this verse should be inclosed in a parenthesis."

Ch. II. Ver. 8. light of evangelical truth. So that, antecedently to the appearance of Christ to judgement, this great apostasy shall be destroyed, and the pure uncorrupted principles of the gospel shall universally prevail. In the mean time great evils and disorders will arise from the temporary ascendency of the antichristian power.

9. Even him *whose coming is according to the operation of Satan*[1], *with all false miracles and signs*
10. *and wonders*[2], *and with all iniquitous deceit among those that are lost*[3], *because they received not the love of the truth that they might escape*[4].

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[1] *According to the operation of Satan*] *Satan* is a word of various import both in the Old Testament and the New. It signifies *opposition*; and is often put for the principle of opposition personified, Matt. xvi. 23. In Luke x. 18, it plainly signifies the *heathen idolatrous power*, which was to recede rapidly before the light of the gospel. Rev. ii. 13, "thou dwellest where Satan's seat is." Here it signifies *the idolatrous persecuting power*. See also Luke xxii. 31. In Rev. xii. 10, xx. 2 and 7, it seems to be used for the *antichristian persecuting power*, and in that sense it appears to me to be used here. The *man of sin*, the lawless one who was to be displayed immediately after the heathen empire was overthrown, was to be both an idolatrous and a persecuting power, and was to use the same methods, both of fraud and violence, to impose upon and to mislead those who were indifferent to truth, which had been used by heathen and idolatrous persecutors. This was notoriously the case with that corrupt Christianity which was supported by the civil power under Constantine, and with all corrupt establishments of Christianity to the present day, of every description, and in all parts of the world.

[2] *With all false miracles*, &c.] "The word ψευδες seems equally to belong to all the foregoing substantives." Wakefield.

[3] *Those that are lost.*] "in a state of final perdition, while guilty of religious imposture." Newcome. But I think the expression refers to the deceived rather than to the deceivers; and that it denotes their being lost to the Christian religion, rather

The power to which I allude is an idolatrous power, exalting itself in the Christian church, and armed with civil authority; and, like other heathen superstitions, it will endeavour to support itself by persecution, and by false pretences to miraculous powers, to arts of sorcery, and other gross delusions, which may impose upon the understandings of the weak and ignorant.—And these impostures will have great effect upon a race of men who, while they profess the Christian name, will be utter strangers to the genuine principles and spirit of the Christian religion; and who will have fallen into this wretched state in consequence of a criminal indifference to truth, and a disgraceful neglect of those important doctrines, an habitual and practical regard to which would have preserved them from so shameful a degeneracy. Ch. II. Ver. 10.

5. The apostle further declares, that this delusion should be permitted to prevail, as a just punishment of professing Christians for their indifference to truth, ver. 11, 12.

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than their exclusion from final salvation; for no doubt there are many virtuous characters, even in the most corrupt church, as there also were even in the heathen world.

[a] *They received not the love of the truth that they might escape:*] *i. e.* that they might escape from apostasy and from those delusions of the *man of sin*, from which the love of truth would effectually have preserved them. *To be saved*, in this connexion, no more relates to *final salvation*, than *to be lost* in the preceding clause relates to *final perdition*. Dr. Chandler justly observes, that "an upright, honest regard to truth and righteousness is the surest preservative in the world against destructive errors." See also Benson on ver. 11.

Ch. II. Ver. 11. 12. *And for this reason, God will send them a mighty delusion* [1], *to believe that lying* power [2], *to the end that* [3] *all might be condemned* [4] *who believed not the truth, but took pleasure in iniquity* [5].

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[1] *God will send them a mighty delusion.*] "will permit to prevail among them, not overruling second causes." Newcome; who renders the clause, "a mighty working of error." "such effectual delusion." Wakefield. It means a delusion of the grossest kind, which shall induce them to believe the most palpable absurdities and falsehoods, and to receive them as fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

[2] *That lying* power.] So Wakefield. They would not embrace the sacred truth of the gospel, and therefore they must entertain that error, those false and lying doctrines which were contrary to and subversive of it.

[3] *To the end that.*] "ἵνα in this verse expresses the event." Newcome.

[4] *Might be condemned.*] "judged and condemned by the righteous sentence of God." Chandler.

[5] *Who took pleasure in iniquity.*] "in such deceit." Wakefield. "The word signifies, 'entirely to approve and acquiesce in any thing as matter of their choice, and perfectly agreeable to them." Chandler.

Dr. Chandler adds, "I think it is impossible we should be at a loss how or where to apply this prophecy. Every part of it is such a perfect description of the papacy of the church of Rome, that if St. Paul had been alive, and seen the usurpation, and pride, and apostasy of that See, he could scarce have described it in stronger and in livelier colours, or by more peculiar and distinguishing characteristics, than he hath done in the prophecy before us." It cannot indeed be denied that the church of Rome is a very considerable branch of the apostate church; but it is not the whole of it. And there are other churches, nearer home, which if the apostle Paul had visited, it is much to be feared that he would have found even in them, both in doctrine and in practice, too near a resemblance to that corrupt idolatrous doctrine, and that arrogant persecuting spirit, which was to characterize the apostasy of the latter days.

There is no reason to regard establishments *as such*, that is, the protection and encouragement of Christianity by the civil magistrate, as constituting a mark of the apostate church. Those establishments only are antichristian which support cor-

Ch. II. Ver. 12.

A practical belief of the genuine doctrines of the gospel is, as I have just observed, the great preservative from error and vice, and indifference to truth lies at the foundation of all the future corruptions of the Christian religion, both in faith and practice. As a just punishment for this want of enlightened and active zeal, God will permit so strong a spirit of delusion to possess the apostate church, that men professing Christianity will openly reject its most obvious and salutary truths, and greedily imbibe the most gross, palpable, and pernicious errors. The consequence of which will be proportionate depravity of morals; which, with regard to multitudes, will terminate in just and insupportable punishment.

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rupt doctrine and idolatrous worship: such as that of Jesus Christ, the holy spirit, the Virgin Mary, and other dead men and women; and above all, when these corrupt doctrines and heathenish practices are enforced by pains and penalties and persecutions. This completes the character of the *man of sin*. And to say the truth, there are many churches not established by law, who exhibit as much of the spirit of the apostate church as popery ever did. What can we think of those who in the seventeenth century, when petitioning for their own toleration, expressly stipulated that their Antitrinitarian brethren should be excluded? Or of their descendants in the present day, who while applying for the repeal of persecuting statutes which bear hard upon themselves, insist that chains much heavier than their own shall continue to bind the consciences of catholics? If this be not the spirit of antichrist, it is hard to say what is.

SECTION III.

Ch. II. *THE APOSTLE expresses his gratitude to God for their election and invitation to the privileges of the Gospel; exhorts them to stedfastness; offers his prayers for them, and requests theirs for himself and his associates, and declares his entire confidence in their good principles and virtuous resolutions.*—Ch. ii. 13—iii. 8.

1. The apostle gives thanks to God for their election, and for their invitation to participate in the privileges and blessings of the gospel, ver. 13, 14.

Ver. 13. *But we ought*[1] *always to give thanks to God on*

[1] *But we ought,* &c.] The apostle having denounced the judgements of God upon those who through indifference to truth had exposed, or would expose, themselves to gross and pernicious delusions, proceeds to comfort the Thessalonians, by assuring them that they were not the persons to whom he alluded; and by expressing his confidence in their adherence to the Christian doctrine. The apostle speaks of them as *beloved of God,* in the Jewish sense of the words, as being distinguished by privileges: see Rom. ix. 13. They were chosen from the beginning, as having been selected to receive the benefit of the gospel soon after its first publication in Macedonia. Acts xvii., 1 Thess. ii. 2. They were chosen to salvation, or rather to deliverance: see ver. 10. *i. e.* to a deliverance from idolatry and vice. This was accomplished by belief of the truth, *i. e.* by a profession of faith in Christ; and by sanctification of the Spirit, or a visible separation from the unbelieving world by the gifts of the holy spirit. Rom. viii. 15—17. Being thus chosen, they were by the preaching of the apostles invited to the profession of the gospel; and the great design of all was, that they might

your account, brethren beloved by the Lord, be- Ch. II.
cause God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit[2], *and belief in the truth: unto which he hath invited you* Ver. 14.
through our gospel, to obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Think not, my dear brethren, who are most highly favoured by God, that it is my intention to represent you as in the number of those who will be justly condemned because of their indifference to truth. On the contrary, I continually thank God on your account, as I am in duty bound, that it was his pleasure to select you among the first of your countrymen to be rescued from the bondage of ignorance and idolatry, to be consecrated to himself and separated from your heathen neighbours by your profession of the Christian faith, and your participation of the gifts of the holy spirit: and our

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obtain final happiness, the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, that of which he is now in possession, and which he has promised to bestow.—Thus we see how little mystery there is in the apostle's doctrine, if his expressions are interpreted in a fair and proper sense, and how little foundation is laid in the scriptures for the strange doctrines of absolute and unconditional election and reprobation by an eternal and arbitrary decree. See Chandler and Benson.

[2] *Sanctification of the spirit.*] "πνευμα *denotat illa dona spiritus, quibus Thessalonicenses convicti de veritate, et emendati mente fuerunt, ipsa doctrina Christi, quæ, quoniam perfectior est lege Mosaica, sæpe in N. T.* πνευμα *appellatur.*" Rosenmuller. So Wakefield, by a *spiritual purification*. More correctly, as I think, Dr. Chandler: "by the spirit in his extraordinary gifts God gave them the assurance that he had accepted them: this was the wonderful evidence and sure token that God had sanctified, and separated them to himself."

Ch. II. Ver. 14. gratitude is still further enhanced by the recollection that we ourselves were honoured as the messengers to communicate to you the glad tidings of the gospel, and to invite you to enter into the Christian community; the privileges of which, if duly improved, will ensure your ultimate admission into that everlasting state of glory and felicity which Jesus our master has revealed, of which he, as our forerunner, is already in possession, and into which he will finally introduce all his faithful followers.

2. The apostle exhorts them to stedfastness in their profession of the gospel, and prays for their establishment in it, ver. 15—17.

15. *Therefore, brethren, stand firm*[1], *and hold fast*[2] *the lessons*[3] *which you have been taught by us, whether by discourse or by letter.*

Possessed of these privileges, and animated by these hopes, let no consideration induce you to forfeit your glorious prize. Whatever assaults may be made upon your faith and virtue, stand fast; hold firm, and do not for a moment abandon those pre-

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[1] *Stand firm.*] στηκετε. "This word," says Dr. Chandler, "is used to denote great firmness, constancy, and resolution, in maintaining our purposes, standing unmovably against, and vigorously resisting, all opposition."

[2] *Hold fast.*] κρατειτε. "It signifies to hold *by conquest*, and firmly to maintain what we have in possession." Chandler.

[3] *The lessons.*] παραδοσεις. "It sometimes signifies unwritten traditions, transmitted from generation to generation. Here it cannot have that sense, and would more properly have been rendered *institutions* or *doctrines*." Chandler. So Wakefield. "the truths, whether respecting doctrines or facts." Newcome.

cious truths which we taught you when present, and have written to you since we departed, and which lie at the foundation of all our immortal expectations. Ch. II. Ver. 15.

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself[4], *and God even our Father, who hath loved us, and graciously given*[5] *us everlasting consolation and good hope, encourage your hearts and establish you in every good doctrine and work.* 16. 17.

Persevere, my Christian friends, and may our lord and master Jesus Christ assist you by his doctrine, by his example, by his promises, and by the gift of his spirit. And may the great God himself, his Father and our Father, who has approved his paternal affection towards us by freely and gratuitously imparting to us the rich consolations and everlasting hopes of the gospel, grant his blessing to your virtuous efforts, encourage and comfort you amidst perils and sufferings, establish your faith in the doctrine of the gospel, and render that faith

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[4] *May our Lord Jesus Christ himself,* &c.] "This is only another mode of praying that these Christians may obtain all the blessings of the gospel of which Christ is the founder; and the expression is not to be understood literally, as if Christ had himself immediate access to the hearts of men, and administered consolation to them. Indeed God himself does this only by means of natural causes: by such knowledge as is naturally adapted to produce that effect. In like manner, God gives us our daily bread, but not in a miraculous way." Priestley.—Chandler and Benson understand this as a direct prayer to Christ.

[5] *Graciously given.*] So Wakefield. "by the gospel scheme has inspired us with eternal consolation." Harwood.

Ch. II. Ver. 17. abundantly productive of the fruits of holiness and universal virtue.

3. The apostle requests that they would pray for his protection and success, ch. iii. ver. 1, 2.

Ch. III. Ver. 1. *Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the doctrine*
2. *of the Lord may run and be glorified*[1], *even as among you*[2]: *and that we may be delivered from inconsistent*[3] *and wicked men; for all are not faithful*[4].

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[1] *Run and be glorified.*] "an allusion to the races in the ancient games, in which he who ran with the greatest speed obtained the most honourable prize. The apostle prays that the gospel may spread through the nations with the greatest speed, that it might obtain the crown of success." Chandler. "may have free course." Newcome. "that the doctrine of the Lord may continue running and gaining glory." Wakefield.

[2] *Even as among you.*] "This is giving them the highest commendation, and speaking of them in the most respectful manner." Chandler.

[3] *From inconsistent,* &c.] ατοπων. "There is scarcely any English word," says Dr. Chandler, "which exactly answers it. The ancient glossaries variously expound it, by *wicked, filthy, strange, lawless, irrational, absurd.* It signifies something which *has not place;* and, by an easy figure, what is *absurd, indecent, unbecoming,* and excites *surprise.*" The expression here is, as he observes, "perfectly agreeable to the place before us;" as the apostle refers probably to converted Jews, who endeavoured to depreciate his character, and oppose his doctrine, whose conduct therefore was peculiarly inconsistent, and might justly excite surprise. The apostle was at Corinth when he wrote this epistle, where a formidable party was soon formed against him, at the head of which was some eloquent judaizing Christian; and he might already discover with pain the symptoms of this bad spirit in the Corinthian church. Indeed it is certain that he did observe it; which was the reason that he conducted himself there with peculiar caution, and refused to receive any remuneration for his services. 2 Cor. xii. 13, xi. 9—12.

[4] *All are not faithful.*] Literally, *all men have not faith;*

Upon this subject little remains to be added. I request your prayers for myself and my associates in the ministry, that we may not labour in vain: but that the gospel of Christ, which we preach, may advance with a rapid and glorious career, and that it may be as successful here at Corinth and in other places as it has been at Thessalonica, and may produce the same effects of love and good works amongst others which it produces among you. And pray likewise for us, that the object of our ministry may not be defeated by those absurd and inconsistent professors of Christianity, who from prejudice, or pride, or other bad motives, oppose our doctrine and depreciate our character. For, strange as it may seem, persons of this description are not uncommon among us, and men professing to be believers in Christ, are in fact enemies to Christian truth, and to those who teach it. Ch. III. Ver. 2.

4. He expresses his cheerful hope that by the assistance of Christ they will adhere faithfully to the doctrines and the precepts of the gospel, ver. 3—5.

But the Lord[5] *is faithful who will establish you,* 3.

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a frivolous observation, if he meant only to say, "that all were not believers:" but very pertinent and much to his purpose if he intended to assert that, "though they professed to believe, they were not faithful to his doctrine." See Chandler; who renders the words, "credit, or trust, is not due to all."

[5] *The Lord.*] I am inclined to think, with most expositors, that Christ is the person here intended; and that, by a figure of speech, he is said to do that which is accomplished by his doctrine and promises.

Ch. III. Ver. 4. *and preserve you from the evil* one [1]. *And we have confidence in the Lord* [2] *concerning you, that ye both perform and will perform what we enjoin you.*

5. *And may the Lord direct your hearts unto the love of God, and the patience of Christ* [3].

It is however a satisfaction to think, that though men are treacherous Christ is faithful. His doctrines are true: his promises shall be fulfilled to their utmost extent: his gospel shall support you under all your trials: it shall keep you from sinking in the season of persecution: it shall preserve you from apostasy, and from returning to your former subjection to the powers of darkness. And indeed I am fully persuaded that you are so firmly attached to the principles of the gospel, that you will continue to comply cheerfully with all my apo-

[1] *From the evil* one.] τȣ πονηρȣ. See Chandler and Wakefield: *i.e.* will preserve you from apostasy; from returning again to the dominion and empire of Satan, the symbolical monarch of the unbelieving world, whose authority you renounced when you became the subjects of Christ. *The evil one*, the devil, Satan: *i.e.* "the adversaries of the gospel; especially the unbelieving Jews." Benson.

[2] *We have confidence in the Lord*, &c.] *q. d.* We entertain a pious and Christian confidence concerning you; being conscious of the authority by which we speak, and of the power of Christian principles; believing you to be sincere in your profession, and recollecting your past fidelity and perseverance, we are confident that, by the help of God, you will continue to obey our injunctions.

[3] *May the Lord—patience of Christ.*] "The equivalent antecedent is here used for the pronoun, as John iv. 11." Newcome; who, with the common version, renders the words, *the patient waiting for Christ.* The literal translation is, *the patience of Christ: i.e.* says Dr. Chandler, "the patience which Christ exercised; as Jam. v. 11, the patience of Job, is that patience of which he was so great an example."

stolical injunctions, as you now do, and have hitherto done. Ch. III. Ver. 5.

And may your increasing knowledge of the principles, and your happy experience of the power and excellence, of that gospel which by the command of Christ, whose servants and messengers we are, we have communicated to you, produce its genuine effects upon every heart! May it particularly guide you to that first of duties, the love of God, the most ardent gratitude for his great mercy by Jesus Christ, manifesting itself in all its genuine effects of love and good works! And may nothing move you from the profession of the gospel; but in all your dangers, your trials, and your sufferings, look to your great exemplar Jesus Christ: imitate his patience, fortitude, and magnanimity; and, supported by his grace, be willing to suffer as he suffered before you.

SECTION IV.

THE APOSTLE animadverts upon the conduct of some idle, officious and disorderly persons in the church of Thessalonica; recommends quiet and industry after his own example: orders that the untractable should undergo the censure of the church, and concludes with the apostolical benediction written with his own hand. Ch. iii. 6—18.

1. He cautions the Thessalonian Christians to

CH. III. avoid the society of idle and disorderly persons, ver. 6.

VER. 6. *Now we command you*[1], *brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to withdraw yourselves from every brother who walketh irregularly*[2], *and not agreeably to the instructions which they received from us*[3].

I regret that I am under the necessity of again introducing a disagreeable subject which I mentioned in my last letter, especially as I find that my friendly cautions have not been attended with the desired effect. I now, therefore, my beloved brethren, in the name and by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, require and charge those of you whose

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[1] *We command,* &c.] The apostle had given the Thessalonians a hint in his former epistle, 1 Thess. iv. 11, against idleness and officious intrusion. This advice, however, appears to have been little regarded by those to whom it was addressed. And the apostle having been informed, perhaps by the messengers who had returned after having carried his first letter, that this idle meddlesome spirit had increased, possibly under the pretext that the day of judgement being so near it was of no use to attend to any worldly concerns, in this second epistle he animadverts upon it with greater severity, and very properly holds out his own example of industry and independence, to show that a belief in the approaching advent of Christ ought by no means to slacken their attention to the duties of their stations. The apostle here expresses himself with a tone of authority. "The word," says Dr. Chandler, "implies an authoritative order such as generals give to their soldiers, or princes to their subjects."

[2] *Who walketh irregularly.*] ατακτως· "who does not keep his rank, and by breaking it puts others into confusion; a military term." Dr. Chandler.

[3] *Instructions which they received from us.*] παραδοσεις, *traditions.* See ch. ii. 15; *they received from us: i. e.* either by word of mouth while we were with you, or by the epistle which we lately sent. The received text reads, "he received."

conduct is irreproachable, to withdraw yourselves immediately from the society of those professors of the Christian religion who neglect the Christian discipline and rule of life, whose behaviour is a disgrace to their profession, who treat my instructions and admonitions with contempt, and whose misconduct introduces confusion and disorder into the church. Ch. III. Ver. 6.

2. The apostle states his own exemplary conduct while he resided among them, in working diligently for his subsistence though he had a right to a maintenance from them, ver. 7—9.

For ye yourselves know how it becometh you to imitate us. For we were not irregular among you: nor did we eat any man's bread at free cost. But with labour and fatigue, we worked night and day, that we might not be burthensome to any of you[4]. 7. 8.

You recollect without doubt perfectly well the instruction which we gave you, and the example which, from the knowledge we had of the character of the inhabitants of Thessalonica, I and my associates thought it advisable to exhibit for your imi-

[4] *With labour and fatigue*, &c.] See 1 Thess. ii. 9. The apostle probably knew that there were many idle people at Thessalonica who would profess Christianity, if they could be maintained by it in idleness and gossiping. To preclude expectations of this kind, he and his associates waved their claim to a maintenance, and worked diligently at their manual occupations to earn a subsistence. Yet it appears that even this would not have been sufficient for their support without the kind assistance repeatedly sent to them by the Philippians, Phil. iv. 16.

Ch. III. Ver. 8. tation. In no respect did we deviate from our character as Christian teachers: nor did we encourage idleness by our example. We accepted gratuitous support from no one: but while we employed the day in teaching publicly and privately the doctrine of Christ, we worked hard, early and late, at our manual occupations, in order to procure subsistence for ourselves, that we might neither put any of you to inconvenience to maintain us, nor encourage others by our example to fasten themselves upon you for support.

9. *Not because we were destitute of authority*[1], *but to make ourselves an example to you, that ye might imitate us.*

Though we maintained ourselves, it was not because we had no just claim upon you for a decent and liberal support: for it is but reasonable, and Christ has directed, that a suitable compensation should be made to the preachers of the gospel for the occupation of their time, and thoughts, and labours. But in this instance we waved our just right for the sake of setting a beneficial example to you.

3. The apostle reminds them of the maxim which he had laid down to discourage idleness.

10. *For indeed*[2], *when we were with you, we gave*

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[1] *Not destitute of authority.*] See 1 Cor. ix. 1—14, 2 Cor. xi. 7, &c. "Not because we have no right." Newcome.

[2] *For indeed.*] We worked with our own hands, *for* we had laid down this maxim, &c. and we were willing to show that our doctrine and practice were consistent. See Benson.

you this charge, If any man *will not work, let him not eat*[3]. Ch. III. Ver. 10.

That the design of our example might not be mistaken, we accompanied it with positive precept, and gave you this maxim as a warning against idleness, That the man who will not do what he can to support himself, has no right to expect to be supported by others.

4. He advises idle and officious persons to mind their own business and to live in peace, ver. 11, 12.

For we hear that some among you walk irregularly, doing no business, but being impertinently busy[4]. *Now those who are such, we charge and* 11. 12.

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[3] *If any* man, &c.] "It is not charity to support idleness; nor have they any right to eat bread, who can labour for it, but refuse." Chandler; who observes, that "by the laws of Solon, idleness was discouraged, and by those of Draco it was punished with death." "This seems to have been a proverb both among Jews and heathen." Benson.

[4] *Doing no business, but being impertinently busy.*] μηδεν εργαζομενες, αλλα περιεργαζομενες. Dr. Chandler observes, "There is a turn of words in the Greek which can scarcely be imitated in any other language: *q. d.* We hear there are some who do no business, but are busy-bodies. The word signifies, 'to be curious and inquisitive into the affairs of others, impertinently to meddle in things in which we have no concern.'" Perhaps they might ramble from house to house, and dissuade every body from working, pretending that Christians now had nothing to do but to talk about the day of judgement. This idleness and impertinence would create much mischief in families, and expose Christianity to great scandal among unbelievers. Dr. Benson has a good note upon the great evil of a busy, meddlesome, calumniating spirit in general, especially of religious detraction. But possibly the misconduct of the Thessalonians upon which the apostle so justly animadverts, was merely such as I have represented.

Ch. III. Ver. 12. *exhort, by our Lord Jesus Christ, that they work quietly and maintain themselves*[1].

The admonition which I suggest is but too seasonable. For I am credibly informed, through the same channel by which I learned your great error concerning the day of judgement, that some among you who make a profession of the Christian religion act in a manner very unworthy of their character, making use of the general expectation of the immediate appearance of Christ, or of some other plea equally groundless, as an excuse for idleness. And as though all attention to secular business were now superfluous, they totally neglect their proper occupations, and going about from house to house, they intrude into the concerns and disturb the peace of their neighbours with their senseless babbling. Now, as the apostle of Christ, I strictly charge, and as affectionately concerned for their welfare I earnestly exhort and intreat, all persons of this description to reform their conduct immediately, and as they tender the authority of Christ, and value their connexion with the Christian community, to return to their occupations without delay, to keep themselves quiet, and to support themselves by their own industry; so that they may give no trouble to their fellow Christians, and may offer no occasion to unbelievers to report that Christianity encourages idleness and impertinence.

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[1] *And maintain themselves.*] Literally, *eat their own bread: i. e.* "the bread earned by their own industry." Newcome.

5. The apostle gives advice to regular and well-disposed Christians how to conduct themselves with respect to such as are idle and disorderly, ver. 13—15. Ch. III.

But, brethren[2], *be not ye weary*[3] *in well-doing*[4]. Ver. 13.

As to you, my Christian friends, who are not chargeable with the faults upon which I have animadverted, I intreat you not to be discouraged from the practice of virtue, nor to be restrained from acts of benevolence and sympathy, by the occasional abuse of your kindness by these unworthy intruders.

And if any one disobey our injunctions in this epistle, mark that man[5], *and hold no intercourse with him*[6], *that he may be ashamed*[7]. *Yet, regard him not as an enemy, but admonish*[8] *him as a brother.* 14. 15.

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[2] *But, brethren.*] The apostle having finished his advice and reproof to the culpable, now addresses himself to those Christians who had supported a good character, and gives them advice suitable to the occasion. See Benson.

[3] *Be not ye weary.*] "The original word signifies 'to fail in any thing through negligence, sloth, or dejecting fear.'" Chandler, from Hesychius.

[4] *Well-doing.*] "Not virtue in general, but the practice of kindness and beneficence. Gal. vi. 9." Benson. He adds, "The ancients thus interpreted the words, 'let not their sloth hinder your charity in giving them what is necessary to preserve life.'"

[5] *Mark that man.*] Grotius and Le Clerc understand the advice, *q. d.* "signify that man in an epistle to me." This is a sense that the words will bear, but the common interpretation better suits the connexion. See Benson and Chandler.

[6] *Hold no intercourse.*] "avoid his company, keep him at a distance." Chandler.

[7] *That he may be ashamed.*] ἵνα ἐντραπῇ. "The word," says Dr. Chandler, "is very emphatical; it includes the double notion both of shame and of a change of sentiment and conduct."

[8] *Regard him not as an enemy, but admonish,* &c.] They

Ch. III. Ver. 15. Further, if it should happen, which indeed I am unwilling to suppose, that any one of these officious meddlers should persist in wilful disobedience to the advice I have now given, you will do well to pass a suitable censure upon him: and agree among yourselves to hold no intercourse with him, and not to admit him into your houses. This, if any thing, will bring him to himself, it will make him ashamed of his conduct, and will produce reformation. But do not carry your censures too far; do not, immediately at least, exclude him from the Christian church: but as a fellow Christian, who has been misled, suggest to him those considerations which will bring him to a better mind.

6. He expresses his good wishes for them all, ver. 16.

16. *Now the Lord of peace himself*[1] *give you peace*[2], *by all means, at all times*[3]. *The Lord be with you all.*

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were not to excommunicate, but to admonish, νουθετειτε. "The word," says Dr. Chandler, "signifies to *rebuke, correct*, or *chastise for a fault*." The apostle advises that it should not be managed with too great severity.

[1] *The Lord of peace.*] "May the Author of all good grant you all kinds of happiness." Dr. Priestley. I rather, with most interpreters, suppose that Christ is the person intended. "He," says Dr. Chandler, "is called by Isaiah the Prince of Peace, because he has reconciled both Jews and Gentiles to God and to one another, creating peace between God and them, and commanding them to follow the things that make for peace."

[2] *Give you peace:*] *i. e.* by his gospel infusing a pacific spirit. This prayer, or rather devout wish, was peculiarly seasonable; as impertinence of intrusion on the one hand, and severity of reproof on the other, might provoke contention.

[3] *By all means, at all times.*] So Mr. Wakefield; who, upon

Beware that you do not interrupt the peace of the church on the one hand by an intrusive spirit, or on the other by harsh censure. And may Jesus Christ, the great messenger of peace, by the spirit of his gospel, communicate and preserve to you, at all times, and without interruption, the invaluable blessing of peace in its most extensive signification. May his gospel, with all its blessings, be the portion of you all without exception. Ch. III. Ver. 16.

7. The epistle concludes with the benediction written with the apostle's own hand, ver. 17, 18.

The salutation by the hand of me Paul, which is my *token in every epistle. Thus I am wont to write*[4]. *The favour of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*[5] 17. 18.

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the authority of the Syriac and Æthiopic, leaves out τρόπῳ, and understands καιρῷ. Many good copies read τοπῳ, *place*. See Griesbach.

[4] *Thus I am wont to write.*] ὕτω γραφω. Mark xv. 6. "He released: *i. e.* he was wont to release." Benson, Glassius. The apostle seems to have suspected that somebody had forged an epistle in his name, see ch. ii. 2; and therefore he gives them a token by which they may always distinguish a genuine from a spurious epistle, *viz.* the form of the concluding benediction, and its being wholly written by himself. Some suppose he wrote in cypher; but this supposition is unnecessary. It is probable that he wrote Greek ill, Gal. vi. 11; and the peculiarity of his hand-writing would be a sufficient proof of its genuineness. The expression *in every epistle* implies, that these Epistles to the Thessalonians were not the first which the apostle had written; but as they are of the earliest date of those which are still extant, it is obvious that some epistles which the apostle wrote are lost.

[5] *The favour*, &c.] "May all the blessings of the gospel attend you." Dr. Priestley.

Ch. III. Ver. 18. The body of this epistle is written by a person whom I employ for that purpose; but the salutation which follows is in my own hand. This is the mark by which the genuineness of an epistle of mine may always be known, so that you will be in no danger of being imposed upon by any spurious letter pretended to be sent by me. Observe the handwriting, in which I express the following cordial wish for your happiness. May the gospel, with all its blessings, which is the free gift of God by Jesus Christ, be yours, now and for ever. Amen.

THE FIRST EPISTLE

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

TIMOTHY.

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

TIMOTHY was a native of Lystra, a city of Lycaonia in the Lesser Asia. His father was a heathen, but his mother was a Jewess, and both she and her mother were persons of eminent piety, who had taken great pains to instruct Timothy from his childhood in the knowledge of the Jewish scriptures. 2 Tim. i. 5. iii. 14, 15. These pious women had probably been converted to the Christian religion during the first visit which the apostle had made at Lystra A.D. 47, when he and Barnabas, after having been worshiped as Gods, because of the miraculous cure of the lame man, were persecuted at the instigation of the unbelieving Jews, and the apostle Paul was nearly stoned to death by

the mob. Acts xiv. The second visit which the apostle made to Lystra was A.D. 51, when Timothy being grown up to manhood, and having obtained by his exemplary conduct a high reputation among the Christians at Lystra, and Iconium, and his father being probably dead, the apostle determined to take him as an associate in the mission. Acts xvi. Having been set apart for this purpose by prayer and imposition of hands by the elders of the church, 1 Tim. iv. 14, and endued with spiritual gifts by the apostle, he accompanied Paul and Silas in their journeys: nor does it appear that he ever afterwards left the apostle, except when he was deputed upon some special mission. And Paul joins the name of Timothy with his own in the inscription of several of his epistles.

The time when this epistle was written has been a subject of considerable discussion. It is generally concluded that it was written to Timothy at Ephesus, soon after the apostle had quitted that city to go into Macedonia, ch. i. 3. One such journey is recorded in the history of the Acts, ch. xx. But as it appears, from the first epistle to the Corinthians, that Timothy was not with the apostle at Ephesus when he wrote that epistle, and as in this letter to Timothy he expresses an expectation of returning speedily to relieve him from the burdensome office which he had imposed upon him, it has been argued, that this epistle was not written to Timothy upon that occasion, but in the course of another journey, which is not mentioned by Luke;

and which is supposed to have taken place about A. D. 65, after the apostle's release from his first imprisonment [1].

But as, when the apostle took leave of the elders of Ephesus at Miletus, Acts xx. 25, he solemnly declares that he *knew* that they would see his face no more, it is unreasonable to believe that he ever visited Ephesus again, unless we have the most direct and indisputable evidence of the fact: but no such evidence is produced; and many circumstances are alleged which are thought to make it probable that this epistle was written during the journey recorded by Luke. From the similarity between the directions given to Timothy and those addressed to Titus, it seems probable that these epistles were written nearly at the same time: and we have some reason to conclude that the epistle to Titus was sent by the apostle before he left Ephesus. It seems likewise evident, from the very particular description which the apostle gives of the qualifications of bishops and deacons, that Timothy's business at Ephesus was to select proper persons for these honourable offices; but it is very improbable that the churches in and about Ephesus should have been left in an unorganized state, till after the apostle's release from his first imprisonment. Indeed, we know that they were not so; for the elders or bishops of Ephesus came to meet the apostle at the

[1] The advocates of this hypothesis are Pearson, Whitby, Basnage, Cave, Fabricius, Mill, Paley, and Macknight.

port of Miletus, in his way to Jerusalem. The apostle when writing to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xvi. 11) exhorts, that no person should despise Timothy on account of his youth, and in this epistle (ch. iv. 12) he advises the evangelist to conduct himself with such gravity and circumspection that no person may treat him with contempt because of his youth. These epistles therefore were probably written nearly at the same time. And this advice would be more suitable to the age of Timothy at this time, than it would ten years afterwards, when he had passed the season of youth. It is true that the evangelist was not at Ephesus when the epistle to the Corinthians was written: but the apostle undoubtedly expected to see him before he left Ephesus (1 Cor. xvi. 11), and when he departed he might expect to return soon; intending perhaps to proceed directly to Corinth and to return immediately; but meeting Titus in Macedonia, he received from him such an account of the state of things at Corinth, as induced him to postpone his visit to that city for a year. Instead therefore of returning to Timothy at Ephesus, he directed Timothy to come to him at Macedonia; where we accordingly find his name united with the apostle's in the inscription of the second epistle to the Corinthians, which probably was not written till more than a year after the epistle to Timothy. For these reasons Dr. Lardner and others have concluded that this epistle was written from Troas, or Macedonia, late in the

spring, or early in the summer of A.D. 56, before the apostle had had an interview with Titus[1].

Nevertheless, the objections against this hypothesis appear to me absolutely insurmountable. It is morally impossible that the apostle Paul, writing in confidence to his pupil and associate Timothy, immediately after he had left Ephesus in consequence of the tumult excited by Demetrius and the artists, in which his own life had been exposed to the most imminent peril, and appointing him during his absence to superintend the concerns of the church at Ephesus, should not in the whole course of the epistle make the most distant allusion to those dreadful disturbances, by which he had himself been driven from the city probably some weeks or months sooner than he intended. And the argument derives tenfold strength from the consideration that in the second epistle to the Corinthians, which was written more than a year afterwards, when his feelings must of course be considerably abated, he alludes to the tumult at Ephesus, and to the dangers to which he had been exposed in Asia, in language almost expressive of horror; which plainly shows how sensibly the recollection even at that distance of time affected his feelings, and how deep an impression these scenes had left upon his mind. Whereas, in the epistle to Timothy, written when he had hardly recovered from the first alarm, he

[1] This is the opinion of Lightfoot, Baronius, Estius, Benson, Doddridge, Lardner, Grotius, Hammond, Witsius, &c.

takes no more notice of Demetrius's tumult than if it had never happened. In fact, nothing can be conceived more quiet than the apostle's mind appears to have been from the beginning to the end of the epistle. This state of mind would have been utterly impossible in the supposed circumstances.

It seems therefore necessary to look out for another date to this epistle; and I beg leave, with great diffidence, to offer one which, though not wholly free from difficulties, appears to me less objectionable than either of the preceding hypotheses.

If Dr. Ashworth's supposition, which, to say the least, is as probable as any other, be allowed; namely, that the apostle Paul visited Crete in some portion of the three years which are assigned for his residence in Ephesus and its vicinity, taking Titus with him as his associate in that mission, he would probably leave the concerns of the church at Ephesus in the hands of the evangelist Timothy, who had been his companion in the ministry about four or five years. And as it is possible that the apostle might be induced to undertake this mission, on a sudden, in consequence of some unforeseen opportunity which occurred, he might not have had time to communicate to Timothy those particular instructions which it would be necessary to give to so young a man when he was invested with such an important trust. He avails himself therefore of the first opportunity which offered after his arrival in Crete, to dispatch a letter containing specific directions for his conduct in the arduous circum-

stances in which this youthful evangelist had been left: which epistle would also be his warrant with the Ephesians for any measures which he might think necessary to pursue. This was the First Epistle to Timothy: which, therefore, if these suppositions be allowed, ought to be dated from Crete.

This hypothesis seems to afford the easiest explanation of all the circumstances. It accounts for the style and tone of the epistle, as addressed to the evangelist when he was very young; and more especially, for that particular detail of the qualifications of those who were to be selected as officers of the church, which would not have been so necessary to a person of maturer age and experience. It easily accounts for the total silence of the apostle upon the subject of the disturbances at Ephesus, and the dangers to which he and the other teachers of the gospel had been exposed in that superstitious city; and for that calmness and quietude of mind with which this epistle was dictated, so different from that which appears in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. If it be objected that the apostle would hardly have intrusted such important powers to so young a person, Timothy being at this time probably no more than four- or five-and-twenty, that objection holds equally against the supposition that the apostle wrote the letter at the time when he left Ephesus in his way to Corinth, after the tumult of Demetrius. In fact, we know, from the tenor of the epistle, that Timothy was a very young man at

the time when it was written ; and let it be remembered, that the officers which he was appointed to select, were not like bishops, presbyters, and deacons of modern times, but merely committees of respectable men to regulate the public meetings of the assembly, to instruct and exhort the members, or to manage its temporal concerns, and to provide for the poor. It was also very desirable, for the sake of order and regularity, that this arrangement should be made as speedily as possible without waiting for the apostle's return, which must necessarily be uncertain ; and Timothy, though young, must have been eminently qualified to take the lead in this business ; because the Ephesians, being new converts, were of course strangers to the customs of the churches, while Timothy, who had travelled with the apostle for several years, had seen the method in which the churches planted by him had been respectively organized. It should seem, therefore, that when the apostle left Ephesus, he fully expected to return soon ; but, knowing that his movements were not altogether in his own power, being sometimes impeded by his enemies, and at other times directed by express interposition of Christ himself, he appointed Timothy to superintend the affairs of the church during his absence ; and upon his arrival in Crete he wrote this epistle, to instruct his young associate how to act if he should himself be prevented from returning at the time proposed.

It adds considerably to the weight of the argument, that the Letters to Timothy and Titus have a great affinity to each other, not only in subject but in style; nearly as great as that between the epistles to the Colossians and the Ephesians. The Epistle to Titus being written less in detail than that to Timothy, being addressed to an older man. This circumstance greatly adds to the presumption of their having been written nearly at the same time, and upon similar occasions, which, upon this hypothesis, they were; the Epistle to Timothy having been sent at the commencement, and that to Titus at the termination, of the apostle's mission to Crete.

One considerable objection obviously occurs to this hypothesis, which with some will be regarded as fatal. The apostle, at the beginning of his epistle, says, 1 Tim. i. 3, "I besought thee to remain at Ephesus when I *went into Macedonia*." And this is the reading in all copies and versions now extant. But that this letter could not have been written in the journey recorded Acts xx. when the apostle quitted Ephesus after the tumult of Demetrius, must, I think, be sufficiently apparent; and that the organization of the church at Ephesus would not have been left till after the apostle's release from his first imprisonment, and when Timothy was no longer a young man, is, I conceive, almost equally improbable. The difficulties in both cases are avoided by the proposed hypothesis; for

the adoption of which we must either accept the reading of Hilary, "I besought thee to remain at Ephesus (*cum ires*) when you were about to set out for Macedonia;" or we must suppose some early corruption of the text, which it is not now in our power to rectify: this, however, is not without example in the sacred writings.

Upon the whole, it appears probable to me that the First Epistle to Timothy was written by the apostle from Crete, some time in A.D. 55.

THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY is one of those, the genuineness of which was never disputed by the ancient churches, and there seems no reason to call it in question now. It is a composition of great value, both as it establishes the divine authority of the Christian religion by the testimony which it bears to those extraordinary facts upon which its evidence rests; and as it illustrates the moral tendency and beneficial effect of the Christian doctrine in the piety, benevolence, and zeal of these its earliest professors, and most eminent and successful teachers. And this epistle is particularly useful, as it delineates the temper and character which may justly be expected in those who are appointed to the honourable office of teachers and ministers in the church.

It is plain, from the tenor of the epistle, that the apostle Paul had left Timothy at Ephesus with power to instruct and organize the church during

his absence. And the design of the epistle is, to suggest salutary advice to the youthful evangelist to enable him to conduct himself with propriety and dignity, in a situation of great difficulty and delicacy.

CHAPTER FIRST. The apostle, after a suitable INTRODUCTION, warns the evangelist against false teachers, zealots for the law, and immoral in their conduct; he expresses his gratitude for his own conversion to the Christian religion, and his call to the apostolic office; he exhorts Timothy to persevere in the same honourable profession, and not to apostatize from the truth like some whom he mentions, and whom he had found it necessary to exclude from Christian communion.

CHAPTER SECOND. The apostle requires that Christians should intercede for all men, and especially for those who are invested with civil authority, that peace and truth may every where prevail, ver. 1—8. He then enjoins upon the female sex modesty, reserve, and silent subjection, enforcing his injunctions by arguments drawn from the Mosaic account of the first human pair, ver. 9—15.

CHAPTER THIRD. The evangelist having probably been directed to select proper persons to superintend the church, and to instruct its members, the apostle proceeds to enumerate the qualifications requisite for the honourable and successful discharge of the pastoral or episcopal office, ver. 1—7. He afterwards specifies the proper qualifications of dea-

cons and their families, whose office in the church he represents as highly honourable and useful when performed with fidelity and discretion, ver. 8—13; and concludes this part of his subject with expressing a hope that he should soon return to his friend, whom he in the mean time encourages to zeal and activity, by a brief representation of those facts which constitute the basis of the Christian faith, ver. 14—16.

CHAPTER FOURTH. The apostle foretells the great apostasy, the distinguishing character of which would be to impose distinctions and mortifications inconsistent with the liberal spirit of the gospel, ver. 1—5. He exhorts the evangelist to avoid such useless distinctions, and all other trifling questions, and to insist wholly upon those important doctrines which were the foundation of Christian hope, and the best motive to virtuous practice; and for the sake of which they willingly suffered persecution, ver. 6—11; and he particularly recommends it to him to secure the respect of others by a strictly virtuous and exemplary deportment, by diligent application to the improvement of his mind, and by a faithful persevering discharge of the duties of his office, ver. 12—16.

CHAPTER FIFTH. The apostle directs his young friend, in what manner to administer reproof with the best effect, ver. 1, 2. He then details the qualifications of widows who were justly entitled to be entered upon the list of such as were to partake of

the charitable distributions of the church, reminding him that these distributions could be only intended for those who were advanced in years, and who supported the most virtuous and honourable characters, ver. 3—16. He requires that the pastors of the society should have an equitable and liberal compensation for their labours, and that accusations against them should not be lightly received, ver. 17—20: and the apostle concludes this chapter with a solemn injunction upon the evangelist to observe his directions, to be impartial and deliberate in his proceedings, advising him to take due care of his health, and reminding him that the difference in human character required a correspondent difference in his treatment of different persons, ver. 21—25.

Chapter Sixth. The apostle strictly requires servants, or slaves, to learn from the principles of Christianity to yield a steady and cheerful obedience to their masters, whether Christians or heathen, and animadverts severely upon those who taught that Christianity put an end to civil distinctions, ver. 1—5. He represents the promises of the gospel as the most valuable treasure, and the best antidote against covetousness, 6—10. He solemnly enjoins upon the evangelist to persevere in the practice of virtue, in the profession of Christianity, and in the faithful discharge of his public duty, as he will answer for himself at the appearance of Jesus Christ, ver. 11—16. He charges him to direct the opulent to a wise and virtuous use of their wealth,

ver. 17—19; and having cautioned him against those who were desirous to corrupt the purity of the Christian faith with the vanities of a false philosophy, he concludes the epistle with his apostolical benediction, ver. 20, 21.

The Postscript to this epistle, which states that it was written from Laodicea, is unquestionably erroneous.

THE FIRST EPISTLE

TO

TIMOTHY.

SECTION I.

AFTER a suitable introduction, the apostle reminds the evangelist of the reason why he had left him at Ephesus to supply his place in his absence, and urges him to resist the attempts of those who would impose the observance of the ceremonial law. Ch. i. 1—11. Ch. I.

THE APOSTLE'S INTRODUCTION.

THE apostle affectionately inscribes the epistle to the evangelist, ver. 1, 2.

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the appointment of God our Saviour, and of Christ Jesus[1] *our hope, to Timothy,* my *true son in the faith; favour, mercy, peace, from God our Father, and from Christ Jesus our Lord.* Ver. 1. 2.

[1] *Of Christ Jesus.*] This is the true reading: vide Griesbach. The received text reads, "the Lord Jesus Christ."

Ch. I. Ver. 2. I who am an apostle of Christ, commissioned to teach his doctrine and to bear witness to his resurrection, being appointed to this honourable office by the will of God, who is our deliverer from the yoke of idol worship and of ceremonial institution, and by the immediate interposition of Jesus Christ, whose doctrine is the foundation of our immortal hope, who appeared to me in the way to Damascus, and honoured me with a commission to teach the gospel,—I, Paul, address this epistle to my beloved Timothy, whom I have converted to the Christian doctrine, who follows my example with filial love and reverence, and for whom I feel the tenderest paternal regard; and to him I most sincerely wish an increasing participation of the blessings of the gospel, which are the free gift of divine mercy, and the possession of which comprehends every thing truly desirable both for this life and the next; to him may these blessings be communicated in the richest abundance from the mercy of God our benevolent Parent, and from Jesus our Master, who has been appointed by God as the medium of this his gracious dispensation to mankind.

2. He exhorts Timothy to continue at Ephesus, and to silence the false teachers, as he had given him in charge, ver. 3, 4.

3. *Continue*[1] *at Ephesus, as I intreated thee when*

[1] *Continue.*] προσμειναι, in the imperative mood. Castellio, Knatchbull, Bowyer, Wakefield.

I went into Macedonia[2], *that thou mayest charge certain* persons *not to teach different doctrines, nor to pay attention to fables, and to endless genealogies*[3], *which promote disputes, rather than that dispensation of God*[4], *which is by faith.* Ch. I. Ver. 4.

Being under the necessity of leaving Ephesus abruptly, and sooner than I intended, and before I had completed the settlement of the large society of Christians in that city and its vicinity, I intreated you to remain there while I proceeded to Macedonia in my way to Corinth. And I particularly requested that you would strictly charge certain persons who were disposed to set themselves up as teachers without being lawfully appointed to that office, or properly qualified for it, and who were in-

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[2] *When I went into Macedonia.*] πορευομενος. So all copies and versions. One copy of Hilary reads *cum ires Macedoniam*, when you were going to Macedonia. *q. d.* When I set out from Ephesus you intended a voyage to Macedonia; at my intreaty you remained at Ephesus. At any rate this epistle could not have been written upon that journey to Macedonia, which is mentioned by Luke, Acts xx., and it is very improbable that it should have been deferred till after the apostle's release from his first imprisonment. A more probable period than either is assigned in the Introduction to this epistle, together with the arguments by which that hypothesis is supported: but upon the supposition there maintained, a mistake must have slipped into some very early copy in this sentence. See Griesbach, ed. 2.

[3] *Endless genealogies.*] It is doubted whether the apostle means Jewish genealogies, or the Gnostic fiction of the genealogies of the Æons. Dr. Benson has assigned probable reasons for supposing the latter. Many Jewish philosophers were Gnostics. The apostle would hardly have called Jewish genealogies, fables. He himself boasted of his descent from Abraham.

[4] *Dispensation*:] οικονομιαν. Such is the reading of the best authorities. The received text reads οικοδομιαν, *edification*. See Griesbach.

Ch. I. Ver. 4. clined to impose upon their brethren the observance of the Jewish ritual, not to presume to teach a doctrine so different from that pure and spiritual Christianity which I had taught them; and particularly that they should not pay the least regard to the lying legends of Jewish rabbis, or to those intricate genealogies and unintelligible speculations which might supply arguments for perpetual wrangling, but could contribute nothing to the credit or the diffusion of that new and heavenly dispensation, which is appointed by God as the object of our Christian faith.

3. The design of the apostle's instruction is to promote universal benevolence, while the crude doctrines of the false teachers only led to frivolous and unintelligible disputes, ver. 5—7.

5. *Now the purpose of that charge*[1] *is love, out of a pure heart and a good conscience, and undissembled faith.*

The true doctrine of Christ, which I have inculcated among them, produces love to God and man, together with a tranquil and happy state of mind, which originates in purity of heart, in the testimony of an approving conscience, and a practical faith in the gospel. And because it operates these beneficial effects, I urged you to charge those who usurp the office of teachers, at their peril to teach

[1] *Of that charge:*] *q. d.* which I exhorted you to give to the false teachers, ver. 3. Griesbach includes ver. 5—17 in a parenthesis.

any thing inconsistent with it. And you well know that this instruction was far from being unnecessary. Ch. I. Ver. 5.

From which some having swerved, have turned aside to vain talk; desiring to be teachers of the law, but understanding neither what they say, nor concerning what they so positively affirm. 6. 7.

Some weak and vain persons, losing sight of this main object of evangelical instruction, have taken upon them to teach many foolish and unnecessary things; imposing many rites and ceremonies upon the believers in Christianity, which are of no use in themselves, and which the author of our religion has not enjoined. Nor are these people in fact thoroughly acquainted with that ritual, the observance of which they are so ready to impose; but while they pretend to be teachers of the law, they betray gross ignorance both of its specific injunctions and of its grand design.

4. The law is useful as a restraint upon vice, but not as a ritual obligatory upon believers, ver. 8—11.

Now we know that the law is excellent, if a man use it agreeably to its design[2]. 8.

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[2] *Agreeably to its design.*] νομιμως, *lawfully.* "agreeably to the purpose for which the law was given, and without imposing the observance of its ceremonies on believers in the gospel." Newcome. Dr. Priestley observes, that "lest it should be imagined Paul meant to undervalue the law, he expressly declares that that was not his intention, and shows what was the proper

Ch. I. Ver. 8. I am far from being an enemy to the Mosaic law, as my slanderers maliciously represent. I acknowledge it to be of divine original; and that at the time when it was delivered, and to the people for whom it was designed, it was of great use. And the moral part of it is still obligatory upon all mankind. But let not the ceremonial law, with the additional load of Pharisaic tradition, usurp the place of the gospel.

9. *Knowing this, that against a just person there is no law in force.*

Believers in the Christian religion are justified by faith without the works of the law; they are brought into a state of privilege and hope by the simple act of belief in Christ, and by making a public profession of their belief independently of a compliance with the Mosaic ritual. And if they live up to their profession and their future expectations, they are not obnoxious to that sentence which the moral law denounces upon all impenitent offenders. These are principles which we must settle in our own minds, when we take into consideration the present extent and obligation of the law of Moses.

—9. *But* laws are made *for the lawless and the unruly, for the impious and the wicked, for the unholy and profane, for parricides and murderers,*

10. *for fornicators, for sodomites, for man-stealers,*

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end of the law with respect to the moral, which was the most important use of it; namely, to be a restraint upon vice and wickedness, several kinds of which he here enumerates."

for liars, for perjured persons; and if there be any other thing contrary to that wholesome doctrine of the glorious gospel of the blessed[1] *God, which has been committed to my trust.* Ch. I. Ver. 11.

Laws are made to prevent crimes, by denouncing condign punishment upon those who are guilty: of these some are atrocious offences against society and the public peace, and demand the severest cognizance of the civil magistrate. Others are offences of a more private nature: violations of good morals, infringements upon that delicacy of character, which the gospel requires, that glorious gospel of which I have the honour to be an authorized preacher and an apostle, and which enjoins the strictest purity of heart and life, without which none can be admitted into the blissful presence of God. These crimes, though highly blameable, cannot always be arraigned before an earthly tribunal; but they do not escape the notice of omniscience. And the sentence, which the moral law of God passes upon these offences, shall be as certainly executed in due season upon the obdurate and impenitent, as the punishment denounced upon crimes of the greatest notoriety, and the most horrible aggravation.

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[1] *Blessed God.*] μακαριε, *blessed, perfect in happiness.* Wakefield renders it *holy,* and refers to Hesychius.

SECTION II.

Ch. 1. *THE APOSTLE, after having expressed in the warmest terms his devout admiration and gratitude for his conversion to the faith, and his call to the apostolic office, renews the charge of fidelity to Timothy, and warns him of the danger of apostatizing from the faith.* Ch. i. 12—20.

1. The apostle, having mentioned that he was intrusted to preach the gospel, takes occasion to express his great thankfulness for his conversion to the Christian faith, and his call to the apostolic office, ver. 12—14.

Ver. 12. *Now I return thanks to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me ability*[1], *that he accounted me*
13. *faithful, having put* me *into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I acted ignorantly in* my state of *unbelief.*

I am intrusted to preach this glorious gospel; and truly, when I recollect this fact in all its circumstances, I am lost in admiration and gratitude for the great honour conferred upon one so unde-

[1] *Who has given me ability.*] ενδυναμωσαντι με, *who granteth me strength.* Wakefield.—*q. d.* who supplied me with miraculous powers, &c. "by the co-operation of his spirit." Newcome.

serving of it. And first of all, I thank my Master Christ Jesus, who is the head of the church, and from whom I have received those gifts and powers by which I am qualified for the discharge of the apostolic office, that he should regard me, I will not say as worthy of this honourable station, but rather as one who would discharge the duties of the office with fidelity, zeal, and courage, and who would not by any mean and temporizing conduct betray the confidence reposed in me. It is truly wonderful that he should have vouchsafed thus to honour me, who before my conversion distinguished myself by the most malignant opposition to the Christian name; being a reviler of Jesus and of his doctrine, a spiteful persecutor of his disciples, treating them in the most insolent and injurious manner. Yet, great as my offence was, it was forgiven; because my misconduct arose from an error of judgement, rather than from malevolence of heart. In my unhappy state of unbelief, I acted ignorantly, being seriously persuaded in my wretched, misguided conscience, that I ought to do all that I did against the doctrine and the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth. Ch. I. Ver. 13.

And the favour of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, together with[2] *that faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.* 14.

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[2] *Together with:*] *q. d.* in producing that faith in Christ and love to him which then became the ruling principles in my breast. "*Faith* is opposed to St. Paul's former unbelief, and *love* to his former spirit of persecution." Newcome.

Ch. I. Ver. 14. The mercy and goodness of Christ went far beyond the measure of my guilt and folly; and from a bigoted persecuting unbeliever, it transformed me into a humble, charitable, holy, zealous disciple, and preacher of the gospel. The power and grace of Christ wrought an immediate and total change in my views, my principles, my affections, and my conduct; and made me the reverse of all that I had been before.

2. The apostle represents the mercy manifested to him as an encouraging motive to faith and penitence, ver. 15, 16.

15. *It is a certain truth, and worthy of cordial reception*[1], *that Jesus Christ came into the world to*
16. *save sinners, of whom I have been*[2] *the chief. Nevertheless, for this cause I obtained mercy; that in me, as chief*[3], *Jesus Christ might display the utmost forbearance, as an example to those who should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life.*

There is no doctrine more true, more important, or more worthy of being cordially and universally received and professed, than this, That Jesus Christ came into the world to bring all mankind, whether the Jews who had forfeited their privileges, or the

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[1] *Of cordial reception.*] παση̃ς αποδοχη̃ς. Raphelius observes, that πα̃ς is used for *summus*." Newcome. "all joyful acceptation." Wakefield.

[2] *I have been.*] An instance of ειμι expressing past time.

[3] *In me, as chief.*] πρωτῳ. Benson supposes the apostle means to say, he was the first blasphemer and persecutor who had been converted since the effusion of the spirit. But this, Macknight observes, is contrary to Acts ii. 33—41, vi. 7.

heathen who never possessed them, into a state of privilege and of hope, rescuing them from the bondage of the Mosaic law, and from the impure rites of idol worship, and introducing them into the light, the liberty, the peace, and privilege of the gospel state. Ch. I. Ver. 16.

Of those who are thus benefited by the gospel, none was ever more unworthy than myself, who was not only an unbeliever, but a furious persecutor of the church; who had, therefore, forfeited all claims to mercy: yet my honoured Master singled me out as the object of his compassion; and this he did, not from any merit of my own, but that my example might be an encouragement to others, blind and furious as myself, to repent and reform, and embrace the gospel, in humble dependance upon that mercy which, having been extended to such an one as I was, will never be denied to any sincere penitent; and which will advance to a happy and immortal life every one who believes and obeys the gospel.

3. The apostle, excited by the recollection of this distinguishing goodness, ascribes the glory of all to God, ver. 17.

Now to the ruler of the ages[4], *the incorruptible,* 17.

[4] *To the ruler of the ages.*] τῳ βασιλει των αιωνων, "unto the king of the several ages or dispensations, viz. the age before the *law*, that under the *law*, and that under the *Messiah*, or the last age. Unto him that disposed these three grand dispensations, so as that one should make way for another, he here very pertinently ascribes praise. Lewis Capel informs us

Ch. I. Ver. 17. *the invisible, the only God*[1], *be honour and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Mercy like this can never be sufficiently adored and praised. And though I acknowledge my great obligation to Jesus Christ, who was the immediate instrument of communicating these invaluable blessings, and conferring upon me these distinguishing honours, I do not forget that they are all ultimately to be traced to the free and infinite mercy of his God and our God. To Him therefore who is the author of all the dispensations of mercy to mankind, whether the patriarchal, the Mosaic, or this new dispensation under the Messiah, which comprehends all his rational offspring; to Him who ever lives to fulfill his purposes of mercy, and who is ever really, though invisibly, present with his faithful servants; to Him who alone is God, possessed of every perfection natural and moral, with-

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that this was one of the Jewish doxologies, *Let God be blessed for ever, who hath created this age and the age to come;* and that expressions like this are frequent in the Jewish liturgy." Benson. See also Macknight. "Now unto the king of the ages, to God, uncorruptible, invisible," &c. Wakefield. "Now to the king eternal, immortal, invisible." Newcome.

The apostle had been expressing his gratitude to Christ, who had appeared in person to convert him to the faith, to invest him with the office of an apostle, to endue him with the necessary powers and qualifications, and who was with him to superintend and direct him in the whole course of his ministry. But he does not forget that Christ himself is no more than an instrument in the hands of God; whose supreme agency he here acknowledges, and to whom, as the Lord of all, the only God, he renders divine honours.

[1] *The only God.*] The received text reads, "the only *wise* God;" but the word σοφῷ is wanting in the best manuscripts, and is dropped by Griesbach and Newcome.

out an equal and without a rival; to Him be honour and praise through every dispensation, and to the end of time. Amen. Ch. I. Ver. 17.

4. The apostle now resumes his charge to Timothy, whom he urges to fidelity and resolution, and warns against the dangers of apostasy, ver. 18—20.

This charge[2] *I commit to thee, O son Timothy, agreeably to prior solemn declarations*[3] *concerning thee, that according to them*[4] *thou mayest maintain a good warfare.* 18.

My dear Timothy, my beloved son in the faith,

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[2] *This charge.*] παραγγελιαν, ver. 3. Timothy remained to give a charge, ver. 3; the design of this charge was to promote faith and love, ver. 5: the apostle now proceeds to give his charge in detail.

[3] *Prior solemn declarations.*] Mangey conjectures επι σε, *concerning thee.* See Bowyer. Wakefield reads with the Æthiopic, επι με, *concerning me*; but gives it up as unintelligible. Προφητειας may express something which has been said before: meaning perhaps nothing more than either the high character given of Timothy by some eminent Christians at Derbe and Lystra, before the apostle admitted him as an associate (see Acts xvi. 2), or the solemn admonition, which had been addressed to him previously to entering upon his mission. Dr. Priestley, and many others, understand it of "some prophecy, pointing out Timothy as a proper person to be intrusted with the preaching of the gospel;" and adds, "it is evident from other circumstances that such a spirit of prophecy was then in the church." It does not, however, appear necessary to suppose that there was any thing supernatural in the case. It is generally allowed that the prophets did not always speak from inspiration.

[4] *According to them.*] εν αυταις· *i. e.* in conformity to the testimonies borne to your character by the prophets or teachers of Derbe and Lystra. In this sense, says Dr. Benson, εν is used, Matt. vi. 7. Comp. 1 Tim. iv. 14.

Ch. I. Ver. 18. when I was about to engage you as my associate at Lystra, I inquired your character of the believers there, and was then assured by some of the most eminently gifted teachers of the church that I should find in you a zealous advocate of the pure gospel, and a determined opposer of the corrupt doctrine of the Jewish teachers, and they accompanied their commendations of your character with earnest exhortations to the same effect. I charge you, therefore, my beloved friend, to fulfill the expectations which have been raised concerning you: be strenuous in your opposition to those who would corrupt the gospel of Christ, and approve yourself a valiant champion of Christian truth.

19. *Retaining faith and a good conscience, which* latter *some having rejected, have also suffered shipwreck of their faith.*

There are two things which you must, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, strenuously retain. The first is, uncorrupted faith, the Christian faith in its original purity, unmixed with heathen philosophy on the one hand, and with Jewish fables and ceremonies on the other. The next is, a clear conscience, a pure heart, and a virtuous life, without which faith will be of little use. And indeed there are some unhappy persons, who, having first polluted their consciences by their vices, and having lived in habitual contempt and neglect of the moral precepts of the gospel, have, as a natural consequence, rejected the belief of it altogether, and represented the whole as a fable and a fraud; or at least, while

they have retained the profession of the Christian religion, they have subverted its grand design by teaching doctrines unfavourable to good morals as the essential doctrines of the Christian faith. Ch. I. Ver. 19.

Of which number *are Hymenæus and Alexander*[1], *whom I have delivered over to Satan, that they may be taught not to blaspheme.* 20.

Of this misconduct there are two notorious instances at Ephesus, with which you are probably acquainted; namely, Hymenæus and Alexander. These were men of bad principles and immoral lives; and for that reason they rejected or corrupted the gospel, and gave me great trouble during my residence at Ephesus. But, to prevent fur-

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[1] *Hymenæus and Alexander.*] Alexander was a coppersmith, 2 Tim. iv. 14, once it seems a professor of the Christian religion; but being of an immoral character, he was by the apostle, together with Hymenæus, "delivered over to Satan," that is, *excommunicated*, see 1 Cor. v. 5. After which they apostatized from the Christian faith, denied the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, 2 Tim. ii. 17; and became, Alexander especially, bitter enemies of the apostle Paul. At the time of the riot at Ephesus, Alexander was urged on by the Jews, Acts xix. 33, probably to inflame the multitude still more against the apostle and his followers: but the populace, finding that he was a Jew, probably confounded him with the Christians, and would not give him a hearing. These men are mentioned again in the second epistle: Hymenæus as persisting in his mischievous errors and corrupting others, Alexander as the personal enemy of the apostle himself, and neither of them reformed by the discipline inflicted.

If, as many believe, the apostle delivered these men into the hands of the devil to cure them of blasphemy, he certainly sent them to a bad school. To suppose, that delivering to Satan was the miraculous infliction of disease, is perfectly gratuitous. The apostle disowned them, and excluded them from the Christian community.

Ch. I. Ver. 20. ther mischief, I thought fit to exclude them from the Christian community, and have consigned them to the society of those unbelievers and idolaters whose company they love, and whose works they practise. I shall be sincerely glad if this public stigma which has been fixed upon them, may be a means of bringing them to serious consideration, and of inducing them to repent of that malignant opposition which they now make to the doctrine of Christ, and to the preachers of the gospel.

SECTION III.

Ch. II. *THE APOSTLE enjoins general intercession, as an expression of benevolence acceptable to God, who wills that all mankind, without distinction, should participate in the blessings of the gospel.* Ch. ii. 1—7.

1. The apostle enjoins intercession for all mankind, and especially for magistrates and men in exalted stations, as an acceptable expression of universal good-will. Ch. ii. 1—4.

Ver. 1. *I exhort, therefore, in the first place, that supplications*[1], *prayers, intercessions* and *thanksgivings, be made*[2] *for all men*[3].

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[1] *Supplications.*] "By δεησεις I understand *petitions* for a supply of our wants; by προσευχας, *vows* to the Almighty in return; by εντευξεις, *meditations*, and that intercourse which

Ch. II. Ver. 1.

I know but too well the narrow spirit which prevails among my countrymen, who regard themselves as the favourites of heaven, and look upon the Gentile world with contempt and abhorrence, as more deserving of anathemas than benedictions. I fear lest the same spirit should be infused by false teachers into the converts to the Christian faith. But let it be deeply impressed upon the mind of every disciple of Christ, that the religion of Jesus is a law of kindness and universal good-will; and therefore I strictly charge you, that whenever the believers at Ephesus assemble together for religious worship, prayers should be offered up for all mankind, deprecations of impending calamities, and petitions for necessary blessings; also that thanksgivings should be rendered to God for his great goodness to all his reasonable creatures.

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passes between God and our own souls." Bishop Barrington, Bowyer. "δεησεις, *deprecations*; προσευχας, *prayers for good things*; εντευξεις, *intercessions*; ευχαριστιας, *thanksgivings*. I do not apprehend," saith Benson, "that the apostle was very solicitous nicely to distinguish between supplications, prayers, and intercessions, but used them all to intimate, that he would not only have them praise God, but put up all sorts of petitions for all men, by what name soever these petitions were usually called."

[2] *Be made.*] ποιεισθαι. Bishop Bull understood this of a direction to compose liturgies for the church at Ephesus: "an instance of prejudice which," Dr. Doddridge says, "almost made him weep."

[3] *All men.*] This exhortation is almost universally understood to refer to the narrow-mindedness of the Jews; who in the first captivity were taught to pray for those in whose land they were captives, see Ezra vi. 10; but under the Romans were unwilling to pray for their oppressors, and constantly stirring up sedition.

Ch. II. Ver. 2. *For kings, and all who are in high stations, that we*[1] *may lead a peaceable and quiet life in all piety and virtue.*

The enemies of the gospel will be desirous of representing you as seditious and disloyal; they will intentionally confound you with those zealots of the law, whose obstinacy in refusing to pray for their heathen governors gives great and just offence. But let the Christians at Ephesus be exhorted to pray for the emperor, and for all subordinate civil authorities, whose office it is to preserve the public peace. And let them recommend both their persons and their government to the divine protection and blessing, that so they may give no just occasion of offence, and that, by their dutiful submission to the civil power, they may obtain that protection from it which will ensure peace and security, and will enable them to pass their lives in the exercise of piety and the practice of virtue, so as to command universal respect.

3. *For this* is *right and acceptable in the sight of*
4. *God our Saviour, who willeth that all men should be saved*[2]*, and come to the acknowledgement of the truth.*

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[1] *That we may lead.*] Mr. Wakefield, upon the authority of the Arabic, renders it, "that *they* may go through a quiet and peaceful life with all veneration and respect." This authority is hardly sufficient for changing the received text, which admits of so good and pertinent a sense. Beza proposes to omit the point at *ουτων*. *q. d.* all placed in authority for this end, that we may lead a peaceable life. See Bowyer.

[2] *Who willeth that all men should be saved.*] This expression

Ch. II. Ver. 4.

This spirit of pious philanthropy is honourable to the Christian religion; and it is highly pleasing to God, who has by his great mercy in the gospel delivered us from the bondage of idolatry and vice, and from the narrow spirit of the Jewish œconomy: who is also the common parent of the whole human race; whose good pleasure it is, that the gospel should be published to all mankind without distinction, and that the great deliverance we have experienced should be extended to every individual, of every nation, who will accept of the gracious offers of salvation; who has also commissioned the apostles and other teachers of the Christian doctrine, to make the gospel known through the whole habitable world, that all may be instructed in its truth, and participate in its blessings.

2. The apostle, in pursuance of this argument, asserts the universal importance of the Christian doctrine, which he was specially appointed to preach to the Gentiles, ver. 5—7.

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is explained by the succeeding clause, that "they should come to the acknowledgement of the truth:" to be *saved*, therefore, is to become professors of the gospel, by which they were saved from idolatry on the one hand and Judaism on the other. It has no reference to the happiness of a future life any further than the profession of the gospel might be the means of virtue. See Newcome. Dr. Macknight well explains it, "who commands all men to be saved from heathenish ignorance and Jewish prejudices." When it is said that *God wills they should be saved*, the meaning is, that it is his pleasure that the gospel should be preached to all; without distinction of Jew or Gentile.

Ch. II. Ver. 5. *For* there is *one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*[1].

There is no reason why one nation or class of men should regard themselves as entitled to greater privileges than another; for there is one God, the benevolent and impartial parent of all mankind, the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews, and equally disposed to promote the happiness of all his creatures. And to manifest his love to all men equally, of whatever nation or country, he has deputed one person only as the chief messenger of his will. He has not sent into the world one prophet to the Jews and another to the heathen: much less has he commissioned an angel or celestial spirit to communicate his will to one people, and a frail human being to teach another: but he has appointed his faithful servant Jesus Christ, a man like ourselves, subject to all the innocent weaknesses and infirmities of human nature, but amply qualified for the discharge of the high commission with which he is intrusted, to be the instructor of all men, whether Jews or heathen, and the great medium of divine communication.

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[1] *The man Christ Jesus.*] Not the *God*-man, nor any the least intimation that he was any thing more than a man. A *mediator* is one who is the medium of divine communication, as Moses was to the Israelites: it does not at all imply the notion of *atonement* or *propitiation*. "Had the apostle," saith Dr. Priestley, "thought him to be a being of a higher nature than that of man, it cannot be supposed but that in this place more especially, he would have denominated him by that higher rank, whatever it was; and especially if he had conceived him to be so great a being as the Maker of man and all things."

Who gave himself a ransom[2] *for all men, the testimony*[3] reserved *for its proper time.* Ch. II. Ver. 6.

It was necessary for the accomplishment of the purposes of divine providence, that the distinguished person who was appointed to be the medium of divine communication with all mankind, as Moses was with the Jewish nation, should suffer a public death; and to this catastrophe Jesus of Nazareth, who was anointed and set apart for this honourable office, voluntarily and cheerfully submitted. And this sacrifice which he made of his life for the benefit of all mankind, may be called a ransom, a price of redemption from bondage, a means of deliverance to the heathen from the thral-

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[2] *A ransom for all.*] αντιλυτρον. Estius saith, that this was a word used when life was given for life. It signifies in general, the means of deliverance. Mr. Wakefield renders it *deliverance.* Benson understands αντιλυτρον as λυτρον, the price put down for the ransom of a captive. One great mistake on this subject is, that the apostle is understood to speak of deliverance from sin and its punishment, when he only means, deliverance from the yoke of heathenism and the ceremonial law.

[3] *The testimony.*] μαρτυριον. I adopt Benson's interpretation: "an eminent and stedfast witness of the truth in the age in which it was appointed that he should live and die." Benson also has some good remarks upon the voluntary submission of Christ to suffering and death.

The Alexandrine MS. wants το μαρτυριον. *q. d.* "who gave himself a ransom at the proper time." The Clermont and other copies read ου το κ. τ. λ. *q. d.* "the testimony *to which* was given at the proper time." One copy reads το μυστηριον, *the mystery, i. e.* the call of the Gentiles; which Beza and Wakefield prefer, but decline to adopt against the authority of all the versions. Castalio and Bengelius connect this clause with the succeeding: *q. d.* "a doctrine to be borne witness to in due season, of which I am appointed a preacher." Bowyer, Griesbach.

Ch. II. Ver. 6. dom of idolatry and vice, and to the Jew from the yoke of the law; for by this event the Jewish covenant was abrogated, and the new and universal dispensation of grace and mercy was introduced. The death of Jesus, the mediator, may also be regarded as a signal testimony to the truth of his doctrine, and to the divinity of his mission. And this important event took place at the season appointed in the counsels of infinite wisdom, a time which was upon the whole the fittest and the best; after it had been made sufficiently apparent, that the light of nature and the speculations of philosophy were not of themselves capable of enlightening and reforming the world.

7. *Of which* doctrine[1] *I have been appointed a preacher, and an apostle,* (*I speak the truth*[2], *I speak not falsely,*) *an instructor of the Gentiles in faith and truth.*

I again repeat it in justification of my own conduct, and as a public warrant to you, Timothy, in following my directions at Ephesus, and in teach-

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[1] *Of which* doctrine.] εἰς ὅ, *as concerning*. Newcome; who remarks, that the latter clause in ver. 6, and the beginning of ver. 7, may be rendered, "*for* a testimony *to the world* at the proper season: *i. e. when the fullness of time came.* For which testimony I have been appointed, &c."

[2] *I speak the truth.*] The received text adds, "in Christ:" these words are wanting in the Alexandrine, Clermont, and other copies, and in the Syriac, Vulgate, and other versions, and are dropped by Griesbach, Newcome, and Wakefield. Dr. Owen says, "As they occur, Rom. ix. 1. without any mark of reprobation, I see no reason why they should be thought commentitious here." Bowyer. Nor would they be rejected here, if they were supported by equal authority.

ing that doctrine which you have learned from me, that of this gracious dispensation, thus attested and ratified by the death of Jesus Christ, I have the honour to be constituted by him a teacher and an apostle, a publisher of the doctrine which he first taught, and a witness of his resurrection from the state of death. And what is still more astonishing, and to a prejudiced and narrow-minded Jew may appear wholly incredible, which nevertheless I solemnly aver to be a real and a serious truth, I am authorized and required by Christ, who is my master, and the director of my missionary labours, to be an instructor of the Gentiles in the purity and simplicity of that faith, the profession of which will introduce them into a state of privilege and hope, and a practical regard to which will ensure their ultimate and everlasting felicity. Ch. II. Ver. 7.

SECTION IV.

The apostle requires that the public offices of worship should be conducted by men only, forbidding women to officiate in public, and enjoining upon them at all times to observe that decorum of dress and behaviour, which becomes the modesty and delicacy of the sex. Ch. ii. 8—15.

1. The apostle requires that the public offices of religion should in all places be conducted by men, ver. 8.

Ch. II. Ver. 8. *I direct therefore that the men pray*[1] *in every place*[2], *lifting up holy hands*[3], *without wrath or disputing*[4].

Being appointed by Jesus Christ an apostle in his church, with full powers to teach his doctrine, and to regulate its external concerns, and having exhibited to the church at Ephesus ample evidence of this authority thus intrusted to me, I now proceed to mention some regulations, which, for the sake of decency, good order and general edification, I require to be observed by the churches, and which in my absence I delegate to you full authority to carry into effect. And in particular I enjoin, that the religious services of the Christian society shall be conducted by the men only, who are better qualified to speak in mixed assemblies than persons of the other sex. Let this rule be universally observed; and let public prayers be offered up to God, wherever it may be convenient to a society of believing worshipers to assemble. Under the Christian dispensation there is no distinction of places any more

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[1] *That the men pray.*] A direction that men only should conduct public devotion. See Benson.

[2] *In every place.*] An allusion to the Jews; who limited the presence of God to the temple and the synagogue. Vide Benson.

[3] *Holy hands.*] An allusion to the custom of washing hands before prayer.

[4] *Without wrath or disputing.*] "*q. d.* without resentment of Christians to persecutors; of Jews and Judaizers to Gentiles." Benson. "*Without disputings* about the admission of Gentiles into the church, and the universal obligation of the law, or about Jewish fables and genealogies." Vide Benson and Newcome.

than of times; and prayers offered up from the meanest edifice, or from the open fields, are as acceptable to God as if they were presented in the synagogue, the temple, or any other consecrated edifice, however splendid. One qualification is indispensable: namely, that the hands which are held up to God should not only be externally but morally pure; and that the heart from which these prayers proceed should be free from all malevolent passions, and especially from religious bigotry; from that angry spirit, which is too often generated and fomented by disputes concerning times, and places, and modes of worship; and from that rancour which those who entertain different opinions upon these subjects are too ready to indulge with respect to each other. Ch. II. Ver. 8.

2. The apostle recommends to the women simplicity and decorum in dress, and forbids them to assume the office of public teachers, ver. 9—12.

I *likewise* require *that the women should adorn themselves with decent apparel*[5], *with modesty and discretion. Not* so much[6] *with braided hair, or* 9.

[5] *Decent apparel.*] "suitable in point of decorum, considering their station in life, and what becomes them as Christians." Newcome.

[6] *Not* so much.] Literally, "not with braided hair (or curls), &c. but with good works." Archbishop Newcome well explains the text, "not so much with, &c. and not only with, &c. See John vi. 27; Eph. vi. 12." It is a well known Hebrew form of expressing the comparative degree. The apostle could not mean to forbid Christian women to dress in a manner becoming their rank and station in life; or to represent curling the hair

Ch. II. Ver. 10. *gold, or pearls, or costly array, as with good works, which becometh women professing reverence for God*[1].

As some of the new converts are persons of rank and fortune, I forbid not women of their quality and station from wearing that apparel which is usual and decorous. Let them, if they please, upon proper occasions, assume the ornaments of dress; but let them never exceed the limits of modesty and discretion, nor let them affect splendour in their attire when they assemble with their fellow Christians for the worship of God. Above all things let them remember, that the most precious ornaments of the female sex, and especially of those who, having renounced idolatry, profess to be worshipers of the true God, and disciples of Jesus Christ, consist in acts of charity and beneficence. The habit of doing good is a glorious robe, which well becomes persons of every age and condition of life, and especially those who are blest with affluence. It will never tarnish, and never wear out.

11. *Let the woman receive instruction in silence*[2]

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or ornaments of gold and jewellery as in themselves immoral. Christianity lays no stress upon things indifferent: what the apostle forbids is foolish vanity in dress, expense beyond what persons can really or conveniently afford, and which will cramp their benevolence; an affectation of finery which is inconsistent with simplicity and unbecoming their station in life; and in a word, a solicitous attention to external appearance, to the neglect of piety, charity, and good works.

[1] *Professing reverence,*] or, worship of God; *i. e.* the true God, distinct from idols. See Newcome and Wakefield.

[2] *In silence.*] "in the church. 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35." Newcome.

with entire submission. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but require her[3] *to remain in silence.* Ch. II. Ver. 12.

It does not agree with the delicacy of the female sex to put themselves forward as public teachers. Though some are inclined to encourage this practice, it is what I disapprove, and in virtue of my apostolic authority I expressly forbid. Let the women confine themselves to the duties of their proper sphere, and let them not intrude into the province of the men, who by the greater vigour of their constitution, and the firmer tone of their organs, are better qualified for public speaking. Let the women therefore attend as hearers in respectful silence; and if they desire further information, let them ask in private of those who are able and willing to communicate instruction.

3. The apostle enforces the injunction by arguments borrowed from the Mosaic account of the creation and fall of man, and concludes the subject with a promise of blessings to the virtuous, ver. 13—15.

For Adam was first formed, and Eve afterwards. 13.

The book of Genesis informs us that Eve was made for Adam, and not Adam for Eve; and therefore the woman should acknowledge the superiority of the man.

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[3] *But* require her.] See a similar construction ch. iv. 3.

Ch. II. Ver. 14. *Also Adam was not seduced, but the woman being seduced was* guilty *of transgression*[1].

The understanding of Eve was easily imposed upon by the smooth and subtle discourse of the serpent, and she was therefore persuaded to eat the forbidden fruit. But Adam fell in consequence of his attachment to Eve, not because his understanding was deluded. The woman therefore should be in subjection to the man, as possessing a superior intellect, and being more capable of discerning between right and wrong[2].

The apostle concludes this head of discourse

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[1] *Was* guilty *of transgression.*] So Newcome. Wakefield gives a different version: "Adam was not deceived, but became a transgressor through the error of the woman."

[2] *Between right and wrong.*] Such is the nature of the apostle's argument; which, to say the truth, is of no great weight, and will hardly bear him out in his conclusions, any further than as it was an address to the professed principles of those who were zealots for the Mosaic ritual. That it is proper for men to take the lead in the public services of Christian assemblies is obviously just, and will be generally allowed. And the apostle had undoubted authority to enjoin a decorous silence upon the female sex. It is likewise sufficiently evident that it is equally indecorous for the woman to usurp authority over the man in the affairs which properly fall within his department. But that degrading subjection of the female sex which was common in the East, and which the apostle seems to favour, is neither consistent with wisdom, with justice, nor with the liberal spirit of modern times. And if the authenticity, and the literal interpretation of what is commonly called the Mosaic account of the creation, and the fall of man, should be admitted, which are very problematical, the apostle's argument would still be very precarious. If the priority of Adam's creation proves his superiority to Eve, the priority of the creation of brutes would prove their superiority to Adam. And if Adam knowingly violated the command of God, his folly was surely far greater than that of Eve, who had been imposed upon by the serpent.

with the promise of blessing to the pious and obe- Ch. II.
dient.

Nevertheless[3], *she shall be preserved in child-* Ver. 15.
bearing, if they continue[4] *in faith and love and holiness with soberness of mind.*

Though the inferiority of the woman is thus established, and though she was condemned to a severe penalty in consequence of the Fall, yet she shall be in some measure redeemed from the curse; and the pains and sorrows of childbirth, if not removed,

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[3] *Nevertheless*, &c.] An extremely difficult text. Newcome suspects *της τεκνογονιας* to be an interpolation, or marginal reading crept into the text; but he owns the supposition is unsupported by authority. The sense given in the paraphrase is the most common, and upon the whole the most probable. It is adopted by Locke, Benson, and Newcome. Locke, on Rom. vii. 5, cites several texts in which *δια* has the force of *in*, or *during*. viz. Rom. iv. 11; 2 Cor. v. 10; Eph. iii. 6. So the Greeks say, *δι' ἡμερας during the day, δια νυκτος during the night.*— It is not indeed literally true, that Christian females are relieved from the sufferings and dangers of child-bearing: but the practice of Christian virtue is the best preparative for suffering, and affords the best support under it. Rosenmuller renders the verse: "*Consequetur autem salutem cum procreatis liberis, si permanserint in fide, et amore, et sanctitate vitæ cum temperantia;*" she shall be saved with her children, if they continue in faith and love, &c. He observes, the Syriac renders *τεκνογονια, children;* that this translation preserves the construction; and that *δια* with a genitive, as is well known, is sometimes put for *συν, with.* See Rom. ii. 27. iv. 11. *q. d.* The woman and her children shall be saved, if they are well educated and practise virtue. Mr. Wakefield's translation is similar to that of Rosenmuller: "notwithstanding, their offspring will be saved, if they continue in faith, and love, and sanctity with sobermindedness." Some understand the passage as referring to Christ, the promised seed. But this is an arbitrary interpretation.

[4] *If they continue.*] "See a like change of number Psalm cxxvii. 5." Newcome.

Ch. II. Ver. 15. shall at least be mitigated to those who have learned to bear them with a christian spirit, and who adorn their profession by the practice of christian virtue.

SECTION V.

Ch. III. *THE APOSTLE, to assist Timothy in the choice of proper persons for ecclesiastical offices, describes the qualifications requisite in those who are appointed to officiate as bishops or superintendants in the church.* Ch. iii. ver. 1—7.

1. He represents the episcopal office as very honourable, ver. 1.

Ver. 1. *This* is *a true observation*[1], *If any man be earnestly desirous*[2] *of the episcopal office, he desireth an honourable employment.*

Many are eager to be appointed bishops or superintendants in the church; some may perhaps be prompted by a mean ambition of superiority and fancied pre-eminence; some may not be sufficiently apprized of the importance of the office, of the various duties that are attached to it, or of the many qualifications requisite to the faithful, honourable

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[1] *This is a true observation.*] Literally, "This is a faithful or credible saying." This clause is added to the end of the preceding chapter by Markland and Wakefield. See Bowyer.

[2] *Earnestly desirous.*] ορεγεται. Vide Macknight. Dr. Priestley strongly recommends reviving the office of elders in dissenting churches, as the only proper way to support discipline.

and successful discharge of it; while some, I doubt not, have just views, and are influenced by the best motives. They do not look up to it as to an office of ease, of emolument, or of power, but as a post of labour, of danger, and of usefulness. But whatever be the views and motives of the respective candidates, it is a certain fact, that he who is ambitious of the episcopal office is ambitious of a very honourable and very important employment; an employment, which, in the present critical situation of the church at Ephesus, will require consummate prudence and sagacity, will demand constant vigilance and activity, will expose its possessors to imminent perils, but which, if faithfully and wisely discharged, will be productive of great honour to himself and advantage to the church. It will be his business, in connexion with his colleagues and fellow-labourers, to instruct the ignorant, to preserve the doctrine of the church pure and uncorrupted, to resist the encroachments of the false teachers, to maintain good order and discipline, to warn the unruly, to dismiss from the Christian community those who cannot otherwise be reclaimed, to keep the church in unity, holiness and peace, to preclude every just occasion of offence to unbelievers, and to maintain a fair and honourable reputation. Ch. III. Ver. 1.

2. Having thus stated the importance of the office, he proceeds to describe the qualifications requisite for the honourable and successful discharge of it, ver. 2—7.

Ch. III. Ver. 2.

A bishop then must be blameless [1],—As the law required that priests should be free from natural blemishes, the gospel requires that its ministers should be exempt from moral stains, and that their characters should be pure and without reproach;

the husband of one wife [2],—one who is not guilty of polygamy, and who has not, from insufficient reasons, divorced one woman and married another: for these practices, though allowed among the heathen, and tolerated by the Jews, are inconsistent with the superior purity and strictness of the Christian law;

vigilant [3],—guarding against the introduction of error and vice;

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[1] *Blameless.*] ανεπιλημπτον. An allusion to the law of the priesthood. Vide Benson. The directions here are similar to those given to Titus, ch. i. 5, &c. No doubt, therefore, Timothy was left at Ephesus with the same view as Titus was left in Crete. The apostle had not yet resided at Ephesus long enough to organize the church completely to his mind:—a presumption that the epistle was written before the apostle had completed his long three years residence at Ephesus; during which he must have had ample time to organize the Ephesian church. It also furnishes a further presumption, that the letters to Timothy and Titus were written at no great distance of time from each other. These circumstances countenance the supposition that Paul visited Crete from Ephesus, and that the epistle to Timothy was dated from Crete. That the elders and bishops of Ephesus were the same, is evident from Acts xx. 17—28.

[2] *The husband of one wife.*] See Benson, Newcome, Doddridge. Some infer from hence, that none but a married man might be a bishop; others, that a Christian minister may not marry a second wife. But the interpretation in the commentary seems to be the most rational, and is most generally adopted. How inconsistent is this direction of the apostle with the Popish doctrine of the celibacy of the priests!

[3] *Vigilant.*] νηφαλιον might be rendered *sober* or *temperate*;

self-governed[4],—with a mind well regulated, and free from the domineering influence of turbulent and unruly passions; Ch. III. Ver. 2.

decent[5]—in his outward behaviour, so as not only to avoid giving offence, but to attract esteem and respect by a grave and becoming deportment;

hospitable[6]—to strangers, and particularly to those who are employed as missionaries to propagate the gospel, accommodating them with every thing necessary for their subsistence and comfort, while they remain with him, and supplying them with whatever may be requisite to promote the design of their mission when they depart. The bishop must also be

ready to teach,—being himself well-instructed in the genuine doctrine of the Christian religion; impressed with a strong desire to communicate instruction even to those who are most ignorant, or in the meanest station: and likewise possessing a facility of conveying his ideas in a clear, intelligible and impressive manner;

not addicted to wine, not a striker[7];—for these 3.

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but that is mentioned in the next verse. See Macknight and Wakefield.

[4] *Self-governed.*] σωφρονα, *sanæ mentis.* "whose mind is well regulated; one who governs his passions." Macknight.

[5] *Decent.*] κοσμιον, *of comely behaviour.* "The former respects the *inward* man, this the *outward*." Macknight.

[6] *Hospitable.*] "Hospitality was more necessary when there were no public houses." Newcome, Macknight, and Benson.

[7] *Not a striker.*] The word αισχροκερδη, *not greedy of filthy lucre*, which follows in the received text, is omitted in the best manuscripts, and by Griesbach. Dr. Priestley observes, "that it may seem extraordinary that any mention should be made of

Ch. III. Ver. 3. vices are absolutely inconsistent with the meek and holy spirit of the gospel, and are particularly disgusting in the teachers of its sublime doctrine:

but mild, not contentious, not covetous;—not ready to take offence, nor delighting in angry quarrels, but of a peaceable and gentle temper; breathing the spirit of that gospel which he teaches, which contains the joyful message of peace and good-will to men. Nor is it fit that a superintendant of the church should be of an avaricious spirit, eagerly grasping after wealth, and unwilling to employ it to the purposes of benevolence and hospitality;

4. *one who governs his own family well, keeping his children in subjection with all gravity.*

A bishop who is to sustain the rank of a father in the church, must first show that he knows how to exercise with discretion the authority of a father at home. He must govern his own family well, with a prudent mixture of gentleness and resolution, so as to secure the reverence and esteem of his household. And in particular, if he have children, he must have trained them up to habits of good order and respectful obedience.

5. *For if a man know not how to govern his own family, how can he take care of the church of God?*

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such vices as these; and particularly as disqualifications for the office of bishop. It shows that the reform of conduct was the work of time; these facts are inconsistent with the idea of any sudden or miraculous change being wrought in the mind. Men first change their opinion and profession upon proper evidence; and better principles would, when they had time to operate, produce a proper change in heart and life."

If a person, for want of prudence and a proper dignity of character, cannot keep his own family in order; if his children are insolent or disobedient, rude and ungovernable; if he fails in the regulation of that small society, over which his authority is almost absolute, how can it be reasonably expected that he will superintend with discretion the concerns of the church, or maintain order and discipline in a society so much larger, where the tempers and dispositions of the members are so much more various and unmanageable, which is consequently so much more difficult to be governed, and where his authority will be so much less? Ch. III. Ver. 5.

Not one newly converted, lest, being elated, he fall under the condemnation of the accuser[1]. 6.

It would be improper to choose a new convert to exercise an office of high trust and authority in the church, whatever his rank in life, or whatever his qualifications and talents may be; for, to say nothing of the improbability of his being properly instructed in the Christian faith, and of the impropriety of elevating him above other Christians of greater knowledge and experience, it can hardly be doubted that an elevation so sudden and unexpected would inspire too high an opinion of himself, and prompt him to some indiscretion in his language or his conduct; of which the vigilant and

[1] *The accuser.*] διαβόλου. The enemies of Christianity, who were ready to propagate reports to the disadvantage of Christians and of the gospel, and to invent calumnies. There is no reason to think that the devil is at all alluded to by the apostle.

Ch. III. Ver. 6. malicious enemies of Christianity would gladly avail themselves to his personal disadvantage, and to that of the church over which he might be chosen to preside.

7. *He must likewise support an honourable character among those who are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the accuser.*

A bishop or superintendant of the church must be a person who has always maintained a good character in the world, who has never been guilty of any notorious vices or indiscretions; so that he may be held in estimation even among unbelievers, and that no one may have any ground to cast reproach upon him. Otherwise, if by any flagrant instance of misconduct he has injured his character, he will never be able to discharge his duty with true satisfaction of mind; his instructions, admonitions and reproofs, will want their due weight and influence; and the enemies of Christianity will either insidiously endeavour to seduce him from the faith, and to draw him again into vice and disgrace; or, by exaggerated reports, and vile insinuations, they will endeavour to blast his character, to injure his usefulness, and to bring the society over which he presides into contempt. So that nothing can be more essential to the usefulness of a superintendant, or a bishop of the church, and to the interest of the community over which he presides, than a clear conscience and an honourable character.

SECTION VI.

The apostle describes the characters and qualifications requisite in those who were candidates for the offices of deacons or deaconesses. Ch. iii. 8—15. Ch. III.

1. The apostle specifies the qualifications of those who were fit to be appointed to the office of deacons, ver. 8—10.

In like manner the deacons must be *grave, not double-tongued*[1], *not addicted to much wine, not greedy of dishonourable gain.* Ver. 8.

As the deacons are chosen to superintend the secular affairs of the church, and occasionally to assist in the office of Christian instruction, great attention should be paid to the characters of those who are appointed to this honourable station.

Like the bishops or elders, they should be men of grave and respectable characters, who are not likely, by any levity of conduct, to expose themselves or their office, their doctrine, or the society whose concerns they are appointed to manage, to contempt. They must also be men of simplicity and sincerity, consistent in their language, not ap-

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[1] *Not double-tongued.*] διλογους, "prone to hollowness and deceit." Newcome.

Ch. III. Ver. 8. plauding men to their faces and condemning them when absent, not teaching one doctrine at one time and another at another, in order to gratify prejudice, to promote their interest, or to gain applause. Neither must they be addicted to intemperance, that degrading vice, nor to mean and dishonourable gain: they must not be of a covetous and mercenary spirit, lest, being intrusted with the funds of the society, they should apply to their own use what is intended for the decent support of the officers of the church or the relief of the poor.

9. *Retaining the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience* [1].

The deacons ought to be well-instructed in the whole doctrine of Christ, but especially in that very interesting discovery which was to former ages an unknown mystery, but which is now made manifest, to the no small discontent and confusion of narrow-minded Jews, but to the unspeakable delight and gratitude of the Gentile believers, that the heathen who is converted to the faith of Christ, shall be admitted to equal rights with the believing Jew, though he may not submit to the bondage of the law. And this great principle he must hold with a

[1] *With a pure conscience.*] Dr. Benson thinks that there is an allusion here to the case of Hymenæus and Alexander, ch. i. Dr. Macknight observes, that "the apostle's direction implies, that he should be both sound in the faith and conscientious in maintaining it." The *mystery of the faith* was the call of the gentiles. A man invited to be a deacon ought both to be convinced of the truth of this doctrine, and courageous in avowing it; and who would, therefore, be impartial in the distribution of the donations of the church, Acts vi. See Benson.

clear conscience: he must not only believe, but profess this important article of the Christian faith; and he must not, in order to avoid the displeasure of Judaizing bigots, suppress the truth of the gospel, and sacrifice the liberty of the Gentile church: nor must he, in the distribution of the donations of the church, show any partiality to the Hebrew above the Gentile convert. Ch. III. Ver. 9.

And let these also be first proved, and then, if irreproachable[2], *let them take the office of deacon.* 10.

As it is improper to elect a new convert to the office of a bishop or superintendant of the church, it is also inexpedient to appoint such an one to the office of a deacon. Let such officers be chosen from among believers of knowledge and experience who are of considerable standing in the church, men of tried integrity, and whose character is an ornament to their profession. And being publicly nominated, if no objection be alleged against them, and if they appear to be generally approved, let them then assume and exercise the office.

2. The apostle gives similar directions with respect to the qualifications of women who were appointed to the offices of deaconesses, ver. 11.

[2] *Irreproachable.*] "ανεγκλητοι, *qui non in jus vocari potest propter scelus manifestum.*" Schleusner. *q. d.* against whom, when proposed, no objection can be made. Dr. Macknight observes, that "it was a custom in the church, which obtained probably from the apostolic age, to publish the names of those who were intended for ecclesiastical functions, that if any one had aught to accuse them of, they might show it:" to this custom he supposes an allusion here.

Ch. III. Ver. 11. *In like manner the women*[1] *ought to be grave, not slanderers*[2]*, temperate, faithful in all things.*

The same directions which I have given concerning the qualifications of a deacon, I repeat with respect to those women, whom, in the present circumstances of the church, it is expedient to appoint to the office of deaconess: and whose duty it is to visit and instruct those of their own sex, to attend the sick, to relieve the poor, and to entertain strangers. Let the women, who may be selected for this useful office, be grave and decent in their deportment, and free from all unbecoming levity in their behaviour. Let them not be too severe in animadverting upon the failings of others; and, above all things, let them abstain from false and malicious accusations. Let them beware of excess, and vigi-

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[1] *The women.*] The women here mentioned are commonly supposed to be the wives of the deacons; but there is no reason to believe that the apostle would give directions concerning them any more than about the wives of the bishops. It is certain from Rom. xvi. that women exercised the office of deaconesses to those of their own sex in the primitive church, and to these probably the apostle alludes in this place. This was the opinion of Chrysostom and most of the ancient writers, and is well supported by Benson and Macknight. It is also adopted by Newcome. Macknight thinks that πρεσβυτιδες, Tit. ii. 3, 4, were *female elders* appointed to instruct the young of their own sex; 1 Tim. v. 2, 9, 10, the same persons are called *widows*.—He has a pertinent quotation from Clement of Alexandria, to prove that these female teachers were so called; and indeed it is probable that they were chosen from the class of widows.

[2] *Not slanderers.*] διαβολας. "*false accusers.*" See ver. 6, and Ainsworth on Lev. xix. 16, xxi. 7. They were not to slander any body; and especially not to blast the characters of the poor, and so cut them off from the charitable relief of the Christian church." Benson.

lantly guard against the odious habit of intemperance. And as they are intrusted with the public purse for the relief of the poor, the sick, and the stranger, let them discharge this duty with the strictest fidelity, and upon no consideration let them divert the contributions of the church to purposes different from those for which they were designed. Ch. III. Ver. 11.

3. He directs that deacons should be men who govern their own families with discretion, and that, by meritorious exertions in inferior offices, they should qualify themselves for more honourable stations, ver. 12, 13.

Let the deacons be husbands of one wife only, *ruling their children and their own families well.* 12.

For they who have discharged the office of a deacon well, acquire for themselves an honourable rank[3], *and great freedom of speech*[4] *in the faith which* is *in Christ Jesus.* 13.

The directions I gave concerning the bishop I now repeat with respect to the deacons, That no person be appointed to that office who is a polygamist, or who, having divorced his first wife from insufficient reasons, is now married to another. And let those persons be chosen who have previ-

[3] *An honourable rank.*] An excellent step or degree: *i. e.* will be advanced to the higher office of presbyter or bishop. See Macknight, Benson, and Doddridge. *Freedom of speech:* great confidence in persecuting times. See Newcome.

[4] *Great freedom of speech.*] "And in these times of persecution great confidence in asserting and teaching the faith which Christians profess." Newcome.

Ch. III. Ver. 13. ously shown their capacity for discharging the office well, by governing their families with discretion, and by having trained up their children in habits of virtue and filial piety. For if the families of those who are appointed to offices in the church are disorderly and untractable, it reflects discredit upon the heads of those families, and will be a disgrace to the church. And though the rank of a deacon be inferior to that of the bishop or principal teacher, it is nevertheless an office of great respectability, and they who discharge its duties faithfully and well, will be esteemed and honoured by the church, and will in due time probably be advanced to superior stations. And in the mean time the testimony of their conscience, and the esteem in which they are held by wise and good men, will encourage them to teach the doctrine of Christ with manly freedom; and their wholesome doctrine, supported by the excellence of their example, will be crowned with success.

4. This advice he has delivered to regulate the conduct of the evangelist during his own absence from Ephesus, whether for a longer or a shorter interval, ver. 14, 15.

14. *I write these things unto thee in expectation*
15. *of coming to thee very soon*[1]*; but if I delay, that*

[1] *In expectation of coming very soon.*] ταχιον, or, as the Alexandrine and others read, εν ταχει. It is quite impossible that when the apostle set out for Macedonia, Acts xx. after the tumult of Demetrius, intending to visit Corinth, and to

thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, as *a pillar and support of the truth*[2]. Ch. III. Ver. 15.

I am now in a situation, as you very well know, from which I expect speedily to return, and to relieve you from the weight of responsibility which I have imposed upon you. But as I am not my own master, and know not what may happen, lest my absence should be prolonged beyond what I at present purpose or expect, I have written these necessary directions and advices, that you, who, by

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settle the disorders which prevailed in that church, he should have expected to return *speedily* to Ephesus. This, therefore, could not have been the time when he wrote his letter. But if he wrote from Crete, agreeably to the hypothesis which has been proposed in the Introduction, he of course fully expected to return very soon, which would be his justification for having delegated such extraordinary powers to this youthful evangelist. Yet still it was possible that he might be either prevented by his enemies, or restrained by Providence, from returning to Ephesus so soon as he proposed. To provide for this contingency, he writes the letter which contains these particular directions to his young substitute. In this case, however, the apostle appears to have returned as soon as he intended, and to have relieved the evangelist from his burdensome responsibility.

[2] As *a pillar*, &c.] The church is not the "pillar of truth," for it is represented as the temple itself. Somerville, Bengel, Griesbach, and Rosenmuller, end the sentence at ζῶντος. *q.d.* "that thou mayest know how to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God. The pillar and ground of the truth, and without controversy, great is the mystery," &c. With Benson, Wakefield, Newcome, and others, I have preferred applying the epithets *pillar and ground of truth* to the evangelist himself. See Gal. ii. 9, Rev. iii. 12. There is probably an allusion to the temple of Diana at Ephesus, or to the temple of Jerusalem.

Ch. III. Ver. 15. sustaining the office of an evangelist, are constituted a pillar of the church, and a main support of Christian truth, may know in what manner to discharge the duties incumbent upon you in the arduous situation which you are now occupying at Ephesus; that, by simplicity of doctrine, and wisdom of conduct, you may indeed approve yourself a firm support and graceful ornament of that holy edifice, which is not, like the temple of Jerusalem, decorated with external splendour, nor, like the celebrated temple of Diana, consecrated to a senseless idol, but which is a spiritual and living temple, dedicated to the living and eternal God. This glorious building is the great body of believers, who are by their profession of the Christian doctrine consecrated to God, whom he claims as his peculiar property, among whom he dwells by the gifts and energies of his holy spirit, and whom, if they are faithful and obedient, he will raise, by his almighty energy, to a new, a glorious, and an endless life.

SECTION VII.

THE APOSTLE, after solemnly enumerating the principal facts upon which the evidence of the divine origin of the Christian religion is founded, proceeds to foretell many circumstances of the grand apostasy, against which he urges the evangelist to put the Ephesians upon their guard. Ch. iii. 16—iv. 7. Ch. III.

1. The apostle distinctly, but briefly, states some of the fundamental facts of the Christian religion, ver. 16.

And without dispute, great is the mystery of religion[1]. *He who*[2] *was manifested in* the *flesh*[3], Ver. 16.

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[1] *The mystery of religion:*] *q. d.* Other religions have their mysteries, but the Christian religion contains a greater mystery than all: viz. that the gospel should be preached to, and received by, the heathen world; for this is what the apostle commonly means by the word *mystery*. See Eph. i. 9, iii. 3; of which he never speaks but with admiration. Ευσεβειαν· "*ipsa religio Christiana, quæ pietatem non solum commendat, sed etiam promovet.*" Schleusner.—"The mystery of godliness, or, of *true worship*, is confessedly great. The long concealed and now discovered doctrines of the true religion, which is called ευσεβεια, in opposition to the ασεβεια of the heathen." Newcome.

[2] *He who.*] There are three readings of this passage: ΘΣ, *God*; ΟΣ, *he who*; and Ο, *that which*. The Ephrem manuscript reads ΟΣ, *he who*; and probably the Alexandrine. This is adopted by Griesbach, who observes that ΘΣ and Ο are much more likely to be corrupted from ΟΣ, than *vice versa*. "All the old versions," says Dr. Clarke, (*Doct. of Trin.* No. 88, 89,)

Ch. III. Ver. 16. *was justified by* the *spirit*[4], *appeared to* his *messengers*[5], *was proclaimed to* the *nations*[6], *was*

" have *who* or *which*. Also all the ancient Fathers, though the copies of many of them have it now in the printed text Θεος, *God;* yet from the tenor of their comments upon it, and from their never citing it in the Arian controversy, it appears that they always read ὁς, *who;* or, ὁ, *which*." He adds as a note, " It must not be judged from the present copies of the text in Nyssen and others, but from the manner of their commenting upon the place, how the text was read in their days." The editors of the Greek Fathers, misled by their prejudices, altered the text of their authors to agree with the received text. So Griesbach observes, it is certain that Cyril of Alexandria did not read Θεος, though that reading is frequently found in the printed text of that writer. Nor is it cited by any Greek father before the fifth or sixth century. Macedonius, bishop of Constantinople in the sixth century, is charged with corrupting the text. Archbishop Newcome says, that " if we read ὁς, *he who*, we have a similar construction Mark iv. 25; Luke viii. 18; Rom. viii. 32. See Dr. Benson's judicious note on the text. Also Griesbach's excellent note; and the judgement of Wetstein, Owen, and Nichols in Bowyer.

[3] *Manifested in* the *flesh*.] He was a real man, and not a man in appearance only, as the Gnostics and Docetæ taught, to whom the apostle seems to allude. See ch. i. 4, vi. 20. Compare also 1 John iv. 2, 3, 2 John ver. 7. Perhaps the expression *manifested in the flesh* may allude to his appearance in a very humble form, not at all adapted to his high pretensions and claims.

[4] *Justified by* the *spirit*.] *q. d.* Mean as was his appearance in comparison with the magnitude of his claims, he fully justified the character he assumed by his miracles, by his resurrection, and by the gifts of the holy spirit. " was justified by the miraculous and extraordinary gifts of the spirit." Benson.

[5] *Appeared to* his *messengers:*] " ωφθη αγγελοις, *seen by messengers*." Wakefield. *i. e.* He appeared to his apostles, to those whom he appointed to be the witnesses of his resurrection and the heralds of his gospel. This is an obvious and a most important sense, well suited to the connexion. That he was seen by angels, or celestial spirits, according to the common interpretation, is scarcely intelligible, and at best irrelevant. See Benson; also Gosset in Bowyer.

[6] *Proclaimed to* the *nations*.] This publication of the gospel

believed on in the *world*[7], *was taken up into glory*[8]. Ch. III. Ver. 16.

In the great and opulent city of Ephesus, which, on account of the magnificence and celebrity of the temple of Diana, may be regarded as the metropolis of heathen idolatry, you hear much of the solemn mysteries of heathen worship. But to all who impartially consider the subject it will appear beyond all contradiction that the Christian religion, which teaches the true worship of the Supreme Being, reveals far more extraordinary and more useful mysteries than heathenism can boast.

Jesus of Nazareth, a man in all respects like his brethren, who appeared in a humble form during his personal ministry, and who suffered an ignominious death, justified his pretensions to a divine legation by the miracles which he wrought, and particularly by his resurrection from the dead. Of

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to the Gentiles is the great mystery which was so long unknown, so utterly unexpected, and so offensive to the Jews: which had been revealed to the apostle, which he was commissioned to teach, and upon which he so fondly insists as an unexampled display of divine mercy. See Benson.

[7] *Believed on.*] επιστευθη. Wakefield supposes επιστευθη is here to be taken for επιστωθη, as he has himself translated it 2 Thess. i. 10, Rom. iii. 2. He would render it *established by evidence.*

[8] *Was taken up into glory:*] or, *gloriously received.* ανελημφθη, *was received.* This word is applied to our Lord's ascension, Mark xvi. 19, Acts i. 2, 11, 22. See Luke ix. 51; and the clause is generally understood of that remarkable event. A friend of Dr. Benson understands it of the glorious reception which the gospel obtained in the world: see Acts xx. 13, 14, xxiii. 31; Eph. vi. 15; 2 Tim. iv. 11; which justify this translation of ανελημφθη. The objection against which interpretation is, that it coincides with the preceding clause; but if Mr. Wakefield's interpretation be admitted, this objection is precluded.

Ch. III. Ver. 16. this interesting event we have the clearest evidence; for he showed himself alive after his suffering, to the apostles, whom he had chosen to be witnesses of this important fact, and to be his messengers to publish his gospel through the world; and among others he condescended to appear even to myself. In consequence of this assurance, and in virtue of the important trust which was confided to them, the apostles of Christ have published his gospel to all mankind, without distinction of Jew or Gentile; and the doctrine which they taught has been so powerfully attested by the various miracles which they have been enabled to perform in confirmation of it, that it has already met with a glorious reception in the world: thousands both of Jews and Gentiles have embraced the Christian faith, and become members of the Christian community, and the present success of the gospel is a happy earnest of its perpetual establishment, and its increasing prosperity. Finally, this distinguished teacher ascended up into heaven in the presence of his apostles; from whence he will return at the appointed time, in power and great glory, to raise the dead and to judge the world.

2. The apostle proceeds to predict the great apostasy of the latter days. Ch. iv. 1—5.

Ch. IV. Ver. 1. *Yet*[1] *the spirit expressly declareth*[2], *that in*

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[1] *Yet.*] So Newcome, who explains it thus in his note: "However, important and instructive as these truths are, the

latter times[3] *some will apostatize*[4] *from the faith,* Ch. IV. Ver. 1.
attending to deceitful spirits[5], *and to doctrines concerning demons*[6].

Such is the present state of the Christian religion, so pure in its doctrine, so satisfactory in its evidence, so extensive in its propagation, and so glorious in its prospects, that it seems natural to expect that the whole world will soon be converted to the profession of it. But the spirit of prophecy distinctly announces a state of things very contrary to our fond expectations and desires; for I am authorized expressly to declare, that in after times, at what period God only knows, some professing Christians, and those not a few in number, nor insignificant in rank and influence, will grossly apo-

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holy spirit hath revealed that corruptions of the Christian doctrine will arise."

[2] *Expressly declareth.*] Macknight supposes, "with an audible voice;" but this is improbable. Joseph Mede suspects an allusion to Dan. xi. 36; and that *the latter times* are, the last period of the Roman empire, about A.D. 400.

[3] *In latter times.*] "in the times long after the apostle's days." Benson. See 2 Tim. iii. 1. "*Non est temporibus ultimis, sed secuturis.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *Some will apostatize:*] not all, even though it may be a great majority. See Bishop Newton, Dr. Benson, and Archbishop Newcome.

[5] *Deceitful spirits.*] "false prophets, pretending to inspiration." Newcome. See Macknight.

[6] *Demons.*] The spirits of dead men; the objects of popular worship. See Bishop Newton and Archbishop Newcome. *Doctrines of*, i. e. concerning, *demons*. For a similar construction see Gal. ii. 20, Heb. vi. 2." Benson. "doctrines about dead men." Wakefield. "The doctrine concerning the spirits or souls of dead men," says Dr. Priestley, "makes one of the most important articles in the corruptions of the church of Rome."

CH. IV. VER. 1. statize from the primitive faith; and will introduce doctrines foreign to the truth and to the spirit of genuine Christianity. They will listen to men who falsely pretend to be divinely inspired, and who will lead them into gross and dangerous errors. And in the first place, they will teach strange doctrines concerning departed men; that their spirits are still in a conscious state; and that by the prayers of the church, and the use of certain unmeaning ceremonies, they may be canonized, and become entitled to religious worship: thus introducing an idolatry into the Christian religion very little different from, or superior to, those abominable rites which they profess to have renounced.

2. *Through* the *hypocrisy of liars, whose consciences are seared.*

This miserable and mischievous idolatry will be introduced by the instruction and recommendation of men professing extraordinary piety, but who in fact are mere deceivers, teachers of falsehood, and hardened in iniquity beyond all feeling of remorse, and all sense of shame.

3. *Forbidding to marry,* commanding *abstinence from meats*[1], *which God created to be received*

[1] *Forbidding—commanding.*] "*Ante απεχεσθαι est ellipsis participii κελευοντων. Similis vero ellipsis* I Cor. xiv. 34." Rosenmuller. "A bold ellipsis well supplied by our translation." Benson. "Our author abounds in these hyperbata," says Mr. Wakefield, who translates the passage, "giving commands about abstinence from marriage and from meats." "In the grand apostasy this has been eminently fulfilled in the bishops, monks, friars, nuns, and secular priests, in whom marriage is looked upon as worse than adultery." Also, "the

with thanksgiving by those who believe and acknowledge this truth[2], *that every creature of God* is *good, and that nothing is to be refused* if it be *received with thanksgiving; for it is made holy by the divine appointment*[3] *and by prayer*[4]. Ch. IV. Ver. 4. 5.

Another mark of this lamentable apostasy will be the disparagement of marriage, which God has instituted for the most wise and beneficent purposes; and the encouraging, and in some cases absolutely enjoining, celibacy, under the absurd pretence of superior purity and elevation of mind. These lying teachers will also lay great stress upon

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trifling distinction of meats which the church of Rome observes in Lent, and on two days every week throughout the year, is exactly agreeable to what was here predicted." Benson. "The doctrine of fasting, and the abstinence from particular meats at particular times, is so particularly pointed out here, that it is extraordinary that the prophecy should not have prevented its own accomplishment." Dr. Priestley.

[2] *This truth, that every creature,* &c.] So Wakefield; with whom Rosenmuller agrees: "*eam nempe veritatem, quam statim* ver. 4 *commemorat.*" This implies that the indiscriminate use of food is not lawful to those who entertain conscientious scruples upon the subject. See Rom. xiv. 23.

[3] *By divine appointment.*] So Wakefield. Literally, "by the word of God," as in the common version. "The gospel," says Dr. Benson, "has abolished the ceremonial law, and the distinction between meats clean and unclean." "The discriminating notes of these apostatizers," says Archbishop Newcome, "belong remarkably to the church of Rome."

[4] *And by prayer.*] Bishop Newton observes, that "man is free to partake of all the good creatures of God, but thanksgiving is the necessary condition. What then can be said of those who have their tables spread with the most plentiful gifts of God, and yet constantly sit down and rise up again without suffering one thought of the giver to intrude upon them? Can such persons be reputed either to believe or acknowledge the truth?" See Macknight.

Ch. IV. Ver. 5.

distinctions of food; enjoining upon some, habitual abstinence from every kind of animal food; appointing long annual fasts; and setting apart particular days, in which abstinence from certain kinds of food will be represented as highly meritorious, and the indiscriminate use of meat, as a great and almost unpardonable sin; thus discovering a spirit directly opposite to that of the gospel, which teaches that every thing which is fit for the food of man may at any time be lawfully used by him, being created for this purpose by the benevolent Maker of all, who requires no other condition of the participation of his bounty, but a grateful acknowledgement of his goodness, and the temperate use of his blessings. There are indeed some, who, having been educated in Jewish prejudices, are not yet fully acquainted with their Christian liberty. In them it would be improper to indulge indiscriminately in the use of those kinds of food which the law pronounces unclean, till their minds are fully satisfied of the lawfulness of it. And the gospel makes allowance for uninformed and weak consciences, while it prohibits all infringement of the rights of others. The liberty, therefore, of using any kind of food indiscriminately, can with propriety be extended only to those who, being well instructed in the liberal genius of the Christian doctrine, and who, being apprized that all ceremonial distinctions are abolished by the Christian law, believe and acknowledge that all the creatures of God, capable of administering nourishment to man,

are in a moral and ceremonial sense equally good; and that nothing is to be rejected as unclean which is received with a thankful spirit. For that, whatever distinctions of food might be permitted or enjoined under the Jewish dispensation, the gospel sets them all aside, and allows the free use of every kind of food, being all sanctified and made lawful by the express appointment of God in the abolition of the ceremonial law, and by that blessing of God, which Christians, who act consistently with their principles, will never fail to implore upon their food, and by those thanksgivings which they will habitually render to him for the riches of his bounty. Ch. IV. Ver. 5.

3. The apostle urges Timothy to insist upon these topics in his public instructions, and to discourage the growth of a spirit of superstition among the believers at Ephesus, ver. 6, 7.

If thou remind the brethren of these things, thou wilt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of the faith, and of that good doctrine to which thou hast attained[1]. *But reject profane and old women's fables*[2], *and exercise thyself in piety*[3]. 6. 7.

[1] *To which thou hast attained.*] "παρηκολουθηκας, *quam es assecutus. Nimirum sensu et intelligentia.*" Rosenmuller. "with which thou art acquainted." Wakefield. "to which thou hast adhered." Benson; who insinuates that possibly Timothy might lean rather too much to those Jewish prejudices in which he had been educated; which might induce the apostle to repeat his cautions.

[2] *Reject,* &c.] "*Affanias procul habe à te eorum, qui vel ex*

Ch. IV. Ver. 7. If you inculcate faithfully and strongly upon the brethren at Ephesus the fundamental principles of the Christian doctrine, which I have thus briefly stated; if you warn them of that great apostasy which is to take place in future times; and if you caution them against those superstitious practices which directly lead to it, which some are too ready to introduce, and particularly against the affectation of superior purity, the great merit of celibacy, and that useless distinction of meats and days, upon which the Jewish zealots lay so great a stress, you will thus approve yourself a faithful minister of the gospel, thoroughly instructed in its salutary truths; and you will show that you have not taken so much pains to acquire information to no purpose. And let me once more warn you to reject all those foolish, traditionary tales, which the Jewish rabbis relate in order to countenance their trifling and puerile injunctions, which are only fit for the nursery, and which every man of right understanding must hold in contempt; and take pains to improve

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Paganismo vel Judaismo ad Christi cultum transierunt." Rosenmuller. "Instead of acquainting himself with the idle traditions of the Jews, or tracing out the fabulous generations of the Æons, Timothy was to exercise himself in acquiring the more extensive knowledge, and in attaining the more complete practice of pure Christianity." Benson. See ch. i. 4. Profane old women's or old wives' fables. "*Fabulas istas vocat* profanas, *quia nulla Dei revelatione nituntur; deinde* aniles: i. e. *absurdas, non minus quam illas quas aniculæ puerulis recitant.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *In piety.*] "*Exerce te potius ad veram pietatem.*" Rosenmuller. See ch. iii. 16.

in the knowledge and the practice of that pure and rational and manly religion, which alone is acceptable to God and beneficial to mankind. Ch. IV. Ver. 7.

It is impossible to read this section with attention, without remarking the precision and distinctness with which the apostle here, as well as upon other occasions, foretells the grand apostasy which was to take place through the whole Christian church; which, though eminently conspicuous in the church of Rome, is not altogether limited to it. And from the extreme improbability of the event, when it was foretold, we may certainly infer his prophetic inspiration, and the truth of the doctrine which he was authorized to teach. While, on the other hand, this circumstantial prediction of a state of things so contrary to what might naturally have been expected and desired, may lead us to acquiesce in it, as what was foreseen and intended by Divine Providence for the accomplishment of the most beneficial, though unknown, purposes; and which shall in due time certainly terminate in the perpetual and universal triumph of truth and goodness.

SECTION VIII.

Ch. IV. *THE APOSTLE states the great importance of practical religion, and urges Timothy to maintain an exemplary behaviour.* Ch. iv. 8—16.

1. The apostle states the great importance of practical religion, the reward annexed to which will make ample compensation for all temporal sufferings, ver. 8—11.

Ver. 8. *For bodily exercise*[1] *is profitable for little, but piety* is *profitable for all things*[2]*; having a promise* both *of the present and of the future life.*

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[1] *Bodily exercise.*] σωματικη γυμνασια. Whitby, Estius, Doddridge and Newcome, understand this phrase as an allusion to the gymnastic exercises, and the celebrated games of Greece. Benson and Macknight understand it "of the corporeal mortifications recommended and practised by the Essenes, an ascetic sect of the Jews. "Γυμναζειν *proprie est exerceri in gymnasiis: inde cœpit transferri ad omnia quæ agendo discimus.*" Rosenmuller; who thinks that the apostle, by the expression *bodily exercise*, alludes to those superstitious practices against which he had been warning his young disciple and friend.

[2] *For little—for all things.*] "προς ολιγον, *i. e.* χρονον—προς παντα, *i. e.* χρονον." Rosenmuller. Wakefield also translates the passage, "Bodily exercise is profitable for a short time only, but godliness is profitable for ever." "Bodily exercise profiteth little, viz. for health and strength, for obtaining a corruptible crown. Godliness has the promise of the life which now is, see Mark x. 30, Rom. viii. 28. Good men have reliance on God, peace of mind and conscience, hope of future happiness, and those temporal blessings which industry, temperance,

I have been urging you to exercise yourself in the practice of true religion, to make a serious business of it, and to endure all that labour and self-denial which may be necessary to your success in it. Follow my advice, and be assured, Timothy, your labour will not be lost. That bodily exercise, which is necessary to success in the celebrated games of Greece, may be useful to promote health, vigour, and agility, to secure the garland of victory and the applause of nations. But these are comparatively trifling things. The rewards of true religion are infinitely superior. Health, competence, content, and cheerfulness, together with the divine blessing, are the natural and the promised rewards of industry, integrity, prudence, and piety in this life; to which the revelation of the gospel annexes the grand prize of immortality. While others therefore contend for that which, if obtained, is at best a corruptible crown, we strive for one that is incorruptible. They labour for time, we for eternity. Ch. IV. Ver. 8.

This is *true doctrine*[3], *and worthy to be received by all.* 9.

What I have declared concerning the importance of true religion, and the rewards annexed to it, is a solemn and momentous truth, which cannot be too

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integrity, and frugality, have a natural tendency to produce." Newcome.

[3] *This* is *true doctrine.*] Dr. Benson observes that "St. Paul has used this expression four times, 1 Tim. i. 15, 2 Tim. ii. 11, Tit. iii. 8, and in this place. They were all matters of certain truth and of great importance; and the apostle used this expression to call up men's attention to them."

Ch. IV. often inculcated, too firmly believed, nor too steadily regarded.

Ver. 10. *For, with this view, we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the protector of all men, especially of believers* [1].

As a proof that I am sincere in what I advance concerning the importance and the rewards of true religion, I may appeal to my own labours and sufferings in this honourable cause. For you well know that my life is devoted to the instruction of mankind in the great truths of the gospel, and the practice of evangelical piety; every where insisting that this, and this alone, can ensure peace here, and happiness hereafter. For this, I am on the one hand reproached by the Jews, as treating with contempt the rites of the law, and on the other, I am persecuted by the heathen, as seducing men to renounce the religion of their ancestors, and to confine themselves to the worship of the one true and living God, who is indeed the only proper object of religious adoration, the benevolent parent, preserver, and benefactor of the human race, and to whose mercy in Jesus Christ, believers, especially, are under the highest obligations.

11. *These things give in charge and teach.*

Herein, O Timothy, I strictly and solemnly enjoin you to follow my example, and whatever labours may be necessary, or whatever reproach you

[1] *The protector,* &c.] σωτηρ· "the protector and preserver of all mankind, but his goodness has been most abundant to Christians." Archbishop Newcome.

may incur, persist in teaching the importance of practical religion, and in charging those to whom your discourses are addressed, to maintain an habitual and supreme regard to God. Ch. IV. Ver. 11.

2. The apostle exhorts Timothy to conciliate respect by exhibiting himself as a pattern of Christian virtue, and diligently to improve himself in those qualifications which were requisite to his reputation and success as an evangelist, ver. 12—15.

Let no man despise thy youth[2]*: but be thou an example to the believers, in conversation, in behaviour*[3]*, in love*[4]*, in fidelity, in purity.* 12.

You are very young for the important station that you occupy in the church, and it will require great discretion in you to behave in such a manner as may best comport with your character and office. Be therefore constantly upon your guard, that you give no just occasion for harsh and severe remarks; exhibit to all the Christians at Ephesus an eminent

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[2] *Despise thy youth.*] This caution is a strong presumption in favour of the supposition that this epistle was written A.D. 55 or 56, and negatives the hypothesis which places the date ten years later, when such a caution would have been unnecessary.

[3] *In behaviour.*] "ανασροφη, *vivendi, et agendi ratio.*" Schleusner. In this sense the word is commonly used in the New Testament; and Schleusner has referred to Polybius and Arrian to prove that the word is used in the same sense by Greek authors, in confirmation of which he also refers to Wesselingius. Stephens in his *Thesaurus* denies that the word is used in that signification by classical writers. See Macknight.

[4] *In love.*] The received text adds, "*in spirit;*" but these words are wanting in the Alexandrine and other copies and versions, and are rejected by Griesbach.

Ch. IV. Ver. 12. example of discretion and good sense in your conversation, of prudence in your general behaviour, of a kind and tender disposition of spirit, of faithfulness to your promises and to your profession, and of temperance, purity, and strict habitual self-government.

13. *Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to instruction.*

Whether my return to Ephesus be speedy, as I hope, or whether it be deferred to a more distant period than I at present intend or foresee, be sure to occupy the interval, whether longer or shorter, in the faithful and judicious discharge of the duty of your station. Attend to the reading of the Scriptures, both privately for your own benefit, and publicly for the instruction of the church. Admonish and exhort your hearers to the discharge of those duties which the gospel requires, and instruct them in the pure doctrine of the Christian religion, warning them against those errors with which Jewish superstition, or heathen philosophy, would deform the simplicity of Christian truth.

14. *Neglect not the gift* [1] *which is in thee, which was*

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[1] *The gift,* &c.] The extraordinary gifts of the spirit. See Benson, Doddridge, Newcome, Macknight. "*Recte ven. Noesselt. statuere videtur: in* locis N. T. omnibus, *qui tradunt, quosdam, susceptâ fide Christiand, per apostolos, impositis manibus, quanquam et adhibita invocatione et accuratiore in doctrinâ Christianâ institutione,* spiritu sancto *imbutos fuisse, nihil aliud quæri et intelligi debere, quam effectam his omnibus singularem animorum concitationem, qua tanquam divini Numinis afflatu se senserint impulsi, ut illam doctrinam læti, ac imperterriti profiterentur.*" Rosenmuller.

That

conferred upon thee because of previous recommendation[2], *with the imposition of the hands of the presbytery.* Ch. IV. Ver. 14.

That the extraordinary gifts of the holy spirit were not so common as some have imagined, may be readily conceded. But to maintain, with this writer, that giving the spirit by imposition of the apostle's hands *never* signifies any thing more than exciting courage and zeal, appears to me to be quite irreconcileable to the language of the New Testament, and to lead, by natural consequence, to explaining away the miracles of the gospel altogether; for few of the miracles of the New Testament rest upon more direct evidence than the gifts of the holy spirit to the primitive converts. Gal. iii. 2—5, 1 Cor. xii.

[2] *Because of previous recommendation.*] διὰ προφητειας.] See ch. i. 18, and the note there. The apostle took Timothy with him as a companion upon the recommendation of the brethren at Lystra and Iconium, Acts xvi. 2. These brethren, whose recommendation weighed so much with the apostle, were probably men of eminence, and prophets or teachers in the church: and the apostle received Timothy in consequence of their *prophecies*, or previous testimonies concerning him.

This appears to me to be an easy solution of a difficult text. And it only requires that the word προφητεια should be understood in its proper and primary sense as a *previous* but not *inspired* declaration. And it is not easy to see why the evangelist Timothy should be the object of inspired prophecies: though it was very becoming for him to be, and we know it as a fact that he was recommended to the apostle by the brethren at Lystra and Iconium. It is generally allowed that the word προφητης does not always signify an inspired person, nor προφητεια an inspired declaration: see Matt. xiii. 35, Tit. i. 12, Rom. xii. 6, 1 Thess. v. 20. Bengelius proposes to "connect διὰ προφητειας with τῦ πρεσβυτερίυ, and to inclose the intermediate words between commas. *Imposition of hands* was made by one, viz. the apostle: Prophecy was made by many, and by equals, who wished Timothy success;" *q. d.* given thee at the recommendation of the presbytery with the imposition of *my* hands. See Bowyer. "*Which was given thee by authority:* i. e. of teachers, or, 'for the purpose of teaching,' according as the word προφητειας is taken in the singular or the plural number." Wakefield. "according to the prophecies, or, after some prophecies." Benson; who refers to Mark ii. 1, Acts xxiv. 17, as authorities for this sense of διὰ. "*According to prophecy:*

Ch. IV. Ver. 14. I have conferred upon you the office of an evangelist, and the gifts of the spirit, agreeably to the earnest recommendation of persons of the greatest experience and most eminent piety in Lystra and Derbe. After which, by solemn imposition of hands, you were commended by the elders of those churches to the blessing of God, when I associated you with myself in my evangelical mission. Let not these gifts lie dormant in your breast; nor let the duties of your office be neglected, but let them be exercised and improved to their proper use, either

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i. e. by particular inspiration moving him so to do." Macknight. "agreeably to the predictions of the Christian prophets." Newcome. "*Quæ data est tibi per prophetiam.*" Grotius; who remarks, that prophets are said to do what they foretell. Ch. i. 18, Jer. i. 10. "*Quod datum est tibi per prophetiam: cum scilicet prophetæ, instinctu spiritus sancti, juberent te in Evangelii ministrum eligi: testantes et prædicantes insignem te virum in dicendo et adhortando fore.*" Slichtingius. Both these learned commentators suppose that inspired prophets marked out Timothy as a fit person to be employed as a missionary of the gospel; and with them Crellius agrees. Przipcovius takes προφητειας in the accusative case, and understands the apostle that gifts were conferred upon Timothy for the purpose of teaching—*ad prophetandum, hoc est, docendum;* which is one sense that Mr. Wakefield has assigned. But this cannot be the meaning of the word ch. i. 18; which speaks of prophecies which *went before* concerning him.

Perhaps the word χαρισμα may signify an office gratuitously conferred. 1 Pet. iv. 10.—"*munus in ecclesia Christiana demandatum.*" Schleusner. See Rom xii. 6, and the true interpretation of the text may be, "Neglect not thine office, i. e. *of evangelist*, which was conferred upon thee, or given to thee, i. e. *by me;* in consequence of previous recommendation, with imposition of the hands of the presbytery:" which, as Dr. Benson observes, "was frequently done in the apostle's days where no spiritual gift was imparted, when a superior blessed or prayed for an inferior," and when any were solemnly designated and set apart for some important office. See Acts xiii. 3.

for converting the heathen, or for the edification of the church. Ch. IV.

Make these things thy care[1], *be wholly in them, that thy improvement in all things may be apparent.* Ver. 15.

Regard the honourable and faithful discharge of your office at Ephesus as your proper and most important business; let it engross your whole mind, devote yourself entirely to it; suffer no foreign consideration, no motives of self-indulgence, or secular advantage, to draw off your attention from it; and let your application to the various branches of your ministerial duty be so constant, and indefatigable, that all may bear testimony to your faithfulness, to your improvement, and to your success.

Take heed to thyself, and to thy doctrine; continue in them[2], *for* by *doing this, thou wilt save both thyself and thy hearers*[3]. 16.

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[1] *Make these things thy care.*] "The word μελετη," says Dr. Benson, "is used to denote all the preparatory exercises of mind or body, which are made use of by those who are desirous of excelling in any art or science. It is applied to those who were training up for rhetoricians, or to those who designed to contend in the agonistic games, or to engage in the dangers and fatigues of war. The apostle recommends to Timothy, by proper previous exercises, to qualify himself for excelling in the discharge of the work of an evangelist." "*Hæc meditare, in his, totus esto.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *Continue in them.*] These words are probably a marginal gloss: they are wanting in the Æthiopic. Owen *ap.* Bowyer.

[3] *Wilt save both thyself and thy hearers.*] "These advices," says Dr. Priestley, "are very intelligible, and peculiarly excellent and important. They show the necessity of ministers labouring to form their own minds, of their acquiring useful knowledge, and using their utmost endeavours for the improvement

Ch. IV. Ver. 16. I conclude what I had to recommend concerning your personal and public conduct with two general advices; take heed to thyself, and take heed to thy doctrine. Let your conduct be exemplary, and your doctrine truly evangelical, the pure, uncorrupted truth of the gospel. Persevere in this honourable course. If you forsake the path of virtue, or the truth of Christianity, you will lose the benefit, and forfeit the reward of your past wisdom and fidelity. But by inflexible adherence to the practice of virtue, and to the purity of the Christian doctrine, you will in the first place ensure your own salvation, and in the second place you will do all that can be done for the salvation of your hearers. In many instances success will probably attend your pious labours; and where this is wanting, still you will not have laboured in vain; your work will be with the Lord, and your reward with your God.

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of their hearers. The apostle likewise intimates, though in a more indirect manner, the value of their labours with respect to their people. And if there be a duty of ministers, there must be a corresponding one on the part of the people, and of equal importance. If the ministers are to communicate instruction, the people are to receive it, not implicitly, but to give their best attention, and then judge for themselves. If it be the duty of the ministers to exhort, it is that of the people to improve by the word of exhortation."

SECTION IX.

THE APOSTLE gives directions to Timothy as to the most prudent method of administering reproof, and lays down rules concerning the relief of those widows who were to be supported by the church, and also concerning the qualifications and maintenance of others, who were to be employed in its offices among persons of their own sex. Ch. v. 1—16. Ch. V.

1. The apostle gives advice to the evangelist, as to the best method of administering reproof, ver. 1, 2.

Do not harshly rebuke an elderly man[1], *but beseech* him, *as a father; and the younger* men *as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.* Ver. 1. 2.

It does not become you who are a young man to administer reproof in a harsh and offensive manner to those who are more advanced in life, nor will such reproofs ever produce a good effect. If then you see any thing amiss in a man that is much older than yourself, modestly, and with becoming humility, ad-

[1] *An elderly man.*] The opposition in the two clauses of the verse shows that the word πρεσβυτερος is here used to express the *age*, not the *office*, of the person reproved. Dr. Benson has an excellent note upon the wisdom of the apostle's advice.

Ch. V. Ver. 2. monish him of his fault, and request him to change his conduct; addressing him as a father, with the respect due to his age and station. If you would reprove younger men, so as to produce a good effect, you must speak to them with the kindness of a brother, and let it appear that you do not reprove because you take pleasure in finding fault, but because you regard it as an indispensable, though a disagreeable duty. In like manner, administer reproof to elder women as to mothers, and to the younger as sisters, with that modesty and decorum which will not fail to produce a proper effect, and which becomes your character as a minister of the gospel.

2. The apostle directs, that widows should be taken care of; but that those widows who had families capable of supporting them, should be maintained by their families, ver. 3, 4.

3. *Support*[1] *widows who are widows indeed*[2].

Let those widows who are women of good character, who have no near relations, and who have not the means of supporting themselves, be maintained out of the public stock.

4. *But if any widow have children or grand-children, let* these *learn first to show piety at home*[3],

[1] *Support.*] "τιμα, *honour*; i. e. *support* or *maintain*: see ver. 17; also Matt. xv. 4, 5, 6, Mark vii. 9—13, Acts xxviii. 10." Benson.

[2] *Widows indeed.*] "who are what that word importeth, really bereaved and desolate." Benson. Grotius and Calvin suppose an allusion to the etymology of the word: χηρω, *destituo, privor.*

[3] *First to show piety at home.*] Macknight's translation is,

and to requite their *progenitors, for this is acceptable to God*[4]. Ch. V. Ver. 4.

If any widows have descendants capable of maintaining them, there is no reason why they should be supported at the public expense. Let children and grand-children, when they have provided decently for their own families, regard it as an indispensable duty to maintain their aged parents, and thus to requite the care that was bestowed upon them in the helpless years of infancy and childhood. This conduct is acceptable to God; it is a branch of true religion, and will be creditable to your Christian profession.

3. The apostle requires, that widows who are really destitute should be decently supported, and animadverts severely upon those widows who lead a life of dissipation, and upon all who are unwilling to contribute to the relief of their aged parents, ver. 5—8.

But she who is a widow indeed, and left alone, hopeth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day[5]. 5.

"Let these learn first piously to take care of their own families, and then to requite their parents." Duty to parents was called *piety*. See Newcome *in loc.* and Wetstein on Acts xvii. 33.—"*Rectius de liberis viduarum hæc intelliguntur. Nam ευσεβειν κ. τ. λ. proprie est venerari, colere familiam suam, i. e. sustentare.* Οικος, *familia et omnes qui ad eam pertinent, matres etiam, et aviæ.*" Rosenmuller; who quotes a passage from Chrysostom giving the same interpretation.

[4] *Acceptable to God.*] The received text reads "*good and* acceptable;" but the best copies omit the words καλον και, and Griesbach leaves them out of the text.

Ch. v. Ver. 5. I have directed you to maintain widows who are widows indeed. By this expression, I mean those widows who are both solitary and pious; widows who have no children or near relations able to afford them needful assistance; and whose character is an ornament to their profession; who believe in God, who obey the gospel, and who maintain a spirit of habitual devotion by the regular performance of religious exercises at stated and convenient seasons.

6. *But she who rioteth in pleasure*[1] *is dead while she liveth.*

A widow who, being at liberty from the restraint of the conjugal state, gives herself up to a life of luxury and dissipation, is a disgrace to a religious community; and with respect to every virtuous principle, and to every valuable purpose of life, she is as though she were dead.

7. *These things also give in charge, that they may be blameless.*

Give these directions to the Ephesians, concerning the distinction to be made between those widows who do, and those who do not need, and

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[5] *Night and day.*] "who prays morning and evening, who is stated and regular in devotion." Doddridge.

[1] *Who rioteth in pleasure.*] So Newcome. Dr. Whitby observes, that the original word σπαταλωσα especially refers to drinking strong and costly liquors. *Is dead.* The same thought occurs in some heathen writers. "It was reckoned a beautiful saying of Pythagoras, that a worthless man is a dead man. That the same thought is not as much admired in St. Paul," says Dr. Benson, "can proceed from nothing but an unreasonable partiality for what is of heathen extraction, and an ungenerous contempt of what is Jewish or Christian."

merit, to be supported from the funds of the society, that they may know how to conduct themselves with discretion and propriety. Ch. V. Ver. 7.

But if any provide not for his own, but especially for those of his own household, he hath renounced the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever[2]. 8.

I have directed that those who are able shall maintain their widowed parents. This direction, I am confident, will be disputed by none who are worthy of the Christian name. For if any one who is able to maintain a widowed mother should rather suffer her to be dependent upon public charity, and indeed if he does not provide according to his ability for every member of his family, he might as well make a formal and public renunciation of Christianity at once. He has renounced it, in fact, by refusing to comply with its most obvious requisitions; and he is in truth a greater enemy to the gospel than an avowed unbeliever; for his conduct in neglecting a duty which is practised by unbelievers themselves, is a scandal to the honourable cause which he professes to espouse.

4. He describes the character and qualifications of those widows who were to be admitted as dea-

[2] *Worse than an unbeliever.*] "*graviter accusat liberos et nepotes divites, qui sinebant ecclesiæ oneri esse eos quos ipsi alere debebant.* Ethnico pejor: *quia Ethnici suas primum domos tutantur, suasque necessitudines fovendas omnibus modis censent. Cicero in Ep. ad Capitonem: suos quisque debet tueri.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. V. conesses, and employed as instructors of their own sex, ver. 9, 10.

Ver. 9. *Let not a widow be admitted upon the list*[1] *who is under sixty years* of age, *having been the wife*
10. *of one man*[2]; *in reputation for good works; if she have educated children, if she have entertained strangers, if she have washed the feet of the saints*[3], *if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently attended to every kind office*[4].

Let all widows who are in want of relief, and who maintain good characters, be maintained from the contributions of the church, and let them be em-

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[1] *The list:*] that is, of deaconesses. Archbishop Newcome inserts the word into the text; and Benson, Doddridge, and all the commentators agree that this must be the apostle's meaning; for surely he could not intend that no widows who were under sixty years of age should participate in the alms of the church.

[2] *The wife of one man.*] Women could divorce their husbands. Mark x. 12, *Poli Synop.* See ch. iii. 2. Newcome. Also Benson's note on ch. iii. 2. In the case of the fornicator at Corinth, 1 Cor. v., the woman had divorced the father to marry the son.

[3] *Washed the feet.*] "a usual piece of civility, as well as a great refreshment in the eastern countries to wash a person's feet, or to take care that it should be done for them." Gen. xviii. 4, xix. 2; Luke vii. 38, 44; John xiii. 5, 14, 15." Benson.

[4] *Attended to every kind office.*] See Wakefield. Dr. Macknight justly observes, that the poor widows cannot be supposed to have done all this at their own expense. Hence he infers, that having been deaconesses in the younger part of life, at the age of sixty they were advanced to the office of instructors or female presbyters. This idea of Dr. Macknight is perhaps countenanced by Rom. xvi. 1, as an aged woman would hardly have undertaken so long a journey. It is also possible that widows who received alms might be employed by the church in performing the offices of humanity and hospitality previously to their appointment to the office of deaconess.

ployed as occasion may require in acts of public hospitality and charity. But let not such persons be admitted to the honourable distinction of permanent officers in the Christian society, till they have reached their sixtieth year; nor then, unless they have always led virtuous and irreproachable lives. An aged widow may be received with propriety into the number of deaconesses and instructors, if she have not for any cause whatever divorced herself from her own husband, and married another while the former was living; which practice, however it may be allowed by the laws of heathen states, is forbidden by the purity of the Christian institute. If such a person, while in her noviciate, have given useful instruction to the children who were placed by the church under her care; if she have provided lodging for strangers whom the church has entertained; if she have condescended to the humblest offices of kindness and hospitality, and have washed the feet of the guests of the church; if she have visited and succoured the afflicted and distressed, and have abounded in works of humanity and kindness while she was a widow, receiving the church's alms; such a person may with propriety be advanced to those offices which the Christian church has allotted to the female sex. The excellence of her character will be a pledge for her future conduct, and will do credit to any station in which she may be placed. Ch. V. Ver. 10.

5. He assigns reasons why he disapproves of ad-

Ch. V. mitting younger widows to this honourable station, ver. 11—15.

Ver. 11. *But younger widows refuse; for when they grow*
weary of the restraints of Christ they will marry[1]:
12. *exposing themselves to censure*[2], *because they vio-*
late their first promise[3].

Discreet, steady, and aged matrons are the only persons properly qualified to occupy the station of female deacons and instructors. If, therefore, any

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[1] *They grow weary of restraint.*] καταστρηνιασωσι. Erasmus derives the word from "στερειν, *metaphora sumpta a jumentis, quæ cum pabulo ferociunt, avellunt habenas, et suopte arbitrio feruntur.*"—"στρηνιᾶν, *ut nos docent Græcorum grammatici, est στερειν ηνιας.*" Grotius; who explains the passage, "*Postquam tædere eos cœpit istius servitutis quam ecclesiæ promiserant. Per Christum intellige ecclesiam.*" Glassius and Le Clerc translate the clause, "who do not obey the reins." Estius observes, that Χριστῳ is governed by κατα in composition: *q. d.* They pull the reins contrary to Christ. "when they grow weary of the restraints of Christ, they wish to marry." Wakefield. The apostle's idea seems to be, that widows when they become deaconesses, or teachers, are as it were married to Christ, and pledge themselves to devote their whole time to the service of the church: but if they quit their stations and marry again, which young widows would often be inclined to do, they as it were violate their conjugal faith, and expose themselves to censure for their irresolution. Dr. Priestley supposes that the apostle refers not merely to their marrying again, but to their marrying unbelievers.

[2] *Exposing themselves to censure.*] "are blameable." Wakefield: not, as in the public version, "having damnation."—"Κριμα *vocat judicium probarum, ab earum facto dissentiens.*" Grotius. For the difference between κριμα and κατακριμα see 1 Cor. xi. 32. "κρ. *non de æterna damnatione, sed latiore sensu de culpa sumitur, seu vitio reprehensioni obnoxio.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Their first promise:*] that is, "the promise they had made of leading a single life, and devoting themselves to the offices of religion." Macknight. "v. g. *se eleemosynis non abusuras, et vitam honestam acturas, ecclesiæque inservituras esse.*" Rosenmuller.

who are younger should desire to be admitted, let them be refused; for, however zealous they may be for a time, they will probably by degrees grow weary of the restraints to which they have subjected themselves, and may choose to enter again into the conjugal state. Thus they bring themselves into disgrace by violating the resolution they formed when they were admitted into those offices of the church, which are appropriated to, and can only with propriety be performed by, matrons who are not involved in the cares and troubles of the conjugal life. Ch. v. Ver. 12.

And withal, being idle, they learn to go about from house to house, and are not only idle, but tattlers also, and meddlers, speaking things *which they ought not.* 13.

If young and indiscreet women are admitted to be instructors and deaconesses, the nature of their office leading them to go from house to house to communicate instruction, to visit the sick, and to perform the offices of religion and humanity, they soon contract a gossiping disposition, and pass their time in idle talk, and impertinent scandal, officiously meddling in the concerns of other people, and imprudently betraying the secrets of families.

I would therefore have the younger widows *marry, bear children, manage domestic affairs, give no occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.* 14.

It is wrong for the younger women to aspire to those offices which require the leisure of a single

Ch. V. Ver. 14. life, the engagements of which it is often inconvenient to keep, and always disreputable to violate. Let then such persons enter again, if they think fit, into the conjugal state, and fulfill the duties of that honourable relation with discretion and credit, and let them not give occasion to the adversaries of the Christian religion to calumniate its professors, by assuming offices unbecoming their character and time of life.

15. *For some have already turned aside after Satan*[1]. I am thus particular in my advice, because I have already seen instances of the bad consequence of young women intruding into the province of aged matrons; for some, by indiscretion, having forfeited the esteem of the Christian community, have apostatized from the Christian faith, and have returned to their former state of darkness and heathenism.

6. He concludes this subject by urging it upon all Christians, who had it in their power, to support their aged and poor relations, and not suffer them to become a burden to the church, ver. 16.

16. *If any believer*[2] *have relations that are widows,*

[1] *After Satan.*] "some have already turned aside from Christianity, and gone among the unbelievers." Benson: see ch. i. 20. "*Secutæ sunt Satanam:* i. e. *ad idololatriam redierunt.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *If any believer.*] ει τις πιστος η πιστη, "if any man or woman who believeth." Newcome.—"*Christianus, aut Christiana.*" Rosenmuller. But it is observable that the apostle cautiously avoids the word *Christian:* which was no doubt given by their enemies at Antioch as a term of reproach, though it is now deservedly held in high estimation. *A Christian is the highest style of man.*

let such support them, and let not the church be burdened, that it may support those that are widows indeed. Ch. v. Ver. 16.

I once more request, and indeed require, all persons professing faith in Christ, who have mothers, or other female relations, in a widowed state, to maintain them decently, if it be in their power. And let not the church be burdened with them, when their own families are in circumstances competent to their support. But let the funds of the church remain entire for the use of those widows who are infirm and destitute, and who have no children or other near relations who can do any thing for them. These are the proper objects of public bounty, and of these there will always be a sufficient number whose necessity will require all that can be conveniently spared from the public stock.

SECTION X.

The apostle gives directions concerning the proper treatment of the elders of the church; he charges Timothy to be very cautious with respect to the characters of those whom he set apart to public offices; and advises him to be careful of his own health. Ch. v. 17—25.

1. The apostle enjoins it as a reasonable thing, as well as a divine precept, that the elders and

Ch. v. teachers of the church should have a competent and liberal support, ver. 17, 18.

Ver. 17. *Let the elders who preside*[1] *well be esteemed worthy of a liberal maintenance*[2], *especially those who labour in teaching the word*[3].

Let those grave and experienced persons who are chosen out of the Christian society to superintend its concerns, to appoint the proper seasons of assembling to regulate the order of public services, to manage the temporal affairs of the society, and to compose differences which may arise among its

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[1] *The elders who preside.*] Compare Heb. xiii. 7, 17, 24, Rom. xii. 8, 1 Thess. v. 12. The presiding elder appointed the time and place of meeting when the Christians held their assemblies in private, through fear of persecution. They directed public worship; they settled which of the spiritual men were to pray or teach, and in what order; they decided controversies, 1 Cor. vi.; and they managed the temporal affairs of the society." See Benson and Macknight.

[2] *Liberal maintenance.*] διπλης τιμης, *double honour*, or, *price*. Matt. xxvii. 6. " double reward." Newcome, Wakefield. See ver. 3: *i. e.* a large reward, Matt. xv. 6, Acts xxviii. 10. It is an allusion to the portion of the first-born, Deut. xxi. 17. See also 2 Kings ii. 9, a double portion of the spirit of Elijah. " a liberal maintenance out of the public stock." Whitby. " *plus stipendii*." Rosenmuller.

[3] *Labour in teaching.*] Literally, " who labour in the word, and in teaching." Newcome. Some, who presided, did not teach, others were instructors as well as presidents. See Heb. xiii. 7. See Whitby's note. " It was not expected," says Dr. Priestley, " that all the elders of a church should teach; but notwithstanding this, they might be very well employed in attending to the good order of the society. These, however, would not in general require any assistance; but those who actually gave their time and labour to the church, so as to give little or no attention to any other business by which they might maintain themselves, would have a natural right to maintenance from those to whom their time and labour were devoted."

members, and who discharge the duties of their important office with discretion, and to the satisfaction of the church, be supported in decency and comfort from the public stock; and particularly those who are appointed to the honourable office of Christian instructors, and who are so much engaged in teaching the young and the ignorant, and in converting the heathen, that they have not time to attend to their own private concerns. It will be to the credit of the society, and to the furtherance of the gospel, that such persons should be treated with the respect due to their characters and labours; and that they should not be impeded in their work by the want of any thing requisite to their subsistence and comfort, nor taken off from their important employment by a necessary attention to their secular affairs. Ch. V. Ver. 17.

For the Scripture saith (Deut. xxv. 4), *Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that is treading out the corn; and The labourer is worthy of his hire*[4]. Lev. xix. 13. Luke x. 7. 18.

The law of Moses humanely required, that the ox which was employed in treading out the corn should be at liberty to satisfy his own hunger; and it is a common observation, the reasonableness of

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[4] *The labourer*, &c.] This observation occurs only Luke x. 7: hence some have inferred that the apostle quotes the gospel of Luke as of the same authority with the Pentateuch; but this is a precarious conclusion. It was probably a proverbial expression, and cited as such both by our Lord and the apostle. "*Extat quidem locus similis* Matt. x. 10. *An vero Paulus Evangelium Matthæi legerit valde dubium est.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. V. Ver. 18. which is obvious to every understanding, and which indeed was applied by Jesus himself to the very case that I am now stating, that 'the labourer is worthy of his hire,' and that a person who devotes his time and powers to the benefit of others has an equitable claim to a compensation for his services. And nothing can be more absurd or unreasonable than to suppose that the superintendants of Christian churches, and the teachers of the gospel, are not entitled equally with others to a just equivalent for their time and service.

2. The apostle directs Timothy how to act when accusations were brought against any of the elders of the church, ver. 19—21.

19. *Receive not an accusation against an elder, unless on* the testimony [1] *of two or three witnesses.*

It is of great importance that the characters of those who are appointed to the superintendance of the church, and whose office it is to instruct others in truth and duty, should be unspotted. Having then appointed proper persons to govern and instruct, do not lightly receive a charge against them;

[1] *Unless on* the testimony.] So Doddridge. "without two or three witnesses." Wakefield. "before." Public Version and Newcome. There is no good reason why the accusation should not be received unless in the presence of witnesses, but a very good reason why it should not be attended to unless it could be proved by a competent number of credible witnesses. —"Do not give ear to any thing which may stain their reputation, unless the matter can be attested by two or three credible witnesses: Deut. xix. 15, Matt. xviii. 16, John viii. 17." Benson.

and listen not to any reports to their disadvantage, if not confirmed by two or three credible witnesses, upon whose testimony you may safely rely. Ch. V. Ver. 19.

Rebuke offenders before all[2], *that others also may fear.* 20.

When you have obtained satisfactory evidence of the misconduct of any of the officers or teachers of the church, let their punishment be proportioned to the enormity of their offence, aggravated as it is by the publicity of their character and the dignity of their office, by the danger of their example, and by the occasion that it will give to the enemies of Christianity to reproach their religion. Rebuke them severely, and rebuke them publicly, not only that they may be made ashamed of their offence, and be brought to a due sense of their guilt, but that others also may see that no elevation of rank, or dignity of office, can protect an offender from deserved censure, and may take warning to avoid a similar conduct, lest they fall into similar disgrace.

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[2] *Before all.*] "This was the custom of the synagogue. *Vitringa de vet. Synagog.* p. 729." Benson. The connexion shows that the apostle is speaking of presbyters and officers of the church.—"*quos coram ceteris presbyteris omnibus coarguendos jubet apostolus.*" Rosenmuller.—"This shows," says Dr. Priestley, "how attentive the early Christians were to the good conduct of the members of their societies; and in their situation among unbelievers it was peculiarly necessary, but it is certainly highly proper even in our circumstances. It is a bad symptom of the decline of the spirit of religion, when the members of Christian societies consider themselves as entirely detached from each other, and feel no interest in their good or bad conduct."

Ch. V. Ver. 21. *I strictly charge* thee, *before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the chosen messengers*[1], *that*

[1] *The chosen messengers.*] εκλεκτων αγγελων. The word *angel* is repeatedly used in the New Testament to signify a messenger, Matt. xi. 10, Luke vii. 24. The disciples of John are called *messengers:* in the original, *angels.* Luke ix. 52. The disciples who were sent to announce the approach of Christ are called *messengers:* Gr. "angels." 1 Cor. xi. 10, the women are required to wear a veil, because of the angels, *i. e. messengers;* who were sent from the assemblies of the men to attend those of the women, and before whom it would be indecorous to appear without a veil. See the note on this passage. James ii. 25, the spies sent by Moses are called αγγελοι, *messengers.* 1 Tim. iii. 16, he appeared to angels: *i. e. messengers,* to his *apostles.* See note *in loc.* Gal. i. 14, "ye received me as an angel (*i. e.* a *messenger*) of God." The angels of the churches in the first three chapters of the Apocalypse, are universally understood to signify the ministers of the seven churches; and Mr. Wakefield well translates the word αγγελος in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews *messenger,* explaining it of the former prophets and messengers of God. See Schleusner *in verb.* The elect angels, therefore, are those eminent believers who were selected to accompany and assist the apostle, who knew Timothy's situation, and who were no doubt very solicitous that he should conduct himself with prudence, firmness, and fidelity, in discharging the duties of his important office. In their presence, therefore, as well as in that of God and Christ, the apostle urges upon his beloved disciple and substitute his solemn charge.

This interpretation, which appears to be so obvious, so intelligible, and so appropriate, seems to have escaped all the commentators, who with one consent interpret the phrase as of spirits superior to mankind; of whose existence even, we have no certain information, much less can we know any thing of their orders and laws, of their offices and employments: who, if they exist at all, and it is indeed probable that millions of orders of intelligent beings exist in the boundless universe, in all probability know as little of what is passing in this diminutive planet, as we know of them. At least, we have no evidence that they know any thing about, or, have any concern with this world and its inhabitants. But that the apostle here refers to these superior classes of beings, appears to have been the opinion of Erasmus, Grotius, Crellius, Slichtingius, Whitby,

thou observe these things *without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality*[2]. Ch. V. Ver. 21.

The office which I have now assigned thee requires great resolution and fortitude to perform well. But the duties of it are indispensable in the situation in which you are placed, considering the character which you support at Ephesus, and the gifts and powers which you possess; and therefore I strictly charge you, as in the presence of God, the searcher of hearts, and of Jesus Christ, whose minister you are, and at whose judgement seat you will be called to give an account of your conduct; and likewise in the presence and with the concurrence of those faithful messengers and preachers of

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Benson, Newcome, Wakefield, Rosenmuller, &c. &c. Dr. Priestley himself swims with the stream. "This (says he in his note upon the text) is speaking according to the oriental style; considering God as a great prince, attended by his angels or ministering servants. As acting under the inspection of this great being, thus magnificently attended, Paul gives this solemn charge to Timothy." The reason of this great and universal mistake appears to be, that the early commentators, conceiving of Jesus Christ as a great superangelic being, naturally enough imagined that the apostle referred to angels or beings of a superior nature to mankind. But those critics of the present day who entertain more correct views of the person of Christ, will easily discern how much more apposite the expression is, if it be interpreted of those delegates of the churches, who often accompanied the apostle in his journeys, and some of whom probably remained with Timothy, when he was left at Ephesus.

[2] *Prejudice—partiality.*] See Wakefield.—"without preferring one man before another." Newcome.—"προκριμα, judgement formed before the matter has been duly examined; προσκλισις, leaning to one side. Partiality is judgement guided by favour; prejudice is judgement dictated by hatred." Macknight.

Ch. V. Ver. 21. the gospel who have been selected by the church as my associates in labours and in dangers, and who are anxiously solicitous for your credit and success; that you pay due regard to the directions that I have given, and this, without prejudice or personal pique on the one hand, or unbecoming partiality on the other; that you conduct yourself in these circumstances with a firmness and fidelity which becomes the faithful minister of Christ, who has no other concern than to perform his duty without fear or affection, or any improper bias whatever, and without regard to any personal consequences.

3. The apostle gives to Timothy a strict charge to be very careful in inquiring into the characters of those men who might be recommended to public offices, and he introduces a friendly hint to take care of his own health, ver. 22—25.

22. *Put thy hands*[1] *on no man precipitately, and be not a partaker in the sins of others. Keep thyself pure.*

As it is better to prevent offences than to punish them, I advise you to be extremely circumspect with regard to the characters of those who are recommended to offices of dignity and importance in the church. When any are selected by their fellow-

[1] *Put thy hands.*] Dr. Macknight observes, that "this is one instance among others that in the apostolic age men were ordained to ecclesiastical functions by imposition of the hands of those who were in the ministry before them."

Christians, and presented to you for approbation and confirmation in the office of elder or deacon, by imposition of hands and prayer, first inquire diligently into their moral conduct, and do not, by hastily introducing into office persons of doubtful character, render yourself in a considerable degree chargeable with the evil consequences which will inevitably follow, if men of mean abilities and immoral lives are made rulers and teachers in the church. Let your whole conduct in this, and in all respects, be spotless and free from reproach. Ch. v. Ver. 22.

Do not any longer drink water only, *but use a little wine, for the sake of thy stomach and thy frequent infirmities*[2]. 23.

Having hinted at your personal duty, it reminds me of observing, that one important duty is, to take care of your health, without which it is impossible for you to go through the fatigues of your office; and, that you may not exhaust yourself by your exertions, I advise you to indulge yourself in the moderate use of wine, and not to drink water only.

The sins of some men[3] *are notorious, leading on* 24.

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[1] *Do not,* &c.] Sir Norton Knatchbull thinks, that as this verse interrupts the sense, it was introduced by the apostle as a postscript in the margin, and by some officious transcriber inserted into the text. See Doddridge, and Bowyer's *Conjectural Emendations.* Some think that the apostle gently reproves Timothy as too much addicted to an ascetic life.

[3] *The sins of some men.*] See ver. 22. *q. d.* "In setting men apart to the ministry, you may be deceived without guilt. The sins of some are manifest before the final judgement; but others so conceal them that they will not appear till the sen-

Ch. V. Ver. 24. *to condemnation, whereas* the sins *of others follow them.*

But to return to the subject of appointing persons to ecclesiastical offices; I would observe, that it is not always easy to discern the real characters of men. Some persons are notorious offenders, whom it may be hoped that the church would never elect; and whom, if they were presented, you would immediately reject, as men whose characters allowed no room for hesitation. But there are others, whose vices are concealed, whose real characters it is difficult to detect, in whom, after the greatest circumspection you can use, you may be deceived, and whose crimes may perhaps not be completely developed till the final judgement. If you should happen after due inquiry to institute such persons into the office of teachers and preachers of the gospel, whatever injury the church may sustain, your conscience will be clear.

25. *So also the good works* of some *are manifest, and those that are otherwise cannot be concealed.*

The same observation may be applied to persons of an opposite character. Some are eminently virtuous; their piety, their benevolence, their habitual regard to God and duty are so conspicuous, that calumny itself cannot fasten any scandal and reproach upon them. In others, equally animated

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tence of their judge." Newcome. I rather prefer the interpretation of Doddridge: "leading on to pass judgement on them without any difficulty." Dr. Benson gives a similar paraphrase.

by a principle of rectitude, their virtues are less conspicuous, they live in the obscurity of retirement, or they studiously conceal from human eyes the good they do. Such virtue, however, cannot be wholly or long concealed. By diligent inquiry you may perhaps find them out, and advance them to those posts of dignity and importance to which their merit entitles them, but from which their modesty and humility would keep them at a distance. At all events, how little soever their merits may be known and acknowledged in the present state, they will not fail to be brought to light and crowned with honour in that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, and all shall be rewarded according to their works. Ch. V. Ver. 25.

SECTION XI.

THE APOSTLE requires that Christian slaves be taught to yield due obedience to their masters, and animadverts with great severity upon those false teachers who, from mercenary views, taught a different doctrine. Ch. vi. 1—10. Ch. VI.

1. He requires that slaves be instructed to yield obedience to their masters, and by no means to fail in due respect to those of them who were converted to the Christian faith. Ch. vi. 1, 2.

Let all who are under the yoke of servitude[1] Ver. 1.

[1] *Let all who are under the yoke of servitude.*] Literally, "as

Ch. VI. Ver. 1. *esteem their masters worthy of all honour; that the name of God and* his *doctrine may not be calumniated*[1].

Many of the zealots for the law, in order to ingratiate themselves with, and to make gain of, their proselytes, represent Christian slaves as released by the profession of the Christian religion from all obligation to serve Christian masters. But do you, Timothy, teach a different doctrine, and let it be known that Christianity makes no change in men's civil relations; but as it requires humanity on the part of the master, it equally enjoins obedience and fidelity on the part of the slave. I require that this doctrine should be inculcated upon Christian slaves; and that they should be taught to regard it as an indispensable duty to serve their masters with honesty and zeal: that so the doctrine which God has revealed for the universal reception and salva-

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many slaves as are under the yoke." See Newcome. It was a doctrine of the pharisaic Jews, that proselytes were released from all antecedent civil and even natural relations. And it is not improbable that some of the Jewish converts might carry the same principle into the Christian community. The Judaizing zealots probably taught, that by the profession of Christianity slaves were emancipated from Christian masters. Against this principle the apostle always enters his strong protest; and teaches that the profession of Christianity makes no difference in the civil relations of men. 1 Cor. vii. 17—24. The apostle no doubt well knew that the principles of genuine Christianity would eventually lead to the utter extermination of slavery; but the process was to be voluntary and gradual, not violent and immediate. See Benson, Macknight, Priestley, &c.

[1] *Calumniated.*] "*evil spoken of.* As if it set men free from civil obligations." Newcome.

tion of mankind, may not be misrepresented and calumniated, as introducing disorder and confusion into civil society. Ch. VI. Ver. 1.

And let not those who have believing masters think lightly of them, *because they are brethren*[2], *but serve* them *the more* willingly, *because those who are partakers of the benefit*[3] *are believers and beloved.* 2.

Neither let Christian slaves imagine that their masters, though Christians, are under any obligation to restore them to liberty; or that because they are equally members of the great family of believers, possessed of the same privileges, heirs of the same eternal inheritance, they are for this reason released from civil subjection, and are entitled to treat their masters with neglect and contempt. Let Christian slaves therefore be as prompt in their obedience to the orders of Christian as of heathen masters. And indeed let the consideration, that the masters whom they serve, and who are benefited by their in-

[2] *Brethren.*] "Though brethren, and upon a level with their slaves in a religious account, they remain superior, and just as they were in a civil and temporal account. See note on Philemon, ver. 12, 14, 16." Benson.

[3] *Partakers of the benefit:*] *i. e.* of the service of the slave. See Benson, Newcome, and Macknight. Dr. Benson observes, that "ευεργεσια is a word never used to express the blessings of the gospel." The public version is, "because they are faithful and beloved partakers of the benefit:" *q. d.* do them service, the rather because they are partakers of the blessing of the gospel, in common with you their slaves. This also is the sense given in Mr. Wakefield's translation, "but serve them, as believers and beloved, partakers of the same benefit, with a more hearty service." But Dr. Benson's interpretation seems preferable.

Ch. VI. Ver. 2. dustry, are believers in Christ, and beloved of God, and that they are bound by the Christian law to treat those under their authority with humanity and brotherly kindness, be an additional motive to still greater alacrity and zeal in the performance of duty.

2. The apostle expresses great displeasure at those who taught a contrary doctrine, ver. 3—5.

—2, 3. *These* things *teach and exhort. If any one teach otherwise, and adhere not*[1] *to the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doc-*

[1] *Adhere not.*] προσερχεται, "consent not." Public Version. "attend not." Wakefield.—Dr. Bentley conjectures that the true reading was probably προσεχεται, or προσεχει, as προσεχειν λογοις is a known phrase both in sacred and profane writers: see 2 Pet. i. 19; Acts viii. 6, xvi. 4; Heb. ii. 1; Tit. i. 14; 1 Tim. i. 3, 4: whereas there is no precedent of a similar application of προσερχομαι. And he conjectures that some manuscript may possibly be found which contains this reading. See *Phileleutherus Lipsiensis*, part i., p. 72, and Benson *in loc.* No such manuscript, however, has yet been discovered: nevertheless, the conjecture is so probable, that it is mentioned by Griesbach in his second edition; and has been adopted expressly by Benson and Doddridge, and virtually by Archbishop Newcome. Nor does there appear to be any valid reason why conjectural criticism should not occasionally be applied to the sacred writings, as it is allowed to be to profane authors; for it is not to be supposed that all transcribers and copyists were inspired. It ought, however, to be very cautiously applied to texts which are of weight in theological controversy. See John i. 1, Rom. ix. 5, and the notes in the *Improved Version*. Rosenmuller denies the necessity of adopting Bentley's conjecture, and appeals to Philo as using the phrase προσελθειν τινι γνωμη, for acceding to an opinion. And Schleusner refers to Munthe's *Obs. Philolog. e Diod. Sic.* for a similar authority: but no example of this use of the word has been produced out of the New Testament or the Septuagint.

trine which is according to godliness, he is vain[2], Ch. VI. Ver. 4.
and knoweth nothing, but is raving[3] *about questions and verbal disputes*[4]. *From which arise envy, contention, calumnies, unjust suspicions, perverse debates*[5] *of men whose minds are corrupted and adverse to the truth, who regard gain as piety*[6]. 5.

This doctrine, concerning the duties of slaves, I require you to teach and inculcate upon all of that description who embrace the faith of Christ; and exhort them to behave accordingly. And do not suffer any to be seduced into a profession of Chris-

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[2] *He is vain.*] τετυφωται. "he is besotted." Wakefield, 2d edit. He once approved of the reading in the Æthiopic Version, τετυφλωται, *he is blind;* but upon further consideration gave it up. It is a reading supported by one manuscript only, and that of no great account.

[3] *Raving.*] νοσων, "raving and delirious in a fever." Doddridge; who observes, that the word expresses the effect of a disease on the mind, in which view *raving* appears a more proper word than *doting*. "he is sick of the wrangling disease." Bishop Wilkins's *Sermons*, p. 73.

[4] *Questions and verbal disputes.*] "The Greek may be resolved into ζητησεις και μαχας περι λογων. Perhaps questions were raised concerning the extent of liberty under the gospel. The apostle treats the subject with warmth, because some had maintained opinions about it which caused the religion of Christ to be evil-spoken of." Newcome.

[5] *Perverse debates.*] "διατριβαι are disputes in the philosophical schools; διαπαρατριβαι are perverse disputes." Macknight. See also Rosenmuller.

[6] *Gain as piety.*] ευσεβειαν. See ch. iii. 16. At the end of this verse the received text adds, "αφιστασο απο των τοιουτων, *from such turn away.*" This clause is omitted in the Alexandrine, Cambridge, and other manuscripts, and in many ancient versions, and is not necessary to the sense. See Griesbach, who nevertheless retains it in the text. Newcome marks it as doubtful.

Ch. VI. Ver. 5.

tianity by the false expectation that they shall thereby be released from their present degraded condition in society. If any person teach a doctrine contrary to this, if the zealot for the law artfully preaches up the immediate emancipation of Christian slaves, and thus departs from that wise and salutary doctrine of Christ, the doctrine of true and rational religion, which, not interfering with the civil states of men, is calculated gradually to ameliorate their condition, by infusing milder principles and gentler habits, both into individuals and communities; if any man, I say, thus departs from the true doctrine and the genuine law of Christ, he is chargeable with a very criminal degree of vanity and self-conceit, in presuming to set up his own erroneous opinions in opposition to the truth of the gospel; he discovers a deplorable ignorance of the true genius and spirit of the Christian religion. If he is in earnest, he must be out of his mind; he raves like a man in the delirium of fever, who is utterly incapable of forming a deliberate judgement; and introduces ferocious disputes about words that have no meaning. The consequences of this haughty and disputatious spirit are very pernicious; it gives rise to envy and strife, to the use of harsh and abusive language concerning those who differ in opinion, and to unjust suspicions of their sincerity, because they will not submit to the decision of these self-constituted instructors. Such a conduct likewise gives occasion to pernicious debates among men of corrupt minds, who are not

desirous of discovering and diffusing truth, but who endeavour by sophistical reasonings to blind the understandings of others, and who have no regard whatever for religion, any further than as it is the means of enriching themselves. Ch. VI. Ver. 5.

3. The apostle represents the folly of an excessive eagerness after unlawful gain, ver. 6—8.

But piety with a sufficiency[1] *is great gain.* 6.

The belief of the Christian religion, and a title to its invaluable blessings, is the greatest treasure that a man can possess; and if, in addition to this, he acquires a decent competence of the blessings of life, he has reason to regard himself as possessing every thing that a wise man can desire.

For we brought nothing into the world, and it is 7.
evident that we can carry nothing out. Having 8.
therefore food and covering[2]*, let us be content with these.*

We come into the world in a naked and destitute condition, and in a short time we must leave it in as naked and destitute a state as we came into it. It is therefore great folly to indulge unreasonable anxiety with regard to the accommodations we shall possess during our short transitory

[1] *Sufficiency.*] αυταρκειας. So Diodati, Macknight; Wakefield, who observes, that what follows justifies this translation. See 2 Cor. ix. 8. *Piety* (ευσεβεια) here, as in the preceding verse, stands for the whole of religion. See ch. iii. 16.

[2] *Covering.*] "σκεπασματα· this word expresses clothes, lodging, and covering of every sort." Macknight, Wakefield.—"Σκ. *sunt tegumenta, domus, tecta, æque ac vestes.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. VI. Ver. 8. residence here, and much more to use any dishonourable means of improving our condition. It is far more becoming to be content and thankful for what little we may possess: and if we are supplied by the good providence of God with decent apparel, with convenient habitations, and with plain and wholesome food, with this provision we ought to be content and thankful.

4. The apostle further represents the pernicious consequences of a covetous temper, especially in those who profess to be teachers of the gospel, ver. 9, 10.

9. *But they who are determined to be rich*[1] *fall into the temptation and snare of many senseless and mischievous desires*[2], *which plunge men into ruin and destruction.*

The men whose sole aim it is to acquire wealth, and who are willing to sacrifice every thing to this mean and unworthy pursuit, may perhaps attain their wish: but in the prosecution of their purpose they will expose themselves to many temptations to violate the rules of justice and integrity, and in the possession of their object they will be tempted to indulge in those licentious gratifications to

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[1] *Determined to be rich.*] "resolved to be rich at all adventures." Benson; who remarks in his note, "That this was peculiarly levelled at the false teachers, the whole strain of the apostle's discourse is a proof." Compare ver. 5, 10, 11.

[2] *Into the temptation,* &c.] For this construction see Wakefield.

which great opulence furnishes so easy access, and which will eventually overwhelm them in disgrace and destruction. Ch. VI. Ver. 9.

For the love of money is the root of all mischief; 10.
which some[3] *having vehemently coveted, have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through*[4] *with many sorrows.*

Where the love of gain is the predominant principle, the ruling passion in the breast, it is impossible to enumerate all the mischiefs which result from it. Where this sordid passion takes possession of the teachers of the Christian religion, it leads them to sacrifice the genuine truths of the gospel to the prejudices of their hearers; and to teach what they know to be false, because they find it profitable. This, though it wears the semblance of wisdom, will be found eventually to have been the greatest folly. For sooner or later they will be roused to a sense of their guilt; and the reproaches of their consciences, like the wounds of a dagger, will fill their hearts with insupportable anguish and dismay.

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[3] *Which some,* &c.] "Observe that ης, attracted by φιλαργυριας, agrees in sense with αργυριε, contained in φιλαργυριας." Newcome.

[4] *Pierced themselves through.*] περιεπειραν. "π. undiquaque infigo et perforo; ex περι undiquaque, et πειρω transfigo." Schleusner. "stabbed themselves from head to foot, so as to be pierced through and through." Macknight; Doddridge, who observes, "that this happily expresses the innumerable outrages done to conscience by those madmen who have taken up this fatal resolution, that they will at all adventures be rich."

SECTION XII.

Ch. VI. *THE APOSTLE solemnly charges Timothy to be faithful and courageous in discharging his office; he advises him to remind the rich of their peculiar duties; he again renews his charge of fidelity, and concludes the epistle with commending him to the divine blessing.* Ch. vi. 11—22.

1. The apostle warns Timothy to avoid the evil practices of the false teachers, and exhorts him to attend to every branch of duty, ver. 11, 12.

Ver. 11. *But do thou, O man of God*[1], *flee these* things, *and pursue righteousness, piety, fidelity, love, patience, meekness.*

I have faithfully represented to you the extreme danger of an eager attachment to riches, especially in a minister of the gospel; and now I solemnly charge you, O Timothy, as one who sustains a sacred character, and who has not only been solemnly set apart to the office of the ministry, but furnished with supernatural qualifications for the discharge of it, to avoid every appearance of a mean and mercenary spirit. Practise universal virtue, live in the fear and love of God, adhere to truth in your declarations, and be faithful to your promises; culti-

[1] *O man of God:*] *i. e.* "minister of Christ. See 2 Tim. iii. 17." Newcome. "*Man of God* signifies an inspired person or prophet. 2 Pet. iii. 21." Benson.

vate universal active benevolence, bear with patience affliction and persecution, and cherish a forbearing and forgiving spirit. Ch. VI. Ver. 11.

Maintain the honourable contest of faith[2], *lay hold on eternal life, to which thou hast been invited, and hast confessed*[3] *a good confession before many witnesses.* 12.

Though I earnestly recommend meekness and forbearance, I am far from desiring you to desert the cause of truth; on the contrary, contend earnestly for the purity of the faith, and do not yield in any point to those who would corrupt the simplicity of the gospel by the introduction either of Jewish rites, or mysterious philosophical speculations. Persist with undaunted resolution in this honourable contest, and thus secure your title to eternal life. This is the glorious prize for which you have been invited to contend; and as you have in many instances made a noble and a public stand in defence of truth, I trust that your future conduct will not disgrace your past transactions, nor sully the reputation you have already acquired.

2. He enforces the charge by reminding the evangelist of the approaching judgement, ver. 13—16.

[2] *Maintain*, &c.] Dr. Benson observes, "This is not an allusion to the life of a soldier engaged in wars and battles, but to the contentions in the Grecian games; which is a common allusion with St. Paul. 1 Cor. ix. 24—27, Phil. iii. 12—14, 2 Tim. iii. 5. See West's *Dissertation on the Olympic Games.*"

[3] *And hast confessed.*] ὡμολογησας. Macknight says, that the aorist has the force of an imperative, and renders it "confess a good confession."

Ch. VI. Ver. 13. *In the presence of God*[1], *who giveth life to all, and of Jesus Christ*[2], *who before Pontius Pilate* 14. *witnessed a good confession, I charge thee that thou keep this commandment unspotted, unblameable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ*[3].

So deeply am I impressed with the importance of the charge which I have now given you, of maintaining a temperate yet firm adherence to Christian truth, that I would urge it upon you by every consideration that can interest your feelings or excite your attention. In the presence of God, of that God from whom all derive their existence, by whose power the virtuous will be raised to immortality,

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[1] *In the presence of God.*] Dr. Benson supposes, that in ch. v. 21 there is an allusion to the splendour and magnificence of the Persian court, and the same allusion is resumed in this text; but, for the reasons assigned in the note upon the former passage, the supposition seems to be needless and unsupported, both there and here.

[2] *And of Jesus Christ.*] There appears to have been a peculiar personal presence of Christ with his church, and especially with the apostles, and with Paul in particular, during the apostolic age, which since that time has been withdrawn, at least in its sensible manifestations; to which presence the apostle here alludes. Indeed the apostle always appears to speak and act as if Jesus were personally present with him. See 2 Cor. xii. 8—10, Matt. xxviii. 20, and the *Improved Version*, and Bishop Pearce on the text. Also Mr. Lindsey's *Sequel to his Apology*, p. 74.

[3] *Until the appearing.*] Grotius observes, that the apostle expresses himself as though he thought it possible that Timothy might live till Christ's second appearance; and refers to his own notes upon 1 Cor. xv. 52, 2 Cor. v. 2, 3, 1 Thess. iv. 15. So Rosenmuller: "*Loquitur Paulus ad Timotheum tanquam qui vivere posset ad tempus, quo Christus ad judicium venturus esset.*"

and who can, and will, infinitely compensate to all his faithful servants every sacrifice which they can make in the cause of truth and duty; and in the presence of Jesus Christ, our glorious chief, from whom both you and I received our commission, who himself exhibited an eminent example of firm and undaunted fidelity, when in the presence of the Roman governor he boldly avowed the important truth, that he was born to reign (John xviii. 37), which he knew would be immediately followed by a sentence of crucifixion, I now most solemnly charge and enjoin, that you preserve the truth of the Christian doctrine without any stain of error in principle, without any reproach of immorality in conduct, as long as you live, and as far as lies in your power, till the day of the second appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, to raise the dead and to judge the world: when fidelity tried and approved shall receive an ample reward. Ch. VI. Ver. 14.

Which in its proper season he will exhibit, who 15.
is *the blessed and the only potentate, the King of*
kings and Lord of lords, who alone hath immor- 16.
tality, inhabiting inaccessible light, whom no man
hath seen, or can see[4], *to whom be everlasting*
honour and dominion[5]. *Amen.*

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[4] *Light inaccessible*, &c.] Dr. Benson very probably conjectures that there is an allusion here to the schechinah or cloud of glory upon the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies, to which no one had access but the high-priest.—"Lucem inaccessam inhabitans: *sensus est, cujus majestatem nemo comprehendere mente potest.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *Everlasting dominion.*] "*qui summo honore est dignus, et*

Ch. VI. Ver. 16. To this awful and magnificent appearance of our divine master we look forward with joyful expectation, though concerning the precise period of its arrival we may be left in ignorance. Nevertheless, we are assured that it will be brought to pass, at the destined and the fittest season, by that omnipotent Being who alone possesses essential power, whose infinite happiness is a proof and pledge of the ultimate felicity of the whole rational creation, whose throne is highly exalted above all earthly potentates, all created authorities and powers, from whom all beings derive their existence, their percipient and active faculties, and all the shadow of dignity and authority which they possess; who is indeed the only proper agent in the universe, governing and disposing all things by his own wise, benevolent, and sovereign will; who alone possesses in his own essence immutable immortal life, and who alone can communicate immortality and happiness to whomsoever he pleases; whose nature and attributes are absolutely incomprehensible, and will ever remain unknown to the most exalted and capacious of created intelligences, to whom belongs universal dominion, and to whom be ascribed everlasting honour. Amen.

3. The apostle desires that Timothy would remind the rich of their important duties, ver. 17—19.

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cujus imperium est æternum. κράτος *sæpe est* imperium. *Vid. Hesychium.*" Rosenmuller.

Them that are rich in this world charge[1] *that they be not elated in mind, that they do not trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God*[2]*, who richly giveth us all things to enjoy.* Ch. VI. Ver. 17.

Though not many in the superior ranks of life can be induced to embrace the humble and despised religion of Jesus, yet as there are some of this description at Ephesus, it is right that they should be informed of the duties which our holy religion enjoins. Charge them therefore not to think too highly of themselves on account of their wealth, not to place their confidence in that which is so little able to afford true satisfaction, and which may vanish from them before they are aware, and when they flatter themselves that they are most secure. But let them learn to put their trust, not in senseless idols, but in that God who lives from everlasting to everlasting, and who is the fountain of life and happiness; who is kind and liberal to all his human offspring, and from whom we all derive the blessings and comforts that we possess.

That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate. 18.

Charge them further to make a good use of their

[1] *Charge,* &c.] Dr. Benson observes, that "Timothy might perhaps be afraid to insist upon such things from those who by their riches were persons of some distinction, and therefore the apostle interposes his authority. "And it has been remarked that this advice to the rich clearly proves that there was no community of goods at Ephesus." See Doddridge.

[2] *The living God.*] "not in Diana, nor any other of the heathen gods made and provided for by mankind." Benson.

Ch. VI. Ver. 18. wealth, to abound in acts of kindness, to employ their riches in honourable and useful undertakings, to impart liberally to those who are in want, to concur cheerfully in every pious and benevolent design, and to contribute generously towards carrying it into execution.

19. *Laying up in store for themselves a good security*[1] *against the time to come, that they may obtain that which is the true life*[2].

Tell them that, by employing their wealth to the purposes of beneficence, and in promoting the interest of truth and virtue, they are laying out their riches to the best account, they are treasuring up for themselves an inexhaustible store of that most valuable of all possessions, peace of mind, pleasing reflections, and joyful hopes; and thus, that they will not only ensure the truest enjoyment of the

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[1] *A good security.*] Gr. θεμελιον, "foundation." Le Clerc proposes χειμηλιον, *a treasure:* but for this there is no authority. Θεμα occurs Tobit iv. 9, "by almsgiving thou treasurest up to thyself a good deposit." "a good provision." Wakefield. —Archbishop Tillotson (*Sermons*, fol. vol. i. serm. 7,) observes, that θεμελιος "is sometimes used for an instrument of contract, whereby two parties do oblige themselves mutually to each other."—"*Omne notat, quod certum est, nec facile perit.*" Schleusner. In this sense the word seems to be used 2 Tim. ii. 19; and this, as Dr. Benson observes in his judicious note upon that text, "affords the most satisfactory interpretation here. For if θεμελιος signifies a bond or article of security for some future glorious possession, then treasuring it up will be easily understood. But 'treasuring up a foundation' sounds oddly, and is not easy to be understood." "*Durius paullo:* q. d. *cumulantes divitias perpetuo duraturas.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *The true life.*] The received text reads αιωνιε, *eternal*, but the best copies read οντως, which is adopted by Griesbach and Newcome.

present transitory state of existence, but will acquire a title to that glorious inheritance which is revealed by Christ, which is incorruptible, undefiled, and will never fade away, and which alone deserves the name of a true, substantial and happy life. Ch. VI. Ver. 19.

4. The apostle renews the solemn charge of fidelity to his trust, and concludes the epistle with recommending the evangelist to the divine blessing, ver. 20, 21.

O Timothy! guard thy *deposit*[3]*: avoiding profane babblings*[4] *and oppositions of science, falsely so called; which some pretending to, have erred concerning the faith. The favour* of God[5] *be with thee. Amen.* 20. 21.

O Timothy! my pupil, my son in the true faith, and my representative in office, I conclude this long epistle with the solemn charge, that you will with the utmost care, resolution and perseverance, preserve pure and uncorrupted that sublime and holy

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[3] Thy *deposit.*] " the doctrine that is committed to thy trust." Newcome. Dr. Benson observes, that " the apostle has kept this point in view through the whole epistle, and now sums it up at parting."

[4] *Profane babblings.*] κενοφωνιας, " f. καινοφωνιας, profane *new-coined* words, as, Vulg. *Vocum novitates.* Chrysostom, Tertullian, *et al. in* Wetstein." Bowyer.

[5] *The favour* of God.] So Newcome supplies the ellipsis. " *Nempe Dei Patris et Christi.*" Rosenmuller.

The Postscript dates the epistle from Laodicea the metropolis of Phrygia Pacatiana; and some copies, from Athens. These postscripts are of no authority, and are wanting in the best manuscripts; but they at least show the early prevalence of an opinion that the Epistle was not written from Macedonia: and consequently an early different reading of ch. i. 3.

Ch. VI. Ver. 21. doctrine which is committed to thy trust, of which trust thou must hereafter give an account. Avoid with the utmost circumspection, on the one hand, those Jewish innovations which would impose the rites of Moses upon the disciples of Christ, and encroach upon the liberties of the Gentile church; and, on the other, guard against those abstruse speculations of heathen philosophy, which, being hostile to the simplicity of the gospel doctrine, would introduce mysterious and unintelligible notions to recommend Christianity to those pretenders to science who cannot be satisfied with a system which common people can comprehend. This is a snare in which some of the teachers of the gospel have been already entangled, and while they have involved themselves in the subtleties of useless science, they have deviated from the simplicity of the Christian faith.

Being thus faithfully warned, keep strictly upon the watch against those corruptions of the Christian doctrine; adhere steadily to the simplicity of evangelical truth; and may you enjoy in their highest purity the blessings of that gospel, which is the free and inestimable gift of God by Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE SECOND EPISTLE

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

T I M O T H Y.

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY is one of those apostolical writings, concerning the genuineness and authenticity of which there has never been any dispute.

It is certain, that it was written from Rome while the apostle was a prisoner there; but a question has arisen, whether this epistle was written during the apostle's first or second imprisonment; and likewise, whether Timothy at that time resided at Ephesus, or at some other place.

It is the current tradition of antiquity, that Paul was imprisoned at Rome twice. The first time was about A.D. 61, when he was sent thither by Festus after his appeal to Cæsar, of which an account is

given in the history of the Acts of the Apostles. At that time Luke was his companion; and the apostle, after he had obtained a hearing before the emperor, was permitted to reside two years in his own house under the guard of a soldier. Here Luke's history closes: but the tradition of antiquity is, that after he had obtained his liberty, he visited the churches which he had planted in Greece and Asia, after which he returned again to Rome, where having converted the emperor's cupbearer, he was by Nero's order seized and put to death. This event is commonly believed to have taken place nearly at the same time when that profligate prince excited a cruel persecution against the Christians under pretence that they had set fire to the city, and in order to screen himself from the charge [1].

The apostle writes to his friend, ch. iv. 8: "I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course." From these strong expressions, which appear to indicate an expectation of speedy dissolution, many have inferred that this is the last epistle which the apostle wrote, and that it must have been indited a very short time before his death. But that this conclusion is unfounded, is evident from other passages in the epistle, which plainly indicate the apostle's expectation of the further prolongation of his life and labours. "Do thy diligence," says he, ver. 21, "to come to me before

[1] See Lardner's *History of the Apostles and Evangelists*, ch. xi. *ad fin.*

winter: The cloak, or portmanteau, which I left at Troas with Carpus, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments, ver. 13. Take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry," ver. 11. These directions clearly prove that the apostle expected to live till Timothy and Mark could come, and that he should make use of the articles which Timothy was desired to bring. Also, that he should employ the two evangelists as his coadjutors in the Christian ministry at Rome, which is evidently inconsistent with the expectation of immediate martyrdom, and likewise with the probable situation of the apostle in his supposed second imprisonment. The apostle therefore seems to have intended nothing more by the expressions above mentioned than that he was now advanced in years, and that his season of active service was almost over. He might also be apprehensive that he should remain a prisoner for life; and that, though he was for the present reprieved, and it might be some time before he was summoned to appear again at the imperial tribunal, the issue of his second appearance would be fatal[2].

Upon the whole, therefore, the opinion concerning the date of this epistle which was held by Dr.

[2] This is the more probable, as it is certain that appearances were judged to have been very unfavourable when he was summoned to make his first defence, 2 Tim. iv. 16. And towards the close of his first imprisonment, when upon the whole he expected to be released, yet he appears to have been not without some apprehensions of a contrary issue. See Phil. i. 20—25, ii. 17, 23, 24.

Lardner and many other learned men appears to me the most probable: viz. that it was written in the spring of A.D. 61, near the commencement of the apostle's first imprisonment[1], and soon after he had obtained an audience of Nero; in consequence of which he was permitted to reside in a house of his own, to which all his friends had liberty of access. In confirmation of this supposition it may be remarked, that it appears from ch. iv. 11, that Luke was with him when he wrote this epistle;

[1] The principal authorities in favour of this date of the epistle are Lightfoot, Baronius, Estius, Hammond, Witsius, Grotius, Rosenmuller, Lardner, and Priestley. On the other side are Whitby, Doddridge, Benson, Macknight, and Paley. The arguments upon which the advocates for a later date of the epistle lay the principal stress are, 1.) The strong language of the apostle, ch. iv. 6—8. 2.) The apostle does not, as in his other epistles, express any expectation of release; but, ch. iv. 18, only that the Lord would deliver him from every evil work, and preserve him to his heavenly kingdom. But if this epistle was written at the beginning of the imprisonment, he might be very doubtful of its issue. 3.) Ch. iv. 20, Erastus abode at Corinth. What need was there to inform Timothy of this, who was with him when he left Corinth? Acts xx., and must have known that Erastus staid behind. 4.) Ibid. Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. Trophimus was with Paul at Miletus, and accompanied him to Jerusalem, Acts xx. Ans. Beza and Grotius for *Miletum* are inclined to read *Melita*; but Lightfoot and Lardner rather infer from Acts xxvii. 2, 7, that the ship in which Paul was, touched at Miletus. But surely in this case Timothy would have met the apostle at Miletus, or at least he must have heard of Trophimus long before Paul wrote. Upon the whole, though the two last objections may not be easily obviated, the evidence appears to preponderate greatly in favour of the epistle having been written during the first imprisonment. In fact, as Lardner observes, we have no evidence of his ever being imprisoned a second time; and least of all, that he would be allowed time to write and to receive an answer to his letter. If the apostle had been arrested during the rage of Nero's persecution, he would have been almost immediately put to death.

and though we are sure that this evangelist accompanied him in his first imprisonment, we have no evidence whatever that he was with him when he returned to Rome. Also, ch. iii. 11, the apostle reminds Timothy of his persecutions at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra, but makes no allusion to his former imprisonment at Rome, which he could hardly have failed to have done, had this epistle been written during his second confinement there. It cannot be doubted that Timothy hastened to Rome immediately upon the receipt of this letter; and this circumstance will account for the mention of his name, together with that of the apostle, in the epistles to the Philippians, the Colossians, and Philemon; these epistles having been written a short time before his release from his first imprisonment. Mark having also accompanied Timothy, and remaining with the apostle, his name occurs in the salutation to Philemon, ver. 24. Demas, who when the apostle wrote to Timothy, ch. iv. 10, had forsaken him probably through fear of persecution, and was gone to Thessalonica, appears afterwards to have recovered his courage, and to have returned to the apostle, who mentions him with honour in the Epistle to Philemon, as his fellow-labourer.

It is highly probable that Timothy was at Ephesus when he received this letter. The apostle sends his salutations to the family of Onesiphorus, who resided at Ephesus, and to Prisca and Aquila, who appear to have fixed their abode in that city. He desires Timothy to bring with him the articles which

he had left at Troas, which, though not directly in his way from Ephesus, was nevertheless the route which the apostle had taken in passing into Greece, and was probably the common route of those who wished to shorten the passage by sea. He warns Timothy against the errors of Hymeneus, and the malignity of Alexander, both of whom he mentions with disapprobation in his first epistle, which was unquestionably sent to Timothy at Ephesus. It is presumed that this evangelist took leave of the apostle at Miletus in his way to Jerusalem, no further mention being made of him in the history, and that he returned with the elders to Ephesus, where he remained till the apostle sent this letter inviting him to Rome.

The main design of the apostle in this epistle is to fortify the mind of the evangelist against those discouraging apprehensions which the sufferings and persecutions of the first teachers of the gospel might naturally excite: to raise him above the sense of shame and fear in the cause of truth, and to animate him to a resolute and faithful discharge of the duties of his office by his own example, by the example of Christ, and by the prospect of a future retribution.

First. The apostle, after a suitable introduction, expresses his great tenderness for the evangelist, and his earnest desire of an interview with him. Ch. i. 1—5.

SECONDLY. He urges Timothy to firmness and fidelity, and exhorts him not to be ashamed of visiting him in his confinement, which was indeed his honour, not his disgrace; he expresses much disapprobation of the conduct of some who had deserted him in his sufferings, and highly applauds the zeal and affection of Onesiphorus, who had visited and succoured him in his confinement, ver. 6—18.

THIRDLY. The apostle earnestly exhorts his friend to be a faithful and assiduous teacher of the gospel, and to make up his mind to incur all dangers, and to endure all hardships and fatigues, with a view to the glorious recompense promised by the gospel, and encourages him by his own example. —Ch. ii. 1—13.

FOURTHLY. The apostle requires Timothy to charge his hearers not to lose time in discussing unprofitable questions, and especially not to give countenance to antichristian errors, which, if they do not exclude from salvation, at least tarnish the character. He urges him to the practice of virtue, to decline trifling discussions, and to communicate instruction in a familiar and impressive manner, ver. 14—26.

FIFTHLY. The apostle warns the evangelist of the corrupt doctrines and practices of the latter days, which will assuredly terminate in the confusion and ruin of their authors and abettors. Ch. iii. 1—9.

SIXTHLY. He solemnly charges Timothy to ad-

here faithfully to the doctrine in which he had been instructed by himself, which was confirmed by the Jewish scriptures, with which the evangelist was familiar, which had been the constant theme of the apostle's discourses, and for the sake of which, as Timothy well knew, he had often endured cruel persecution, ver. 10—17.

SEVENTHLY. The apostle, under a deep impression that the season of life and active usefulness was near a close, solemnly charges the evangelist to be resolute, diligent, and faithful, in preaching the pure uncorrupted doctrine of the gospel. Ch. iv. 1—8.

EIGHTHLY. He urges Timothy to come to him immediately, states his reason for it, complains of the desertion of some of his companions, represents his danger, and expresses his confidence in God. He gives some directions and commissions for the evangelist to execute in his way, mentions some interesting incidents, repeats his injunction to come to Rome, and concludes with salutations and the apostolical benediction, ver. 9—22.

This epistle has been justly regarded as containing within itself, a satisfactory evidence of the truth and divine authority of the Christian religion. The apostle Paul, one of its most zealous and active teachers, at the close of life, persecuted by his enemies, deserted by his friends, in the midst of a long imprisonment, and in the near prospect of a violent death, writing a confidential letter to an intimate friend, a favourite pupil, whom he had trained up

to the ministry, who had been the faithful associate of his labours and his persecutions, and to whom he looked as the chief instrument under Divine Providence of carrying on the great cause in which he was embarked, in which he had laboured, and for which he suffered; in these critical circumstances, far from expressing any suspicion of the justice of his cause, of the truth of his doctrine, and the propriety of his conduct; far from regretting the sacrifices which he had made, the labours that he had undergone, and the sufferings which he had endured, in the promulgation of the Christian doctrine, and in fulfilling the duties of the apostolic office, he every where adopts the language of joy and exultation, and earnestly exhorts his friend and associate to persevere with alacrity in the same honourable course, even though it would probably lead to a catastrophe similar to his own. This unparalleled fortitude, this holy triumph, this joyful exultation, is utterly inconsistent with the supposition of hypocrisy, of imposture, of artifice and intention to deceive. It is the genuine language of the heart; it is the natural expression of a firm conviction of the truth and importance of the doctrine which he taught, and of a consciousness of the divine authority under which he acted. And as self-deception, in the apostle's case, was absolutely impossible, the Christian doctrine which he was commissioned to teach must have been of divine original.

THE SECOND EPISTLE

TO

T I M O T H Y.

SECTION I.

THE APOSTLE, after his usual salutation, expresses his affectionate regard to Timothy, and his earnest desire to see him, and reminds the evangelist of the necessity of firmness and wisdom in discharging the duties of his office. Ch. i. 1—7. Ch. I.

THE APOSTLE'S INTRODUCTION.

1. THE apostle introduces the epistle with his usual title and salutation, ver. 1, 2.

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the appointment of God, in relation to the promise of life[1] Ver. 1.

[1] *Promise of life.*] "He was an apostle for the purpose of announcing this promise to the world." Newcome. See Tit. i. 1—3. The promise of the Mosaic covenant was that of a tem-

Ch. I. Ver. 2. *by Christ Jesus, to Timothy* my *beloved son* [1], *favour, mercy, peace, from God* our *Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord* [2].

This epistle is indited by me, Paul, who am by the authority of God appointed to be an apostle of Jesus Christ; being commissioned and sent forth by Christ my Master, to bear testimony to his resurrection, and to preach his gospel; and especially to proclaim the joyful tidings of a life to come, which is the great and peculiar promise of the Christian dispensation. And it is addressed to Timothy my beloved friend, whom I regard with the affection of a parent, whom I converted to the knowledge and the faith of the gospel, for whose welfare I feel the tenderest concern, and for whom I cannot form a better wish than that he may participate abundantly in the blessings of that glorious doctrine which is the free gift of God, by his holy ser-

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poral life in the land of Canaan; that of the gospel is eternal life in a better state and world. See Benson and Macknight.

[1] My *beloved son.*] This is generally understood of Timothy as being a convert of the apostle. "These two verses," says Dr. Priestley in his Notes on the New Testament, "may be thus paraphrased: 'I, Paul, particularly appointed by God to be an apostle of his son Jesus Christ, the great object of whose gospel is the revelation of a future life, direct this epistle to thee, Timothy, whom I consider as my own son, being converted by me to the faith of Christ. May God grant thee all the blessings of the gospel.'"

[2] *Favour, mercy, peace,* &c.] *i. e.* all the blessings of the gospel which flow from the unmerited, unpurchased mercy of God our Father, and which were dispensed to mankind by Jesus Christ our Lord and Master, whose disciples we are, and who has honoured me with an apostolic mission. This is not a prayer to Christ in person; it is only a wish for those blessings of which he was the medium of communication.

vant and messenger Jesus Christ our honoured Master, and which announces the joyful tidings of peace and pardon, life and immortality. Ch. I. Ver. 2.

2. The apostle expresses his kind remembrance of Timothy, and his earnest desire to see him, ver. 3—5.

I give thanks to God, whom I serve as my *forefathers* did[3], *with a pure conscience, (inasmuch*[4] *as I incessantly make mention of thee in my evening and morning prayers*[5], *being earnestly desirous to see thee, for I recollect thy tears*[6], *that I may* 3. 4.

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[3] *As my forefathers did.*] απο προγονων. "*à l'exemple de.*" L'Enfant, and Beausobre. "*Majorum meorum vestigia secutus.*" Beza. "Majorum exemplo: *Eundem Deum colebat Paulus, quem coluerant majores ejus. Non enim alius Deus est Judæorum, alius Deus Novi Testamenti.*" Rosenmuller. See Newcome. Some explain Rom. ix. 3, by giving απο the same signification which it has here; but I think improperly. See the note there. The apostle had probably been charged by the Judaizers with apostatizing from the worship of his ancestors. He here defends himself from that imputation; and Dr. Benson thinks that the expression *a pure conscience* contains an oblique reflection upon the sinister motives of the judaizing zealots.

[4] *Inasmuch,* &c.] I follow Dr. Benson in the position of the parenthesis, so that the construction of the sentence is, "I give thanks to God—when I call to remembrance thy undissembled faith." According to the more usual interpretation ὡς is made to stand for ὅτι, and the apostle thanks God that he makes mention of him in his prayers: *i. e.* that he has just reason so to do. See Newcome.

[5] *Make mention of thee in my evening and morning prayers.*] In the original, *night and day*; in allusion probably to the continual burnt-offering morning and evening. Compare 1 Thess. v. 17, Dan. viii. 11, 12.

[6] *Recollect thy tears.*] See Acts xx. 37, 38. It is supposed that the evangelist Timothy parted from the apostle at Miletus, and that he returned to Ephesus with the elders of that church;

Ch. I. Ver. 5. *be filled with joy,) when I call to remembrance thine undissembled*[1] *faith, which dwelt*[2] *first in thy grandmother Lois, and in thy mother Eunice*[3], *and* which dwelleth, *I am persuaded, in thee also.*

I am represented by many who wish to injure my character and to disparage my labours, as an apostate from the religion of my ancestors, because I zealously support the liberty of the gentile churches, and because I every where teach that converts from heathenism are under no obligation to submit to the ceremonial law. But this report is a foul aspersion. For being myself a Jew, I continue to observe the rites of the law, and every morning and evening I offer my humble adoration to the one living and true God in the way that my pious forefathers did; and my conscience bears its testimony to the purity of my affections, and to the sincerity of my devotions. In these my daily supplications I constantly remember my beloved friend, imploring the divine

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and that the apostle here alludes to the tears which he shed upon that occasion.

[1] *Thine undissembled faith.*] "Timothy," says Dr. Benson, "not only believed right, but he also acted right; he would not hypocritically conceal or disguise his sentiments, as the Judaizers appear to have done." 1 Tim. ii. 1, 5—7, 19, 20.

[2] *Dwelt first, &c.*] ενωκησε· "*inhabited:* it was not a mere profession, or a transient feeling, but a fixed principle. See Benson.

[3] *Lois—Eunice.*] These pious women were Jewesses, Acts xvi. 1. They had taken very meritorious pains to instruct Timothy in the Jewish scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 15; and probably prepared his mind for receiving the instructions afterwards communicated by the apostle. Dr. Benson remarks "the undesigned coincidence of the epistle with the history as an internal mark of the genuineness of the epistle."

blessing upon him, and expressing my earnest desire that he may be directed and preserved on his way to Rome, where it would afford me the highest gratification to have an interview with him, as I have not forgotten the tears which he shed at our last painful separation at Miletus three years ago. And when I call to mind your faith and piety, of the genuineness and energy of which you have given so many satisfactory proofs, I offer my devout thanksgivings to the God of mercy and truth, who first opened the heart of your excellent mother and her venerable parent to the reception of the great truths of the gospel, and whose blessing, co-operating with their wise and pious instructions, prepared your ingenuous spirit for the admission of the same glorious doctrines, which I am convinced (and I rejoice in the conviction) are now the ruling principles of your conduct and the sure foundation of your hope. Ch. I. Ver. 5.

3. The apostle exhorts Timothy to make the best use of his eminent qualifications for the Christian ministry, ver. 6, 7.

For which reason I remind thee to kindle up[4] *that free gift of God*[5] *which is in thee by the im-* 6.

[4] *To kindle up.*] So Mr. Wakefield. In the public version, *stir up.* "The original is αναζωπυρειν, which signifies to 'blow or stir up a fire when it does not burn sufficiently.'" Benson; who adds, that "possibly there might be some danger lest opposition and persecution should damp Timothy's zeal."

[5] *That free gift of God.*] "The endowments of the spirit." Newcome. Dr. Priestley, in his notes, remarks that "Paul had

Ch. I. Ver. 7. *position of my hands*[1]. *For God hath not given us the spirit of fearfulness, but of power, and of love, and of wisdom*[2].

Knowing the sincerity of your profession, and your earnest desire of usefulness, and being likewise apprized of the difficulties and discouragements which occur in the faithful discharge of the Christian ministry, and which might appall a mind less firm and vigorous than yours, my first and most earnest advice is, that you would devote yourself wholly to the duties of your important office. Stir

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imparted to Timothy those gifts of the spirit which were peculiar to that age; but it is probable that it depended in a great measure upon men themselves whether they were more or less distinguished by them, the Divine Being imparting them most freely to those who were most zealous and active in the Christian cause."

[1] *Imposition of my hands.*] See 1 Tim. iv. 14; where the gift is said to be conferred by the imposition of hands of the presbytery. Perhaps the texts may be best reconciled by adopting Bengel's reading in the first epistle. See the note.

[2] *Of fearfulness,* &c.] This was the spirit of the law, which was a yoke of bondage, Rom.viii. 15; Gal. iv. 3, 7; Heb. xii. 18—24. "of fear in the midst of persecution." Newcome. *Of power:* "in miracles and spiritual gifts." Newcome. *Of love:* "universal benevolence: love to God and man, the characteristic of genuine Christianity. *Of wisdom:* of prudence in displaying miraculous powers, in avoiding or softening persecution, in teaching and admonishing." Newcome. "*Non vult Deus ut animo simus timido, sed forti, amoris prudentiæque pleno. Hæc ideo dicit, quod aliquantum metuebat ne Timotheus, conspectis illis perpetuis malis, quæ Paulum et Christianos premebant, ob id labasceret.* πν. δειλιας *animus* timidus. *Animo timido opponitur* πν. δυν. *animus* fortis *periculis et vexationibus resistens. Ex* amore *proximi fortitudo illa nascitur. Conjuncta esse debet cum hac fortitudine in admonendo, et castigando malos charitas et* σωφρ. moderatio, *ut doctor moderate se gerat in munere suo.*" Rosenmuller.

up and fan the holy fire that is kindled in your breast, and cause it to burn continually with a bright, a cheering, and an enlivening flame. Call forth into vigorous and constant exercise those qualifications for diffusing the knowledge and the power of the gospel, with which you are so eminently endowed, and which were in a very extraordinary manner communicated to you; when, after having been chosen as an associate with me in the ministry of the gospel, the elders of the church united in recommending you to the divine blessing, and the gifts of the spirit were imparted by the imposition of my hands. And remember, my beloved friend, that the spirit which the gospel infuses, is not a spirit of indolence or timidity which shrinks from difficulties and from dangers, but it is a spirit of wisdom, of power, and of goodness, which, arming the chosen defenders of the Christian faith with supernatural powers, inspires them at the same time with undaunted courage, tempered with discretion, and which, filling the heart with love to God and benevolence to man, diligently seeks, wisely discerns, and unremittingly pursues, the most efficacious means of diffusing the knowledge, the power, and the blessings of the gospel.

Ch. I. Ver. 7.

SECTION II.

Ch. I. *THE APOSTLE, expressing his entire confidence in the truth, the importance and the ultimate success of the gospel, encourages Timothy to persevere in the faithful discharge of his ministry, whatever the personal consequences might be.* Ch. i. 8—14.

1. The apostle exhorts him not to be ashamed either of the gospel or its suffering ministers, but to be willing to be a fellow-sufferer with them in the same glorious cause, ver. 8—10.

Ver. 8. *Be not then ashamed of the testimony concerning our Lord*[1], *nor of me a prisoner*[2] *for his sake; but take thy share in the afflictions of the gospel*[3], *according to the power of God*[4].

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[1] *The testimony concerning our Lord.*] So Newcome. Mr. Wakefield renders it, "the testimony *unto* our Lord." The original is ambiguous: it either expresses the doctrine which Christ attested, or the office of giving testimony to it; the gospel itself, or the ministry of the gospel. I have included both in the paraphrase, though the former appears to me preferable.

[2] *Of me a prisoner.*] Dr. Benson supposes that "the Judaizers had objected to Timothy the sufferings of Paul, and intimated how scandalous it was to adhere to one who was so odious to mankind, and treated by them as a malefactor."

[3] *Take thy share,* &c.] See Doddridge. Dr. Priestley observes, that "the apostle holds out no prospects of advantage in this life. On the contrary, he was ready to lay down his own life in the Christian cause. Has this the air of imposture?"

[4] *According to the power of God.*] "according to the support

Having thus imbibed the spirit of the gospel, and being eminently qualified to preach the joyful tidings, be not ashamed of that glorious doctrine which our master taught, for which he suffered, and the divine authority of which he amply attested, nor of the office of the Christian ministry. And think it no disgrace to acknowledge yourself an associate with me in this honourable work, though I am now impoverished, calumniated, and suffering imprisonment for the sake of Christ, and for the zeal with which I have defended the liberty of the Gentile church. Zealots may indeed represent me as a wretch deserted by God and man. Listen not to their malicious calumnies; but rather be willing to take your full share of disgrace and suffering in the cause of Christian truth and liberty; relying with confidence upon divine support. And shrink not from persecution in the promulgation of that gospel which God has supported and will continue to support by his great power in defiance of all opposition. Ch. I. Ver. 8.

Who hath saved us, and invited us[5] *with a holy* 9.

that God affords." Newcome. "that gospel whose truth has been confirmed and sealed by the power of God." Harwood. The elliptical style of the apostle makes his meaning ambiguous. Both senses are good. The later seems to me most agreeable to the apostle's usual style. Mr. Wakefield says he is quite at a loss which to prefer.

[5] *Who hath saved us, and invited us.*] "who hath called us to salvation." Wakefield. "who hath placed us Gentiles, as well as Jews, in a state of salvation." Newcome. See Benson. The salvation of which the apostle speaks is, deliverance from bondage, both from the yoke of the law, and from the bondage of idolatry and vice.

Ch. I. Ver. 9. *invitation*[1], *not in consideration of our works, but because of his own purpose, and of that favour which was given us*[2] *in Christ Jesus before the ancient dispensations*[3].

The God who has attested the gospel of his son by the gifts of his spirit, and who supports his faithful messengers under their severest trials, has graciously invited all men, whether Jews or Gentiles, to participate in the invaluable blessings of the gospel: and he requires of those who are disposed to accept of his invitation, to separate themselves from the unbelieving world by a public profession of faith in the gospel. This gracious invitation is sent to us, not because we have merited any favour from him by the perfection of our obedience either to the moral or the ceremonial law, but because he had resolved, purely from the impulse of his own unlimited benevolence, before the Mosaic law was

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[1] *A holy invitation:*] *i. e.* an invitation to separate themselves from the unbelieving world, as worshipers of the true God.

[2] *Was given us:*] *i. e.* "which he determined to give us. See John v. 22, xvii. 24; 1 John v. 11; Eph. i. 4, 5; Tit. i. 2." Benson. "We see here," says Dr. Priestley, "how familiar this language is with the sacred writers, things being said to be actually done by God, when they could only be intended to be done. How natural, then, is it to interpret what our Saviour says concerning the glory which he had with God before the world was, of the glory which was designed for him before the beginning of the world, which does not imply his pre-existence.

[3] *Ancient dispensations.*] So Newcome. Gr. *secular times.* The Primate refers to Rom. viii. 28, 29; and explains the words of that "undeserved favour which God determined to bestow on us, *i. e.* all mankind, through Christ Jesus, before the secular ages, *i. e.* all former dispensations."

instituted, and even before time began, to communicate these blessings to mankind by the mission of Jesus Christ. This gracious purpose was long concealed in his own breast, and the saints and prophets of former ages were wholly ignorant of it. Ch. I. Ver. 9.

But which hath now been made manifest by the appearance[5] *of our Saviour*[5] *Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death*[6], *and spread abroad the light*[7] *of an incorruptible life*[8] *by the gospel.* 10.

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[4] *Appearance.*] επιφανειας· the word properly signifies a "public splendid appearance of a luminous object;" it is applied by ancient writers to the appearance of the gods. It here expresses the public ministry of Christ, which was made illustrious by his miracles; and is used in other places by the apostle to express the "glory of Christ's second coming." 1 Tim. vi. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 1, 8; Tit. ii. 13; 2 Thess. ii. 8. See Schleusner.

[5] *Saviour.*] See ver. 9. Jesus Christ was the deliverer from bondage.

[6] *Abolished death.*] Καταργεω, *proprie et generatim, otiosum, inutilem, vel inefficacem reddo, quocunque modo hoc fiat, ex* κατα *et* αργεω *cesso.* Luc. xiii. 7; Rom. iii. 3; Gal. iii. 17." Schleusner. "who hath indeed made death ineffectual." Macknight; who in his note remarks, that "Christ hath not abolished temporal death to any one, but he has deprived death of its power to continue mankind in the state of death. See Heb. ii. 14, 1 Cor. xv. 26."

[7] *Spread abroad the light.*] φωτισαντος. So Mr. Wakefield. "not brought to light, as if reason could not discover a future state: the word signifies *to throw light upon, to illustrate.* 'Μαλλον ην Σολων Ομηρον εφωτισεν η Πεισιστρατος· *Solon illustrated Homer better than Pisistratus.*' Diog. Laert. p. 36." Harwood. See Schleusner. "εις φως αγειν, *Suidas. Illuminando patefacere, docere.*" H. Stephens. See Newcome, and Wetstein on 1 Cor. iv. 5. Dr. Whitby produces many pertinent passages to show the very obscure notions which the heathen philosophers and moralists entertained of a future life; but of a resurrection of the dead they had no conception at all. The Jews entertained some imperfect expectations of it. But the doctrine of Christ has placed it in the clearest light. Dr.

Ch. I. Ver. 10.

This merciful design is now made manifest to the whole world by the public mission of Jesus Christ, the appointed deliverer from the burdensome yoke of ceremonial institutions, and from the more grievous bondage of sin and death. This glorious Saviour has, as I may say, already put an end to the dominion, and drawn the sting, of death, by the assurance which he hath given that all the posterity of Adam shall be raised to life, and not a single trophy shall remain of all the triumphs of this mighty and universal conqueror. The gospel of Christ diffuses a cheering radiance over the darkness of the grave, and asserts in the clearest and most unambiguous language that delightful truth, which was before only the object of dim conjecture and anxious surmise, the resurrection of mankind to a new and glorious state of existence, which shall never more be subject to dissolution or decay.

2. The apostle glories in his office as a preacher of the gospel, and in his sufferings for it, and expresses his firm confidence that the Christian doctrine will prevail to the end of time, ver. 11, 12.

Priestley well observes, that "notwithstanding all the corruptions of Christianity, this one great doctrine was never, in fact, denied by any one who ever bore the Christian name. Agreeing in this one great truth, we agree in every thing that is of primary use, and that has a practical influence in life."

[8] *An incorruptible life.*] Gr. *life and incorruption.* Dr. Benson justly remarks, that "these expressions plainly show that the apostle is not speaking of the immortality of the soul, but of the resurrection of the dead and the consequent state of incorruption and immortality. See 1 Cor. xv. 53."

Of which I have been appointed a herald, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. Ch. 1. Ver. 11.

In relation to this most interesting doctrine, I have been appointed by a special commission from our great instructor Jesus Christ to the honourable office of proclaiming it to the world. I have even been invested with the dignities and privileges of the apostolic character; and what is still more astonishing, and continually excites my grateful admiration, I who was once a bigoted Pharisee and a blaspheming persecutor, have been specially authorized to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, and to assert their freedom from the ceremonial law.

For which cause also I am suffering these bonds[1]: 12.
nevertheless I am not ashamed[2], *for I know whom I have believed*[3], *and I am persuaded that he is able to keep what he hath committed to me*[4] *until that day.*

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[1] *These* bonds.] So Wakefield. Or, *these* things; alluding to his poverty, desertion, and danger, as well as to his imprisonment.

[2] *I am not ashamed.*] He thought it no disgrace to suffer in the cause of truth. "I have no misgivings." Wakefield. Rom. ix. 33.

[3] *I know,* &c.] "By appearing to Paul on the way to Damascus, and by bestowing on him spiritual gifts, Jesus convinced him that he was risen from the dead, and was indeed the Christ, and no impostor." Macknight.

[4] *He is able to keep,* &c.] τὴν παραθήκην μου, *my deposit.* The expression is ambiguous: it signifies either "what I have committed to him," viz. my future hopes and happiness. Newcome. See also Whitby: or, "what he hath committed to me," viz. the gospel-doctrine. The latter is most probable. The word occurs only in two other places, 2 Tim. i. 14, and 1 Tim. vi. 20; in both which it undoubtedly signifies the *gospel,* and therefore probably here. Also, this sense best suits the con-

Ch. I. Ver. 12. And indeed, as you well know, the imprisonment which I now suffer, and the imminent dangers to which I am exposed, are entirely owing to the fidelity, zeal, and courage, which I manifested in executing my commission. Nevertheless, I do not repent of what I have done, nor am I ashamed of the doctrine which I have taught: nor do I experience any secret misgivings with regard to the issue of this divine cause, or of the ultimate state of those who are embarked in its defence. Be assured, Timothy, I have not taken up this profession upon slight grounds. I know the character of that

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nexion. The apostle, though a great sufferer, is not ashamed. Why? Because he is confident that the gospel which he teaches, and for which he suffers, will be preserved by its divine Author to the end of time, whatever becomes of the ministers and teachers of it. "παραθηκη, propriè, *depositum*. Metaphoricè, *omne quod alicujus curæ est demandatum*, 2 Tim. i. 12. *Deum posse potenter tueri et conservare hanc doctrinam, fidei meæ commissam.*" Schleusner. "*Eam posse doctrinam mihi traditam conservare ad finem usque mundi.*" Rosenmuller. "I am persuaded he is able to preserve in the world till his future coming that sacred deposit with which he has intrusted me." Harwood. Macknight adopts the same interpretation. But Doddridge, Whitby, Wakefield, Worsley, Newcome, and Priestley, adhere to the public version. Benson illustrates both interpretations, but in his paraphrase adopts the latter. Wakefield, in his manuscript notes in the margin of Wetstein, now in possession of my learned friend Arnold Wainewright, Esq., gives the preference to the sense of "a deposit committed to the apostle;" which differs from that given in his translation, "what I have committed to him," which, however, is favoured by 1 Pet. iv. 19, to which he refers.

Until that day: "*nempe diem judicii, dicit enim apostolus Deus conservare potest et conservabit religionem, etsi ego sim in vinculis. Si ego non possum docere, alii docebunt, nec unquam deerunt doctores, usque ad illum diem Jesu Christi.*" Rosenmuller.

Being who is the great object of my faith and hope. Ch. I. Ver. 12
I know how well he is able, and how immutably he is resolved, to support his own cause, and to carry on his own benevolent designs. I am well assured, and I triumph in the thought, that when my season of service is over, the inestimable treasure which is now committed to my trust shall not be lost, but shall be transferred to other good and faithful hands in regular succession, and safely kept to the great day of consummation, when the glorious plan shall be complete in all its parts, and the gracious purposes of infinite wisdom and mercy shall be fully accomplished.

3. The apostle earnestly presses Timothy to adhere stedfastly to the doctrine which he had taught him, ver. 13, 14.

Hold fast that model of salutary words[1] *which thou hast heard from me, with faith and love in* 13.

[1] *Model of salutary words.*] "ὑποτυπωσις, proprie, *delineatio, brevis ac rudis designatio et adumbratio operis. Exemplar, in animo infixum*; *quod* ideam, *Platonici vocant.* 2 Tim. i. 13, *formam doctrinæ veræ ac salutaris, a me tibi traditæ, in animo tuo expressam habe.*" Schleusner. "Inviolably adhere to that model of salutary instructions." Harwood. Dr. Benson understands the sound words which the apostle here recommends to signify the words of the apostle himself as distinguished from the words of any uninspired and fallible men; and supposes that judaizing Christians and false apostles are obliquely reproved for coining hard words and mysterious phrases. See ch. ii. 2, 14, iii. 7, 13, 14, and iv. 3. "Sound words," says he, "signify the pure gospel doctrine delivered in the plain simple manner of the apostles." It may, however, be doubted whether the apostle meant any thing more than the salutary doctrine of the gospel.

Ch. I. Ver. 14. *Christ Jesus. Keep, through the holy spirit which resideth in us, that excellent deposit*[1].

I instructed you in the true doctrine of Christ in plain and simple language. Retain firm hold of this invaluable doctrine, and in your discourses to others adopt the same plainness and simplicity of speech. Do not, to avoid offence, or to attract admiration, veil the salutary truths of our holy religion in obscure or pompous or mystical phraseology. And let Christian faith be combined with Christian love. Be kind to all, and exercise candour to those who differ from you, even to your bitterest opponents. But never sacrifice the cause of truth under pretence of moderation. Guard with the most jealous vigilance the grand and sacred deposit which has been placed in your hands as well as in mine: employ the gifts and powers with which you as well as myself are endowed, in supporting the Christian faith: and fail not to transmit the doctrine of Christ to those who are to come after you in the same state of purity, simplicity and perfection, in which you have received it from me.

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[1] *Deposit.*] παραθηκην· this is the reading of the best manuscripts. See Griesbach. The common reading is παραχαταθηκην, the sense the same: viz. "the pure gospel." See ver. 12, where the same word is used.

SECTION III.

The apostle, lamenting the desertion of his Asiatic associates, and applauding the courage and kindness of Onesiphorus, urges Timothy to make a judicious selection of persons who should succeed to the office of Christian instructors, and to continue firm and faithful in his adherence to Christian principles, and to the duties of his office. Ch. i. 15.—ii. 7. Ch. I.

1. The apostle expresses his regret at the apostasy of some of the Asiatic Christians; and mentions, in terms of high approbation and gratitude, the fidelity, zeal, and friendship, of Onesiphorus, ver. 15—18.

Thou knowest this[2], *that all those who are in* Ver. 15.

[2] *Thou knowest this,* &c.] The Greek writers in general understand the apostle as speaking, not of the Asiatic churches in general, but of the Asiatic Christians who were with him at Rome. "Οι εν τῃ Ασια· τουτ' εστιν οι εκ της Ασιας." Œcumenius *in loc.* Such is also the judgement of Estius, Mosheim, Beausobre, Lardner, Doddridge, and Priestley. See Lardner's *Hist. of Apostles,* ch. xii. sect. 10. Some intelligence of the apostle's situation at Rome, and of the cowardly conduct of these Asiatics, might have reached Timothy before the arrival of this epistle. He might, being at Ephesus, have heard of their return home. Benson, Newcome, and others, understand the expression of a general apostasy of the Christians in Asia to the tenets of the Judaizers, of which the apostle had been informed, and which he mentions in order to excite the zeal of the evangelist. But an apostasy so general is not probable.

Ch. I. Ver. 15. *Asia have deserted me, of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.*

Some disciples from Asia accompanied me to Rome, or found me there. They at first professed great regard for me; but, when they saw the danger to which I was exposed, and the great animosity of the Jews, they were intimidated, and went over to the party of my opponents, who are zealous for the observation of the law, esteeming it no doubt most safe and reputable, and, with others of my associates, they have left me, and have returned to their homes. Of this you have probably been already informed. In the number of these apostates it grieves me to insert the names of Phygellus and Hermogenes, two eminent persons, of whose faith and fortitude I once entertained better hopes, and whose unexpected and unkind desertion of me in my present circumstances gives me the deepest concern.

16. *May the Lord show mercy to the family of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me*[1], *and was*
17. *not ashamed of this my chain*[2]. *But when he was at Rome, he sought for me very diligently, and*
18. *found* me[3]. *The Lord grant him that he may find*

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[1] *Refreshed me.*] ανεψυξε. "*cooled* and refreshed me, by visiting me in my confinement and supplying my wants when I had like to have been scorched to death, by the heat and violence of persecution." Benson.

[2] *Of this my chain.*] την αλυσιν μου. "this chain of mine." Wakefield.

[3] *He sought for me very diligently.*] This is no proof, as Dr. Lardner justly observes, that the apostle was in very close confinement. For how should a stranger, as Onesiphorus was, find out any man in a great city without inquiry? And when

mercy from the Lord[4] *in that day. And his many services in Ephesus*[5] *thou knowest very well.* Ch. I. Ver. 18.

May the blessing of God rest upon the head of Onesiphorus and of all his family. His conduct towards me has formed an honourable contrast to that of his countrymen, to whom I have just alluded. His conversation, his tender sympathy, his generous liberality, have often relieved, encouraged, and consoled me in the season of distress and danger. His kindness to me has been like a refreshing breeze amidst the heats of summer. Though I was a despised and deserted prisoner, bound in chains, yes, in that very chain which galls my limbs while I am writing this epistle, and though Onesiphorus was a man of note and opulence, he thought it no disgrace to avow his affection for me and for the cause in which I suffer. But when he came to Rome, with much trouble and some hazard, he inquired after me with unwearied diligence till he found me; and he then administered to me the relief which his generous spirit prompted him to impart. I cannot express the sense I feel of my obligation to this kind, generous, and disinterested

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he had found out his residence, he does not appear to have met with any difficulty in repeating his visits to the apostle. This was also the opinion of Witsius. See Lardner *ubi sup.*

[4] *The Lord grant,* &c.] "an usual Hebraism, in which the noun is repeated for the pronoun. See Gen. i. 26, 27, xix. 24; 1 Kings viii. 11; 2 Chron. vii. 2; 1 Cor. i. 7, 8; 1 Thess. i. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 5." Whitby, Benson, Newcome.

[5] *His many services in Ephesus,* &c.] ὁσα διηκονησε. See Wakefield. The Syriac and Vulgate versions read μοι, which appear to have been followed by our translators.

Ch. I. Ver. 18. friend, much less can I make him any adequate return. May God reward him abundantly for all his kindness in that great day to which our glorious Master has directed our views and hopes, when even a cup of cold water given to a suffering disciple shall not be forgotten, and when virtue shall obtain its promised recompense. Nor is it in Rome only that I have received benefits from him. So long ago as when I resided at Ephesus you remember how respectfully, how hospitably, he entertained us; with what tender affection, and upon how many important and trying occasions, he generously offered his services to us; and how much we stand indebted to his friendship and his zeal. Such worth and disinterestedness of character cannot be too highly prized, and ought never to be forgotten.

2. The apostle further advises Timothy to be firm to his principles, and to be discreet in the choice of those who were to be the instructors of others, ch. ii. 1—2.

Ch. II. Ver. 1. *Thou, therefore, my son*[1], *strengthen thyself in the grace*[2] *which is by Christ Jesus.*

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[1] *Thou, therefore, my son.*] "There is something," says Dr. Priestley, "exceedingly affecting and edifying in the manner in which this old servant of Christ writes to one much younger than himself in the same service."

[2] *The grace.*] εν χαριτι. See ch. i. 6, 7, 8. "'The grace that is in Christ Jesus,' means 'the blessings which God bestows upon men by him.'" Priestley. "The gracious gospel." Wakefield. "Exert yourself with vigour in propagating the Christian dispensation." Harwood. "*Fortis esto in admini-*

As so many, from timidity or other motives, are deserting the cause of truth, it is peculiarly incumbent upon us who remain faithful to redouble our activity and zeal. Permit me, then, my dear Timothy, whom I love with the affection of a parent, and to whose conversion I have been so happily instrumental, to press this duty home upon you. In the very important station which you so honourably and usefully occupy at Ephesus, it is of the utmost consequence that your faith should be firmly established in the doctrine of the gospel, and that your heart should be comforted and encouraged by those glorious discoveries which God of his infinite mercy has vouchsafed to reveal to mankind by his holy servant and messenger Jesus Christ. Ch. II. Ver. 1.

And what thou hast heard from me before many witnesses[3], *the same do thou intrust*[4] *to faithful men, who will be qualified to teach others also.* 2.

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strando munere a Christo tibi concredito. Χαρις, *ut* Rom. xii. 3, *videtur h. l. esse munus apostolicum.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Before many witnesses.*] "δια πολλων μαρτυρων. So δια may be understood 2 Cor. viii. 18, and perhaps Gal. iii. 19." Benson; who supposes that the apostle glances at the private and clandestine manner in which the Judaizers taught their doctrines. They crept into houses, and were afraid of being discovered. Newcome explains the phrase, "in the course of my public preaching." Harwood renders it, "those truths which I have imparted to you, and which have been attested by such a variety of witnesses." So Macknight. "δια, coram. *Hanc της δια significationem multis probat Krebsius ad* Act. vii. 53." Rosenmuller.

[4] *Intrust.*] παραθε, alluding to παραθηκην, *a deposit,* ch. i. 12, 13. Dr. Benson observes, that "it is plain the apostle expected that Christianity would continue in the world after their decease, and that they appointed a succession of men to teach it."

Ch. II. Ver. 2. I have taught you the plain simple doctrine of Christ, not, as my calumnious opponents teach theirs, in a mean and clandestine manner, as if I were afraid or ashamed of letting my principles be known. No: what I have taught I have taught publicly, conscious of the authority with which I was invested, of the truth and importance of my doctrine, and of the purity and simplicity of my motives. This heavenly deposit committed to my trust, and by me consigned to your charge, do you, O Timothy, with the same fidelity deliver over to others, who, by their firmness and integrity, will preserve it pure and uncorrupted; and who, by the clearness of their conceptions and their ready utterance, shall be qualified to act the part of wise, faithful, and successful instructors to the succeeding generation, when apostles and evangelists are silent in the dust.

3. The apostle earnestly exhorts his friend to the exercise of persevering fortitude, diligence, and self-denial, as the only ground upon which he can hope for acceptance and success, ver. 3—7.

3. *Bear thy part, therefore, in suffering*[1], *as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*

You have enlisted yourself under the banner of Jesus Christ, and you well knew that you then en-

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[1] *Bear thy part in suffering.*] συγκακοπαθησον is the reading of the Alexandrine, Ephrem, Clermont, and other ancient copies, and of the Syriac and Coptic versions. It is approved by Griesbach.

gaged yourself in a service of toil and danger. Do not then shrink from the difficulties with which you may be called to encounter. Be content to suffer as others do in the same honourable cause, and maintain your allegiance to the end of life. Ch. II. Ver. 3.

No one[2] *who entereth into military service embarrasseth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath enlisted* him. 4.

If you were to enter into the Roman army, you could not expect to obtain the approbation of your commander, and the reward due to faithful and approved service, by remaining at home and occupying yourself in the concerns of civil life, instead of devoting yourself to the duties of a military state: nor can you approve yourself the faithful soldier of Christ unless you make a serious business of your profession, and devote yourself entirely to the duties of it. If secular interest, or ease, or security, or any personal gratification, be the primary object of pursuit, you are disqualified from serving Christ in the important post which he has assigned you.

Also, if any man contend in the games, *he win-* 5.

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[2] *No one,* &c.] Or perhaps, 'every one who entereth upon the military profession avoideth embarrassing himself with the concerns of this life, lest he should displease his commanding officer.' See Wakefield, and Rosenmuller. Dr. Benson observes, from Grotius, that "the Roman soldiers were not suffered to be tutors to any persons, curators of another man's estate, proctors for other men's causes, or to undertake husbandry or merchandise." "As soldiers, we ought to be both active and fearless." Dr. Priestley.

Ch. II. Ver. 5. *neth not the crown, unless he contend according to the rules*[1].

The most honourable distinction among the Greeks is, to win the chaplet at their celebrated games. But you well know that no one, let his rank, his fortune, or his interest be what it may, can ever attain this grand object of public ambition, without having first submitted to all that self-denial, and to all those laborious and hazardous exercises, which are required by the rules of the games as previous qualifications, nor without the most eager and unremitted exertion while the contest continues. If the conditions are not observed, the prize is lost. Nor will that unfading crown, that far more glorious and enduring prize which awaits the conqueror in the Christian race, be ever conferred upon him who loiters in his career, or who, from indolence or timidity, or any other unworthy consideration, neglects to comply with the terms required by the great Master of the course.

6. *The husbandman must labour before he be partaker of the fruits*[2].

The man who will not plough, nor sow, shall never reap. The plenteous harvest is the precious

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[1] *According to the rules:*] *i. e.* "the rules prescribed to such as mean to contend in the Grecian games. He will not obtain the crown unless he use the proper exercise, diet, &c." Newcome. The crown was of parsley, laurel, or bay. See Raphelius.

[2] *The husbandman,* &c.] So Wakefield. "*Ordo naturalis verborum videtur talis esse.* τον γεωργον πρωτον κοπιωντα, *i. e.* κεκοπιακοτα δει κ. τ. λ. *agricolam de fructibus percipere æquum est, at ita demum, si prius laboraverit.*" Rosenmuller.

reward of much previous and persevering toil and industry, nor can the harvest of immortal bliss be obtained upon any other terms. The reward, both in quantity and in value, shall be proportioned to the previous labour; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Ch. II. Ver. 6.

Consider what I say, and the Lord will give thee[3] *understanding in all things.* 7.

Reflect, my dear friend, upon the hints which I have suggested; apply them to your own case; act continually upon such principles and with such views. If you are sincerely solicitous to obey the call of duty and to live up to the spirit of your profession, you shall not want for direction and support. The God whom you serve, and whose blessing you devoutly implore, will be your counsellor and your strength. To his favour, guidance, and protection, I affectionately commend you.

SECTION IV.

For the encouragement of the evangelist, the apostle sets before him the example of Jesus, and his own; and from various considerations he enforces firmness, faithfulness, and prudence. Ch. ii. 8—15.

1. The apostle reminds Timothy of the mission,

[3] *The Lord will give thee.*] The most approved copies read δωσει for δψη, which better connects with the illative particle γαρ. *for* the Lord will give, &c. See Benson and Griesbach.

Ch. II. the descent, the character, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, ver. 8.

Ver. 8. *Remember Jesus Christ*[1], *of the race of David,* who was *raised from the dead, according to the gospel*[2] which I preach.

To animate you to duty, often think on the character, the conduct, and reward of our great Master. Be not misled by the speculations of a vain philosophy. Whatever may be pretended by men who are ashamed to avow the truth, the man Jesus, who descended from the royal house of David, is the true Christ. He is not a man in appearance only, nor a human body inhabited and possessed by a spirit of a superior order. The gospel which I teach declares him to be a real man, born and descended like other men, and in no way distinguished from his brethren, except by his high commission as a prophet of God. His death was not imaginary, but real; and so likewise was his resurrection.

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[1] *Remember Jesus Christ.*] Dr. Priestley observes, that "the apostle's design here is to guard Timothy and others against the tenets of the Gnostic teachers. They said it was Jesus and not Christ that was descended from David. In allusion to this opinion, the apostle here says, that Jesus Christ, meaning his whole person, was of the seed of David, his proper descendant, a man, like Jews or other men; and that he had a proper resurrection in the flesh, as a pattern of our resurrection, which the Gnostics explained away. This was the pure gospel which Paul preached, and for which he was then suffering."

[2] *The gospel* which I preach.] So Newcome. Gr. *my gospel.* Some of the ancients suppose that Luke's gospel is here referred to. Euseb. *Ecc. Hist.* l. iii. c. 4. But the apostle uses the same phrase Rom. ii. 16, xvi. 25, before that gospel was written. See Benson. Indeed it is not probable that these histories had obtained the title of Gospels at so early a period.

Regard these important events as undoubted facts, the reality of which is not for a moment to be called in question, and a firm belief in which is to be the governing principle of your conduct as a Christian and an evangelist. Ch. II. Ver. 8.

2. He reminds the evangelist that this was the doctrine for the propagation of which he was himself at that very time a prisoner and sufferer, ver. 9, 10.

For which[3] *I am suffering affliction, even unto bonds, as an evil-doer; but the word of God is not bound*[4]. 9.

These are the interesting truths in the publication of which I am incessantly employed, and on account of which I am even now suffering many hardships and afflictions; so that, although it has been the constant employment of my life ever since my conversion to the Christian faith, to promote the moral improvement of my fellow-creatures, I am here in confinement like a common malefactor, as if I had been guilty of crimes which merited exclusion from human society. Well,—under all my sufferings I have one consolation still: a consolation which never fails. Prisoner as I am, the glo-

[3] *For which.*] ἐν ᾧ. See Matt. vi. 7, Heb. xi. 2, Whitby, Wakefield, Newcome.

[4] *The word of God,* &c.] A lively turn of expression, which strongly illustrates the generous bent of the apostle's mind. He cares little about himself, if the gospel has its free and glorious course. See Macknight. "*ea semper propagabitur, etsi ego sum in vinculis.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. II. Ver. 9. rious gospel is free and unconfined. I cannot indeed go, as I once did, from place to place, to proclaim the joyful tidings. But that sacred cause, the cause of truth and righteousness, that cause of which God is the patron and protector, cannot fail to make its way, and, in the end, to triumph over all opposition.

10. *Therefore* [1], *I endure all things for the sake of the chosen* [2] people, *that they also may obtain the salvation* [3] *which is through Christ Jesus with everlasting glory.*

I suffer grievous wrongs; I am deprived of many comforts; I am bereaved of that greatest of blessings, personal liberty; and I feel these injuries to their utmost extent. Yet, knowing the important purposes which are answered by the sufferings of the advocates for truth, I do not repine. It was my zeal for the liberties of the Gentile church, whom God hath chosen to visit with his mercy, which incurred the resentment of my countrymen, and

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[1] *Therefore.*] δια τουτο. *q. d.* Why do I endure and voluntarily submit to these sufferings? Ans. For this reason: that the elect may be saved and brought to everlasting glory.—A writer in Bowyer (Battier) connects δια τουτο with the preceding verse: *q. d.* "but the word of God is not THEREFORE bound."

[2] *Chosen* people:] *i. e.* Gentiles. See Newcome. Benson also supposes the Gentiles to be here particularly alluded to. But as the apostle in the context alludes also to the Gnostics, he may possibly, by the elect, mean Christians in general.

[3] *The salvation,* &c.] The apostle distinguishes between *salvation through Christ,* and *everlasting glory*: the *former* is present deliverance from ignorance, idolatry, and vice; the *latter* is the final recompense of virtue in a future life. See Eph. ii. 5, 8.

which was the occasion of this tedious imprisonment. And there is no suffering to which I would not willingly submit, if it might be the means of converting idolatrous heathen to the faith of Christ, and of inducing them to accept the privileges of the gospel so freely tendered to them, and by a wise improvement of the means of virtue, to obtain an interest in that everlasting felicity which is the great promise of the gospel to every practical believer. Ch. II. Ver. 10.

3. The apostle excites his friend to vigorous and persevering exertion, by reminding him that to such exertions only are the promises annexed, ver. 11—13.

This is *an undoubted truth*[4]: *If we have died with* him, *we shall also live with* him; *if we suffer, we shall also reign with* him; *if we renounce* him, *he also will renounce us*; *if we are faithless*[5], 11. 12. 13.

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[4] This, &c.] What? Dr. Newcome replies, "The assertion implied in ver. 10, that God admits the Gentiles into the gospel covenant." It is generally understood as referring to the maxims which follow: and γαρ, with which they are introduced, is understood as an expletive, or rather an inchoative particle after ει. See Benson, and Wakefield. Perhaps it is to be understood elliptically: *q. d.* Be ready to bear all things; for if we have died, *i. e.* have been ready to offer up our lives with him and for him, &c. Dr. Priestley observes, "This seems to have been a saying current among Christians, derived, mediately or immediately, from our Saviour himself. All Christians have one interest with Christ their head. They contend, they suffer, and they triumph together."

[5] *If we are faithless.*] "A man may be unfaithful," says Dr. Benson, "by denying the Christian religion, or rejecting it; by corrupting it, or mingling another doctrine with it; or by living unworthy of it. If we are unfaithful, yet Christ is

Ch. II. Ver. 13. *he will continue faithful: he cannot renounce himself*[1].

The profession, and especially the preaching of the pure uncorrupted doctrine of Christ, exposes us to many temporary inconveniences and sufferings; but it does not leave us without an adequate recompense. It is indeed, my friend, a most certain, a most solemn, and a most glorious truth, that whatever sacrifices we may be called to make in the cause of truth and virtue, nay, if we even suffer death itself for the sake of Christ and his gospel, we shall be acting a safe, a wise, and an honourable part. He died for us, and rose again; if we die with him and for him, we, like him, shall rise to a glorious and immortal life. If we suffer persecution for his sake, we shall hereafter share with him in his throne, and participate in his everlasting triumph. To these animating considerations there is also an alarming counterpart, which may justly awaken our utmost solicitude. If we who make a profession of Christianity, and who are placed in eminent stations in the church, who know the truth and the infinite importance of the doctrine we are commissioned to teach, if we, I say, from indolence or timidity, or from any other unworthy motive,

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faithful, and must disown us." He adds, "that the unfaithfulness here spoken of seems to be, denying the Christian religion in time of persecution."

[1] *Renounce himself.*] "He will not deny what he has engaged to perform." Dr. Priestley. "*Negare potest nos, sed non potest negare seipsum; negare non potest se esse Christum, et vera esse quæ ipse docuit.*" Rosenmuller.

should be induced to desert our post, and abandon our profession, our case is wretched beyond expression. He has himself declared that he will another day disown those who now disown and forsake him; and in vain may we flatter ourselves that we shall escape his just animadversion. We may violate our engagements, but he will never swerve from his declarations, either of reward or punishment. He will never contradict himself. And his veracity, his wisdom, and even his benevolence, are pledged to the performance of his threatenings, equally with the accomplishment of his promises. Ch. II. Ver. 13.

4. The apostle exhorts Timothy to insist upon the great truths of the Christian religion, to warn his hearers against unedifying speculations, and to approve himself a wise and faithful minister of the gospel, ver. 14, 15.

Remind them *of these things, earnestly charging* them [2] *before the Lord, not to dispute about words,* which is *of no use* [3], but *to the subversion of the hearers.* 14.

Perseverance in the doctrine and spirit of the

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[2] *Earnestly charging* them.] διαμαρτυρομενος. See Wakefield.

[3] Which is *of no use.*] "These words," says Dr. Priestley, "refer to the idle fables and genealogies of the Gnostics about the emanations of inferior intelligent beings from the Supreme, and their descent to earth, which subverted the hearers by giving them false ideas of the nature and object of the gospel." "*Dum enim tales verborum pugnas audiunt, nihil certi esse in religione Christiana putant ac dicunt; et sic fides eorum subvertitur.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. II. Ver. 14. gospel is a duty of the highest importance. Remind your hearers, therefore, of the great danger of apostasy, or of tempting others to apostatize from the Christian faith. And solemnly warn them, as they will answer for it at the tribunal of their Lord and Judge, that they do not waste their time in fruitless speculations. Disputes concerning superior intelligences and emanations from the Supreme Being, though they assume the name of science, and wear the appearance of something very grand and sublime, are at best nothing more than controversies about unmeaning words; for the subject itself is beyond our comprehension. And when these fanciful opinions are so blended with the truths of the Christian religion as to supersede the most material and important facts upon which the Christian doctrine rests, they become, not only unprofitable, but highly injurious, and entirely mislead and pervert those unhappy persons who give attention to them, by filling their minds with the most erroneous notions concerning the nature and design of the gospel.

15. *Diligently endeavour to present thyself before God*[1], *approved* by him, *a labourer that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing*[2] *the word of truth.*

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[1] *To present thyself before God.*] See Rom. xii. 1. "in this life." Newcome.

[2] *Rightly dividing.*] "This phrase probably alludes to the business of a steward in a great family who gives to each his portion. Thus Timothy was to suit his admonitions to persons of all characters." Dr. Priestley.

"Ope-

The day will come when you must give an account unto God, of the manner in which you have fulfilled your important trust. Be earnestly solicitous upon that awful occasion to stand accepted and approved by him. In the mean time, consider yourself as consecrated to God, perform every duty as a tribute which you owe to him, as a sacrifice which you offer for his gracious acceptance. Be assiduous: expose not yourself to the reproach of having, through indolence or timidity, neglected the task assigned you. Like a faithful and a wise steward, distribute to every one his proper portion; and dispense the truths of the gospel with sagacity and discernment, adapting your discourses to the circumstances and situation of your hearers, so that every one in his turn may be instructed and edified. Ch. II. Ver. 15.

SECTION V.

THE APOSTLE cautions Timothy against the errors of the Gnostics, which were then beginning to prevail in the church; and directs him to the use of the best means to reclaim men from error, and to confirm them in truth and virtue. Ch. ii. 16—26.

1. The apostle cautions Timothy against dan-

"*Operam da ut teipsum præbeas operarium Deo probatum valde gnavum et strenuum, qui recte tractat doctrinam veram.* Ορθοτομειν *sæpe est* via recta incedere." Rosenmuller.

Ch. II. gerous errors, especially those which related to the doctrine of the resurrection, ver. 16—18.

Ver. 16. *But avoid profane*[1] *empty declamation, for they*
17. who use it[2] *will proceed to further impiety; and their doctrine will corrode like a gangrene.*

I have been advising you, my dear friend, to adapt your discourses to the understandings and the characters of your hearers. Now, in order to this, you must abstain from that vain declamation which, however it may please the ear, or whatever pompous title it may assume, conveys no useful instruction to the mind, and is at the remotest distance from evangelical truth. Public teachers, whose discourses are of this complexion, may be expected to recede further and further from the faith and practice of the gospel, till, in the end, they become openly wicked, and apostatize altogether from the Christian faith. Such fantastic doctrines as are now professed and taught by men who call themselves Christians, are by no means matters of indifference. They gradually corrupt the minds of those who are infected by them, till, in the end, the whole moral constitution comes to be incurably

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[1] *Profane.*] "βεβηλους. *Proprie dicitur profanus, omnis qui a sacris arcetur et mysteriis; qui quasi limine, τῳ βηλῳ, et ostio templi arcendus est. In N. T. de rebus dicitur, et* omne quod est alienum a religione Christiana, *significat.*" Schleusner.

[2] *They* who use it.] "The construction in the original is imperfect. The verb wants a nominative, and the relative an antecedent. Wetstein says that the Clermont seems to have read at first ασεβειας. Dr. Owen observes, 'that such a nominative plural properly authenticated would set the whole right.'" Bowyer.

diseased, and a total mortification of every virtue which belongs to the Christian character is the unhappy and inevitable result. Ch. II. Ver. 17.

Of which number is Hymenæus and Philetus, who have erred from the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past[3], *and subvert the faith of some.* —17. 18.

A sad example of the truth of these remarks is to be found in two persons of learning and eloquence, who embraced the Christian faith, and who, impressed by the powerful evidence of truth, avowed their belief in the gospel of Jesus. I mean Hymenæus and Philetus. But these men, educated in the prejudices of a false philosophy, were disgusted with the Christian doctrine of a resurrection of the dead, as the proper ground of expectation of

[3] *The resurrection is already past.*] Dr. Benson agrees with those who conjecture that Hymenæus and Philetus contended that the resurrection was to be understood in a figurative and spiritual sense, or that it was the same as regeneration or proselytism; and so past at baptism. He observes, "that this was the doctrine of Marcion and the Gnostics." The probability is, that they were philosophers before they became Christians; and, like other philosophers, they held the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the dead in great contempt.

"From this," says Dr. Priestley, "it is evident that the apostle meant the Gnostics; and likewise, that he thought their tenets had an immoral tendency. They thought that the Christian resurrection could be nothing more than a new life; a state of vice being usually called a state of death, in the schools of philosophy as well as by Christian teachers. Also, believing the immortality of the soul, and holding matter in very great contempt, they were persuaded that the body would never rise again. But this was a dangerous doctrine. Whereas the doctrine of the real resurrection of Christ in the flesh, as the pattern of a real universal resurrection, was a new and striking thing, capable of producing the greatest effects."

Ch. II. Ver. 18. a future life. They have not, indeed, directly renounced the Christian faith; but have explained away its leading article. Interpreting figuratively what was intended literally, they have taught that the resurrection means nothing more than a change from heathenism to Christianity; and that it is already past with regard to those who profess the Christian religion. This doctrine has made some proselytes, and its consequences must be very pernicious. For, by setting aside this essential requisite to a future life, the resurrection of the dead, they lose all that is peculiar, and all that is valuable in the gospel revelation.

2. The apostle illustrates the great importance of adhering to the essential doctrines of the Christian religion, ver. 19—21.

19. *Nevertheless*[1], *the covenant of God*[2] *standeth*

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[1] *Nevertheless.*] ὁ μεντοι. "This refers to ver. 16. The intermediate verses should be in a parenthesis." Dr. Mangey. Bowyer.

[2] *The covenant of God.*] Pyle says that θεμελιος signifies either "a foundation of a building," or, "an indenture writing." Tillotson says that it is sometimes used as an instrument of contract. Dr. Benson adopts this sense of the word, and explains it thus: "Hymenæus and Philetus would have set aside the gospel covenant. But nevertheless the covenant of God stood firm, having the seal still hanging to it, to show that it was genuine, and in full force and obligation. On one side of the seal is an inscription denoting what God will do. On the other, an inscription denoting what Christians ought to do. And as long as the covenant stood firm, and had the seal hanging to it, all was secure and well, and their attempts to subvert it were idle, and would end in their own ruin."

The majority of commentators, with Grotius, take the word

firm, having this seal: The Lord approveth them that are his[3]. *And, Let every one who nameth the name of the Lord, depart from iniquity.* Ch. II. Ver. 19.

Whatever errors men, misled by prejudice, or puffed up with vanity, may fall into, the doctrine of Christ and the terms of acceptance with God remain unalterable. The gospel covenant is ratified

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in its primary sense, of "a foundation of a building, upon which it was not unusual to place inscriptions." "These," says Archbishop Newcome, "may have been common anciently, as they are now." See Rev. xxi. 14. But Tillotson remarks, that "σφραγις is only an inscription upon a seal, and has no relation to a foundation." See Benson's note. "*Fundamentum quod Deus posuit firmum stat. Evertunt quidem doctores mendaces quorundam fidem; totam vero ædificii molem, totam ecclesiam nunquam destruent.* Habens inscriptionem hanc: σφ. *hic est quod lapidi vel ædibus inscribitur. Olim singulas ædes habuisse inscriptiones quibus ab aliis distinguerentur demonstravit Warnekros.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *The Lord approveth them that are his.*] This is a quotation from Numb. xvi. 5, LXX., in which the words are applied to the case of Korah and his wicked accomplices, who rebelled against Moses: "Even to-morrow will the Lord show who are his, and who are holy." And on the next day they were all destroyed: "the earth opening her mouth and swallowing them up, and all that belonged to them; and they went down alive into the pit."—"Nothing," says Dr. Benson, "could have been more pertinent to the apostle's present purpose than this allusion. Though his modesty would not permit him to speak in plainer terms, yet in writing against the judaizing impostors, he could not in a more lively and emphatical manner have pointed out their wickedness and danger in opposing him who had such clear evidences of a divine mission, than by comparing them to Korah and his accomplices, who had so daringly opposed Moses, and perished in an exemplary manner for that high act of wickedness." Dr. Benson supposes, that in the latter clause of the verse, Let him, &c. *depart* from all iniquity, there is a further allusion to Numb. xvi. 27, where it is said that the Israelites *departed* from the tabernacle of Korah, &c. And that the apostle means to warn believers to "depart from the *tents* of Hymenæus and Philetus."

Ch. II. Ver. 19. by a seal which bears a double inscription. The first declares what God hath done on his part. He hath borne his testimony to the men who were commissioned to propagate the gospel by the gifts of the holy spirit. And let those who presume to reject a doctrine so authenticated, and to treat the teachers of it with contempt, beware, lest, following the example of Korah and his company, who rejected Moses, they should incur a like fearful doom. The second inscription expresses the duty of those who are parties in the Christian covenant. Avowing Jesus as their Master, let them ever be mindful of the indispensable obligation under which they are laid, to guard with the utmost vigilance against all error both in doctrine and practice, and to withdraw from the society of those who would pervert their most sacred principles.

20. *But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth,*
21. *and some to honour and some to dishonour*[1]. *If*

[1] *Some to honour, and some to dishonour.*] "The 'vessels to dishonour' are those vessels of wood and of earth which are appointed to the uses of the servants; while the 'vessels to honour' are those made of gold and silver, which are appropriated to the use of the master." Hallet's *Notes on S.S.*, vol. ii. p. 147. "Some (says Dr. Benson) by *vessels to honour* have understood the apostle Paul, Timothy, and other faithful preachers of the gospel; and by the *vessels to dishonour*, the judaizing teachers who wickedly corrupted the Christian doctrine. Whereas others suppose that they are both spoken of good men, who are more or less honourable, as they take care to avoid what is evil, and to excel in the practice of what is good. Dr. Clarke says (*Sermons*, vol. x. no. 4), "By *dishonour* meaning, not uselessness and being wholly rejected, as some under-

a man, therefore, thoroughly purify himself from such things, he will be a vessel to honour, set apart and fit for the master's service, and prepared for every good use. Ch. II. Ver. 21.

Though I have alluded to the doom of Korah, I am far from intending to insinuate that under the gospel dispensation, which is a covenant of mercy, every error shall entail the same terrible catastrophe which overwhelmed that contumacious rebel and his infatuated adherents; much less, that involuntary misapprehensions will incur eternal condemnation. Nevertheless I warn you that error in doctrine is not to be regarded as a matter of indifference. As far as it prevails, it in a degree contaminates the character, and becomes a considerable impediment to usefulness. For, as in a spacious and magnificent house there are precious vessels employed for honourable purposes, and meaner vessels for inferior uses, so, in the church of God, they who faithfully adhere to the pure uncorrupted doctrine of the gospel, and whose practice is regulated by it, will be highly esteemed by the great Master of the household, and will be honoured by him as instruments of distinguished usefulness; while others who, misled by prejudice, blend and disfigure the doctrine of Christ by a debasing mixture of human inven-

stand it, but only a less degree of value and esteem, as the nature and design of this similitude plainly require; which, though they be indeed within the house, and not wholly excluded, yet no man who has a worthy sense of religion can long content himself with being of their number without desiring further improvement."

Ch. II. Ver. 21. tions, though, because of their sincerity, they will not be absolutely cast away, yet being only qualified for inferior uses, they will be placed in less honourable stations. It is therefore the indispensable duty of every one, to the best of his ability, to clear his mind from all pernicious prejudices, that so he may lay a foundation for more extensive usefulness.

3. The apostle warns the evangelist to set a guard upon his own spirit, ver. 22.

22. *Avoid unreasonable desires*[1]. *But follow righteousness, fidelity, love, and peace, with all those who call upon the Lord with a pure heart.*

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[1] *Avoid unreasonable desires.*] νεωτερικας επιθυμιας. They who with the public version translate the clause "flee youthful lusts," forget how unsuitable this advice would be to the age and character of Timothy, who, according to Dr. Macknight, was at that time thirty-eight years of age; or, if the epistle was written during the first imprisonment, three or four years younger. Schleusner gives to νεωτερικος the sense of "*omne quod magnum est, acre atque vehemens.*" "Fuge temerarias cupiditates." Rosenmuller: "*In his autem studiis sive cupiditatibus habet locum inanis gloriæ sectatio.*" The learned writer adds, "*alii* νεωτερικον *volunt esse* novitium, *ut* cupiditates novitiæ *sint cupiditates rerum* novitiarum, *noviter repertarum et proditarum, quarum homines, juvenes præsertim, solent esse cupidi, quo ceteris videantur esse sapientiores.*" And this indeed appears to me to be the true meaning of the passage. Avoid the desire of novelty: be not eager after new things, in order to make a display, and to excite admiration; but keep to the good old track, of faith, and love, and peace, in which all men of true piety and virtue walk. Macknight, who is almost the only English expositor who seems aware of the difficulty, though he gives the common and incorrect translation, judiciously observes in his note," that the apostle does not mean sensual lusts only, but ambition, pride, love of power, rashness, and obstinacy. At the time when this epistle was written, Timothy was in the season of life which is most susceptible of these passions."

You are placed in a conspicuous situation, in which it is peculiarly incumbent upon you to keep your affections under severe discipline. Guard, therefore, vigilantly, against excess of every kind. Restrain the emotions of ambition. Be not carried away with the love of power. And do not indulge a taste for novelty; do not affect the puerile vanity of always saying new things in order to excite admiration; but be content with plain truth, and practical piety. You may possibly be under temptation occasionally to defend the purity and simplicity of evangelical truth with undue warmth of spirit. Be upon your guard against intemperate zeal. Practise universal virtue. Firmly adhere to Christian principles. Be always employed in doing good. Maintain a peaceable spirit; and as far as may be consistent with duty, live upon good terms both with believers and with unbelievers. Such is the genuine character of those who are sincere in their profession of the Christian faith. Ch. II. Ver. 22.

4. The apostle exhorts Timothy to abstain from useless controversies, and to adopt the gentlest and the most efficacious means of reclaiming those who had been betrayed into error, ver. 23—26.

But foolish and uninstructive controversies avoid, knowing that they beget wranglings[2]. 23.

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[2] *Wranglings.*] "Here he plainly adverts to the doctrine of the Gnostics, whose subtle discussions he often mentions with equal dislike and contempt." Dr. Priestley. "Μαχας, rixas,

Ch. II. Ver. 23. Many who profess to believe the gospel, but who are strangers to its true spirit, who are puffed up with self-conceit, and are desirous of corrupting the simplicity of the faith, affect to be raising questions upon subjects of a mysterious nature, which, while they wear a semblance of sublimity, are, in fact, trifling and useless, such as no person of sound understanding and of real knowledge would give himself the trouble to discuss. Such questions as these avoid with care, as leading to nothing but endless and angry debate.

24. *But the servant of the Lord ought not to wrangle, but to be gentle to all men, ready to teach, patient of wrong.*

This disputatious temper is highly unbecoming a minister of the gospel, who ought ever to bear in mind, that the service of Christ, and the promulgation of truth and holiness, not his own literary or philosophical reputation, must be his primary pursuit. In this view, it becomes him to cultivate a mild and gentle spirit, to be ready upon every occasion to communicate instruction in the most acceptable and impressive manner, and to bear with meekness and patience the angry contradictions and the perverse misrepresentations of ignorant, prejudiced, or malignant opposers, not rendering evil for evil.

25. *With meekness, instructing those who set them-*

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jurgia, lites. Gellius xiv. 5. *de duobus Grammaticis,* Clamantes, compugnantesque (μαχομενες) eos reliqui." Rosenmuller.

selves in opposition, if, by any means[1], *God may grant them a change of mind to the acknowledgement of the truth: so that being rescued by him*[2] *out of the snare of the devil, they may recover their senses to* do *the will* of God. Ch. II. Ver. 25. 26.

Far from retaliating abusive language and unkind behaviour upon those who desire to promote quarrels and divisions in the church, let the faithful minister of Christ, with good manners and good temper, set before them the evidences of Christian truth and the grounds of his own persuasion. Who knows but they may be brought to reason? who can tell but that God may in his good pleasure open their understandings to see, and their hearts to feel, the

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[1] *If, by any means.*] "Markland and Dr. Owen observe that μηποτε is used for ειποτε. See Luke iii. 15, Bowyer. Knatchbull shows that it is equivalent to ισως, *forte*." Newcome. Whitby produces many instances from the LXX. where it is used in the same sense. Gen. iii. 22, xxiv. 5.

[2] *That being rescued by him:*] *i. e.* that the opposers being rescued. "εζωγρημενοι, rescued alive." Wakefield. *by him:* i. e. by the servant of the Lord. ανανηψωσιν, "may recover their senses." Wakefield. ανανηφω, "to recover from intoxication, to recover reason after a temporary stupefaction." Harwood. *out of the snare of the devil:* the false accuser, the God of the heathen world, the entanglements of heathenism—to *do* the will *of God:* εις το εκεινου θελημα, to the will of *him*, the remote antecedent, *God*. I agree with Mr. Wakefield and Dr. Harwood in referring αυτου to θελος Κυριου as its antecedent; and together with Grotius, Newcome, Whitby, Benson, and others, in referring εκεινου to Θεος. This makes the sense easy and intelligible. The exposition of Dr. Benson is very judicious: "And that they may awake out of this intoxicated sleep which would otherwise end in death, being taken alive out of the snare of the devil, by him, that is, by the faithful servant of the Lord, that for the future they may do the will of God."

Ch. II. Ver. 26. light and power of truth when plainly and fully exhibited to view, and thus induce them to surrender their prejudices and their pride? In this way may you and others, by the exercise of prudence and forbearance, save from destruction and bring to their sound understandings those who are intoxicated with self-sufficiency and prejudice, and recover to purity of faith, and the practice of duty, those who are now the most determined and malignant enemies of the gospel.

SECTION VI.

Ch. III. *THE APOSTLE describes the bad characters of hypocritical professors, and the wicked artifices of seducing teachers, who would in future time appear in the church, but whose artful and malignant opposition would in the end be baffled and exposed.* Ch. iii. 1—9.

1. The apostle warns his friend of the approach of difficult times, and describes the characters of false professors who would endeavour to subvert the truth, ver. 1—5.

Ver. 1. *But know this, that in the last days difficult times*[1] *will come.*

[1] *In the last days difficult times,* &c.] Dr. Whitby and others interpret this prophecy of the approaching dissolution of the Jewish state, and of the obstinate and increasing wickedness of the Jews and judaizing teachers. In confirmation of this hy-

In the course of your ministry, my dear friend, short as that period has been, you have known many who have totally apostatized from the faith; you have seen some who, from vanity, or shame, or prejudice, have been desirous to corrupt the doctrine of the gospel; you have been the mournful witness to some whose characters have been a disgrace to their profession. But I solemnly warn you, Timothy, that though my course will soon be finished, you will probably live to see times much worse than any which have hitherto occurred. For, strange as it may seem, in those awful periods that are advancing, men will, from one inducement or another, Ch. III. Ver 1.

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pothesis, it is observed that the phrase, *the last days*, often bears this sense in the New Testament; that the caution, ver. 5, implies that the persons here described, and with whom the evangelist was to avoid all intercourse, were then in existence; and the prediction, ver. 9, that these delusions should be exposed and abandoned in a short time, agrees with the system of the judaizing teachers and with no other. But this interpretation depends very much upon the sense of the words εσχαται ἡμεραι, *last days;* which, Dr. Macknight remarks, are sometimes used to express *futurity* in general. See Gen. xlix. 1. And in this sense the prophecy of speedy destruction might be applied as properly to Gnosticism as to Judaism. And it is difficult to say what propriety there would be in warning Timothy, who lived at Ephesus, against the bad principles and practices of the Jews: many, therefore, are inclined to think that the apostle had Gnosticism chiefly in view. But, as it is certain that the prophets did not always understand the full import of their own predictions, (see 1 Pet. i. 10, 11,) and as some parts of the description of the false teachers are thought to be characteristic of the religious orders of the Romish communion, it is not impossible, as Dr. Benson and Dr. Priestley contend, that the grand apostasy might be the more immediate object of the spirit of prophecy in this passage.—"*Patet ex com. 5. Paulum agere de iis, quæ Timotheo vivente eventura putabat.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. III. profess the Christian religion, whose temper is directly the reverse of the Christian spirit.

Ver. 2. *For these men*[1] *will be selfish, covetous, arrogant, proud, evil-speakers, undutiful to parents,*
3. *ungrateful, unholy, destitute of natural affection*[2], *implacable*[3], *slanderers, intemperate, savage*[4], *enemies to goodness, treacherous, headstrong, conceited*[5], *lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God,*
5. *retaining the form of godliness*[6], *but rejecting its power: from such also turn away.*

By the spirit of prophecy I announce to you, that before the awful advent of our Lord and Master, whether that event be nearer or more remote, men who bear the Christian name, and who profess to be followers of the humble, the self-denying, the meek, and the holy Jesus, will act a part the very

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[1] *These men.*] οἱ ἀνθρωποι the men to whom the prophecy referred: professing Christians. See Wakefield.

[2] *Destitute of natural affection.*] στοργη, the natural affection which parents have to their children, and even brutes to their young. As children would be undutiful, ver. 2, so parents would be unnatural.

[3] *Implacable.*] "irreconcileable." Wakefield. "covenant-breakers." Newcome. The word ασπονδοι has both these significations.

[4] *Savage.*] ανημεροι, "immitis, immansuetus. Αγριος, Suidas." Rosenmuller.

[5] *Conceited.*] τετυφωμενοι, "infatuated." Wakefield.

[6] *Retaining the form,* &c.] "These vices," says Dr. Priestley, "were to abound in the last times, and among men professing godliness, and therefore in the Christian church. That persons of that character then existed, is evident from Timothy being warned of them; and they could not be any other than the Gnostic teachers. It should seem, therefore, that in the apostle's idea the evil had then begun to operate."

reverse of that which his law prescribes, and his example exhibits. Ch. III. Ver. 5.

With all their pretensions to superior excellence, self-interest and the love of money will be their predominant passion. Valuing themselves upon their pretended knowledge, or upon their zeal for external forms, they will treat with supercilious disdain those whom they regard as their inferiors in station or privilege; nor will they hesitate to use the most contumelious language in speaking of those who may oppose their pretensions or their party. These false professors will sacrifice their nearest kindred to superstitious principles, or interested considerations, and under the hypocritical pretence of duty to God, they will neglect those offices of filial piety which are due to the superior wisdom, or increasing infirmities, of their parents. To God and man they will return evil for good. They will forsake the paths of virtue[7]. They will be as negligent in the care which they owe to their children, as in the attentions due to their parents. Under pretence of zeal for religion, they will keep no faith with men of opposite principles, and will wantonly violate their most sacred engagements. They will calumniate without scruple those who are the unfortunate objects of their envy and jealousy, how unspotted soever their character may be. They will impose no restraint upon their appetites and passions. They

[7] *Will forsake*, &c.] ανοσιοι, qui fœda patrant, *quibus nihil sanctum et venerandum est.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. III. Ver. 5. will show no mercy to those who have offended them; but will be fierce and violent in their expressions of resentment. Conscious of their own depravity, they will hate excellence in others, and will be the declared enemies of all good men. They will betray the secrets of those who unadvisedly place confidence in them, and who may intrust them with their most hidden purposes and thoughts. Conceited with the fancy of superior wisdom, they will scorn to ask advice or to consult the dictates of prudence. They will pretend to raptures of devotion; but will, in fact, be the votaries of sensual pleasure, and will render their religious profession subservient to the gratification of their passions. They will make great pretensions to piety, and will be zealous for the forms of religion; but will be utter strangers to its genuine spirit and practical influence. It will be some time before these great corruptions in doctrine and practice have reached their utmost limits. But the spirit of the apostasy is already beginning to work. And as I before cautioned you to avoid errors in doctrine, I now faithfully and solemnly warn you against the more fatal errors in practice. Let me conjure you to renounce all kind of intercourse with men whose characters resemble what I have now described, how fair and how pompous soever their profession may be.

2. The apostle describes the artifices of these hypocritical teachers, which, nevertheless, will be even-

tually detected, and will expose their authors to merited disgrace, ver. 6—9. Ch. III.

For of such are those who insinuate themselves[1] *into families, and captivate weak women, laden with sins, led by various passions, ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.* Ver. 6. 7.

Of these hypocritical and vicious teachers there are none against whom it is more necessary to be upon your guard, than against fawning sycophants, who assume a modest and gentle demeanour in order to introduce themselves into the houses of those whom they mean to seduce, and who, by their smooth discourse and accommodating doctrine, win the hearts of silly women, who, conscious of their infirmities, are desirous to reconcile the profession of religion with the gratification of their passions. These weak and vicious females often pretend to be seeking after Christian instruction, but the depravity of their hearts effectually prevents their ever attaining a truly correct and practical knowledge of revealed truth.

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[1] *Who insinuate themselves,* &c.] Dr. Benson interprets this "of the practices of the religious orders of the church of Rome." Dr. Priestley observes, that "for such low cunning the priests and monks of that communion have been notorious, and that the specious insinuating manners of the Gnostics were also noted by the apostles and other Christian writers." He also thinks that the apostle here refers to the nice subtilties of the Gnostic doctrines, "than which nothing could be more unintelligible." Οἱ ἐνδυνοντες "who creep or slide in like a snake." Benson, Rosenmuller. Such characters are but too common in all ages and among all denominations.

Ch. III. Ver. 8. *And as Jannes and Jambres*[1] *withstood Moses, so do these also withstand the truth;* being *men of corrupt minds, disapproved*[2] *concerning the faith.*

9. *But they shall not proceed very far; for their folly will be made evident to all men, as that of those* men *also was.*

Nor is it much to be wondered at that these silly creatures become dupes to the artifices of their false teachers, who, to promote their own sinister views, inculcate systems of doctrine which give encouragement to licentiousness of manners. For as the magicians of Egypt practised their contemptible artifices to elude the authority of Moses, and to encourage Pharaoh to refuse the demand which he made in the name of God, so do these men, in order to maintain that ascendancy which they have obtained over the minds of their proselytes, resist by every artifice in their power the efforts of those faithful teachers who would enlighten their understandings with Christian truth. And being men of corrupt hearts, destitute of all virtuous principle, and, notwithstanding all their professions, grossly ignorant of the Christian faith, and disowned by all virtuous

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[1] *Jannes and Jambres.*] The names of these magicians are not mentioned in the Pentateuch, but they occur in the Targum of Jonathan upon Exod. vii. 11, and in both the Talmuds. Also in the writings of Numenius the Pythagorean. *Origen contr. Celsum*, lib. 4. See Priestley.

[2] *Disapproved.*] ἀδόκιμοι· a metaphor taken from metals, which are rejected if they be not pure, and according to the standard, Rom. i. 28; 1 Cor. ix. 27; Tit. i. 16. "*quorum sententiæ de religione minime probandæ, ideoque rejiciendæ sunt, et repudiandæ.*" Rosenmuller.

and sincere believers, they hesitate at no means, however scandalous, for the accomplishment of their design. But these gross corrupters of the Christian doctrine, however successful for a time, shall not be suffered to pass beyond the prescribed limits. For the day of reformation shall arrive at the appointed season, when the crimes of these hypocrites shall be brought to light, and they and their delusions shall sink into universal contempt, similar to that of the impostors of Egypt, when, being no longer able to continue their frauds, they were constrained to acknowledge their own disgrace, and with shame and ignominy to confess, that those splendid works which they had calumniated as the sleight of men, were, in truth, no other than the finger of God. Ch. III. Ver. 9.

SECTION VII.

The apostle exhorts Timothy, after his own example, to adhere faithfully, at all hazards, to the simplicity of the gospel, the truth of which was attested even by the scriptures of the Old Testament, upon which the apostle pronounces a just commendation. Ch. iii. 10—17.

1. The apostle reminds Timothy of his labours and sufferings for the gospel, of the purity of his motives, of his Christian temper, and of the deliverances he had experienced; and appeals to the

Ch. III. evangelist as a witness to the truth of his declarations, ver. 10, 11.

Ver. 10. *But thou hast intimately known*[1] *my doctrine, conduct*[2], *purpose, fidelity, long-suffering, love, pa-*
11. *tience, persecutions, sufferings. What things befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra*[3]*! What*

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[1] *Intimately known.*] "παρακολουθέω, proprie, *æquis passibus incedo cum alio, nec a latere discedo unquam, diligenter examino, perscrutor.*" Schleusner. See Raphelius *Obs. in Luc.* i. 3. The apostle probably refers to the intimate acquaintance which Timothy had with his character and views, in consequence of his having been so long his friend and associate.

[2] *Conduct,*] or, manner of life, ἀγωγῇ. "*Vitæ institutum, vivendi rationem, et modum.*"—"Scipio followed a different course of life: ἀγωγὴν τὸν βίου." Polybius. See Raphelius *in loc.*

[3] *What things,* &c.] I follow, but with diffidence, the punctuation of Battier, in Bowyer; who places a full stop at παθήμασιν, and a note of admiration at the end of the following sentences: it suits the construction of the original, and gives a spirit to the passage, but I doubt whether it is quite agreeable to Paul's usual style of writing. It has been before observed, that it is unaccountable that Paul should have referred to events so remote, without taking the least notice of his long imprisonment at Cesarea and at Rome, if this letter was written, as is commonly supposed, in the apostle's second imprisonment. The events to which he here alludes are related in Acts xiii. xiv. At Antioch in Pisidia, the Jews excited the principal inhabitants of the city to expel the apostles from the place, ch. xiii. 50, 51. They fled to Iconium, where, after having preached the gospel with great success, the unbelieving Jews stirred up a tumult to assault and stone the apostles; who, being apprized of it, escaped to Lystra, ch. xiv. 1—7. Lystra was the birth-place, or at least the residence, of Timothy, who must therefore have been well informed of all that passed. Here Barnabas and Paul could with difficulty restrain the people from offering a sacrifice to them, in consequence of their having healed a lame man. But afterwards, at the instigation of the Jews from Antioch and Iconium, the populace stoned Paul, and thinking him dead drew him out of the city; but he soon recovered, and the next day accompanied Barnabas to Derbe, ver. 8—20.

persecutions I endured! Yet the Lord rescued me out of them all. Ch. III. Ver. 11.

There are some professors of the Christian religion who accommodate their principles to their secular interest; or who at least, being speculative believers, conform to the fashions of the world in order to escape persecution. The reverse of this mean and dishonourable dissimulation has ever been my conduct, as you my beloved pupil, my intimate friend, my chosen associate, are fully apprized. You, Timothy, are perfectly acquainted with the doctrine which I have taught, and in which I was completely instructed by Jesus Christ. You know how far my practice has been correspondent with my teaching: to you I have communicated all my purposes of usefulness, and the plans which I had formed for carrying those purposes into effect. You have been witness to the fidelity with which I discharged the trust reposed in me, not presuming to corrupt the doctrine of Christ, in order to make it more palatable to the hearers, nor declining to preach it to the Gentiles equally with the Jews. You also know the forbearance which I have exercised under great provocations, the kindness which I manifested even to my bitterest enemies, and the meekness and fortitude with which I supported the severest trials. You well know what these persecutions and sufferings were; some of which occurred to me in your native place, at the very commencement of our acquaintance, when your young and tender spirit would be most strongly impressed and most deeply wounded by

Ch. III. Ver. 11. them. I cannot myself, even at this distance of time, recollect them without horror. What indignities did I sustain from the machinations of the unbelieving Jews at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra! And in the last place in particular, your native town, what imminent danger did I encounter, when these vile emissaries nearly accomplished their murderous purposes, by persuading the thoughtless populace, who but just before had been with difficulty restrained from worshiping me as a God, to stone me as a malefactor who was not fit to live! It is indeed wonderful that I am still alive: and I can ascribe my preservation to nothing less than to the seasonable and even miraculous interposition of God, to rescue me from the malice of my persecutors, and to continue my life and my capacity for service as long as it shall be his will to employ me in his work.

2. The apostle declares that similar to his must be the condition of all faithful professors of the gospel, while impostors and their abettors should for a time proceed with little opposition, ver. 12, 13.

12. *Yea, and indeed*[1], *all who resolve to live religiously in Christ Jesus*[2] *will suffer persecution.*

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[1] *Yea, and indeed.*] και παντες δε κ. τ. λ. Dr. Benson remarks (after Hutchinson) the elegance of inserting δε after και in the beginning of a sentence, when an author is going to add something more or greater than he has said already. Comp. Acts v. 32. See Xenophon *Cyrop.* lib. i. p. 63, 8vo, with Hutchinson's note.

[2] *In Christ Jesus:*] *i. e.* "as Christians." Newcome. Dr.

Nor is my case by any means singular; for though my situation and character, as the apostle of the Gentiles, expose me to peculiar dangers and sufferings, yet in fact all who are determined to profess Christian truth, and to lead a Christian life, must expect to meet with similar trials, and will in some shape or other be persecuted, either by misguided professors of the gospel, or open enemies to it. And you, my beloved friend, as well as others, if you are an upright, faithful, zealous and active minister of Christ, must expect a similar treatment. Ch. III. Ver. 12.

But bad men and impostors[3] *will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived*[4]. 13.

Very different indeed will be the condition of those who corrupt the gospel to accomplish their own sinister purposes. They will escape the persecutions to which fidelity would have exposed them,

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Priestley observes, that "here the apostle opposes his principles and conduct to those of the Gnostics, who, in general, avoided all persecution, by complying with the demands of the times, and contented themselves with speculating concerning religion."

[3] *Impostors.*] γοητες. Dr. Benson observes, "that the word properly signifies *sorcerers, magicians, jugglers*, like Jannes and Jambres. "Γοης, *incantator, præstigiator, qui præstigiis, aliisve malis artibus imponit.*" Schleusner. They who interpret this passage as a prophecy of the grand apostasy, suppose this word to be an allusion to the pretended miracles of the church of Rome.

[4] *Deceiving*, &c.] *q. d.* Bad men and their seducers, deceivers, and those who are willingly deceived by them, shall grow worse and worse. Dr. Priestley observes, "One error leads to another, and one vice leads to another; and the degree of infatuation and wickedness to which some men arrive, and which they will even apologize for, would not be credited, if both history and observation did not prove it."

Ch. III. Ver. 13. and will stand high in the estimation of those who would have rejected truth with abhorrence. So shall these crafty impostors, and their willingly deluded disciples, the deceived and the deceivers, go on from error to error, and from crime to crime, till they are in the end overtaken by those judgements which are in reserve for the obstinate and the impenitent.

3. The apostle exhorts his friend to adhere firmly to those doctrines which he had learned of him, and which were confirmed by the Jewish scriptures, into the knowledge of which he had been early initiated, ver. 14, 15.

14. *But continue thou in* the doctrines *which thou hast learned*[1], *and been convinced of*[2], *knowing from whom*[3] *thou hast learned* them.

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[1] *Continue in* the doctrines *which thou hast learned.*] Dr. Benson observes in an excellent note upon this passage, that "fierce controversies and warm disputes create contentions among Christians, and divide them into parties and factions. They also tend to the subversion of the hearers. If once you unhinge some persons, and cause them to doubt of the truth of what they learned in younger life, they are ready to doubt of every thing, and throw off all religion as a fallacy. But notwithstanding this, what mistakes have been imbibed in education ought to be rooted out, though gradually, and with a gentle hand. And disputes and controversies are so far from being of a dangerous tendency, that they are the very things which preserve knowledge in the world, and rouse men to attention. Let human authority take away the liberty of free debate, and thick darkness will soon follow. Had Timothy been taught by the Judaizers, and brought up from his infancy in wrong principles, St. Paul would not have exhorted him to have continued in the things which he had learned and been assured of. But he was to continue in them because he knew of whom he had learned them: viz. of a true apostle; and that they were agreeable to

You see, Timothy, I hold out no secular advantages to induce you to persevere in your Christian profession. I have even faithfully warned you of the dangers and persecutions which in present circumstances are the inseparable concomitants of the faithful fearless discharge of the Christian ministry. Yet do not desert the cause. I solemnly charge you, at every hazard, to adhere firmly, and with an unwavering spirit, to those inestimable truths which you have learned of me. You certainly know that I am neither a wicked man nor an impostor. You have had abundant proof of my apostolical mission, and of the divine authority of my doctrine. Let no consideration induce you to desert the path of truth. Ch. III. Ver. 14.

And that from a child thou hast known the sacred writings[4], *which are able to make thee* 15.

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the scriptures of the Old Testament, with which he had been acquainted from his infancy."

[2] *Convinced of.*] επιστωθης. "convinced of by proof." Wakefield.

[3] *From whom.*] παρα τινος. Some good copies read τινων, in the plural number. Some suppose that Timothy had received instruction from Barnabas as well as Paul, as he certainly had from his pious mother and grandmother, to whose early care in instructing him in the Jewish scriptures the apostle immediately refers.

[4] *From a child,* &c.] Dr. Priestley remarks, that "by *scriptures* the apostle could only mean the Jewish scriptures, in the knowledge of which Timothy had been educated by his mother and grandmother, who were both Jewesses, though his father was a Gentile. The Jews were, and to this day are, remarkable for making their children acquainted with the scriptures. What a reflection is this upon Christian countries, and even upon this of ours, in many parts of which a great majority of the people cannot read at all, and with regard to many of whom better things might be expected! though their children

Ch. III. Ver. 15. *wise*[1] *unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus*[2].

You have a still further inducement to adhere faithfully to the Christian doctrine, inasmuch as it has been your felicity to have been early and carefully instructed, by your pious parents, in the Jewish scriptures, and especially the prophetic writings. And whatever false interpretations some may give to them, or whatever erroneous conclusions they may draw from them, be assured, that when properly understood, they bear convincing testimony to the truth of the Christian doctrine. Not only do the prophecies receive their proper accomplishment in Jesus of Nazareth, but the patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Christian dispensations, are all essential parts of the same wise and beneficent system which infinite wisdom has formed for the gradual instruction and amelioration of mankind. So that

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are taught to read, they are very indifferent about their instruction in those things which it most of all concerns them to know. To the Jewish scriptures the apostle exhorts Timothy to join the study of Christianity, and they both make but one great scheme of revelation, and can never be separated."

[1] *Make thee wise.*] "σοφισαι has here the sense of the Hebrew conjugation hiphil." Benson.

[2] *Through faith,* &c.] The apostle urges Timothy to perseverance in the Christian doctrine, for which he assigns two reasons; the first is, that he knew that he had received it from an apostle of Christ, an authorized and qualified teacher. The second reason is, that he had been early instructed in the Jewish scriptures. Consequently the apostle's meaning must be, that those scriptures well understood contain satisfactory evidence of the truth of the Christian religion. This observation, therefore, is to be understood of the inspired prophetic scriptures, and probably of them alone.

the right apprehension of the sacred writings of the Old Testament will lead you to believe in Jesus as the true Messiah, and by a practical regard to his doctrine, which is the truest wisdom, to secure that ultimate and everlasting felicity which will be an infinite compensation for every temporary loss or suffering. Ch. III. Ver. 15.

4. The apostle concludes his observations and advices with a high and just encomium upon the Jewish scriptures, ver. 16, 17.

All scripture inspired by God[3] is *also profit-* 16.

[3] *All scripture*, &c.] Πασα γραφη, θεοπνευστος και ωφελιμος, κ. τ. λ. The word και is wanting, Dr. Benson says, in one MS., and certainly in the Syriac, Arabic, and Vulgate versions. See Griesbach. It is omitted by Grotius, and in the versions of Wakefield and Harwood.—If this reading be adopted, the apostle does not define what scripture is divinely inspired; but if the και should be retained, and it has the authority of manuscripts in its favour, the common version may be allowed: *All scripture* is *given by inspiration of God*. In this sense the word *scripture* must necessarily be restrained to the sense which suits the connexion: that is, to the *prophetic* scriptures, of which alone the apostle is treating. To understand it, as some do, as a general authoritative assertion of the plenary inspiration of all the books of the Old Testament, is, to say the least, very injudicious; and it is hard to believe that the apostle intended to make a declaration so palpably erroneous. But he probably intended no such thing: he referred only to the prophetic scriptures, which, if genuine, are unquestionably inspired. Archbishop Newcome supposes that Paul not only means to include all the Old Testament, but as much of the New as was then written; but it is plain that the apostle is only treating of those scriptures which Timothy had learned in his childhood, and which contained those proofs of the divine mission of Christ which were necessary to furnish the man of God, the Christian minister and evangelist, for the good work of reasoning with, and converting, or confuting, the Jews. " πα. γρ. κ. τ. λ.

Ch. III. Ver. 17. *able*[1] *for instruction, for conviction*[2]*, for correction*[3]*, for discipline in righteousness*[4]*, that the man*

Either all scripture is given by inspiration, as Chrysostom and most of the protestant interpreters; or, omitting the comma after γραφη, 'All divinely inspired scripture is *also* profitable,' as Grotius and most of the popish commentators. Whichsoever way it is pointed, the expression must not be understood to comprehend the books of the New Testament which were not yet collected together, but the sacred writings of the Old Testament, mentioned ver. 15, as Michaelis observes." Bowyer. "The writers of the New Testament," says Bishop Barrington in Bowyer's Appendix, "always distinguish between γραφη and γραφαι. The former signifies some portion of scripture, the latter the scripture in general. 'Every portion of scripture,' says the apostle, 'inspired by God, is profitable,'" &c.

"The intention of the apostle," says Dr. Priestley, "was not to make any declaration concerning the inspiration of the scriptures, but to show the proper use of them in inculcating those good moral principles from which so many persons at that time departed; and it will sufficiently justify his thus incidentally calling the scriptures *inspired*, if they were written by prophets or men inspired by God, or if any thing that they wrote had been delivered by particular commission from God, which, no doubt, many things contained in the scriptures were. But such men were certainly capable of expressing them in words, and of committing them to writing, without any further inspiration; and therefore there is no occasion to suppose that, as writers, they had any inspiration at all. Also, together with what they delivered as from God, which is easily distinguished, they might mix advices, &c. of their own, which, with the best intentions, should discover the natural weakness of men. The weakness of the apostles, as men and as writers, in reality proves that the doctrine they delivered was not their own, and that the power by which they were supported was from God only."

[1] Is *also profitable*.] That the scriptures are of great general use for instruction and edification, cannot be denied: but this is not the apostle's meaning here. His object is to show that the prophetic scriptures are admirably adapted to qualify an evangelist to preach the gospel to Jews and Gentiles, and he distinctly shows in what particulars they are useful to the Christian preacher. This view of the apostle's design has been too

of God[5] *may be complete*[6], *perfectly fitted for every good work.* Ch. III. Ver. 17.

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much overlooked by commentators, and this oversight has misled many in their interpretation of the text.

[2] *For conviction.*] προς ελεγχον. See Harwood and Benson. "ελεγχος, propriè, *demonstratio, probatio, quæ fit argumentis certis et rationibus indubitatis, qua rei certitudo efficitur, argumentum.*" Schleusner. See Heb. xi. 1. The apostle's meaning is, that the prophetic scriptures of the Old Testament supply the Christian teacher with decisive arguments in favour of the divine mission of Christ.

[3] *For correction.*] "προς επανορθωσιν, propriè, *correctio ejus quod incurvatum est. Omnis restitutio in integrum et meliorem statum. Apud Polybium; de correctione erroris et falsæ opinionis.*" Schleusner, and Raphelius. The apostle means that the right understanding of the Jewish scriptures would correct the crroneous opinions into which the Jews had fallen concerning the nature and design of the dispensation of the Messiah.

[4] *Discipline in righteousness.*] "παιδεια, *omnis institutio et disciplina puerilis. Quævis alia institutio et disciplina, qua quis utitur ad formandos et imbuendos animos.*" Schleusner. The apostle means that the Jewish scriptures explicitly declare the terms upon which the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom are to be obtained; the institute which it will require, the character which it will form, and to which its promises (δικαιοσυνη, *its justification,*) are annexed. See Jerem. xxxi. 31—34, Heb. viii. 8.

[5] *The man of God.*] This was a title which was given to the prophets under the old dispensation. See 2 Kings iv. 40, &c. It is applied to Timothy as an evangelist endued with extraordinary powers, 1 Tim. vi. 11; and may perhaps be intended to express Christian ministers in general. See Newcome. Dr. Benson, on 2 Pet. i. 21, says, that "the expression *man of God* occurs about fifty times in the Old Testament, and always signifies an *inspired person*, or *prophet.*"

[6] *Complete.*] αρτιος. The Clermont and Corbey copies read τελειος, and the old Italic and Vulgate *perfectus.* "Αρτιος, *integer, perfectus, omnibus numeris absolutus.*" Schleusner; who says that it is a word used by arithmeticians and geometers to express two figures or numbers which exactly coincide. Raphelius (*Annot. Philol.*) observes, that it is used by Herodotus in the sense of *paratus*, ready. The apostle's meaning is, that the evangelist having been instructed by himself in the Christian doctrine, and being also perfectly conversant with the

Ch. III. Ver. 17.

Of those books which are held in the highest estimation by the Hebrew nation, certain portions are, and others are not, of divine authority. A sound judgement will discriminate: and whatever respect may be due to the productions of wise and good men, the inspired scriptures alone are entitled to our entire confidence, and are the only authority to which we can with propriety appeal as a confirmation of the Christian revelation. With respect to the inspired scripture, therefore, I may say, that the whole is profitable and edifying, and that every part has its appropriate use. One portion of the Jewish scriptures is calculated to instruct those who peruse and understand them, in the advent of the Messiah, in his character and offices, and in the nature of that spiritual kingdom which he would be authorized to establish. The prophetic writings also contain the most convincing evidence of the mission of Christ, having received their proper accomplishment in him, and in no other person. The same scriptures are likewise well adapted to correct the extravagant errors into which the Jews are so prone to fall, both with respect to the temporal nature of the Messiah's kingdom, and to the perpetuity and universal obligation of the Mosaic institute. Finally, the Jewish scriptures themselves plainly teach the proper discipline of the new dispensation, as consisting, not,

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Jewish scriptures, would be completely qualified for the performance of every branch of his office of preaching the gospel, both to Jew and Gentile.

like the old covenant, in the observation of outward rites, but in the love of God and man, and in the practice of universal virtue. So that by a careful perusal of the writings of the Old Testament, in connexion with the instructions which you have received from me, you will become complete for the ministry of the gospel; an evangelist perfectly qualified for the honourable and successful discharge of the various duties of your arduous office, whether for the conversion of the heathen, or for the conviction or confutation of the Jews. Such is the high estimation in which I hold the sacred oracles of the Jews, though I am calumniated by my adversaries as despising and disparaging their authority, and as endeavouring to subvert their design. Ch. III. Ver. 17.

SECTION VIII.

THE APOSTLE gives a solemn charge to Timothy to be faithful, firm, and persevering, in the duties of his office, and enforces the charge by various important considerations. Chap. iv. 1—8. Ch. IV.

1. The apostle presses upon the evangelist diligence, earnestness, patience and perseverance, in the duties of his ministry, from the consideration of the divine inspection, and the account which he would give to Christ at the great day. Ch. iv. ver. 1, 2.

Ch. IV. Ver. 1. *I solemnly charge* thee *therefore, in the presence of God, and of Jesus Christ*[1], *who will hereafter judge the living and the dead, and by his appear-*
2. *ance, and by his kingdom*[2], *proclaim the word, be urgent in season, out of season*[3], *convince, reprove, exhort, with the utmost patience of instruction*[4].

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[1] *Of Jesus Christ.*] The oldest copies and versions have not the words τȣ Κυριȣ, *of the Lord*, and they are also omitted in Griesbach's edition and Newcome's translation. *In the presence of Jesus Christ*, that is, as though Jesus Christ were now actually present with me or you. If Jesus Christ is to judge the world in person, he must, no doubt, be personally and intimately acquainted with the characters and conduct of men. But probably the event may not exactly correspond with the literal signification of the words. And it is by events only that prophecy can be truly interpreted.

[2] *And by his appearance,* &c.] The best copies read και for κατα. See Griesbach and Newcome. *q.d.* I charge you, as you will answer for it at his glorious appearance, when he shall come to take possession of his kingdom.

[3] *In season, out of season.*] ευκαιρως, ακαιρως. "when you can do it in safety, and when it will expose you to danger; in private, as well as in public; on Lord's days, and on other days." Benson. Dr. Priestley observes, that "there cannot be any charge more solemn than this; and as the duties here enumerated are no other than those of every minister of the gospel, not only ought all ministers to be zealous in the discharge of what they apprehend to be their duty, of which they are to give so solemn an account, but the people ought also to bear with their zeal, which is intended for their good, though in consequence of their not giving the same attention to the subject of religion, they may not immediately perceive the importance of some articles on which their ministers may see reason to lay great stress."

[4] *With the utmost patience of instruction.*] Dr. Benson says, "It is observable that the apostle never mentions patience and lenity when he putteth Titus upon reproving; whereas he frequently recommends them to Timothy, ch. ii. 24, 25, iii. 10. Whether Timothy's being of a warmer temper than Titus, or the obstinacy of the persons with whom Titus had to do, might occasion this difference in the apostle's exhortations, does not now plainly appear."

You, O Timothy! have been favoured with advantages beyond almost all others, to qualify you for the honourable and sacred office with which you are invested. You have enjoyed the instructions and the example of an apostle, you are well acquainted with the Jewish scriptures, you are endowed with extraordinary gifts and powers. Let then your exertions be proportioned to your qualifications. Ch. IV. Ver. 2.

I solemnly adjure you therefore, in the name and presence of that great God who searches the hearts, who communicates to all their several talents and qualifications for usefulness, and who strictly observes how these talents are employed; I adjure you further, in the name and as in the presence of our revered master Jesus Christ, who is appointed to the high and glorious office of judging the living and the dead, at whose tribunal we must hereafter appear, who will make inquisition into our conduct, and reward us according to our works: Yes, my friend, I solemnly adjure you, by the approaching solemnities of that awful day, to which, as the disciples of Jesus, we look forward with anxious expectation, when Jesus shall appear again in pomp and majesty, to raise the dead and to judge the world; and by the glories of that celestial empire which will then commence, and in the honours and the triumphs of which we hope, and, if faithful to our profession, shall certainly bear a conspicuous part: upon all these important and weighty considerations I adjure and charge you, as a Christian evangelist, proclaim the gospel upon all occasions, and in every

Ch. IV. Ver. 2. place, with energy and courage; press home the glorious doctrine upon the hearts of your hearers, not only at stated seasons of public worship and instruction, but upon every opportunity of communicating evangelical truth which may accidentally occur, and watch for such opportunities, whether in public or in private: confute the opposers and the corrupters of the gospel, and establish the truth by the most convincing evidence: reprove those who are departing from the simplicity of the faith, or whose conduct is a disgrace to their profession: exhort your hearers to perseverance in Christian doctrine, and in virtuous practice. Let me add, that though I desire you to be zealous, I would enter a caution against heat of temper and imprudent zeal. Let patience and forbearance accompany your instructions. Indulge no resentment against those who are unwilling to listen to your doctrine, who even treat it with contempt, and load you with reproach. Meekly persevere in the performance of your duty, and leave the result to God.

2. The apostle enforces the exhortation, from the consideration of the increasing number of unfaithful teachers, and of prejudiced and immoral hearers, ver. 3—5.

3. *For a time will come, when* men *will not endure this salutary doctrine*[1], *but to soothe their ears*[2]

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[1] *Salutary doctrine.*] ὑγιαινουσης, *sound, wholesome, healthful doctrine.* "That is sound doctrine," says Dr. Benson, "which

will multiply to themselves teachers according to their own inclinations, and will turn away their attention from truth, and will go aside to fables[3]. Ch. IV. Ver. 4.

Perhaps you are ready to complain that men are unwilling to hear the gospel, and you are thereby discouraged from preaching it. But be assured, Timothy, that, bad as the state of things in that respect now is, it will in a short time be much worse. You may now teach the plain unsophisticated truths of the Christian religion, and may enforce its moral precepts, and you will have many hearers who will be instructed, pleased, and edified, with your doctrine. But in a few years the case will be altered. Men professing Christianity will not endure to hear those salutary truths which would make them wiser

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promotes a holy life. And it is the love of vice which renders men averse to sound doctrine, and puts them upon following such teachers as will gratify their humours and inclinations; and please their ears or fancies, without attacking or condemning their opinions and their vices."

[2] *But to soothe their ears.*] So Wakefield. Gr. "having itching ears." For this collocation of the words, see Markland *apud* Bowyer.

[3] *To fables.*] Dr. Priestley says, "The doctrines to which the apostle here alludes were undoubtedly those of the Gnostics. He did not live long enough to see the rise of other and greater corruptions of Christianity, though they were in some respects of a similar nature. Had the apostle lived to have seen the rise and progress of such doctrines as the trinity, original sin, predestination, and atonement, his indignation would have risen much higher than it did against any doctrines held by the Gnostics, because they were much further removed from the genuine principles of Christianity. Compared with these doctrines, which infringe upon the great article of the unity of God, and which derogate from the equitable principles of his moral government, the notions of the Gnostics were only idle fables."

Ch. IV. Ver. 4. and better. They will become very nice and captious in their judgement concerning their teachers. And in the choice of instructors each will expect to have his own taste gratified in preference to the edification and improvement of all. And they will chiefly prize and value those instructors who will teach them how to reconcile the hope of future happiness with the gratification of their passions. For this reason they will desert the simple intelligible doctrine of the gospel, and a serious plain practical ministry, and will delight in nothing but either the charms of eloquence, or those wild, abstruse, and fictitious notions which, while they perplex and confound their understandings, contribute nothing to the improvement of their character.

5. *But be thou watchful upon all* occasions [1], *endure evil treatment* [2], *perform the work of an evangelist, fully execute thy ministry* [3].

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[1] *Be watchful.*] νηφε εν πασι, "be thou sober on all occasions." Wakefield. "maintain a severe and universal temperance." Harwood. This is the proper sense of the word νηφω, and it is included in the exposition; but the word also signifies to watch, and this sense best suits the connexion. See Newcome, Benson, and Schleusner.—Timothy must be very much altered if he needed to be cautioned against intemperance. See 1 Tim. v. 23.

[2] *Endure evil treatment.*] See Macknight. "patiently bear the ill treatment which the enemies of the gospel will give thee." "κακοπαθησον, endure hardship." Wakefield. "encounter difficulties." Harwood. "suffer hardships." Newcome.

[3] *Fully execute thy ministry.*] πληροφορησον. "fulfill thy ministry." Newcome. Comp. ver. 17. "Perhaps πληρωσον, as Luke xiii. 25. Col. iv. 17." Mangey *apud* Bowyer.

Let these considerations, Timothy, induce you to maintain a strict and habitual government over yourself, that you may not upon any occasion be thrown off your guard, or by inadvertence or imprudence discredit your profession and injure your usefulness. Let not your character be in the least degree assimilated to that of these false teachers. And keep a vigilant eye upon the churches intrusted to your care. Oppose to the utmost of your power the first symptoms of that evil spirit which I have described. You will meet with much opposition from the enemies of truth; you will be calumniated, insulted, and persecuted by those who, to answer their own sinister purposes, would debase and corrupt the gospel. Regard it not. Arm yourself with fortitude and Christian magnanimity. Be not dismayed. Resolve at all hazards to perform the whole, and every part of your duty, as a minister of the gospel, as an associate, and an authorized successor of the apostles. Shrink not from your appointed share, whether of labours or of sufferings; and aim at nothing but the complete discharge of the various and arduous duties of the province which has been assigned you, whatever be the consequence. Ch. IV. Ver. 5.

3. The apostle is the more earnest in his exhortation, from a conviction that his own season of service is drawing to a close: and he takes occasion to express to the evangelist the high satisfaction which he feels in the review of his conduct, and his triumphant expectation of a future reward, ver. 6—8.

Ch. IV. Ver. 6. *For the libation is already poured out upon my head*[1], *and the time of my departure is near.*

I am the more earnest, my dear friend, in these exhortations to diligence and fidelity, as I am very apprehensive that my season of service is drawing rapidly to a conclusion, when I shall no longer be able to assist you either by my advice or my example. My time of life, and my situation as a prisoner waiting for the judgement of the emperor, lead me to expect that my residence here will be but of short duration. I see the preparations made to offer me up. The libation is already poured upon the victim's head. I stand before the altar: and in a few short months, or perhaps weeks, the sacrifice will

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[1] *For the libation,* &c.] ἠδὴ σπένδομαι. "For the libation is already poured out upon my devoted head." Harwood; who observes, that "it is a sacrifical term; that the apostle alludes to the libation that was poured on the victim before it was sacrificed." "Σπένδω, *propriè* libo: *vinum effundo victimæ in honorem Dei. Metaphoricè*, paulatim absumor, 2 Tim. iv. 6. *Jam enim, omnes vires meæ sensim minuuntur et absumuntur.*" Schleusner. "*Jam nunc aspergor vino: præparor ad mortem, ut victimæ solent.*" Grotius. "I am now ready to be poured out." Newcome. "as a libation upon God's altar." Doddridge.

Mr. Wakefield's translation in his first edition was: "I am now pouring out my libation: *q. d.* in grateful acknowledgement to God for my victory." The apostle represents himself as a conqueror at the games, who, having received his award, was offering his sacrifice, and preparing to depart. A very beautiful and interesting image. But the learned author, upon recollection probably conceiving that the original would not well bear that interpretation, altered his translation in his second edition to, *I am pouring out myself as a libation.* I follow the interpretation of Grotius and Harwood, who take the verb in a passive sense, and understand the apostle as describing himself as a victim standing before the altar, upon which the libation has been poured, and which is just ready for the knife.

be complete. The fatal blow will be struck; and I shall bid adieu to this scene of warfare and suffering. But think not that I look forward to that awful hour with feelings of despondency or dismay. No; Ch. IV. Ver. 6.

I have contended in a good cause, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith[2]. As to *what remaineth, a crown of righteousness is reserved for me, which the Lord, the impartial judge*[3], *will award to me in that day*[4], *and not to me only, but to all those also who love his appearance.* 7. 8.

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[2] *I have kept the faith.*] "been faithful to my engagements, by an honourable observance of all the laws of the game." Wakefield. See ii. 5. Dr. Benson denies that the expression την πιστιν τετηρηκα can bear this sense, and interprets it "of faithfully discharging the duties of a high public station." "I have maintained an inviolable fidelity." Harwood.

[3] *Impartial judge.*] "impartial umpire." Wakefield. Dr. Benson says, "he here represents the great judge, who had been witness to all his behaviour, with a crown in his hand, which he will bestow upon him as the reward of his faithfulness and of his coming off victor."

[4] *In that day.*] "the great day of judgement;" "for so," says Dr. Benson, "the phrase generally signifies throughout the New Testament." "With what satisfaction," says Dr. Priestley in his note upon this text, "does the apostle here reflect upon his conduct as a preacher of the gospel! and what encouragement must this have given to Timothy, and ought to give to us to follow him in the same work of zeal and labour of love!" He adds, "I cannot help observing in this place, that the rewards which the apostle expected were, in his idea, to be conferred only at the time of the general resurrection, called, by way of eminence, *that* day, the time of the appearing of Jesus Christ, when he shall come to raise the dead and judge the world. Had he had any expectation of receiving the reward, or any part of the reward, of his labours immediately after death, he could not have been so ungrateful as to have entirely overlooked it."

There is little foundation for the remark of Dr. Doddridge

Ch. IV. Ver. 8.

Think not, Timothy, now that I am come to the close of life, and review my conduct as a preacher of the gospel, and an apostle of Christ, that I repent of my faithful adherence to my revered master, or that I regret any of the labours, or the sufferings, which I have undergone in his cause. No, my friend, I triumph in the recollection that I have successfully and perseveringly maintained, and am now concluding, an arduous but an honourable struggle with the enemies of the Christian faith; that I have now finished a glorious race which has required unintermitting vigilance, and has called forth all the energies of my soul. And I am proud to say, that I have resolutely and firmly adhered to the cause in which I was embarked, and to the principles with which I entered upon the contest; and that amidst great opposition, and many struggles, I have preserved the Christian doctrine pure and uncorrupted, and the liberties of the Gentile church inviolate. Nothing now remains but to receive the prize. Not indeed a chaplet of fading flowers, or withering

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upon this text, that "though it certainly proves that the great and most glorious reward of faithful Christians is referred to the day of general judgement, it would, nevertheless, be very precarious to argue from hence that there shall be no *prelibation* and *anticipation* of this happiness in a separate state. And when *the many texts* which have been so often urged in proof of that intermediate happiness are considered, it is surprising that any stress can be laid on the objection which can be drawn from such passages as this." It may surely be asked, where those *many* texts are to be found which speak of *prelibations* and *anticipations* of future happiness antecedently to the day of judgement.

leaves, but a diadem of everlasting glory and felicity, which my honoured Master, the impartial umpire of the course, who has been witness to my resolute and persevering efforts, will place upon my head in that day to which he has directed the hopes and expectations of his faithful servants: that awful, that delightful day, when he will himself appear to fulfill all his glorious promises, and when every honest exertion in his cause, and every sacrifice for truth and righteousness, shall meet with ample compensation, and be crowned with everlasting honour. Ch. IV. Ver. 8.

For be assured, Timothy, that this glorious prize is not limited to myself alone, or, to those who, like me, are apostles of Christ. It is held forth to you, to every faithful minister of the gospel, to every sincere and approved disciple of Jesus in every age, who by a practical adherence to the profession of the gospel, and by earnest endeavours to extend its dominion to the utmost of his power, demonstrates that he has imbibed its spirit, lives under the influence of its awful expectations, and is supremely solicitous to obtain the final approbation of his Lord and Master. May you, my friend, by bearing a willing part in his labours and sufferings, make good your title to participate with him in his final and everlasting triumph.

Ch. IV.
Ver. 8.

SECTION IX.

THE APOSTLE expresses his earnest desire to see his friend: he gives a brief account of his present situation, and concludes with a salutation, a doxology, and the apostolic benediction. Ch. iv. 9—22.

1. The apostle expresses his earnest desire to see Timothy, and the rather as many had quitted him; and he requests that the evangelist would take the charge of certain articles which he had left at Troas, ver. 9—13.

9. *Do thy utmost to come to me speedily.*

Many of my associates and fellow-labourers have, for one reason or another, quitted my company, so that I am left alone here among strangers. Your society and assistance in these circumstances will be peculiarly acceptable to me. Endeavour therefore to come to Rome as soon as you conveniently can.

10. *For Demas hath forsaken me*[1] *through love of the present world, and is gone to Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia; Titus to Dalmatia*[2].

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[1] *Demas,* &c.] Demas is mentioned with honour by the apostle in his epistle to Philemon, ver. 24, as his fellow-labourer in connexion with Mark and Luke; it is probable, therefore, that he soon recovered from his alarm, and returned to the apostle. See Lardner's *History of the Apostles,* vol. ii. p. 283, ed. 2.

[2] *Titus to Dalmatia.*] From the manner and connexion in

My situation here was so very perilous, that Demas, whose possessions and connexions in this world engross too great a share of his affections, took the alarm, and is gone to Thessalonica to be out of the way of danger. Crescens likewise, and even Titus, have left me: the former having returned to Asia, and the latter having crossed the sea into Dalmatia. I do not, however, doubt that they, the two latter at least, will employ themselves usefully in their respective stations, though I would rather have enjoyed their society, aid, and comfort, at Rome. Ch. IV. Ver. 10.

Luke only is with me. Take Mark and bring him with thee: for he will be useful to me as a minister. 11.

All however have not deserted me. Luke, and he alone of my Asiatic friends, is still with me: the fearless associate of my labours and my dangers, and the faithful historian of my apostolic mission. In

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which the name of this evangelist is here introduced, it is highly probable that he had made this excursion from timidity, and without the apostle's concurrence. Luke remained while the others fled, and it is not impossible that he might feel some resentment at the cowardice of his companions. This is the last we hear of Titus: it does not appear that he ever returned to the apostle, and possibly it was for this reason that his name is never once mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, which might be composed by Luke during his residence with Paul at Rome. The apostle, however, does not insinuate that either Titus or Crescens or Demas had apostatized from the faith; but he certainly gives no intimation that he had himself sent either of them upon an evangelical mission. Demas is mentioned with honour in connexion with Luke, Col. iii. 14. See also Benson on 2 Tim. iv. 10. These circumstances favour the supposition that this epistle was written at the beginning of the apostle's first imprisonment, as stated in the introduction to this epistle.

Ch. IV. Ver. 11. your way to Rome call upon Mark and bring him with you. Like Demas, he once deserted the service, being alarmed at the prospect of difficulties and perils [1]. But he has long since retrieved his character. And though I formerly declined his society, and even parted with Barnabas rather than I would accept the company of Mark, I now think very differently of him, and desire his presence and assistance as an active, faithful, and useful minister and associate.

12. *And I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus* [2].

He will set you at liberty and supply your place, so that when he arrives I hope you will set out immediately.

13. *When thou comest, bring with thee the bag* [3] *which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, but especially the parchments* [4].

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[1] *He once deserted.*] See Acts xiii. 13, xv. 38, 39.

[2] *I have sent Tychicus.*] If Tychicus went to Ephesus, and was the bearer of this epistle to Timothy, he certainly returned to Rome before the end of the apostle's imprisonment, as he was, together with Onesimus, the bearer of the epistles to the Ephesians, the Colossians, and Philemon, which were all written a short time before the apostle's release. See Eph. vi. 21; Col. iv. 7, 9; Philem. ver. 10, 22.

[3] *The bag.*] "φελόνης, *omne integumentum et involucrum alicujus rei.*" Schleusner. Probably the apostle means the cloke-bag or portmanteau which contained his books and parchments. It is hardly to be supposed that it could be an object of any importance to the apostle to send for an old cloke which he had left with his friend several years before. See Benson.

[4] *Books and parchments.*] Books were probably manuscripts written upon a less durable substance, such as bark or papyrus. Parchment was more durable, and probably contained the more valuable writings. Learned men have trifled egregiously in conjecturing what these parchments contained. See Macknight. Benson

You will pass through Troas in your way. Call at the house of Carpus, and bring with you the portmanteau and the books which I left under the care of that valuable friend some years ago. If you cannot bring all, I particularly request that you would at least bring the volumes which are written upon parchment, and which I value most. I foresee that my confinement here will probably be of some duration, and it will be convenient to have my books at hand. Ch. IV. Ver. 13.

2. The apostle warns Timothy against the wicked practices of Alexander, who was a bitter enemy to the apostle's doctrine, ver. 14, 15.

Alexander the coppersmith[5] *has done me great injury: the Lord will reward him according to his works*[6]. *Against whom be thou also upon thy guard, for he vehemently opposes our doctrine.* 14. 15.

Benson *on Epistles,* vol. ii. p. 510. Troas, on account of the narrowness of the passage by sea, appears to have been frequented as a convenient station for travellers who desired to cross from Asia into Greece. It was probably Timothy's best way to Rome as winter approached. The apostle Paul, in his way from Greece to Syria, though in haste, passed from Philippi to Troas. Acts xx.

[5] *Alexander the coppersmith.*] Probably the same man whom the Jews wished to bring forward during the tumult at Ephesus, Acts xix. 33; and the same whom the apostle had excommunicated as an apostate, 1 Tim. i. 20. He is supposed to have been a Jewish Gnostic. See Dr. Priestley on the text.

[6] *The Lord will reward him,* &c.] This is the reading of the Alexandrine, Ephrem, Clermont, and Corbey manuscripts. Griesbach marks it as of high authority; and it relieves the difficulty arising from the supposed execration of the apostle, which is expressed in the received text.

Ch. IV. Ver. 15. This man is a bitter enemy to the gospel, and especially to the doctrine which you and I think it our duty to teach and to enforce, the perfect liberty of the gentile church. By his malicious opposition he has done me all the injury he could; and though, as I mentioned to you in a former letter, I have expelled him from the communion of the Christian church, and so far diminished his influence among professed believers, he seems to be exasperated rather than reformed by this measure of needful severity. I however have proceeded against him to the utmost limits of my apostolical authority. If he persist in his malignant and injurious conduct, he must be left in the hand of God, who will inflict upon him condign punishment. In the mean time be you upon your guard against his malice and enmity, and by prudence and firmness repel every attack, and deprive him of every advantage against you.

3. The apostle informs Timothy, that though he was deserted by his timid friends at his first appearance at the imperial tribunal, nevertheless God supported and rescued him, and that he continues to place entire confidence in the divine protection, ver. 16—18.

16. *At my first defence no one was with me, but all* men *forsook me*[1]*: may it not be imputed to their charge.*

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[1] *All forsook me.*] As the apostle was writing to Timothy, to whom the Roman converts were unknown, he probably alludes chiefly in this passage to the Christians who had been his

When my cause was first brought to a hearing, the Christians here, as well as those who accompanied me from Asia, were seized with a sudden panic, and would not venture to appear with me in court, but left me to plead my cause alone. Such timid conduct was hardly to be expected from men who had made so many solemn professions of attachment to my person, and of zeal for truth. But the case was perilous, and human nature is frail. Their misconduct was the effect of timidity, not of insincerity. I heartily forgive them, and I pray God to forgive them too. Ch. IV. Ver. 16.

But the Lord stood by me[2] *and gave me strength; that by me the preaching* of the gospel *might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was rescued from the lion's mouth*[3]. 17.

Though my friends deserted me, the Lord was at hand, and graciously inspired me with wisdom, courage, and eloquence, which raised me above the need of human support, and enabled me, in the presence of my accusers and my judges, to proclaim with

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companions out of Asia, and to whose firmness and friendship and zeal he no doubt principally looked for support. See Benson *ad fin.*

[2] *The Lord stood by me.*] Perhaps the apostle means his master Jesus Christ, who had originally invested him with the apostolic office, and had frequently appeared to him in the course of his ministry; and who would no doubt be with him upon this important occasion. See 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9, Acts xxii. 18. But the expression is ambiguous.

[3] *The lion's mouth.*] Mr. Wakefield understands this as a proverbial expression, and not as alluding to any individual, whether the emperor or his deputy; which, however, is the opinion of most expositors.

Ch. IV. Ver. 17. such undaunted boldness and convincing energy the truths of the gospel, as produced the most salutary impressions upon all who heard me, and contributed to the object of my apostolical mission, in making known the Christian doctrine to all classes and descriptions of men, whether of high or low degree, whether Jews or heathen. The consequence of this defence was an immediate order for a relaxation of my confinement; and my unexpected escape from a situation so critical and hazardous, is like deliverance from the very jaws of a lion.

18. *And the Lord will rescue me*[1] *from every danger*[2], *and will preserve me for his heavenly kingdom*[3]. *To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

The Lord, whom I faithfully serve, and who has hitherto been my powerful protector, will continue to protect me still: and while he has any work for me to perform, he will guard me from impending dangers, and will preserve and enable me to go through every labour which may be requisite for

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[1] *The Lord*, &c.] See the note upon verse 17. The apostle at this time was uncertain of the issue of his imprisonment. In his letters to the Philippians, Colossians, &c., written above a year afterwards, he expresses great hope of release.

[2] *From every danger.*] εργε πονηρε, evil work. See Wakefield. —"*Multi intelligunt de indigno quovis facinore, quod in se apostolus admittere posset: alii vero, de facinore quovis, quod in eum falsi fratres, aut nominis Christiani hostes machinari possent.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Preserve me for his heavenly kingdom.*] εις, "that he will bring me safe *to* it." Benson. Or perhaps that he will preserve me for it; for the purpose of promoting the progress of the gospel, the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of righteousness and truth and peace in this world. Εις sometimes signifies *in order to*. See Rom. i. 17, xvi. 26. See Macknight's *Introd.* Ess. 4.

the promulgation of the gospel and the establishment of his kingdom in the world. And longer than this I desire not to live: for life is of no value when usefulness is ended. But in every situation, and to the remotest period of existence, I would acknowledge the goodness and celebrate the praises of him who honoured me with the apostolical mission, and who has hitherto preserved and encouraged me in the discharge of it. Amen. Ch. IV. Ver. 18.

4. The apostle concludes the epistle with salutations and a benediction, ver. 19—22.

Salute Prisca[4] *and Aquila, and the family of Onesiphorus*[5]. 19.

Remember me affectionately to those dear and venerable friends from whom I have received so much kindness, and to whose assistance I am so much indebted.

Erastus[6] *remains at Corinth, but Trophimus I have left sick at Miletus*[7]. 20.

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[4] *Prisca.*] In the Acts called Priscilla, which is probably a diminutive of the other. Acts xviii. 2, 26. See Benson. Dr. Owen takes Priscilla to be the true name, for which Prisca is an easy contraction. Bowyer.

[5] *The family,* &c.] Onesiphorus himself might be still at Rome; or at least not returned from his journey. See 2 Tim. i. 16.

[6] *Erastus.*] He was chamberlain of Corinth, and is mentioned Acts xvi. 23, xix. 22.—The apostle perhaps had requested Erastus to meet him at Rome, expecting that the friendship and patronage of a person of his rank and consequence might be of some use to him in the imperial court.

[7] *Miletus,* &c.] Grotius conjectures it should be Μελιτη, and supposes that Trophimus was left at Melita after the shipwreck. But Miletus was also a city in Crete, mentioned by Strabo and Pliny.

Ch. IV. Ver. 20. It did not suit Erastus to accompany or to follow me to Rome, as I wished and he intended; the duties of his office constrained him to continue at Corinth. Trophimus would have been glad to have attended me throughout, and he set off with me: but he fell sick by the way, and I was obliged to leave him at Miletus.

21. *Do thy utmost to come to me before winter*[1].

I am here a prisoner and almost alone. My old friends have left me, and I have not yet formed many new connexions. I shall therefore pass a solitary and uncomfortable winter if you and Mark do not give me your company. I again therefore request that you will set off as soon as possible after the receipt of this letter, and come to me at Rome before the stormy season sets in, and navigation becomes unpleasant and dangerous.

Eubulus and Pudens, and Linus and Claudia[2], *and all the brethren*[3] *salute thee.*

Our pious friends here, some of whom are per-

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[1] *Before winter.*] "From hence," says Dr. Benson, "we may conclude that this epistle was written some time in the spring or summer."

[2] *Eubulus, Pudens, &c.*] "Pudens is said to have been of the senatorian order; and Claudia, a British lady converted by St. Paul; but without sufficient authority. Linus is said by the ancients to have been afterwards the first bishop of Rome." Benson.

[3] *All the brethren.*] "This is an intimation that there were Christian brethren still at Rome, and that the whole church was not dispersed and broken up." Benson.

"No person," says Dr. Priestley, "can read these salutations from particular persons to particular persons, without being satisfied that this is a genuine epistle, written as other epistles of that age were. The circumstances of the cloke and other minute particulars, give us, however, no idea of his wri-

sons of distinction, who have heard of your character and zeal, and who entertain a high respect for you, desire to be affectionately remembered to you. Ch. IV. Ver. 21.

The Lord Jesus Christ be *with thy Spirit. Favour be with you. Amen.* 22.

I conclude with the best wish I can form for you. May Jesus Christ, our great and common master, be with you, as he has been with me. May he be your instructor, protector, and comforter, as he has been mine. May he dispose and qualify you to preach his gospel with fidelity, courage, and success. And finally, may all who attend your ministry, and particularly the Christians at Ephesus, who have enjoyed the chief benefit of your evangelical ministrations, abundantly participate with you in the blessings of the everlasting gospel. Amen.

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ting from inspiration, because we cannot imagine any want of it to such a man as Paul, in writing such an epistle as this; but that such a letter should be written by him in the circumstances in which he then was, is a very important consideration in favour of the truth of Christianity, because it cannot be accounted for without supposing the truth of the leading facts in the gospel history."

N.B. The Postscript is wanting in most of the ancient manuscripts and versions, and is not of the least authority. See Griesbach. It states that the Second Epistle to Timothy ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians, was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time.

THE EPISTLE

OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

TITUS.

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

TITUS, to whom this epistle is addressed, was a Greek (Gal. ii. 3), and was probably converted from idolatry by the apostle Paul, who calls him his genuine son in the faith (Tit. i. 4); but the time of his conversion cannot be ascertained. It is a remarkable circumstance that Luke never mentions the name of Titus in his history; though it appears from the epistle that both of them were companions of the apostle [1], and were probably associated in the same ministry.

The name of Titus first occurs in the Epistle to the Galatians [2]; where it appears that he accompa-

[1] Probably to the church at Corinth, 2 Cor. viii. 16—18.
[2] Gal. ii. 3.

nied Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem A.D. 49 or 50, when they went up to consult the apostles concerning the obligation which the converted Gentiles were said to be under to submit to the Mosaic ritual; upon which occasion the apostle declares, that he would not suffer Titus to resign his Christian liberty in order to gratify the prejudices of the Jewish bigots. After this, we hear no more of him till the date of this epistle, though he was probably the occasional, if not the constant, attendant upon the apostle in his mission [1].

Luke gives no account in his history of the first promulgation of the gospel in Crete; and learned men have assigned different times for this event, according to their different hypotheses. It is a matter of little consequence. The opinion which appears to me the most probable, is that which represents the apostle as having made an excursion into Crete, in the course of the three years in which he resided principally at Ephesus. He went thither perhaps in the beginning of the year 56, or the latter end of 55, and took Titus with him; and having made a considerable number of converts, he returned to Ephesus, leaving Titus behind to settle the affairs of the church, and to establish good order and good morals among the new converts. Soon after his return he wrote this letter to Titus, to encourage and support him in those vigorous mea-

[1] 2 Cor. viii. 23. The apostle calls him his partner and fellow-labourer.

sures which it was necessary for him to adopt among a people so ignorant, vicious, and unruly. The apostle directs Titus to remain in Crete till he should be relieved by Tychicus or Artemas (ch. iii. 12), after which he desires him to come to him at Nicopolis, where he then proposed to pass the winter. But, having received a letter from the Corinthians soon after his return to Ephesus, and learning from their messengers the deplorable state of the church at Corinth, the apostle appears to have altered his plan. Deferring his intended journey to Corinth, he determined to remain at Ephesus till Pentecost (1 Cor. xvi. 5); and being solicitous to know what impression his epistle had made upon the Corinthians, he sent Artemas to relieve Titus[2], and directed that evangelist to go immediately to Corinth, and to meet him at Troas in the summer of A.D. 56 (2 Cor. ii. 12). Not finding Titus at Troas, he went forward to Macedonia, where it appears that he met this evangelist, who gave him an account upon the whole agreeable, though not altogether satisfactory, of the state of the Corinthian church. The apostle, having received this information, resolved to postpone his visit to Corinth for a year, and in the mean time he went probably into Dalmatia and Illyricum to preach the gospel, and took Titus with him. Upon his return to Mace-

[2] Acts xx. 4. Tychicus went with Paul to Asia; probably, therefore, not Tychicus, but Artemas, had been sent to Crete to relieve Titus.

donia, the apostle sent that evangelist, together with Luke, and another eminent person, to carry his second epistle to the Corinthians, and to hasten their collection for the benefit of the Hebrew Christians; recommending Titus to them as his partner and fellow-helper (ch. viii. 23). Soon afterwards the apostle came to Corinth himself [1]. The last mention which is made of Titus is 2 Tim. iv. 10; from which it appears that he had been with the apostle during his imprisonment at Rome, and that he went from him to Dalmatia, which Dr. Lardner regards as a presumptive argument that he had visited that country before. But whether Titus went upon this occasion with, or, without the approbation of the apostle, does not appear; probably the latter, as the apostle complains of being deserted by every body but Luke. And this, perhaps, might be the reason why Luke, taking offence at Titus on account of his abandonment of the apostle in the season of danger, might purposely leave out his name in his history of the apostolic missions.

The design of the epistle is, to direct the evangelist to the choice of persons properly qualified to superintend the Christian churches, and to animate and support him in those vigorous measures which might be necessary to the preservation of order and discipline among the new converts from an unruly

[1] See Lardner's *Hist. of Apostles*, &c., ch. xii. § 6; Benson's and Doddridge's Prefaces to the Epistle to Titus.

people; and likewise to explain those relative and personal virtues upon which it would be necessary for the evangelist to insist, as indispensable requisites to the Christian character. It has been observed, that there is a remarkable resemblance between this epistle and the First Epistle to Timothy[2], which was no doubt written nearly at the same time, and upon a similar occasion, but that the apostle is more concise in his exhortation to Titus, who was probably a man of considerable

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[2] Archdeacon Paley, in his *Horæ Paulinæ*, has noticed the visible affinity between the Epistle to Titus and the First Epistle to Timothy, as a presumption in favour of the genuineness of both. He particularly mentions, that the writer accosts his two friends with the same salutations, and passes on to the business of his Letter with the same transition: 1 Tim. i. 2, 3, Titus i. 4, 5;—that the advice to both evangelists is similar, 1 Tim. i. 4, Titus iii. 9, 1 Tim. iv. 12, Titus ii. 15;—that the phrase "this is a faithful saying," occurs three times in the first epistle to Timothy, once in the second, and once in this, and in no other part of Paul's writings;—that the word *sound*, as applied to words or doctrine, is used twice in the first epistle to Timothy, twice in the second, and three times in the epistle to Titus, and no where else in the New Testament; and that the phrase *God our Saviour* is found only in these epistles. Also, that similar terms are employed in the epistle to Titus, and the first to Timothy, in describing the qualifications required in those who should be advanced to stations of authority in the church.

Hence the learned writer concludes, that the two epistles were written nearly at the same time, and both of them in the interval between the apostle's first and second imprisonment. The former supposition is indeed highly probable; but it is an insurmountable objection against the latter, that the preaching of the gospel in Crete should have been delayed to so late a period. A more probable date has, I think, been assigned to both the epistles; but of this the reader will judge. Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, chap. xiii.

ability, and of greater age and experience than Timothy.

In the prosecution of his purpose, FIRST, The apostle, in the INTRODUCTION to the epistle, solemnly announces himself as the authorized teacher of that doctrine of life which, having been promised in past ages, had by Jesus Christ been explicitly revealed; and expresses his devout wishes for the happiness of his convert and his friend. Ch. i. 1—4.

SECONDLY. The apostle assigns his special reason for leaving Titus in Crete: namely, to appoint superintendants over the churches; which leads him to insist upon the qualifications necessary to the honourable and successful discharge of the episcopal or pastoral office. And he further takes notice of the peculiar difficulty which would attend the discharge of this office in Crete, arising from the profligate character of the Cretans themselves; which fully corresponded with the description given of them by one of their own poets, and which required uncommon vigilance, prudence, and fortitude, in those who were to be their instructors in the faith, the advocates of pure religion, and the guardians of Christian morals, ver. 5—16.

THIRDLY. The apostle directs the evangelist to enforce upon the aged and the young of both sexes, an habitual regard to the duties appropriate to their respective ages and characters. Ch. ii. 1—8.

FOURTHLY. He directs Titus to exhort slaves to

obedience, meekness, and fidelity, upon evangelical principles. These exhortations he enforces by the consideration, that the design of the gospel is to redeem men of all ranks from the dominion of ignorance and vice, and to introduce all equally into a state of privilege and hope, ver. 9—15.

Fifthly. He exhorts subjects to obey their civil rulers, and to live in peace, and notices the great and beneficial change which a thorough conversion to the Christian religion introduces into the social state, and the unspeakable goodness of God in calling the Gentiles to the hope of life by Jesus Christ. Ch. iii. ver. 1—7.

Sixthly. The apostle directs professing Christians to follow useful and reputable occupations, and to avoid trifling disputes: he advises Titus to expel from the Christian community men of a contentious and contumacious spirit; and concludes the epistle with a charge to Titus to come to him at Nicopolis; commending to his notice Zenas and Apollos[1]; repeating his exhortation to recommend industry to those who professed the Christian faith; and adding, finally, his salutations and benediction, ver. 8—15.

The epistle is said, in the Postscript, to have been

[1] Apollos was certainly with the apostle at Ephesus when he wrote the First Epistle to the Corinthians; and as he declined going to Corinth, he might perhaps make a visit to Crete. 1 Cor. xvi. 12.

written from Nicopolis[1]; but it is more probable that it was written from Ephesus in the spring of A.D. 56.[2]

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[1] There were several cities of that name; one in Thrace, which is the city supposed by Theodoret and Chrysostom to have been intended by the apostle: in this opinion they are joined by Lardner. Jerom understood it of Nicopolis in Epirus, which took its name from the victory at Actium. Paley agrees with Jerom.

[2] Dr. Lardner places the date of this epistle A.D. 56, after the apostle left Ephesus. I follow Dr. Ashworth, who supposed it to have been written in the same year, *before* he left Ephesus. Dr. Doddridge thought it was written between the first and second imprisonment at Rome: Mill places it in 64, Pearson in 65. Lardner thinks it not probable that Crete should have remained so long without the knowledge of the gospel.

THE

EPISTLE TO TITUS.

SECTION I.

THE APOSTLE'S INTRODUCTION.

1. THE apostle announces himself as the authorized teacher of that doctrine of life, which having, under the former dispensation, been the subject of promise, is now explicitly revealed by Jesus Christ, and expresses his devout wishes for the happiness of his convert and friend. Ch. i. 1—4. Ch. I.

PAUL, a servant[1] *of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for* promoting[2] *the faith of the chosen* Ver. 1.

[1] *A servant.*] δουλος, *a slave.* "This is the only epistle of Paul in which he begins with calling himself a servant of God: 1 Pet. ii. 16. The apostle might allude to the case of the Hebrew slave, who, when he might have had his liberty in the seventh year, declared he loved his master and would not be released, but obliged himself to be a servant for life." Benson.

[2] *For* promoting.] κατα πιστιν, according to the faith. κατα ευσεβειαν, according to godliness; *i. e.* which promotes faith and godliness. Vide Doddridge, Worsley, Raphelius. "Not *according to*, but for *promoting of:* place ver. 2, 3, in a paren-

Ch. I. Ver. 2. *of God, and the acknowledgement*[1] *of the truth which promoteth godliness, (concerning the hope of everlasting life, which God, who cannot falsify, promised before the ancient dispensations*[2]*, but which promise*[3] *he hath in its own times*[4] *manifested by the preaching which hath been committed to me according to the appointment of God our Saviour,)*

4. *to Titus,* my *genuine son*[5]*, in the common faith*[6]*, favour and peace*[7] *from God* our *father, and the Lord Jesus Christ*[8] *our Saviour.*

The apostle, intending to give directions to Titus

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thesis." Owen *ap.* Bowyer.—Griesbach begins the parenthesis at κατα.

[1] *Acknowledgement.*] επιγνωσιν, "agnitio, *verius quam* cognitio." Erasmus.—*To acknowledge* is a stronger expression than *knowledge* (γνωσις): it signifies not only to *know*, but to admit and embrace it. 2 Cor. i. 13, 14. See Benson.

[2] *Before the ancient dispensations.*] So Newcome. "χρονων αιωνιων, before the *secular ages*." Benson. *i. e.* before the times or jubilees under the law: vide Benson's note.

[3] *But which promise.*] "but hath manifested his word." Newcome. λογον, "promise." Wakefield, Macknight.

[4] *Its own times.*] καιροις ιδιοις, in his own proper time. "Perhaps he alludes to prophecies, particularly Daniel's seventy weeks." Benson. "in due time." Newcome. So Castalio, Beza. "in its season." Wakefield.

[5] *Genuine son.*] γνησιω· *i. e.* one who holds the Christian doctrine in the purity in which it was taught by the apostle. "my own son." Newcome. "my true son." Wakefield.

[6] *Common faith.*] κοινην, faith common to Jews and Gentiles. This phrase is not used to Timothy, but to Titus a Gentile Christian, and therefore particularly proper and beautiful. See Benson.

[7] *Favour and peace.*] ελεος, *mercy*, is wanting in the best copies. Vide Benson, Mill, Griesbach.

[8] *Lord Jesus Christ.*] Κυριε, *Lord*, is wanting in the Alexandrine MS., and in the Coptic and Vulgate versions. Vide Benson and Griesbach.

concerning a proper choice of persons to superintend the affairs of Christian societies, and to preach the gospel in Crete, very properly introduces this advice, by announcing his own official and sacred character, and giving a brief and comprehensive summary of the doctrine he taught. Ch. I. Ver. 4.

He first professes himself to be the servant of God, his property, his redeemed, devoted, willing *slave;* subject to his unlimited and uncontrouled authority, and acknowledging no other rule of conduct than his will and pleasure.

Of Jesus Christ he declares himself to be an *apostle,* appointed to that high and honourable office by Jesus Christ himself; who, after his resurrection, had appeared to him for that purpose, and had given him a charge to preach the gospel to the heathen.

The design of his mission was, to *promote the faith of the chosen of God;* it was to establish the faith of those who already believed, and who, publicly professing the Christian doctrine, had been admitted into the society of those who are described as having been chosen by God out of the idolatrous and unbelieving world, to enjoy the privileges and hopes of the gospel.

But the apostle's mission further extended to the instruction of those who were not yet enlightened, who having been chosen were by him to be invited to the belief and profession of the gospel. He taught the gospel alike to the idolatrous heathen, and to the prejudiced Jews; and he taught it not as

Ch. I. Ver. 4. a matter of speculation, but as a great energetic practical principle of virtue and piety.

And the doctrine which the apostle taught related chiefly to that *hope of everlasting life, which God, who could not falsify, had promised.* Christianity produces its effect upon the hearts and lives of men, by revealing the unspeakably important doctrine of an everlasting state of righteous retribution. This it is which distinguishes the gospel from every other system of philosophy and moral instruction. It places the expectation of a life to come, upon the promise of a faithful and unchangeable God; and it is by the hopes and fears of a future life thus authoritatively confirmed, that the Christian religion produces its beneficial effects upon the heart, and makes men wiser and better.

This promise was made *antecedently to the ancient dispensations.* The expression is somewhat obscure. It signifies literally, *before eternal times.* Hence some have dreamed of what they call an eternal covenant of redemption; that is, of some mysterious transaction between the Father and the Son for the salvation of men, from all eternity, before time began. Others, with better appearance of reason, have understood the phrase of the promise which God made to Adam after the Fall, previously to the patriarchal or the Mosaic dispensations. The more probable interpretation is, that the apostle alludes to the promise which was made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to the ancient patriarchs, before the giving out of the law upon Mount Sinai.

Ch. I. Ver. 4.

It may be rendered, " the times of the ages." And it is well known, that age is often put for dispensation, and the plural sometimes for the singular. And the apostle, in most of his epistles, appeals to the promise of God to Abraham, that in him should all families of the earth be blessed, Gen. xii. 3, as a summary and promise of the gospel antecedently to the promulgation of the law. Most probably, therefore, he alludes to the same promise here.

It was then obscurely insinuated; it is now explicitly revealed. God, in his own time, under the gospel dispensation, which was promulgated at that time, which, to his unerring wisdom, appeared most expedient, has published to all mankind the promise, which was before known to few, and has authorized his holy servant and apostle to proclaim the glad tidings to all mankind without distinction; thus approving himself to be the faithful God, the Saviour, the deliverer of the Jew from the bondage of the law, and of the heathen from the yoke of idolatry and vice, and introducing all into a state of liberty, of reconciliation and of hope.

The apostle, invested with the high commission to proclaim these joyful tidings, addresses himself in the beginning of this epistle, to Titus, his *genuine son in the faith*, whom he had converted from error to truth, from immorality to virtue, from the worship of idols to the knowledge of the living and the true God; and who approved himself the genuine disciple of the apostle, by adhering stedfastly to the doctrine which he had received from him,

Ch. I. Ver. 4. neither blending it with heathen philosophy, nor corrupting it with Jewish superstition. He addresses Titus as his genuine son in the *common faith*, in that faith which was intended for the benefit of the Gentile as well as the Jew; in that gospel which promised eternal life to all of every nation who received its doctrines, and who yielded a practical subjection to its authority; and to this beloved son, as the best expression of his affectionate and paternal regard, he wishes grace and peace, in the continued possession of his interest in the gospel, of that gift which originated in infinite mercy, and which is productive of unspeakable peace and satisfaction of mind; a blessing which we derive from God, who acknowledges the endearing relation of a father to the Christian family, who are thus raised to partake of the adoption and inheritance of sons; and from the Lord Jesus Christ, whom we acknowledge as our master, and who was commissioned by his heavenly father to save us from vice and ruin, and to raise us to knowledge, to virtue, and to immortality.

SECTION II.

THE APOSTLE gives Titus some directions concerning the election of proper persons to superintend the churches of Crete, an office which the notorious vices of the Cretans made it necessary to fill with persons of the greatest prudence and respectability of character. Ch. i. ver. 5—16. Ch. I.

1. The apostle describes the qualifications of the man who was worthy of being selected for the episcopal office, ver. 5—9.

For this purpose I left thee in Crete, that thou mightest proceed to set right[1] *what was left undone*[2]*, and mightest appoint*[3] *elders in every city as I gave thee in charge.* Ver. 5.

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[1] *Proceed to set right.*] So Wakefield. "*pergas corrigere.*" Erasmus. See Macknight.—"Ut reliqua pergas ordinare. Το επι *in compositione significat interdum post alium venire, et in opere ejus immutare quid, aut ei supplementum addere.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *To set right what was left undone.*] So Wakefield. "set right the things that are wanted." Newcome. Dr. Priestley observes: "It is evident that elders and bishops were the same persons, for in one verse they are called elders and in the next verse bishops; and as every city or town, for there were no great cities in the island, had bishops, it is evident that they could not be diocesan bishops having ministers of other churches subordinate to them."

[3] *Appoint.*] The apostle gives no hint that the concurrence of the members of the society would be necessary to give validity to the appointment of Titus. Probably the Cretans were

Ch. 1. Ver. 5. My numerous engagements making it necessary for me to return to Ephesus before I had organized the many converts to Christianity in the different towns of Crete into regular societies, and appointed the proper superintendants, being well satisfied with regard to your prudence, activity, knowledge and zeal, I left you behind, Titus, my beloved associate, to finish this important work; and I now renew the charge which I gave you at my departure, that you will immediately proceed to select the most prudent and respectable characters in each society to superintend its spiritual concerns.

6. *If any one be irreproachable, the husband of one wife*[1], *having children who are believers, not accused of dissoluteness, nor disobedient*[2].

One of the first qualifications of a man who is selected to superintend the church is, that he be unblameable in the management of his own family; one who has no more than one wife, who is neither a polygamist, nor divorced from his first wife without sufficient reason, and married to another. If he have children, it must appear that he has brought

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too ignorant and too imperfectly reclaimed from their vices, and likewise too much under the influence of judaizing zealots, to be capable of making a proper choice for themselves.

[1] *Of one wife:*] i. e. of one wife at a time. The apostle did not mean to condemn second marriages, much less to prohibit marriage altogether to the priesthood. Whitby appeals to the authority of Chrysostom, Œcumenius, and Jerom.

[2] *Disobedient.*] Dr. Priestley observes, that "Christianity did not act as a charm, or suddenly, but gradually, there being in the first place a change of belief, or speculative principles only, and these producing in time a change of conduct."

them up in the knowledge of truth and the practice of virtue. The children of a Christian bishop must not be idolatrous heathen, they must not lie under the reproach of dissipation and riot, they must not be undutiful to their parents. For how shall he be able to govern the church, who cannot support discipline in his own house?

Ch. I. Ver. 6.

For the bishop[3] *must be irreproachable, as the steward of God.* 7.

The man whom you appoint to be the overseer of the church, to instruct the ignorant, to confirm the wavering, to administer Christian ordinances, to lead the devotions of his fellow-worshipers, and to support discipline in the new-formed church, by whatever name he is called, whether elder or bishop, whether there be one only, or whether two or more are united in the same important charge, must be a person of unblemished morals, both in his personal and relative capacity; for he is the steward of God, appointed to dispense the truths of the gospel, and the riches of divine mercy by Jesus Christ: the dignity of his character therefore must correspond with that of his office.

Not self-willed[4], *not prone to anger*[5], *not one*

[3] *For the bishop.*] "this overseer of the church." Wakefield. Compare ver. 5. From hence it is clear, that in the apostolic age an elder and a bishop were synonymous terms. Compare Acts xx. Whitby admits that the names were then common; which he states as the opinion of Chrysostom, Theodoret, and others.

[4] *Not self-willed.*] αυθαδη, "obstinate, morose, and arrogant." Doddridge; who observes, that "Raphelius, in his Notes from Herodotus, has taken great pains to show that this is the

Ch. I. Ver. 7. *who sits long over wine, no striker, not greedy of dishonourable gain.*

The man who undertakes the superintendence of the church must not be one who insists upon having his own way in every thing, who will never yield either his inclination or his opinion to those of others, obstinate in his purpose, morose in his manners, and haughty in his demeanour; he must not take fire upon every slight provocation, and resent every supposed affront; he must not be addicted to drinking, unwilling to leave his wine, valuing himself upon his taste and judgement in intoxicating liquors, or upon the quantity which he can swallow; he must be no brawler, but must keep at the utmost distance from that quarrelling and fighting which is the general and almost inevitable consequence of hard drinking. And finally, he must be perfectly clear from that low vice, the love of mean and dishonourable gain, to which the Cretans are so much addicted, that there is no baseness to which they will not submit if they can get any thing by it.

8. *But a friend to hospitality*[1], *a lover of good-*

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proper signification of the word."—"*Sibi placens, in cujus gestu, sermone, vultu, quid tumidum et præfractum apparet, quod est indicium animi plus æquo placentis sibi.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *Not prone to anger.*] So Macknight. "not passionate." Wakefield. 2 Tim. ii. 24, 26.

[1] *A friend to hospitality.*] This was a necessary virtue where there were no public accommodations for strangers as in modern times. "Not in the modern sense of hospitality," says Whitby: "that is, a great table for persons of quality to come to."

ness[2], *self-governed*[3], *just, holy, temperate; holding fast the true doctrine*[4] *as he hath been taught, that he may be able*[5] *both to encourage by wholesome instruction, and to confute those who contradict.* Ch. I. Ver. 9.

On the contrary, the man who deserves to be selected by you to this honourable office must be attentive to strangers, and willing to receive and to entertain them according to his ability; he must delight in acts of kindness, in the society of the wise and good, loving goodness wherever he finds it; he must subdue all the inferior powers into unresisting subjection to the laws of reason and virtue; he must be correct in all his transactions with others; must maintain a sanctity of character, as becomes a member of the Christian community, and be moderate in the enjoyment of innocent gratifications. And finally, he must adhere strenuously

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[2] *A lover of goodness.*] So Wakefield. "a lover of good men." Newcome.

[3] *Self-governed.*] So Newcome. σωφρονα, "chaste." Wakefield. "prudent." Macknight and Benson. Macknight observes, "It consists in the government of the angry passions: differing from εγκρατη, which signifies one who bridles his appetites."

[4] *Holding fast.*] Αντεχομενον "signifies holding fast, in opposition to one who would wrest it from him." Macknight.—πιστ λογ, "true doctrine." Wakefield, Macknight, Newcome. Benson paraphrases it, "one who is tenacious of the Christian revelation as I taught it among them."

[5] *That he may be able.*] "that he may be able to encourage some by wholesome instruction, and to confute others who contradict." Wakefield. Compare this description of the qualifications of an elder or bishop with that given by the apostle to Timothy, 1 Tim. iii. 1—7.

Ch. I. Ver. 9. to the word of truth, the genuine doctrine of the gospel which I first taught, and which you continue to preach, without corrupting it by any foreign mixture, either from the Jewish or the heathen schools. And thus he will be qualified to administer instruction and consolation to those who are upright in their profession, which will promote their moral health and vigour; and to confute the ignorance and bigotry of others who would oppose and adulterate the gospel.

2. It was necessary to be careful in the selection of proper persons to act as elders or bishops in the churches of Crete, on account of the profligate characters of the Cretans themselves, and the perverse zeal of the judaizing teachers, ver. 10—16.

10. *For many are unruly*[1], *vain talkers*[2], *and deceiv-*
11. *ers, especially those of the circumcision*[3]. *Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole families*[4], *teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonourable gain.*

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[1] *Unruly.*] ανυποτακτοι, "very unmanageable persons." Benson.

[2] *Vain talkers.*] "persons who utter a multitude of foolish and trifling things on the subjects whereof they speak." Macknight.

[3] *Those of the circumcision.*] This seems to imply that the gospel had been preached some time in Crete to give the Judaizers an opportunity of making proselytes. Perhaps the apostle means unconverted Jews; who we know would from the beginning be very active in their opposition to the gospel.

[4] *Whole families.*] "It appears from hence," says Dr. Benson, "that some whole families of Gentile Christians had gone off and joined the Judaizers." *Subvert:* "a metaphor taken

It is the more necessary to appoint men of great respectability of character to be the teachers and pastors of the churches, because there are many who are taking great pains to corrupt the gospel of Christ, and to seduce the unwary from the path of pure Christianity. There are many who will not submit themselves readily either to your authority, Titus, or to mine; who are filling the minds of those who listen to them with crude and mischievous notions; who endeavour to pervert the understandings of their hearers. Some of them are heathen philosophers, but I principally allude to Jewish zealots, who wish to combine the bondage of the law with the liberty of the gospel. You must appoint teachers, whose reputation and whose doctrine will bear down the absurdity of these bigots, who, if they are left to themselves, will undermine the principles of the new converts, and seduce whole families to their pernicious principles. And I can assure you that these fanatical teachers, notwithstanding all their pretended zeal, have no other motives, but to make a trade of their profession, and to enrich themselves at the expense of their hearers. Ch. I. Ver. 11.

One of themselves, a teacher[5] *of their own, hath* 12.

from those who overturn houses by sapping the foundation." Macknight.

[5] *A teacher.*] προφητης. So Wakefield.—"a poet." Newcome; who observes, "they are called *prophets* from their pretensions to inspiration." "The person here referred to is generally supposed to be Epimenides; and if so, the propriety of the epithet προφητης rather than ποιητης may easily be disco-

Ch. I. Ver. 12. *said, The Cretans have ever been liars*[1], *mischievous brutes, greedy gluttons*[2].

This character is given of them by their own poet: "The Cretans are a lying, savage, intemperate, brutal people;" and you know that this is the opinion universally entertained of them.

13. *This testimony is true; for which cause, rebuke them sharply*[3], *that they may be sound in the faith,*

14. *not attending to Jewish fables, and to the commandments of men*[4] *who apostatize*[5] *from the truth.*

I cannot but admit the truth of this description of the Cretans by their national poet. You plainly perceive, therefore, what sort of men you have to deal with, so that you must speak out boldly; it

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vered from Diog. Laertius in *Vit. Epimenidis.*" Dr. Owen *apud* Bowyer.

[1] *Ever been liars.*] "They had the reputation of liars, from their saying what was true, viz. that Jupiter, who was worshiped in Greece, was born and died among them, and from their showing his sepulchre." Priestley; who remarks that "this letter was a private one, not to be communicated to the persons whose characters are thus described; and consequently that it was not designed for the use of posterity, though in the course of divine providence it has been happily preserved to us." See Benson, and Warburton *apud* Benson. "Polybius," says Dr. Owen, "often mentions the Cretans, but scarcely ever without reproach." Bowyer.

[2] *Greedy gluttons.*] γαστερες αργαι. "greedy bellies." Wakefield. *Swift gluttons:* "i. e. insatiable devouring gluttons." Benson, from Dr. Jeremiah Hunt. "*slow*, that is, idle indolent gluttons." Newcome.

[3] *Sharply.*] αποτομως, *cut them to the quick*, that the sound and healthy part be kept from infection. See Benson.

[4] *Commandments of men:*] whether relating to holy times, or o distinctions of food, &c. Compare Rom. xvi. See Newcome.

[5] *Who apostatize.*] "who turn themselves from the truth." Wakefield.

will not do to temporize, and flatter and countenance them in their criminal practices. You must tell them plainly that Christianity positively requires the entire renunciation of all these odious vices, and the habitual, uniform practice of virtue; and that no positive rites, not even such as have been appointed by God himself, and much less Jewish traditional precepts and Pharisaic ceremonies, will be of the least avail to their acceptance with God, without sincere and deep repentance. Thus, by probing their vices to the quick, and cutting out the gangrene, you will introduce sound principle and a healthy state of mind; and will teach them to treat these mercenary apostates, together with their idle tales, and their unauthorized impositions, with the contempt they deserve. Ch. I. Ver. 14.

To the pure all things are *pure; but to the polluted, and the unfaithful*[6], *nothing* is *pure; but even their understanding and conscience are polluted.* 15.

To the enlightened and practical believer all days are equally holy, and all kinds of food are equally lawful and innocent; but to him who corrupts the faith, and who, from secular motives, introduces Jewish rites into the Christian system, all things are impure; every day is unholy, every action is criminal; his intentions are evil, his motives are base, his affections are depraved, and his whole character and conduct is offensive in the sight of God.

[6] *Unfaithful.*] So Benson; who observes, "that they appear to have known and believed right, but to have acted wrong."

Ch. I. Ver. 16. *They profess to know God, but in* their *actions they deny* him; *they are odious and untractable*[1], *and approve themselves by no one good work.*

These false teachers, who would mix Judaism with Christianity, make a great parade of their being the true worshipers of God, and represent themselves as the only persons authorized to teach religious truth; but their conduct gives the lie to their profession. In practice they are atheists, and by the indulgence they allow to their vicious propensities, they plainly show that their profession is insincere; for their vices are odious, their conduct insolent and ungovernable, and with all their pompous profession of superior knowledge of the gospel, they have not a single good quality to atone for the long and black catalogue of their crimes.

SECTION III.

Ch. II. *THE APOSTLE directs the Evangelist to enforce upon the aged and the young of both sexes the duties of their respective stations and characters, and to be himself an example of Christian virtue.* Ch. ii. 1—8.

1. He tells him what advice to give to men advanced in life, ver. 1, 2.

[1] *They are odious and untractable.*] So Wakefield. "βδελυκτοι, digni quos omnes exsecrentur, *exosi Deo et hominibus.* αδοκιμοι, *inutiles sicut nummi qui rejiciuntur.*" Rosenmuller.—worthless.

But speak thou the things *which become whole-* Ch. II. Ver. 1.
some doctrine[2].

Having stated the qualifications and duties of bishops and pastors, allow me now to address a few words of exhortation, Titus, to yourself. And first of all, pay no regard to those airs of superiority which the false teachers affect, and by no means imitate them in representing rites and ceremonies as substitutes for moral duties; but teach that doctrine which alone is truly healthful to the mind, however unpalatable to the impostor and the hypocrite; enforce the truth, that there is no salvation without sincere repentance and the practice of substantial virtue and piety, and that every one must faithfully perform the duties of his station.

That the elderly men[3] *be sober, grave, self-* 2.
governed, sound in faith, in love, in patience.

Admonish those men who are advanced in life, especially such as may be appointed to offices in the church, to keep themselves at all times perfectly

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[2] *Wholesome doctrine.*] ὑγιαινουσῃ. "True doctrine is called *wholesome*, because it invigorates the faculties of the soul, and keeps them in a healthy state." Macknight. Dr. Benson observes, that in this chapter the apostle shows Titus what he himself was to teach, as he had shown him in the preceding what the bishops should teach.

[3] *Elderly men.*] Πρεσβυτας is here understood to signify the deacons or other officers of the church, by Hammond, Le Clerc, and some of the ancients. Macknight would translate it *elders*; and observes, that the advice given to them is the same as that given to elders and deacons. 1 Tim. iii. 2, 8. Dr. Benson remarks, that "Titus is not directed to treat the old men as *fathers*, &c. He was now older than Timothy was when St. Paul wrote his first epistle to him, and might therefore be supposed capable of acting with more prudence and authority."

Ch. II. Ver. 2. sober, never to indulge in any excess; also to be vigilant and attentive to the duties of their office; to maintain a grave and dignified deportment, and not to allow themselves in levities which in youth might perhaps be pardonable. Let them govern their tempers and their appetites, and keep them in due subjection to the dictates of reason and the law of God. Let their faith be not merely speculative, much less corrupt, but pure, vigorous, operative and salutary. Let their love be not pretended, but sincere; not partial, but universal. Let them love God with their whole heart, and their neighbours as themselves; and let them bear, with dignified composure, the infirmities and sorrows of declining years; and not, by peevishness and fruitless complaints, increase their sufferings, lessen their character, and occasion additional trouble to those whose office it is to attend their persons, to administer to their wants, and to relieve their infirmities.

2. The aged women are to be admonished to perform their duty, and particularly to instruct the younger persons of their own sex, ver. 3—5.

3. *That the elderly women*[1] *likewise* be *in behaviour*[2] *as becometh holy persons*[3], *not slanderers,*

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[1] *Elderly.*] So Wakefield. It is supposed that the apostle here alludes to deaconesses: an office known to exist in the primitive church. Rom. xvi. 1.

[2] *In behaviour.*] καταστηματι it extends to dress and personal appearance in general.—"*In habitu cultuque corporis qui Christianos decet.*" Schleusner. "*Vox κατ. latius hic sumitur:*

not addicted to excess of wine[4], *teachers of that which is right.* Ch. II. Ver. 3.

Admonish women advanced in life, and especially those who are appointed to offices of importance in the church, with regard to their own sex, to dress with propriety, and to regulate their general behaviour by the principles of the Christian religion, which prohibits its professors from conforming in an excessive degree to the follies and fashions of the world, especially when the time of life and dignity of station may be expected to elevate the mind to better things. Let them be tender of the characters of others, remembering how difficult it is to recover a lost reputation; let them not, therefore, wantonly or maliciously circulate, much less invent, reports to the prejudice of their neighbours. Let them also, above all things, abstain from drunkenness, a vice odious and contemptible in all, particularly in the female sex, and most of all in those who are advanced in life, and who sustain offices which require the greatest decorum and propriety of behaviour. And let them fulfill the duties of their years, and of their office, in instructing young persons of their own sex how to conduct themselves in a decent, honourable, and Christian manner.

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nec amictum tantum, sed et gestum, incessum, vultum, &c. complectitur." Rosenmuller.

[3] *Holy persons.*] " sacred persons, because employed in sacred offices." Macknight. Compare 1 Tim. iii. 11.

[4] *Not addicted.*] Gr. *enslaved.* Newcome.—" *Non temere præcipiendum hoc ait ætatis provectioris feminis.* Χαιρει τῳ οινῳ ἡ ἡλικια αυτη. *Schol. Vet. Hom.*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. II. Ver. 4. 5. *That they may form the minds*[1] *of the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, well employed at home*[2], *submissive to their husbands, that the doctrine of God be not evil spoken of*[3].

Let elderly women, and especially those matrons who are appointed, in consequence of superior years and experience, to superintend and instruct the younger persons of their own sex, instruct and admonish the young married women to be kind and affectionate to their husbands, whether Christians or heathen; to love their children, and to manifest their maternal affection by contributing cheerfully to their support, and especially by instilling into their tender minds the principles of virtue and genuine Christianity, to command their passions, and, even under great provocation, to be meek and gentle; to abhor every thing that is inconsistent with the most delicate sentiments of honour and virtue; to live much at home, and in the prudent faithful

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[1] *Form the minds.*] σωφρονιζωσι. See Newcome's margin. "that they may *instruct*." "persuade." Macknight. "σωφ. *facere ut quis sapiat, hortari, docere.*" Rosenmuller.—"*ut prudentiam doceant adolescentulas.*" Vulgate.

[2] *Well employed at home.*] οικεργες. So the Alexandrine, Ephrem, and many of the best copies read, instead of οικαξες, *keepers at home*, which is the reading of the received text.—οικεργες αγαθας, "good œconomists." Worsley. "well employed:" this is the punctuation of Hen. Steph. See Bowyer. If αγαθαι is kept separate, it signifies *good, benign.*

[3] *The doctrine of God be not evil spoken of.*] "This caution is given in opposition to the error that the gospel set its professors free from human relations." Newcome. Compare 1 Tim. vi. 1.

discharge of domestic duties; and, from a regard to the will of God, to yield that subjection to their husbands which the reason of things and the custom of the country require; so that the doctrine of Christianity may not be traduced, as relaxing the duties of relative life, but may be the more approved and admired the better it is understood, as being the best source of domestic peace and union. Ch. II. Ver. 5.

3. Titus is directed what advice he is to give to young men, ver. 6.

In like manner, exhort the young men to be self-governed. 6.

Admonish the young men to lay a proper restraint upon their appetites and passions, and to maintain that strict discipline over the mind which will be productive of inward peace, and will display itself in a consistent and dignified behaviour, that will do credit to their Christian profession.

4. The apostle urges the evangelist to be himself an example of every Christian virtue, ver. 7, 8.

In all things show thyself[4] *a pattern of good works; in teaching, uncorruptness*[5]*, gravity, whole-* 7. 8.

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[4] *Show thyself.*] So Wakefield. Gr. "showing."

[5] *Uncorruptness.*] With Newcome I read αφθοριαν, which has the sanction of the most ancient copies. The received text reads αδιαφθοριαν, "*in doctrina* integritatem." Schleusner.—Mr. Wakefield conjectures that the true reading is αδιαφοριαν, "*quæ sine respectu personarum se gerit, neque minus pauperi consulit quam diviti, potentique.*" *Sylva Critica*, P. i p. 71. In thy doctrine *impartial.*

Ch. II. Ver. 8. *some doctrine, which cannot be condemned*[1], *that he who opposeth* it *may be ashamed, having no evil to say of us*[2].

If, Titus, you expect to do any good by your teaching, you must follow it up by a good example; and that not only in one or two instances, but in the habitual practice of all the virtues of the Christian character. And particularly with regard to your public instruction, do not presume to corrupt the pure word of God with any human mixtures, in order to make it more palatable to your hearers. Teach it with becoming gravity, mindful both of the Being in whose name you speak, and of the great importance of the message which you have to deliver. Let your doctrine be salutary and practical, such as will bring the mind into a healthy active state; let it be free from all unnecessary harshness and asperity of language; let it have a direct tendency to make your hearers wiser and better; and let it be so temperate and guarded that no one will dare, or be able, to find fault with it; so that the spiteful, bigoted, judaizing teachers, the enemies of the gospel, who are also your enemies and mine, may blush with shame and remorse, when they see,

[1] *Which cannot be condemned.*] "Possibly Titus, who was a Gentile convert, and who had no prejudices in favour of the Judaizers, might be in some danger of speaking with some harshness of them, and of their wicked attempts; and in the warmth of his zeal he might be led to say things which had better not have been said. Or at least the fear of such impropriety of language might lead the apostle to give him this caution." Benson.

[2] *Of us.*] All the ancient copies read ἡμων, *us*, instead of ὑμων, *you*, which is in the received text. See Griesbach.

that after all the calumnies they have propagated, they can really allege nothing truly blame-worthy against our character or our language, and that our innocence and prudence is an impenetrable shield against the venomous shafts of their inveterate malice. Ch. II. Ver. 8.

SECTION IV.

THE APOSTLE states the instructions which are to be given to servants, and the peculiar motives by which they are to be enforced, and encourages Titus to zeal and fidelity. Ch. ii. 9—15.

1. The apostle details the instructions which it would be proper to give to servants, ver. 9, 10.

Exhort[3] *bond-servants*[4] *to be submissive to* their *own*[5] *masters, to be desirous of pleasing them in all* things, *not contradicting, not secretly stealing*[6], *but showing the utmost fidelity*[7], *that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all* things. 9. 10.

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[3] Exhort.] "Supply παρακαλει from ver. 6." Newcome.

[4] *Bond-servants.*] δουλους, slaves.

[5] *Their own.*] ιδιοις, own masters: not only to Christ their common Master, but to the individuals whose slaves they are.

[6] *Secretly stealing.*] νοσφιζομενους, stealing privately through fear of detection. Compare Acts v. 3.—"not thieving." Newcome.—"not wasting or privately embezzling their masters' goods." Benson.

[7] *The utmost fidelity.*] Gr. "showing all good fidelity." So Newcome.—"the utmost faithfulness." Wakefield.

Ch. II. Ver. 10.

There are some who represent the Christian religion as dissolving all civil obligations, and who teach that Christian servants and Christian slaves, upon their profession of the Christian faith, are released from obedience to their masters and immediately acquire a title to personal liberty. But though Christianity redeems men from spiritual bondage, it leaves their civil and political condition as it found it, only operating a gradual improvement by the gentle but powerful influence of moral principles. It requires, therefore, the faithful discharge of the proper duties of a servant to a master, enforcing those obligations by additional motives peculiar to itself. Let Christian slaves, therefore, be taught that they owe entire obedience to their masters in all things lawful, whether those masters be heathen or Christian, and as much after their conversion to Christianity as in their heathen state; and let them know that their subjection to Christ, our common master, by no means releases them from their antecedent duties. Let them also be taught, that they must be desirous of pleasing their masters, that they must study their tempers, their situation, and their wants, and endeavour, if possible, to anticipate their wishes; if they find any of them morose in their temper, unreasonable in their injunctions, or harsh in their language, they must bear all with meekness and gentleness; and, how grievous soever the provocation, must carefully refrain from the use of all petulant and reproachful retorting, and from all dishonest and undutiful conduct. Whenever their masters'

property is trusted to their care, they must not presume, they must not even think of secreting any part to their own use, how secure soever they may be from detection. In every concern they must act with the strictest fidelity, that they may adorn the Christian religion, that they may lead men to think well of the gospel and its professors, and thus manifest their gratitude to God, who has saved them, by the gospel of his son, from the bondage of heathenism, and has brought them into a state of liberty, hope, virtue, and happiness. Ch. II. Ver. 10.

2. It is a great motive to the performance of these duties, that the blessings of the gospel are extended to all without distinction of rank, and that the great design of it is, to render all who profess it virtuous and happy, by the awful and animating expectations which it excites, ver. 11—14.

For the favour of God, which bringeth salvation[1] *to all men, hath shone forth*[2]. 11.

The gospel revelation, which originates in the goodness of God, and is the best gift of divine

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[1] *Which bringeth*, &c.] "Either *hath appeared to all men*, as Theophylact; or, with others, *that bringeth salvation to all men*." Estius *apud* Bowyer.

[2] *Hath shone forth.*] επεφανη, "hath shined out or risen like a bright sun, or a cheering constellation, upon a benighted or dark world." Benson: vide also Macknight. "The gospel is called the grace of God, either because it is the greatest favour which God has bestowed on man, or because it teaches the doctrine of God's great favour to men." Macknight. The gospel, that grace of God which containeth the promise of everlasting salvation.

Ch. II. Ver. 11. mercy to mankind, the design of which is to save men of all nations and ranks, without any distinction of Jew or Gentile, bond or free, from ignorance and superstition, from vice and misery, has risen upon the world like the morning sun, and diffuses its glorious light through all nations.

12. *Instructing us that, denying ungodliness*[1] *and worldly desires, we should live soberly and righteously and religiously*[2] *in this present world.*

The design of the gospel is not to impose rites and ceremonies, to introduce innovations into civil life, and to substitute forms of worship for practical religion, but to reclaim men from impiety and vice, and to make them truly and habitually virtuous. It is intended to teach men to renounce all false conceptions of God, and of the worship and service that he requires, all superstitious notions, all idolatrous rites, and all those vicious affections and criminal practices which the world regards with indifference, and which the prevailing superstitions

[1] *Ungodliness.*] "By *ungodliness*," says Dr. Benson, "I would understand atheism and irreligion, blasphemy, perjury, profane cursing and swearing, contempt of God, a want of due reverence to him, neglect of his worship, judging hardly or speaking with disrespect of his providence, disobedience to his will. By worldly lusts may be understood the other vices of mankind: every thing contrary to the *sobriety* and *righteousness* recommended in the next verse. All Christians are concerned to avoid these things; but they might be here condemned with a peculiar view to the character of the Cretans."

[2] *Soberly*, &c.] "*soberly*, i. e. wisely regulating our passions, affections, and appetites: *righteously*, i. e. with justice and equity, kindness, and beneficence towards men; *godlily*, i. e. paying due homage, submission, and obedience to God." Benson.

tolerate and encourage; and it requires that we should live in the conscientious discharge of every religious and moral duty; in the strict government of the appetites and passions; in the exercise of justice, fidelity, and kindness to our fellow-creatures; and in the diligent performance of the duties we owe to the Supreme Being; to fear and love him, and to live under a commanding sense of his presence and inspection in all our transactions with men, in all our intercourse with the world. Ch. II. Ver. 12.

Earnestly expecting that blessed hope[3], *even the manifestation of the glory of the great God, and of our saviour*[4] *Jesus Christ.* 13.

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[3] *Earnestly expecting that blessed hope.*] "gladly entertaining the happy expectation." Wakefield. See Acts xxiv. 15, 2 Tim. iv. 8.

[4] *Of the great God and of our Saviour.*] "Our Saviour at the last day will appear clothed in his own glory, attended by his Father's glory. Matt. xvi. 27, Mark viii. 38, Luke ix. 26. By the great God, therefore, must be understood the one God and Father of all, who is here and every where else most evidently distinguished from our saviour Jesus Christ. This title is never applied to Jesus Christ in the scriptures, but frequently to the Father, and to him alone." Benson. Beza and others render the words, *our great God and saviour Jesus Christ*; and they say that the appearance of God is a phrase never used in the New Testament. But most certainly Christ is never called *the great God*, nor had the apostle any conception that his words could be so perverted. Macknight well observes, "It is not the appearance of God, but of the glory of the great God here mentioned." Both Newcome and Wakefield render the clause, "the appearance of the great God, and of our saviour Jesus Christ."

"From this expression," says Dr. Priestley, "some have hastily inferred that Jesus Christ and 'the great God' were the same person. But a saying of our Saviour himself will clearly explain this: he says, that he shall return in his own glory, and in the glory of his Father, and of the holy angels. The appear-

Ch. II. Ver. 13. Christianity requires the practice of these duties, and enforces them by the most powerful sanctions; elevating us to the awful and delightful expectation of a second appearance of our honoured Master Jesus Christ: an appearance, not in the humble form in which he first published his gospel in the world, and died upon the cross. Oh, no! when he shall return again, he will appear in his own glory, and in the glory of his great God and Father, and all his holy angels with him; and being seated on the throne of his glory, the dead, both small and great, shall be judged by him according to their works. Yet, even then, he will maintain the character of the Saviour and the friend of his faithful followers.

14. *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity*[1], *and purify to himself a peculiar people*[2], *zealous of good works*[3].

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ance of the great God, therefore, signifies nothing more than that glorious presence of God which will accompany Jesus Christ when he shall return to raise the dead and judge the world." "*Dicitur hæc Dei et Christi majestas, quia Deus majestatem illam Christo tribuit. Alii utrumque prædicatum ad idem subjectum, Christum nempe, referunt, contra quam sententiam vide quæ Moldenhawerus recte monuit, in annotationibus ad hunc locum.*" Rosenmuller.

[1] *Redeem us from all iniquity:*] *i. e.* to recover us from a Gentile state. "Here," says Dr. Priestley, "we see the true meaning of Christian redemption. It is a deliverance from iniquity, and all the effects of it, by making us virtuous and good, and by no means a deliverance from the wrath of God by the death of Christ. The phrase 'peculiar people' is borrowed from the Old Testament, where the Jewish nation is said to be a peculiar people, that is, distinguished from all other nations for great and valuable purposes. In like manner, in the Christian

This Saviour was lately upon earth in a very humble form, and after he had fulfilled his ministry in preaching the gospel he suffered death upon the cross, that he might put an end to the Jewish dispensation, and introduce and seal a new, a universal, and perpetual covenant, extending to heathen as well as to Jews; to recover those of us who were under the dominion of ignorance, idolatry, and vice, to truth, piety, and virtue; and the great design of all was to set apart for himself a people distinguished from all the rest of mankind by their zeal, not for speculative opinions, not for useless and burdensome rites, but for the practice of substantial and universal virtue. This, under the Christian dispensation, is the main distinction between those who are the true and approved servants of God, and the unbelieving, idolatrous, and wicked world. Ch. II. Ver. 14.

3. The apostle enjoins it upon Titus to insist strongly upon these topics, ver. 15.

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dispensation, all good men may be considered as the peculiar people of Christ, without any distinction of nations."

[2] *A peculiar people.*] περιουσιον. Compare Ex. xix. 5, Deut. vii. 6. The Jews were formerly the peculiar people of God. Now, believing Gentiles are taken into that honourable relation. "*Populus eximius, præstans: a* περιειμι, *superior sum, antecello.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Zealous of good works.*] "When our Lord and his apostles have laid such stress upon good works, and have frequently declared them absolutely necessary to salvation, none who profess Christianity ought to neglect the practice of them, much less speak of them with aversion and contempt." Benson.

Ch. II. Ver. 15. *These things*[1] *speak and exhort, and reprove with all authority. Let no man despise thee*[2].

Let these important topics which I have now suggested, viz. the great design and the awful expectations of the gospel, be the constant theme of your discourse both in public and in private. Upon these principles ground all your exhortations to the different classes of mankind, to perform the duties which the gospel requires; for if this will not influence men to repent of their crimes, and to live in the practice of virtue, nothing will. If any object to your doctrine, and are desirous of substituting the observation of ceremonies for the performance of duty, confute and expose their pernicious errors: and if any act upon these dangerous principles, reprove them with prudence, with fidelity, and with authority, mindful of the commission under which you act, and knowing the powers with which you are invested, and the purposes for which they were given; do not tamely submit to insults, which would lessen your character and impede your usefulness.

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[1] *These things.*] Dr. Benson observes, that "by instruction and authority from the apostles Evangelists might teach, preach, reprove, rebuke, exhort; but they are never said to have testified the grand fact of Christ's resurrection."

[2] *Let no man despise thee.*] Compare Tim. iv. 12. The apostle does not say to Titus, Let no man despise thy youth: a proof that Titus was older than Timothy. See Benson and Priestley.

SECTION V.

THE APOSTLE exhorts Titus to press upon his hearers the due performance of their civil and social duties, which he enforces by considerations peculiar to the Christian religion. Ch. iii. 1—7. Ch. III.

1. The apostle exhorts Titus to remind his hearers of their duties to magistrates and civil authorities, and to recommend a quiet, peaceable spirit, ver. 1, 2.

Admonish them to be submissive to authorities and powers, to be ready to obey them in every good work[3]. Ver. 1.

Remind the converts in Crete that they are not, by their profession of the Christian religion, absolved from their obligation to obey their civil rulers, as the Jewish zealots often teach their misguided proselytes. Christianity is no enemy to social order: let believers know, therefore, that their religion requires them to yield subjection to the civil authorities, in what hands soever they may be lodged, and in whatever manner they may be exercised, even

[3] *To obey them in every good work.*] πειθαρχειν προς παν. So Wakefield. "Put them in mind of a ready obedience to these in every good work." By others the clauses are kept distinct: "Put *men* in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work." Newcome.

Ch. III. Ver. 1. though the magistrate should be a heathen, and his government oppressive and unjust. As the Christian religion is far from abridging men's civil rights, so neither does it confer any civil privilege. And as the Christian converts must submit to their civil governors, whatever their character may be, so they must be active, ready, and cheerful in their obedience, when they are required to do any thing which may contribute to the peace and prosperity of the community; and at all times they must be attentive to their social duties.

2. *To calumniate no man, to avoid contention, to be gentle, showing all meekness to all men.*

The disciples of Christ, whose doctrine is a law of kindness, are strictly prohibited from using harsh and opprobrious language. They must not needlessly speak evil of others, even when it may be done with truth; much less may they calumniate and blast the reputation of their neighbours by false and malicious misrepresentations of their language, character, or conduct. Quarrelling and fighting are utterly inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity, which strongly inculcates gentleness, forbearance, and a meek and forgiving spirit to all men of all countries, parties, and sects, whatever injuries they may commit, or whatever provocations they may offer.

2. The mercy of God in the gospel dispensation purifies the heart from the unsocial and malignant passions which were indulged in an unconverted

state, and infuses a spirit of universal goodness, ver. 3—7. Ch. III.

For we also[1] *were formerly without understanding, disobedient, erring, enslaved to various appetites and pleasures*[2]*, living in malice and envy, odious, and hating one another*[3]. Ver. 3.

For we who are now converted to the Christian religion, and whose lives are regulated by the precepts and by the spirit of Christianity, were in our unconverted state as immoral and as profligate as the unchristianized world still is. We were once destitute of all just sentiments of religion, disobedient to the laws of God and man, wandering in the

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[1] *For we also.*] Benson and Priestley think the apostle only is intended, Newcome only Gentiles, Macknight only Jews. Probably both Jews and Gentiles are to be included: *q. d.* We may well be disposed to exercise meekness and gentleness to others, having ourselves needed it so much while we remained in an unconverted state.

[2] *Appetites and pleasures.*] επιθυμιαις και ηδοναις. Dr. Benson observes, that "these words do not always express *impure desire* and voluptuousness (vide Steph. *Thesaur.*), but merely intense inclination, Mark iv. 19, 1 Thess. ii. 17; and pleasure, which is not inconsistent with Saul's character before his conversion." He remarks, that "the apostle does not mention idolatry, adultery, theft, &c., which were the gross vices of idolatrous Gentiles."

[3] *One another.*] The Æthiopic reads αδελφους, *the brethren*; which, if admitted, would be peculiarly applicable to Paul. See Benson. Dr. Benson's principal reason for limiting this description to the apostle himself seems to be, that the abundant effusion of the holy spirit, noted ver. 6, was only applicable to himself as an apostle. But it seems not unlikely that the apostle might use this expression to denote the abundance of spiritual gifts communicated to the primitive believers; and that he might mean to include believers in general, without excepting those whose conduct antecedent to their conversion had, like his own, been least stained with the grosser vices.

Ch. III. Ver. 3. paths of error and vice, the wretched slaves of appetite and passion, intemperate, malignant, envious, odious, and delighting to injure each other. Such was once our disgrace and misery.

4. *But when the kindness of God our saviour, and*
5. his *love toward man, shone forth, he saved*[1] *us, not by works of justification*[2] *which we did, but according to his mercy, by the laver of regeneration*[3], *and*

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[1] *Saved.*] "delivered us from the miserable and wicked state in which we were living before we believed the gospel." Macknight. See Newcome and Benson. "shone forth." Macknight. See ch. ii. 11.

[2] *By works of justification.*] "justifying works; works tending to gain us admission into the gospel covenant." Newcome.

[3] *The laver of regeneration.*] λουτρον *proprie* balneum, *per metonymiam subjecti* lavacrum, *ipsa aqua in balneo.*" Schleusner. When a Jew or a heathen was converted to the Christian religion, the change which took place in his apprehensions, in his affections, in his character, and his expectations, was so great and extraordinary, that it seemed as though he had become an inhabitant of a new world; and this change is sometimes compared to a resurrection from the dead (see Rom. vi.); and sometimes, as in the text, to a new birth. Compare John iii. 3—7, 1 Pet. i. 3, 23. They who are introduced into this state are said to be *saved*, i. e. rescued from the bondage of idolatry, or from the yoke of the law (see ver. 5); and this *not by works of righteousness which they had done*, but by the *free mercy of God*, who had invited them into the gospel covenant, without any antecedent claim of merit in them, entirely of his own gratuitous goodness. And as baptism was the appointed symbol by which the believer was to express his conversion to the Christian faith, his transition from the unbelieving world into the holy community, this rite is sometimes spoken of as if it were the actual change, of which it was the authorized symbol. So Acts xxii. 16, Ananias says to Paul, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." See also John iii. 5, 1 Pet. iii. 21. And in the text we are said to be saved by the *washing* or *the laver of regeneration*, in connexion with the renovation of the holy spirit. Hence it was, that the word παλιγγενεσια, *regeneration*, was used by the early ecclesiastical writers for bap-

by the renovation of the holy spirit[4], *which he shed on us richly through Jesus Christ our saviour.* Ch III. Ver. 6.

Such was the unhappy condition both of Jews and Gentiles, when the joyful tidings of the gospel were proclaimed to the world; but when this best gift of God to man, this strongest proof of divine benignity and good-will, enlightened the benighted world with its beautiful ray, God our creator and deliverer saved us thereby from the darkness, the errors, the vices, and the misery of our former state. And this he did, not because we, in consequence of our wise improvement of past privileges, had entitled ourselves to still superior advantages. Far from it: on the contrary, our apostasy and vices had incurred a just sentence of condemnation; and our present improved and happy state is entirely owing to the free unmerited mercy of God, whose good-

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tism, which was the emblem of the change produced. And a baptized person was said to be *regenerated:* referring solely to his *external* and *professed,* not to his *moral* state. Vide Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clem. Alex. and Theophilus, as referred to by Whitby *in loc.* But this use of the symbol for the thing signified, gradually introduced that enormous error which prevails in the Roman, and in some Protestant churches, that *Baptism is Christian regeneration:* so that a child born in original sin, and therefore liable to eternal misery, is sanctified and saved by being washed by a duly authorized priest: and even the greatest sinner, by being baptized, receives immediate and unqualified forgiveness. Who that looks into the New Testament could ever have thought it possible that such monstrous absurdities could have been fastened upon it? and who would suspect that such absurdities could have found advocates among men of learning in the present enlightened and inquisitive age?

[4] *Renovation of the holy spirit.*] "that renovation of mind which the holy spirit usually communicated to converts in those ages had the strongest tendency to produce." Newcome.

Ch. III. Ver. 6. ness prompted him to interpose for our relief; and by whose blessing upon the means of instruction, we have been induced to enter ourselves as members of the Christian community, by the solemn rite of baptism; and have, as it were, been introduced into a new world, in which our views, our feelings, our expectations, and our conduct, as well as our privileges and obligations, are totally changed from what they formerly were. To which happy renovation, the abundant effusion of the holy spirit from Jesus Christ, who has been appointed by God to be the deliverer of mankind, has in no small degree contributed, having supplied us with the most convincing evidence of the truth of the Christian doctrine, and thereby excited the most glorious and interesting expectations.

7. *That, being justified through his favour, we might become heirs, as to the hope*[5], *of eternal life.*

He gave us the gospel freely, and poured out his spirit upon us abundantly, that we might be convinced of the truth of the evangelical doctrine; and that, by our cordial acceptance, and our public profession of the Christian religion, we might be advanced to the character and privilege of sons, and might become expectants of the inheritance of everlasting life; a glorious and awful expectation, which,

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[5] *As to the hope.*] κατ' ελπιδα. "Include this between commas, to connect κληρονομοι with ζωης, which would otherwise want a genitive. Piscator, Knatchbull, Grotius. The words seem to disturb the sense, and may therefore be omitted. They are wanting in one manuscript. Dr. Owen." Bowyer.

to every virtuous believer, shall in due time be fulfilled to its utmost extent; and which in the mean time may justly animate them to the discharge of every duty, and console them under every loss and every suffering. Ch. III. Ver. 7.

SECTION VI.

THE APOSTLE directs the evangelist to recommend honourable industry, to avoid useless disputations, to dismiss contentious and factious persons from the society; and concludes the epistle with some particular charges, with salutations, and the apostolical benediction. Ch. iii. 8—15.

1. The apostle desires that Titus would insist strongly upon honourable industry, ver. 8.

This doctrine[2] *is worthy of credit. And these* 8.
things[3] *I will, that thou strongly affirm; so that they who have believed in God may be careful to excel in reputable occupations*[4]. *These are honourable and useful to mankind.*

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[2] *This doctrine:*] *i. e.* "the doctrine he had laid down in the four preceding verses." Newcome.

[3] *These* things.] τατων. "these heirs of the hope of life, the converts from idolatry in Crete." Macknight. "these things." Newcome, Wakefield.

[4] *Excel in reputable occupations.*] καλων εργων προϊ-ασθαι. *i. e.* good works in general. Macknight, &c.; but the same expression occurs again ver. 14, where, from the connexion, Macknight allows it signifies honest occupations and trades: it

Ch. III. Ver. 8. The doctrine which I have advanced concerning the great goodness of God in our salvation by Jesus Christ, and in raising us to the hope of life by the gift of his spirit, is a truth of the greatest moment, and the belief of it is of the highest practical importance. And with regard to the converted Gentiles, who are thus unexpectedly become heirs of the hope of immortal life, I strictly charge you to inculcate upon them the practice of virtue, as a necessary means of obtaining it; and as the Cretans are as notorious for their indolence as for their intemperance, and as there are some persons who are disposed to teach, or to believe, that a life of indolence, and wasting time in angry disputes upon frivolous questions, is acceptable to God, I charge you, Titus, on the contrary to insist steadily upon this point, that all who have embraced and still continue in the Christian faith, who, having been converted from idolatry, have become the worshipers of the one true God, shall pursue some honest and reputable occupation, by which they may be able to maintain themselves and their fa-

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seems probable, therefore, that this is the meaning here. προϊσασθαι, "*bona opera tueri, juvare.*" Newcome, Kypke, Ellys. "that those who trust in God may study to be foremost in good works." Wakefield.—"be careful to *stand up* for good works." Benson. Grotius's observations are excellent: "*Præesse bonis operibus non est aliud quam domum suam facere honesti alicujus opificii officinam, omnes suos exercere in laboribus honestis, non agere vitam leonum, parasitorum, scenicorum, aruspicum, aut his similem. Hunc sensum nobis monstrat eadem sententia repetita infra* 14. *Opponuntur hæc ei quod modo de Cretensibus dixerat* γαστερες αργαι."

milies without being a burden upon the community. It is by honourable industry in the proper business of life that the disciples of Christ will do the most credit to their profession; for it is by these means that they will make themselves most useful to mankind, both by their good example and their beneficent actions. Ch. III. Ver. 8.

2. The apostle dissuades Titus from useless controversy, ver. 9.

But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies[1], *and disputes, and contentions about the law, for they are unprofitable and vain.* 9.

Time is too precious to be wasted upon trifling disputes, either in settling intricate genealogies, or in quarrelling about distinctions of food, distinctions of days, or other subjects which the zealots of the law of Moses, burdened with the additional encumbrances of Pharisaic tradition, are so eager to introduce, which they so rigorously impose, and for which they so intemperately contend.

3. The apostle advises Titus to dismiss from the Christian society men of a contentious and factious spirit, ver. 10, 11.

Reject a man who is a fomenter of divisions[2] 10.

[1] *Genealogies.*] Bengelius and others suppose the Gnostic doctrine of the Æons to be referred to here; but being mentioned in connexion with disputes about the law, it seems probable that Jewish genealogies are particularly alluded to.

[2] *A fomenter of divisions.*] αἱρετικον ανθρωπον, *a heretic:* i. e. "a man who teaches what he knows to be erroneous." Whitby,

Ch. III. Ver. 11. *after the first and second admonition*[1], *knowing that such an one is wholly perverted*[2], *and erreth*[3], *being self-condemned*[4].

Macknight, Newcome. "a man who errs in fundamental doctrine; and self-condemned, because he publicly avows that which furnishes matter for his condemnation." Doddridge. "a man who foments divisions, or sects, or parties." Wakefield. "The word αἱρεσις, *heresy*, does not with the ancients," says Dr. Benson, "signify doctrine, but a *sect* or *party*. It is usually rendered *sect* in our common translation. In 1 Cor. xi. 19 it is rendered *heresies*, but in the margin *sects*: as it is most reasonable to understand it Gal. v. 20, 2 Pet. ii. 2, where it is translated *heresies*. *Schism* is a rent, a groundless faction or division among members of the same congregation; *heresy* has its foundation in schism. A heresy is a sect, faction, or party; or, the persons of which that party consists. Vide 1 Cor. xi. 18, 19: 'I hear there be divisions (marg. *schisms*) among you; and I partly believe it, for there must be also heresies (marg. *sects*) among you, that they who are approved may be made manifest.'

"A heretic, then, (αἱρετικος) is a sect-maker, or sectary: one who makes or follows a sect or party. Among the philosophers the word was of a middle signification. Acts xxvi. 5 heresy is used in a good sense; but when it is condemned as one of the works of the flesh, it is used in a bad sense.

"Those who to the best of their judgement take Christ for their head and guide in religious matters, though such men may perhaps mistake the meaning of several texts, or judge wrong as to points of doctrine, and though others may perhaps exclude them from their communion, yet they constitute a true church of Christ, though few in number; and those who oppose them and renounce communion with them are the heretics, how numerous soever they may be, and how great soever their worldly power."

Such are the judicious observations of Dr. Benson in his excellent note upon this text.—Archbishop Newcome refers to Bishop Pearce's Sermon upon the subject, as above all worthy of being consulted.

[1] *Reject after admonition.*] "It is not said, Imprison him, tease him with artful examinations, or put him to the torture to make him confess; and then, if he will not recant, roast him by a slow and lingering fire. Such rules never proceeded from

If any men of a contentious overbearing disposition, and particularly, any of the warm zealots for the law, should, notwithstanding your efforts to maintain the peace, the order, and the liberty of the Gentile church, and to banish these frivolous and vexatious questions, persist in propagating their obnoxious tenets, and should disturb the peace of the society by forming parties in opposition to the doctrine that we are authorized to teach, it is my advice to you, once or twice, to warn such sectaries in a calm and serious manner of their guilt and their danger, and to expostulate with them concerning the impropriety of their conduct in destroying the harmony of the society, by dividing it upon questions of so little importance: and if they refuse to listen to your advice, and to alter their conduct, discard them from the church, and regard them no

Ch. III. Ver. 11.

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the apostles of our Lord, but from the ministers of Satan. Exciting the rage of the populace, or, awakening the zeal of the magistrate, inflicting pains and penalties, &c., has never yet been found the way to enlighten men's understandings, or to make them better Christians or honester men. Titus was not rashly to reject a heretic: if upon repeated admonition he repented, he was not to reject him at all; but if he did not thereupon amend, he was to be rejected as incorrigible, and as no longer under the evangelist's care and inspection." Benson. "*Reject*, avoid, withdraw thyself from." Newcome.

[2] *Is wholly perverted.*] ἐξεστραπται. The word is applied to *buildings*; and signifies, to be overturned from the foundation. Estius, Macknight.

[3] *Erreth.*] ἁμαρτανω, "*aberro a scopo proposito:*" to err from the mark, to wander from the road; to sin. Schleusner.

[4] *Being self-condemned.*] "He that thus breaks off from the unity of the church, doth in effect inflict that punishment upon himself which the church useth to malefactors; that is, cutting himself off from the church." Hammond.

Ch. III. Ver. 11. longer as members of the Christian community: for it is plain that people who are so zealous for Jewish rites are utter strangers to the doctrine and spirit of Christianity. If they were ever acquainted with it, they are now entirely alienated from it; and by setting themselves up at the head of factions and parties in opposition to us, they do in effect renounce communion with us, and pass a sentence of excommunication upon themselves.

4. He directs Titus to come to him at Nicopolis, and to give every necessary assistance to Zenas and Apollos, ver. 12, 13.

12. *When I shall send to thee Artemas or Tychicus, endeavour to come to me to Nicopolis* [1], *for I have determined to pass the winter there.*

I propose to stay a few months longer at Ephesus,

[1] *Nicopolis.*] If the hypothesis be admitted that the Epistle to Titus was written from Ephesus in the beginning of A.D. 56, the apostle must have changed his plan of passing the winter at Nicopolis. After having received the Epistle from the Corinthians and returned his answer, he determined to postpone his visit to Corinth till he had learned how his Letter had been received, and the effect which it had produced. For this purpose, having sent Artemas to Crete to relieve Titus, he directed that evangelist to go directly to Corinth, and having seen how matters stood there, to make a report to him at Troas: intending at that time to stay at Ephesus till Pentecost. But being obliged to depart sooner than he intended in consequence of the tumult occasioned by Demetrius and the artists, he did not find Titus at Troas, and being impatient to receive tidings from him, he crossed over to Macedonia, where he met him. Titus, therefore, must have left Crete immediately upon Artemas's arrival; and meeting Paul in Macedonia, probably accompanied him to Illyricum, and passed the winter of the year 56 with the apostle there.

and at the latter end of the year I intend to go to Nicopolis in Thrace, where I mean to pass the winter. Before that time I shall send either Artemas or Tychicus to relieve you from the duties of your laborious office, after which I hope you will come to me at Nicopolis and spend the winter with me. Ch. III. Ver. 12.

Diligently help forward on their way Zenas, the teacher of the law, and Apollos, that they may want nothing. 13.

Two of our friends, Zenas, who before his conversion to Christianity was an eminent teacher of the Jewish law, and Apollos, so well known in the churches as an eloquent preacher of the gospel, are now upon a journey, intending to promote the knowledge of the Christian religion in the countries which they visit. In their way they mean to pass through Crete. When you see them, give them every assistance to render their visit pleasant and useful while they remain with you, and to help them forward in their journey, and assist them in the purposes of their mission, when they depart from Crete.

5. The apostle again recommends honourable industry, and, after a general salutation, he concludes the epistle with the apostolical benediction, ver. 14, 15.

And let our converts *also learn to excel in reputable occupations*[2] *for necessary exigencies, that they be not unfruitful.* 14.

[2] *Reputable occupations,* &c.] vid. ver. 8. "*for necessary uses,* in respect to the wants of their fellow-Christians. As

Ch. III. Ver. 14. Having mentioned the assistance which I wish you to afford to Zenas and Apollos, it reminds me once more to request that you will urge the converts from heathenism to the Christian faith to distinguish themselves from their indolent and intemperate neighbours by industry in their proper callings, that so they may have something in store to lay out for useful purposes, and particularly to promote the knowledge and the practice of the Christian religion among those who have not yet been blessed with the light of truth; and to assist in bearing the expenses of missionaries who, like these two eminent teachers of the gospel, are willing to devote themselves to this laborious and hazardous office. Thus they will prove to the world that the faith which they profess is an operative and useful principle, when they see its beneficial effects, in producing

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concerning liberality and hospitality to them; especially to propagators of the gospel." Newcome.

"The apostle," says Dr. Priestley, "now concludes his epistle with giving directions about particular things. These little circumstances, though of no use to us in any other view, are of the greatest use in proving the genuineness of the epistles. They are so written, as that no man can seriously believe them to be forgeries: accordingly, it never was doubted either that they were Paul's, or that they were written in the circumstances to which he alludes. The proof of the truth of the gospel history from this one circumstance is of a peculiarly clear and satisfactory kind to those who properly attend to it; but few appear to me to have done this. It would be quite as easy to account for the writing of the Epistles of Cicero, upon the supposition of there being no truth in the Roman history, as to account for the writing of these of Paul, on the idea of there being no truth in the Christian history: so exactly do they correspond to one another."

industry, sobriety, economy, and liberality, among those who were formerly idle, intemperate, sordid, and selfish. Ch. III. Ver. 14.

All who are *with me salute thee. Salute those who love us in the faith.* The *favour* of God *be with you all.* 15.

The Christians at Ephesus send their affectionate salutations to you. Salute in my name all those who are our friends in the true and uncorrupted faith. With regard to those who debase the Christian doctrine by mixtures of Jewish ceremonies, I know that they are no friends of mine, and that they are fully aware that my unwearied efforts are continually exerted to oppose their pernicious errors. To send Christian salutations to such would be hypocrisy in me, and by them would be regarded as an insult. To conclude: As I have written this Epistle, not merely for the instruction of you, my convert to the faith, my companion in labour and in danger, and my representative in Crete, but for the benefit of the whole community of Christians in that extensive island, my apostolical benediction rest upon you all! May the favour of Almighty God be with you! Possessed of this, you will be safe and happy.

THE EPISTLE

TO

THE HEBREWS.

INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS.

THE antiquity of the EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS has never been disputed. It was written in the apostolic age, and anterior to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple; for it contains many expressions which plainly imply that the Temple service was then existing. And as the epistle was certainly written by a Hebrew Christian and addressed to believing Hebrews, if that dreadful catastrophe had actually taken place, it is morally impossible that there should not have been some direct mention of it, or some plain allusion to it.

The author of this epistle is uncertain. It is commonly ascribed to the apostle Paul: but the ancients were divided in their opinion concerning it[1]; some giving it to Paul, others to Barnabas, or

[1] "This epistle," says Dr. Lardner, "was generally received in ancient times by those Christians who used the Greek

Clement, or Luke. It was a prevalent opinion among the ancients, and has been adopted by some modern critics, that the apostle dictated the epistle in Hebrew, or Syro-Chaldaic, and that it was translated into Greek by Luke or Clement, or rather that the ideas and arguments are Paul's, but that the style and language are Luke's.

That the language of the epistle is not that of the apostle Paul, is very generally allowed; and the reasons for this opinion are assigned by Origen, who was a competent judge of style and composition, being himself a good writer in Greek. "The

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language and lived in the Eastern part of the Roman empire. Clement of Alexandria before the end of the second century received the epistle as Paul's, and quotes it without hesitation. It is not, however, expressly quoted as Paul's by any Latin writer in the first three centuries." Lardner's *Works*, vol. vi. p. 395, Dr. Kippis's edition.

Some writers, both ancient and modern, have supposed that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written in Hebrew or Syriac, and translated into Greek. This hypothesis was defended by J. D. Michaelis, but refuted (says Rosenmuller) by Semler, who proved that the apostle wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews in Greek, in a *Dissertation* published at Halle, 1761. It seems, however, strange, that an epistle to the Hebrews should have been written in Greek: a language which it is probable that most of those who lived in Palestine did not understand. Some, therefore, have thought that the epistle was not addressed to them, but to the Hebrew Christians dispersed through the Roman empire. Lardner agrees with those who think the epistle was originally written in Greek, and argues against Spanheim and Wetstein from the occurrence of Greek paronomasias, or the concurrence of words of similar sound: a proof which he thinks unanswerable. The quotations from the Old Testament being all made from the LXX., and that even where it materially differs from the Hebrew, is likewise a strong presumption that the Epistle was written in Greek.

style of the Epistle to the Hebrews," says that learned Father, " hath not the apostle's rudeness of speech; but as to the texture of it, it is very elegant Greek, as every one will allow who is able to judge of differences of style. If I were to speak my opinion, I should say that the sentiments are the apostle's; but the language and composition another's, who committed to writing the apostle's sense, and, as it were, reduced into commentaries the things spoken by his master; so that if any church receive this epistle for Paul's, it is to be commended; for the ancients ascribed it to Paul; but no person certainly knows the composer but God. But the report transmitted to us by some is, that Clemens, who was bishop of Rome, wrote the epistle, and by others that it was written by Luke, who wrote the Gospel and the Acts [1]."

[1] See Euseb. *Eccl. Hist.* lib. vi. cap. 25. Dr. Lardner's opinion is, that Paul dictated the epistle in Hebrew; and another, who was a great master of the Greek language, immediately wrote down the apostle's sentiments in his own elegant Greek. But who this assistant of the apostle was, is altogether unknown. " This is an admirable epistle," continues this learned writer, " but singular in sentiments and language: somewhat different in both these respects from all the other writings in the New Testament. And whose is the language, as seems to me, is altogether unknown, whether that of Zenas or Apollos, or some other of the apostle's assistants or fellow-labourers." Lardner's *Works*, vol. vi. p. 410.

Eusebius says: " Paul having written to the Hebrews in their own language, some think that the evangelist Luke, and others that Clement, translated it into Greek." *Hist. Eccl.* lib. iii. cap. 38.

Philaster, bishop of Brescia about 380, says: " There are some who do not allow the Epistle to the Hebrews to have been written by Paul, but say it is either an epistle of the apostle

That the apostle Paul was not the author of this epistle is, I think, sufficiently evident: and though I was once inclined to the opinion of those who think that the ideas are Paul's, but the dress and language Luke's, upon further consideration I incline to believe that the apostle had no concern either in the matter or the form of this epistle: for though he frequently borrows the language of the scriptures to express his own ideas, and occasionally, perhaps, indulges in that loose and figurative interpretation of the Old Testament which was the fashion of the age, he never carries his allegorical

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Barnabas, or of Clement bishop of Rome: but some say it is an epistle of Luke the evangelist. Moreover some reject it, as being more eloquent than the apostle's other writings."

Jerome, about 392, says: "The epistle called to the Hebrews is not thought to be Paul's because of the difference of argument and style; but either Barnabas's, as Tertullian thought, or the evangelist Luke's, according to some others, or Clement's, bishop of Rome, who, as some think, being much with him, clothed and adorned St. Paul's sense in his own language. Moreover he wrote as a Hebrew to Hebrews, in pure Hebrew, it being his own language; whence it came to pass, that being translated it has more elegance in the Greek than his other epistles." See Lardner, vol. vi. pp. 408, 409.

"*Cujus scriptoris sit hæc Epistola non mirum est hodie dubitari, cum etiam veteres dubitaverint.*" Grotius; who thinks it impossible that Paul should be the author: "*ideo quod Paulinæ epistolæ inter se sint germanæ, pari charactere et dicendi modo: hæc vero manifeste ab iis discrepet, selectiores habens voces Græcas, leniusque fluens, non autem fracta brevibus incisis, ac salebrosa.*" He concludes that the epistle was written by Luke. The truth is, as Origen states it, that God only knows the author; and it is in vain to bewilder ourselves in conjecture. It is not, however, improbable that it was written by a hearer or an associate of Paul; which may account for his arguing in some instances from the same premises as the apostle. Comp. Heb. ii. 8 with 1 Cor. xv. 27.

reasoning to that great, and I had almost said extravagant extent, in which the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews indulges himself.

Still, however, it cannot be denied that the epistle was written in the apostolic age, and probably by some apostolic man; some associate of the apostles: not Luke, who was probably a Greek; whose compositions are chaste and elegant, and whose taste and judgement could never stoop to the verbal and declamatory mode of reasoning adopted by this author; which, however, might not offend Barnabas or Apollos, who were Jews by birth. The fashion of allegorizing the Old Testament might not be unpleasing to those who were accustomed to Jewish habits of thinking and reasoning, and who were not proficients in the dialectic art. It is, however, quite impossible that such writing and reasoning should have any claim to inspiration. Nevertheless, whatever may be thought of the *arguments* upon which the writer builds his conclusions, the *conclusions* themselves are undoubtedly true. The reasonings are adapted to the principles and the prejudices of the simple and uninformed Hebrew believer; but the doctrine is plainly that of the apostles[1], such

[1] "*Distinguenda sunt argumenta quibus auctor hujus epistolæ utitur ab ipsis veritatibus, quas proponit. Bene Clericus ad Hammond, ad Heb.* ix. 16. *de auctore hujus epistolæ,* '*Capita omnia doctrinæ Christianæ, quæ persequitur, verissima sunt, et possunt ex reliqua scriptura probari: sed ratio, qua illa illustrat, plane est similis consuetudini illorum temporum, ut ex Philone intelligere licet, in quo sunt passim ejusmodi accommodationes locorum SS. ratiocinationesque inde deductæ, in quibus nulla grammaticæ

as the author had derived from the purest sources, uncorrupted with the base alloy either of Pharisaic tradition or of heathen philosophy.

There is a very considerable resemblance between the Epistle to the Hebrews, and that which is extant under the name of Barnabas. In both, the doctrinal part consists of strained allegorical interpretations of the Old Testament scriptures. The latter, however, carries his figurative interpretations to a still more extravagant extreme than the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and takes to himself no small degree of credit for his own ingenuity[1].

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ratio habetur, nec aliud spectatur, nisi ut res ipsa quæ iis illustratur, sit vera. Is mos erat illius ætatis, quem non magis mirari debemus, quam nostras ipsorum consuetudines hodiernas.'" Rosenmuller.

[1] This writer explains the law concerning the distinction of animals into clean and unclean, as intended to recommend moral purity, which he illustrates by some fanciful instances. Of one animal he says that it changes its sex every year; and of another, that it brings forth its young at its mouth. And he accounts for his own superior knowledge upon these subjects by special divine communications. See Barnab. *Epist.* part i. c. 10. The difference is so great between the nonsense of the doctrinal, and the wisdom of the practical part of this short epistle, that one might be tempted to believe that they were written by different authors. There is nothing in the Epistle to the Hebrews so absurd as these examples from that of Barnabas, though some of the analogies are equally far-fetched and irrelevant: particularly those which relate to Melchizedec, ch. vii. Dr. Lardner says, that "Barnabas often argues like the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, but without borrowing from him." *Works*, vol. ii. p. 20. It is not denied that the Epistle of Barnabas, with many fanciful analogies, contains many excellent things; Dr. Lardner, p. 12, justly observes, that "the first part is an exhortation to constancy in the belief and profession of the Christian doctrine, without the rites of the Jewish law. The second part contains moral instruction."

Nevertheless, in both these Epistles the practical part is excellent. In that of Barnabas, the moral instruction, which is found only in the Greek original, and not in the Latin version, is in no respect unworthy of the very chief of the apostles. Some learned men, among whom is Jeremiah Jones, think that the Epistle of Barnabas is a forgery of the second century: but the prevailing opinion is, that it is the production of some Hebrew Christian of the apostolic age, and that, if it were originally written by Barnabas, it has been tampered with by some early scribe. At any rate, it exhibits a specimen of the manner in which the scriptures were then interpreted.

There is, however, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, besides a great superiority in style, an ingenuity and coherence not to be found in the Epistle of Barnabas. The design of the author is to reconcile the minds of the Hebrew Christians to the doctrine of a suffering Messiah, and to warn those wavering believers of the danger of apostasy. And he conducts his argument with a considerable degree of ingenuity, and in a way which was most likely to make a favourable impression upon the feelings of the Jewish believers. He begins with expatiating upon the superior dignity of the messenger of the new covenant above all former prophets and messengers of God: and it is not till after he has stated that the person commissioned upon this important errand could not with propriety be an angel from heaven, or a being of any order superior to man-

kind, that he ventures to introduce the name of Jesus, as a person who, having by the gracious appointment of God tasted of death for the benefit of all, was for that reason already crowned with glory and honour, and ordained to universal dominion. And having shown how expedient, and even necessary, it was that the great deliverer of mankind should himself be a suffering human being, he proceeds to reconcile the believing Hebrews to this state of things, by running a parallel between the Mosaic and the Christian dispensations, and by illustrating the great superiority of the latter, even in those articles in which the Jews were accustomed principally to glory [1] as the peculiar excellencies of their own institution. He particularly argues that the new dispensation possesses a superior lawgiver, a superior promise, a superior chieftain, and above all a superior priesthood, a superior temple service, a superior victim, and a superior mode of consecration and sacrifice: and, from the whole, he infers

[1] Rosenmuller, after stating the objection which the unbelieving Jews urged against the Christian revelation as every way inferior to that of Moses, adds, "*Contra hos igitur Paulus ostendit Jesum Nazarenum longe superiorem esse angelis, Mose, Pontifice Maximo V. T., omnibusque reliquis sacerdotibus; ex ejus morte et cruciatibus pro nobis perpessis, multo majora, et diuturniora bona ad nos redundare, quam ad Judæos ex cultu Levitico, &c. Ex his aliisque argumentis probat, Christianam religionem esse multo præstantiorem, perfectioremque illa vetere Judaica, et adhortatur Christianos ad constantiam in religione, et omnium virtutum indefessum studium. In toto hoc argumento tractando auctor se accommodat ingenio eorum, qui a Judaica ad Christianam religionem transierant, eosque a primis elementis religionis ad altiora ducit.*"

the extreme danger of apostasy, against which he frequently and solemnly warns them in the most earnest and affectionate language.

This epistle is divided into two Parts—DOCTRINAL and PRACTICAL. The former extends to the eighteenth verse of the tenth chapter, and the latter to the end of the epistle.

PART THE FIRST.

The writer endeavours to reconcile the Hebrews to the offensive DOCTRINES of the Christian dispensation, by showing its superiority in every important particular to the institutions of Moses; and to illustrate his argument,

FIRST, The author asserts the pre-eminence of the founder of the new dispensation over all former prophets and messengers of God, and infers the superior regard which is due to the dispensation introduced by him. Ch. i. 1—ii. 4.

SECONDLY. He argues that the nature of this dispensation required that the first teacher of it should not be an angel or a celestial spirit, but a suffering human being, of the same nature with those whom he came to redeem from death. Ch. ii. 5—18.

THIRDLY. The author briefly argues the superiority of Jesus to Moses. Ch. iii. 1—6.

FOURTHLY. The *rest* promised to believers, and into which Jesus conducts his followers, being su-

perior to that into which Joshua led the Israelites, the neglect of the proper means of securing it must be proportionably criminal and dangerous. Ch. iii. 7—iv. 13.

FIFTHLY. He expatiates upon the priesthood of Jesus, and in particular he argues at large the superiority of the priesthood of Christ, which is after the order of Melchisedec, to the Levitical priesthood, which was after the order of Aaron; and from these premises he infers the temporary duration and speedy abolition of the ceremonial law and the Mosaic institute. Ch. iv. 14—vii.

SIXTHLY. The author then proceeds to his main point of reconciling the minds of the believing Hebrews to the very offensive doctrine of a crucified Messiah, by representing the death of Christ as that of a victim of a superior nature, whose blood was shed to ratify a covenant far superior to that of Moses, of which sacrifice those of the Levitical institute were nothing more than types and shadows. Ch. viii. 1—x. 18.

With this important argument, which he labours with great industry and ingenuity, and which he sets in a variety of lights, he concludes the Doctrinal Part of the epistle.

PART THE SECOND.

The Second Part of the epistle contains the PRACTICAL APPLICATION of the doctrine which the author had advanced.

FIRST. He urges the believing Hebrews to patience and to perseverance, and again warns them of the extreme danger of apostasy. Ch. x. 19, &c.

SECONDLY. He defines the nature of faith, and exemplifies the excellence of this valuable principle in the conduct of the Jewish worthies, whose history is recorded in the Old Testament. Ch. xi.

THIRDLY. From these examples, from the character of Christ, and his fortitude under sufferings, and from the pre-eminent glory of the gospel dispensation, he urges the believing Hebrews to endure persecution with courage, and to adhere faithfully to their profession. Ch. xii.

FOURTHLY. He exhorts them to the practice of various virtues, and to yield a respectful submission to their Christian and apostolic instructors. Ch. xiii. 1—17.

FIFTHLY. He concludes the epistle with earnestly recommending himself to their prayers, with devout wishes for their improvement, with apologizing for the freedom which he had used, and with the usual benediction, ver. 18, &c.

In the Exposition of this celebrated epistle I have adopted that interpretation which, to the best of my judgement, after the most serious examination, expresses the true meaning of the writer. This in some instances differs considerably from the usual and popular mode of explaining the text: but I hope that it is supported by evidence sufficient to

convince the candid, the serious, and the inquisitive; for such only are open to conviction. All, therefore, that I request of the reader is, that he would read with candour, and judge with impartiality: and may the Spirit of Truth guide him into all truth!

THE

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

PART THE FIRST.

THE AUTHOR ENDEAVOURS TO RECONCILE THE MINDS OF THE BELIEVING HEBREWS TO THE OFFENSIVE DOCTRINES OF THE CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION, BY SHOWING ITS SUPERIORITY IN EVERY IMPORTANT PARTICULAR TO THE INSTITUTES OF MOSES. Ch. I.

SECTION I.

THE WRITER asserts the superiority of Jesus to all former prophets and messengers of God, and argues the superior regard due to the dispensation which he was commissioned to introduce. Ch. i. 1—ii. 4.

1. THE author expresses in bold and highly figurative language the dignity of the character, and the importance of the message, of the Head and Publisher of the new dispensation, ver. 1—3.

Ch. I. Ver. 1. 2. *GOD, who in many parts, and in many ways*[1], *spake formerly to our fathers by the prophets, in these last days hath spoken to us by* his *son*[2], *whom he hath appointed heir*[3] *of all things, with a view to whom*[4] *he even constituted the* former *dispensations.*

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[1] *In many parts and in many ways.*] πολυμερως, *in many parts:* i. e. partly by one prophet, partly by another. See Peirce, Newcome, Macknight. πολυτροπως· "This clause," says Dr. Macknight, "does not refer to the different manners in which God revealed himself to the prophets, but to the different ways in which the prophets communicated the revelations they received to the fathers; they did it in types and figures, &c., whereas the gospel revelation was spoken by Christ and his apostles in one manner only, namely in plain language."

[2] *By* his *son.*] εν υἱῳ, *by a son.* Wakefield. It does not follow that Christ is of a different nature from former prophets because he is called a son, any more than that the servants of a household are of an inferior nature to the family whom they serve. It is a distinction of rank, not of nature.

[3] *Heir of all things:*] that is, "lord of all things." See Gal. iv. 1. Vide Crellius, Whitby, Macknight. Christ is lord of all things, as the whole human race, Jews and Gentiles, are to become subject to his spiritual authority; that is, to the gospel.

[4] *With a view to whom.*] δι' ὃ και τους αιωνας επoιησεν. Αιων, though it may sometimes signify *world* (which is however doubted by Sykes), see Heb. xi. 3, yet is often used for *age* or *dispensation.* Matt. xii. 32, xiii. 39; Mark x. 30; Luke xviii. 30; 1 Cor. ii. 6, x. 11; Col. i. 26; Heb. vi. 5, ix. 26. Δια with a genitive commonly expresses the instrumental cause, but sometimes also the final cause; and in this sense Grotius understands it here, and supposes a reference to an old proverb amongst the Jews, that the world was made for the Messiah. He appeals to Beza in support of this interpretation of δι' ὃ. Beza on Rom. vi. 4. See also the Scholiast on the *Plutus* of Aristophanes, p. 6., ed. Basil. Also Thucydides *Hist.* lib. vi. § 7. δι' ὑπερ παντα εκινδυνευον, "for whose sake they put every thing to hazard."—δια λογων, "with a view to conversation."

Ch. I. Ver. 2.

That God, whom we of the Hebrew nation have been taught to acknowledge and adore as the sole unrivalled Almighty Sovereign of the universe, selected long ago the posterity of Abraham to be the depositaries of his law, and to preserve in the world the knowledge and worship of himself as the one true and living God. This glorious Being, who communicated his will to our forefathers in past ages by his servants the prophets, revealing it gradually and occasionally, sometimes by visible appearances, sometimes by audible voices, and sometimes by visions and dreams, hath now, of late, been pleased to make an entire revelation of his gracious purposes to mankind, by the clear and direct instruction of a teacher expressly commissioned for this end, upon whom such distinguished honour has been conferred, that in comparison with

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Joseph. *Antiq.* lib. xviii. c. vii. § 7, 8, c. x. § 3.—δια νους, "with a view to be understood." 1 Cor. xiv. 19. See Locke on the place. "I think the words should be translated 'for whose sake,' or, 'upon whose account,' he made even the ages." Dr. Chandler on Eph. i. 11. This is a remarkable concession, as Dr. Chandler was a high Arian; of which doctrine this text is commonly regarded as one of the chief arguments. Mr. Simpson, *Ess.* viii. considers the plural form as the Hebrew superlative: "by whom he constituted the ages," τους αιωνας· *q. d.* this last and most important dispensation, the dispensation of the Messiah. According to this interpretation, the preposition δια retains its usual signification. "*Per Christum vere nova et alia secula Deus condidit, dum per eum plane novam, et a priore longe diversam, rerum ac mundi faciem induxit.*" "*Secula Deus per Christum fecisse dicitur, non quod omnia, quæ unquam extiterunt secula per eum condiderit, sed quod condiderit aliqua, nempe nova et a prioribus diversa, iisque longe feliciora.*" Crellius, Slichtingius.

Ch. 1. Ver. 2. him all former prophets are but as servants in the household in respect to a son. This illustrious person is appointed to an inheritance worthy of his rank: the dominion over all things is given to him; and though he is not yet in full possession of all his glory, it is nevertheless the fixed purpose of his God and Father that all the nations of the earth shall in due time bow to his authority, and submit to his auspicious government. And indeed it is with a view to this last, most beneficial, universal, and perpetual dispensation, that all preceding dispensations have been introduced and established. The various revelations made from time to time to the ancient patriarchs were intended to prepare the way for a more glorious and universal diffusion of moral light; and all the rites and ceremonies of the law point to the same happy termination. All had a reference to this great teacher, and received their accomplishment in him.

3. *Who being*[1] *an effulgent ray*[2] *of his brightness,*

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[1] *Who being.*] This context contains a description in highly figurative language of the character and condition of Jesus as the Messiah. He is distinguished from all preceding prophets, as a son from a servant;—he is made heir of all things, that is, Jews and Gentiles are equally the subjects of his kingdom. N.B. For this sense of the phrase *all things*, see an excellent dissertation by Mr. Tyrwhitt in *Commentaries and Essays*, vol. ii. No. 1.—With a view to him all former dispensations were arranged.—He is a ray of the divine brightness, as he clearly teaches the will of God;—he is an exact image of God himself, as he controuled the laws of nature at pleasure by the voluntary power of working miracles which was imparted to him;—he conducts all things by the powerful authority of God;—his cause and kingdom are carried on in the world by the irresistible

and an exact image of himself[3], *and conducting all things by his powerful authority*[4], *after he had* Ch. I. Ver. 3.

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agency of the Almighty;—he made purification of sin;—he consecrated a new and holy community to God;—and he is set down at the right hand of supreme majesty, or of the majesty on high, as he is risen from the dead, has ascended to heaven, and is advanced to universal spiritual dominion. The attentive reader here sees, what from the great influence of prejudice is not usually observed, the regular gradation of circumstances from the original designation of this great teacher through his life, doctrine, miracles, and death, to his glorious resurrection and ultimate advancement to the dignity and honour intended for him. And all this without offering any other violence to the language of the writer than what is usually offered to figurative language, viz. that of not understanding it in a literal sense. And in truth the common interpretation recedes as far from the literal sense, or nearly so, as the interpretation here given.

[2] *Effulgent ray.*] απαυγασμα, ἡλιε φεγγος, *the splendour of the sun.* Hesychius. απαυγη, ἡ εκλαμψις, *effulgence.* Suidas, Doddridge, Macknight. "ὁς ων. *Participium ων est et præsentis et præteriti imperfecti temporis.*" Crellius. See John ix. 25. The writer is here describing the character of Christ during his personal ministry.

[3] *An exact image of himself.*] χαρακτηρ της ὑποστασεως αυτε. Χαρακτηρ is the engraving of a seal, or the impression made by a seal upon wax. Ὑποστασις is *substance:* the image of his substance is the image of *himself.* See 2 Cor. ix. 4; Slichtingius, Crellius, and Grotius *in loc.* The meaning is probably the same as that of εν μορφη Θεε, Phil. ii. 6; and is to be explained of the possession of miraculous powers. Christ being the image of God no more proves his participation of the divine nature, than Adam being made in the image of God proves him to have been also divine. Sykes has an excellent note upon the word *hypostasis;* which, he says, "seems never to have been used to signify *person* till long after St. Paul's days, and should not be rendered so here. We find the term in metaphysical books applied to certain *properties* of the One God as eminently *subsisting* in him. Plato talks of three hypostases, not meaning three persons; for *unity* and *goodness* made two of these hypostases. Taking, then, *hypostasis* as signifying Essence with its properties, the Son is properly the image or just representation of God's properties, goodness, kindness," &c.

[4] *Conducting all things,* &c.] φερων τε τα παντα τω ῥηματι

Ch. I. Ver. 3. *by himself made the purification of sins* [1], *sat down at the right hand of supreme majesty* [2].

This illustrious teacher, like a beam of heavenly radiance, has diffused the clearest light over the divine dispensations: and by the mighty works which he was enabled to perform he exhibited a most striking and awful resemblance of that Being who has all the powers of nature under his controul. During his personal ministry, being armed with authority from God, he thus introduced his kingdom and established his doctrine: and when, by an event which, however unexpected and surprising, was far from being disgraceful to his person or his cause, he had prepared the way for the reconciliation of enemies and the introduction of aliens into covenant with God, he was quickly raised from this state of temporary depression, and advanced to

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τῆς δυναμεως αὐτου. Crellius understands this clause as exegetical of the preceding: "φερειν hoc loco nihil aliud est quam movere, agitare." Dr. Newcome explains it "bearing before him;" as the Greek word is used in the phrase αγειν και φερειν παντα. Αὐτου undoubtedly refers to God; the author uses ἑαυτου in the next clause where he means to speak of Jesus himself. See Peirce. "*Verbum potentiæ per hebraismum est verbum potens.*" Crellius. *q. d.* Ordering all things in the new dispensation by authority from God.

[1] *Purification of sins.*] The word *our*, ἡμων, in the received text, is wanting in the Alexandrine and other manuscripts. The writer with great address omits the express mention of the obnoxious subject of the crucifixion of Jesus. What he means by purification of sin he explains more at large, ch. ix. and x. δι' ἑαυτου, *by himself*, is wanting in some good copies.

[2] *Right hand of supreme majesty.*] So Mr. Wakefield. Or, "the majesty on high:" *i. e.* in heaven. An expression borrowed from Ps. cx. 1, and often applied to Christ to express the dignity and authority to which he is now advanced.

a degree of dignity and glory, superior to what had ever been conferred on any preceding prophet, however venerable or illustrious. Ch. I. Ver. 3.

Observe here the address of the author of this epistle, and the tenderness with which he treats the prejudices of his readers, in not immediately mentioning the name of Jesus the despised Nazarene, nor introducing the obnoxious circumstance of his crucifixion, till he had prepared their minds for it, by expressing in the strongest language the dignity of his character and office, and only obliquely hinting at his death in that view of it upon which he afterwards expatiates, and which would be most likely to reconcile the minds of the Hebrew Christians to so mortifying a subject.

This address of the writer has been misunderstood by modern interpreters, and indeed by the ancients, who were converts from heathenism, and who knew little or nothing of Jewish prejudices, customs, and modes of thinking. And those figurative expressions of the writer, which were only intended to describe the dignity of our Lord's character, and the divine energies and authority by which his mission was supported, have been strangely misapplied, as if they taught some unknown and incomprehensible emanation of the person of the Son from that of the Father, and some mysterious communication of the divine essence or substance, and participation of the divine government of the universe, which never entered into the thoughts

Ch. I. Ver. 3. either of the writer himself or of the simple Hebrew Christians to whom the epistle is addressed, and who had always been taught to believe that there is one God only, who made the heaven, the earth, and the sea, and all that is therein, who sustains and governs all things without an equal, a rival, or a vicegerent.

2. The writer asserts the great superiority of the Leader of this new dispensation to all former prophets and messengers of God, alluding to his resurrection from the dead, ver. 4—6.

For the explanation of the writer's argument, it is necessary to observe, that the same word in the original is sometimes translated *angel*, that is, a supposed celestial spirit, and sometimes *messenger*, and the connexion of his discourse requires that in this chapter, and the beginning of the next, it should be translated messenger, as referring to those former prophets who had been mentioned in the first verse.

In order likewise to understand the relevance of the writer's quotations, it must be remembered that in the scripture phraseology, *sonship* implies an inheritance. The Israelites were *sons* of God, and their inheritance was Canaan. Christians are also *sons*, and their inheritance is a resurrection to everlasting life. Christ is the *first-born* son, because he is the first who rose from death to immortality; and he is said to be superior to all other prophets, without excepting even Moses himself, who is principally alluded to, though, to avoid offence, not ex-

pressly named, because the Christian inheritance to which Jesus leads, and of which he is the first partaker, is infinitely superior to that of Canaan. Ch. I. Ver. 3.

It is also evident that this writer frequently quotes passages of scripture merely from the sound of the words[1], without any regard to the connexion or to the true meaning of the text; and that the arguments are often of no intrinsic value, being addressed merely to the *professed opinions*, and sometimes, it should seem, even to the *ignorance* of his readers. The writer of this epistle, whoever he was, is more of an eloquent declaimer than a judicious reasoner. Christianity is not bound to defend all her advocates: the doctrine may be, and undoubtedly is true, though some of the arguments alleged by its friends may be inconclusive, and some of its advocates injudicious.

Let us now return to the proofs which this writer produces of the superiority of the great teacher, whom he does not yet name, to all former prophets.

Being become so much greater than those messengers[2], *as he hath obtained by inheritance a more excellent name than they.* 4.

[1] *The writer quotes from the sound of words.*] "The Jews," says Dr. Priestley in his preface to this epistle, "having no other books, were always meditating upon their scriptures; which led them to apply passages in them to all occasions, proper and improper, and to draw from them arguments which will not always bear strict examination. This was perfectly natural in their circumstances; and if we had found the case to be otherwise, we should have wanted a valuable argument of the genuineness of these writings, as not suiting the men or the times."

[2] *Those messengers.*] And again ver. 5, *Unto what one* of

Ch. I. Ver. 4. Having been put into possession of the great inheritance, he has obtained the title of a son, while former prophets and messengers of God, however eminent their character, or however important their mission, were not graced with that honourable appellation.

5. *For unto what one of those messengers said* God *at any time, Thou art my son*[1], *this day have I*

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those messengers. See Sykes. *των αγγελων, those messengers:* viz. *οἱ προφηται*, ver. 1. This interpretation, suggested many years ago by an ingenious friend, is adopted by Mr. Wakefield in his *New Translation*. It is surprising that it was never thought of before. But the Gentile Christians from the beginning misunderstood the expressions; and the original error seems to have been propagated from age to age almost without intermission. The Hebrew Christians must, however, have understood the writer in the true sense; for it is evident that they were always strictly Unitarian. See Dr. Priestley's *Hist. of Early Opinions*, vol. iii. book iii. ch. viii.—xii. It was of great importance to establish the fact that Jesus was a prophet superior to all former prophets and messengers of God, without excepting Moses himself; who is unquestionably the person chiefly alluded to, though not yet expressly named. But of what use is it to the inhabitants of this planet to know any thing concerning the arrangement of a supposed celestial hierarchy, or to be informed that other guardian angels, who were before the colleagues of Christ, are now become his inferiors? or who that allows himself to reflect calmly and dispassionately, can suppose that a formal revelation should be made of a fact in which men are so little interested? See Peirce *in loc.*

[1] *Thou art my son.*] The second Psalm is generally understood as a prophecy of the Messiah, both by Jewish and Christian interpreters; and Mr. Peirce in his note upon this passage has given a learned and able vindication of this interpretation. Dr. Priestley, however, denies the inspiration of this Psalm, and assigns plausible arguments for his opinion. *Theol. Repository*, vol. iv. p. 98—103. "*Omnes Hebræi fatebantur, quicquid præclarum et magnum de piis hominibus et regibus Israelitarum dictum esset in Libris Vet. Test. id sensu multo eminentiore pertinere ad Messiam, a prophetis varie præfiguratum. Sic omnes*

begotten thee? and again, I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son? Ch. I. Ver. 5.

You recollect a passage in the second Psalm (Ps. ii. 7.) which the Jewish nation universally interpret of the Messiah: he is there called a Son; and the spirit of prophecy represents God as giving him that appellation upon a glorious occasion, which though then future is spoken of as present, and which has now actually taken place.

There is also another passage (2 Sam. vii. 14), which, though spoken by Nathan to David, of Solomon, is also applicable in a far more important sense to the Messiah, the purport of which is, I will provide a glorious inheritance for him, and will distinguish him above all his brethren, above all other prophets, teachers, and messengers.

And when he introduces the first-born again[3] *into the world, he saith*[4], *Let all the messengers of God pay homage to him.* 6.

Hebræi fatebantur, Psalmum secundum, quanquam in Davide aliquo modo impletum, sensu tamen arcano et sublimiore ad ipsum Messiam pertinere, qui supra omnes Filius Dei, dicendus sit: a Deo genitus, i. e. *ad imperium evectus. Hoc semel monuisse sufficiat.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *I will be to him a father,* &c.] Mr. Peirce labours to prove, but I think unsatisfactorily, that this passage is also a prediction of the Messiah.

[3] *And when he introduces,* &c.] παλιν εισαγαγη κ. τ. λ., "and when he again bringeth in his first-born into the world, *i. e.* after his resurrection. Mr. Peirce observes, that "the order of the words in the original leads to this sense, and they cannot without violence offered to them bear another translation."

[4] *He saith.*] Some think that this citation is made from Deut. xxxii. 43, where the LXX. have the very words which are here quoted. But as nothing corresponding to them is found in the

Ch. I. Ver. 6. The xcviith Psalm may be understood as a pompous representation of the introduction of the Messiah's kingdom; and in ver. 7 are these words, Pay homage to him, all ye messengers of God: these being interpreted as an address to the Messiah, are an acknowledgement of his superiority to all former prophets. This call upon the messengers of God is made upon some grand public occasion when this superior prophet is inaugurated into his office. As applied to the great teacher, whose dignity and office I am now describing, it signifies that his second appearance in the world, after his temporary removal from it, was the circumstance which constitutes his great superiority over all former messengers of God.

It needs but little discernment to see how very precarious this argument is, and how entirely it depends upon his reader conceding the principles upon which it is founded. It is also made still more obscure by the unwillingness of the author as yet to introduce the offensive doctrine of the crucifixion of Jesus.

Hebrew or the Samaritan, Mr. Peirce suspects them to have been an interpolation; and with the generality of interpreters he supposes the citation to be made with a little variation of expression from Ps. xcvii. 7. That learned writer contends that the Psalm (and even the passage in Deuteronomy) refers to the time when the Gentiles would be gathered into the church, that is, to the reign of the Messiah, which commenced at the resurrection of Christ; and consequently, that the application of the prophecy by the writer of the Epistle is correct and pertinent.

3. Though former prophets are described under very honourable characters, the author of the new dispensation is entitled to superior honours, and advanced to universal dominion, ver. 7—9. Ch. I.

And concerning[1] *these messengers indeed* the scripture *saith*[2], *Who maketh his messengers winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.* Ver. 7.

Former prophets and holy men, who were commissioned to reveal the will of God to mankind, were as ready as the wind or the lightning to obey the orders of the Almighty; yet still, like those inanimate but powerful agents, they acted only in a subordinate and ministerial capacity.

This citation is made from Ps. civ. 4. The design of that beautiful and sublime ode is to celebrate the displays of the divine attributes in the works of creation and providence: the true version of the words in their original connexion is, He maketh the winds his messengers and the flames of fire his ministers. By a bold prosopopœia they represent winds and lightnings as the servants of the Almighty, and yielding obedience to his orders.

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[1] *Concerning.*] προς τους αγγελους, "*concerning* these messengers." Grotius remarks this as a peculiarity in the style of Luke. Luke xix. 20. But Hallet produces an example from the writings of Paul, Rom. viii. 31. Introd. to Peirce on Heb. p. xxxi.

[2] The scripture *saith.*] This citation and the succeeding ones are from the Septuagint version: a presumption, as some think, that the epistle was originally written in Greek. "The *scripture* saith, not *he* saith: the nominative case is not Θεος, but γραφη understood." Dr. Owen. See Bowyer.

Ch. I. Ver. 7. But this writer, citing the passage more from regard to the sound than to the sense, inverts the meaning of the psalmist, and applies the words as descriptive of the character of the former prophets and messengers of God.

8. *But concerning the son* it saith, *God* is *thy throne*[1] *for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy king-*
9. *dom is a sceptre of rectitude. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God,* even *thy God*[2]*, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy associates*[3]. Ps. xlv. 6, 7.

The xlvth Psalm, which, though originally composed to celebrate the nuptials of Solomon, is by the interpreters of our nation commonly applied to the Messiah, represents that great prophet as sustaining a character far superior to that of any of his

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[1] *God* is *thy throne.*] "*Deus ipse est sedes tua perpetua.*" Grotius. So Wakefield. Newcome adopts the common translation, "thy throne, O God;" and as those are called Gods to whom the word of God came, there is no material objection to this translation: understanding by the word of God, a prince, or a mighty, perhaps, an inspired chief. "God is the support of thy throne." Sykes.

[2] *God,* even *thy God.*] Θεος, ὁ Θεος σϑ. "The first Θεος should be inclosed between commas, being the Attic vocative, as in the preceding verse. Therefore, 'O God, thy God hath anointed thee,' &c." Mangey and Markland, *apud* Bowyer.

[3] *Associates.*] Dr. Doddridge says, "It seems to be intimated here, that as Christ took the special charge of Judea, angels were charged with the government of other countries, in reference to which they are called his fellows or companions." But I am persuaded that the author of this epistle makes no allusion whatever to the groundless notion of guardian angels. The associates here mentioned are former prophets and messengers, beings of the same nature, who, like Jesus himself, were commissioned to reveal the will of God to men.

predecessors; for while they are described as menial servants, this last and greatest prophet is represented in a regal capacity, as invested with high dignity and authority; as a just and righteous prince, who, because of the superior excellence of his character, and importance of his commission, is advanced by his Father and his God to, and powerfully supported in, a station of glory and felicity far beyond those who like him were honoured with a divine commission though in an inferior degree. Ch. I. Ver. 9.

The psalm which is here cited is applied by the Jews to the Messiah, and by Christians to Christ. Whether it be a prophecy at all, will bear a question; and how far a prophecy can be admitted as containing a double sense, is a case of exceeding great difficulty; but nothing can be argued from the use made of the prophecies by this writer, because it is plain, from the last citation, that he is satisfied with texts whose sound alone, however distant from the true meaning, is applicable to his purpose.

It is a strange interpretation which some ingenious and learned men[4] have given of this passage,

[4] *Some learned men.*] Mr. Peirce expounds the text in this manner: "Therefore, O God, thy God hath anointed thee to a vastly greater regal authority and power than ever belonged to the angels, who before thy inauguration were partners with thee in the government of the world." The learned author observes, in his note upon the passage, "It seems not an unreasonable supposition, that, notwithstanding their holiness and integrity, they might be liable to such mistakes as Christ was not."

But

Ch. I. Ver. 9. viz. that Jesus Christ, who had formerly been employed like other guardian angels, his equals, in superintending a particular district, had conducted himself so well in his peculiar province, that, as the reward of his merits, he was now advanced to universal dominion, and his former colleagues are made his subjects. Surely divine revelation was communicated to teach mankind something of more immediate importance than these imaginary revolutions in the celestial hierarchy. The design of the gospel is to make men wise unto salvation; and it contains no information that is not directly conducive to this purpose.

4. The writer having mentioned God as the supporter of the throne of the son, now in the language of the psalmist, Ps. cii. 25, expresses his confidence in the divine immutability as the pledge of the perpetual duration of the Messiah's kingdom, ver. 10—12.

10. *And: Thou, Lord*[1], *in the beginning hast*

But can any reflecting person seriously believe that the government of the world was ever committed to the care of imperfect and fallible beings, who, because of their incapacity, were afterwards deposed, and the forms of government changed?

[1] *Thou, Lord.*] "In Ps. cii. 25, there is no corresponding Hebrew for *thou, Lord.* Jehovah must be supplied from ver. 21, 22, or God from ver. 24." Newcome. The words however are found in the LXX. and were probably dropped by negligence from the Hebrew copies. The immutability of God is here declared as a pledge of the immutability of the kingdom of Christ. "To show," says Emlyn (*Works*, vol. ii. p. 340), "how able his God who had anointed him was, to make good and maintain what he had granted him, a durable kingdom

founded the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They will perish, but thou remainest[2]; *they will decay altogether like a garment, and like a mantle*[3] *thou wilt fold them up, and they will be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years will not fail.* Ch. I. Ver. 11. 12.

This sublime description of the eternity, the immutability, and the almighty power of God, in which the devout psalmist represents the supreme Being as remaining unchangeable in all the glory of his attributes from age to age, while at his pleasure worlds and systems rise and disappear in long succession, and the splendid firmament itself is folded up and laid aside like a robe, inspires a joyful assurance that the kingdom of his son, supported by the arm of his omnipotence, shall bear down all opposition, and shall endure to the end of time.

These words are, by readers whose minds are biassed by popular prejudice, supposed to be addressed to Christ; but there is nothing in the connexion which necessarily leads to this conclusion. As they stand in the hundred and second Psalm they are evidently addressed to God; and a Jew, writing to his countrymen, would never presume to

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for ever and ever." See Lindsey's *Sequel to his Apology*, p. 488.

[2] *Thou remainest.*] or, thou shalt remain. See Peirce and Macknight. διαμενεις. "thou wilt endure throughout." Wakefield.

[3] *A mantle.*] περιβολαιον, "an upper garment or cloak." Beza understands it of the covering of a tent.

Ch. I. Ver. 12. hold that language concerning a prophet, however dignified, which in their sacred writings was uniformly appropriated to the Deity.

5. It was the commission of former prophets not to establish the new dispensation, but to prepare the way for it, ver. 13, 14.

13. *Moreover, to which of those messengers hath he ever said, Sit thou at my right hand until I make*
14. *thine enemies thy footstool*[1]*? Are they not all servants* swift as *winds*[2]*, sent forth upon their mini-*

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[1] *Thine enemies thy footstool?*] Dr. Macknight observes, that "the eastern princes used to tread upon the necks of their vanquished enemies, in token of their utter subjection, Josh. x. 24. And some of the more haughty ones, in mounting their horses, used them as a footstool."

[2] *Servants* swift as *winds.*] λειτουργικα πνευματα, *ministering winds.* See ver. 7. The writer probably alludes to the comparison he had just made, and means to represent all former prophets as eager in their inferior and menial stations to obey the orders of their sovereign, to wait upon the future heirs of salvation, *i.e.* to deliver those prophecies of the Messiah which would induce those who came after them to receive the gospel.

Our translation uses the phrase *ministering spirits,* which immediately leads the English reader to conceive of angels in this connexion as incorporeal beings. That the words will bear this sense cannot be denied; but there is no reason to suppose that the word πνευματα is used here in a different sense from that in which it is used in the context. Mr. Peirce, in his Note, endeavours to accommodate the passage to his own strange hypothesis of a revolution in the celestial hierarchy. He allows, however, that the presumption is in favour of the translation *ministering winds.*

But even admitting that "ministering spirits" is the true translation, it would not follow that angels were alluded to. In the Hebrew idiom a man's spirit means *himself,* viz. 2 Tim. iv. 22. "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit," *i. e.* with thee. Compare Philem. ver. 25, 1 Cor. ii. 11. "Are they not

stry for the sake of those who were to be the heirs[3] *of salvation?* Ch. I. Ver. 14.

In the hundred and tenth Psalm Jehovah is introduced as addressing a highly exalted person, whom the psalmist calls "his lord" in these remarkable words, "Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." This we all agree[4] to apply to the Messiah, and to be prophetic of his high dignity and ultimate universal authority and dominion. But do you find any passage in the Jewish scriptures in which this language, or any thing like it, is addressed to any other prophet? Are they styled lords? are they at the right hand of God? are they promised universal empire? No: their office, however honourable and important, was of a humbler nature. They were only servants under the divine controul, swift as the winds to obey the orders they received. Their office was indeed honourable, though secondary and inferior to that of the Son. They were harbingers of the Messiah's kingdom, who by their predictions of his advent, and of the nature and extent of the authority which he was to exercise, prepared the minds of men for

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all ministering spirits?" is therefore no more than if the writer had said, "are they not all *ministers?*"

[3] *Who were to be heirs.*] "for the sake of those who should afterward belong to the Christian church." Peirce; who observes that the writer only speaks here "of professed Christians, enjoying the gospel, and the subjects of Christ's visible kingdom and church on earth."

[4] *This we agree.*] See Grotius and Whitby. The latter proves by many testimonies that the Jewish writers interpret this Psalm of the Messiah.

Ch. I. Ver. 14. the reception of his doctrine, and supplied the most satisfactory proofs of the divinity of his mission. Thus the former prophets were appointed by God to be the instructors and the guides of those who were then to be, and who now are, by their instrumentality, the disciples of this new dispensation, and partakers of its inestimable benefits.

6. From the pre-eminence of this new and glorious teacher he infers the superior regard due to the dispensation introduced by him. Ch. ii. 1—4.

Ch. II. Ver. 1. *For this cause we ought to give the more earnest attention to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we let* them *escape*[1].

The superior dignity of the teacher requires superior attention to the doctrine, which we may be sure is of proportionably greater importance, and most worthy of being received and remembered by us.

2. *For if the doctrine delivered by messengers*[2] *was*

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[1] *Let* them *escape.*] παραῤῥυωμεν, *run out as leaking vessels.* The word means that we should not let what we have heard *slip by* us, or *run out*, through any negligence or carelessness.—"The figure is taken from water, which easily flows by one if it be not stopped, and by that means kept." Sykes. "*ne quando præterfluere ea sinamus.*" Bos.

[2] *Messengers.*] αγγελοις, by former prophets, as in the context, commonly interpreted *angels*, and Whitby has a learned note to establish this sense of the word. We know that prophets and messengers, viz. Moses, Aaron, Joshua, &c., were employed at the giving out of the law from Sinai (see Exod. xxiv. 12); but that any celestial created spirits were concerned in it we have no satisfactory evidence.

of such authority that[3] *every transgression and disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation*[4], *which having been first published by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those that heard* him[5], *God at the same time bearing testimony by signs and wonders*[6], *and various mighty works, and distributions of the holy spirit, according to his own will?* Ch. II. Ver. 3. 4.

This new dispensation cannot be neglected with impunity: for, consider with yourselves, if the legal dispensation which was introduced by messengers and servants, and the dignity and importance of

[3] *Was of such authority that*, &c.] So Wakefield. βεβαιος, "stedfast, and every transgression," &c. Newcome, according to the construction of the original. "The threats denounced in the law were all put in execution exactly and rigidly, *i. e.* in the wilderness." Sykes.

[4] *Salvation.*] *i. e.* deliverance in general, whether from the bondage of the law, or from the yoke of idolatry and vice. See Tit. iii. 5. It is not necessary to suppose that eternal life and happiness is here intended. Archbishop Newcome explains it of "the doctrine and the means of salvation proposed by such high authority."

[5] *By those that heard* him.] From this expression Grotius infers that this epistle was not written by an apostle, but by some disciple of the apostles, such as Luke, to whom he inclines to ascribe it. It is, to say the least, a strong presumption that Paul was not the author; for he always expressly disavows having learned the Christian doctrine from men, even though they were apostles, and affirms that he learned it from Christ alone. See Gal. i. 11. He never would have used the language which occurs here without some qualification.

[6] *Signs and wonders*, &c.] It is not easy, nor is it material, to know the distinctions of the miraculous powers here mentioned. Peirce has an excellent note upon the passage. "Some," says Archbishop Newcome, "distinguish thus: that σημειον is a miracle wrought as a sign; τερας, one wrought on inanimate nature; and δυναμις, one wrought on animate nature."

Ch. II. Ver. 4. which must have been far inferior to that to which I now allude, was so strongly enforced, that condign punishment, without mitigation or reprieve, was inflicted upon the voluntary offender, can we in similar circumstances hope for mercy? Can we expect to escape the most distressing consequences if we reject a dispensation of so much greater value, which was first published by the glorious personage of whom the prophets were the harbingers, which was further taught and explained to us by his messengers, who learned it from his lips, and whose doctrine was attested in the most solemn and convincing manner by those miracles which God enabled them to perform, and by those miraculous powers which he authorized them in various instances to communicate to their disciples. Let not any one think that the rejection of this divine institution is a matter of little consequence; or, that a doctrine introduced into the world with this splendour of miracles may be opposed, abandoned, or even neglected, without the utmost hazard.

SECTION II.

THE WRITER argues, from a variety of considerations, that the nature of the Christian dispensation required that the first teacher of it should be not an angel, or a celestial spirit, but a suffering man.—Ch. ii. 5—18.

1. He affirms that the Christian dispensation

was not committed to the direction of angels, Ch. II.
ver. 5.

Moreover, unto angels[1] *(God) hath not com-* Ver. 5.

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[1] *Moreover, unto angels.*] *Moreover*, γαρ, introducing, not an inference, but a collateral remark. The author enters upon a new subject: having proved that the founder of the new dispensation was superior to all former prophets and messengers of God, he now sets himself to prove that, exalted as he is in dignity, he is nevertheless in nature inferior to angels; and is in this respect altogether similar to his brethren. "*Angels:*" so Wakefield. Here the connexion requires that the word which in the preceding section means *human beings, messengers of God*, should now be taken in the sense of *celestial spirits*; such as angels are supposed to be. This change in the signification of a word, without giving notice of it, though a great fault in composition, is not out of character in our author, who writes rhetorically rather than logically; and often takes the liberty of playing upon his words. In ver. 7 of the first chapter, he uses the words in a sense totally different from their original meaning as they stand in the civth Psalm. And if the common interpretation be correct, he changes the sense of πνευμα in ver. 14, from the sense in which he uses it ver. 7, without giving any notice of the alteration.

It is not often that a writer sets himself to prove, that a human being *is* a human being, and nothing more than a human being. But this writer, as though he were aware that the lofty expressions which he had used were liable to be misunderstood, endeavours to guard his readers against this misconception by stating in the most explicit terms, that by all he had said concerning the dignity of the Founder of the new covenant, and his superiority to the angels or prophets of the old dispensation, he never intended to represent him as superior to angels or celestial beings; for as it had been foretold of him that he should be inferior to angels, so in fact it was indispensably requisite to the accomplishment of the object of his mission, that he should be a proper human being in every respect similar to those whom he came to redeem from vice and misery; and not only so, but that he should also be a sufferer and a victim previously to his advancement to his kingdom and glory.

Such were the pains which the sacred writers took, and this writer in particular, to impress upon their readers a correct judgement concerning the person of their Master, and to pre-

Ch. II. Ver. 5. *mitted the world to come*[1], *concerning which we speak.*

The prophets of God, who are called his angels, or messengers, were employed by him to conduct the Jewish dispensation, sanctioned by temporal promises and threatenings, in its origin, and through the various stages of its progress; and I have just been proving to you, by arguments the most conclusive, that the great prophet of the new dispensation is superior to them all, as a son to a servant, as a master to his emissaries and messengers. You are not, however, from the ambiguity, or from the strength of language which I have used, to draw conclusions which were not designed, nor to infer that the person of whom I have been discoursing

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vent their figurative expressions from being misunderstood. Yet such was the shame and scandal of the cross, and the dread of being exposed to scorn as the disciples of the crucified Nazarene, that in the very age of the apostles, and in defiance of the plainest language of the New Testament, men began to introduce those corrupt opinions concerning Christ, which gradually grew up to the deification of his person, and ultimately to the monstrous doctrine of a Triune God; which for fifteen centuries has been the belief and the disgrace of the apostate church.

[1] *The world to come.*] οικουμενην μελλουσαν. It is agreed among critics, that the Christian dispensation is here intended; but why called οικουμενην μελλουσαν, *the future inhabited world?* Some think because it is styled a new creation, Isa. lxv. 17; others represent the expression as synonymous with αιων, and render it *the succeeding age*; the temple being standing when this epistle was written. See Newcome's *Translation*. Dr. Macknight and others suppose the writer to allude to the object of the divine promise under the Christian dispensation, namely, a future life, as distinguished from the promise of the Mosaic covenant, which was only the earthly Canaan.

is a being of a nature superior to man. The reverse is true. For though the dispensation which I have described, and which has been introduced in the awful and magnificent manner which you have heard, is a dispensation greatly superior to any which preceded it, and is enforced by the momentous sanctions of a future life, yet I can assure you that the direction of it is not committed to celestial and angelic beings, but that the illustrious founder and teacher of it is a mere human being, a man like ourselves. Ch. II. Ver. 5.

2. The writer further remarks, that certain circumstances are foretold concerning the Messiah in the book of Psalms, one of which still remains unfulfilled, while the others have received their accomplishment in the person of Jesus, ver. 6—9.

But a certain writer[2] *hath somewhere testified, saying, What is man that thou art mindful of him, or any son of man*[3] *that thou regardest him? Thou madest him a little lower*[4] *than the angels*[5], 6. 7.

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[2] *A certain* writer.] I cannot think that Mr. Peirce, notwithstanding all the learning and ingenuity which he has exercised upon the subject, has by any means proved, in a satisfactory manner, that the eighth Psalm was a prophecy of Christ. This is one instance among many of the very loose manner of quoting and applying scripture so familiar to the writer of this epistle, and probably to the Jews of his time.

[3] *Man, or any son of man.*] See Wakefield.

[4] *A little lower.*] βραχυ τι. Peirce and many others observe that this expression may be translated, "for a short time;" which translation best accommodates the Arian hypothesis; but the common translation is equally correct, and bet-

Ch. II. *thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and thou hast set him over the works of thy hands*[1].

Ver. 8. *Thou hast subjected all things under his feet. Now in thus subjecting all things to him, he hath left nothing* that is *not subjected to him*[2].

This quotation from Psalm viii. 4—6 may be understood as prophetic of some illustrious person who is to be appointed universal governor, and to whose authority all things without exception are to be made subject.

—8. *But now we do not yet see that all things are subjected to him.*

There is no person who has yet appeared to whom this part of the prophecy can apply; and therefore it is not from this circumstance that we can discover the illustrious object of it. But there is one, a distinguished character to whom I have all along alluded, and whom I shall immediately

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ter adapted to the original Psalm: there is, therefore, no reason to alter it. See Sykes.

[1] *Angels.*] The original word is Elohim, *gods*; and probably means to express beings of an order superior to mankind. It never signifies *messengers*, which is the primary sense of the word (מלאך) that is commonly translated *angel*.

[1] *And thou hast set him over the works of thy hands.*] This clause is wanting in the Clermont and Corbey and in many other ancient manuscripts, and likewise in the Syriac version; but it is found both in the Hebrew and the LXX., and is probably genuine.

[2] *He hath left nothing*, &c.] The apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 27, applies the same text to the dominion of Christ: hence some have concluded that Paul was the author of this epistle; but this is precarious. The apostle's inference is different, viz. it is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him.

name, in whom the first part of the prophecy hath received its proper accomplishment; and in whom, without doubt, the last and the most glorious part will in due time be amply verified. Ch. II. Ver. 8.

But we see Jesus[3], *who was made a little lower than angels, that he, by the gratuitous goodness of God, might taste death for every man, for the suffering of death*[4] *crowned with glory and honour.* 9.

The person whom I mean is Jesus, the head of the new dispensation; a name by many despised and abhorred; but to you, I trust, dear and venerable. He is the master that we serve, the founder of our faith, greatly pre-eminent over all former prophets and teachers. Not indeed in his nature; for he like them is inferior to angels; and it was fit he should, for he was destined to be a sufferer;

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[3] *We see Jesus.*] Observe here, that this is the first mention of the name of Jesus, which the author does not introduce till he has raised in the minds of the Hebrew Christians the highest ideas of his office and character; and though it is necessary to mention his sufferings, he does it in the slightest manner, it is only tasting death; which he represents at the same time as an event fraught with the most beneficial consequences to all mankind, as the result of the free goodness of God, and as immediately connected with and crowned by his advancement to the highest dignity and honour. This caution of the writer in introducing the name of Jesus has escaped the notice of most expositors. He seems to have intended the epistle for the inspection of the unconverted, as well as the converted Hebrews; and the fear of hurting the prejudices of the Jews, shows that the writer was educated in the school of Paul. See Peirce on ver. 11.

[4] *For the suffering of death.*] The hyperbaton in this verse is noticed by all the critics.

Ch. II. Ver. 9. and, by the free goodness of God, he was, for the benefit of all mankind, delivered up to a temporary death. But this event was so far from being disgraceful to him, or to his cause, that by his resurrection from the grave and ascension to the right hand of God, which was the reward of his voluntary sufferings, he is advanced to greater dignity and honour than any human being before him ever attained, which plainly points him out as the proper object of the remarkable prophecy which I have just cited, and as destined in the divine councils to be the future lord and governor of all things.

Upon this paragraph we may observe, 1. That this passage makes it probable that the epistle was written, if not by Paul himself, yet by one of the companions or hearers of that apostle: for the same prophecy is quoted with the same view, 1 Cor. xv. 25—27.

2. The eighth Psalm does not appear to have any peculiar claim to be regarded as prophetic of the Messiah. It is a poetical composition which beautifully expresses the condescension and goodness of the divine Being in the formation of man, and in the dominion granted to him over the inferior creatures. This therefore is an additional instance of quotation by accommodation from the Old Testament, so familiar with this writer, and with the Jews in his time.

3. The word Elohim, which in this Psalm is translated *angel*, is not the same with that which

is usually so translated, and it never signifies a messenger. It is commonly rendered God, or Gods, and it expresses the dignity of the human race, as being little inferior to celestial spirits. The writer here applies the expression to Jesus in the same sense, and means thereby to show that he was not an angel but a man. He insinuates that it was requisite that he should be a man, that he might be liable to death, of which, if he had been a celestial spirit, he would not have been susceptible. He was inferior to angels that he might taste of death. Ch. II. Ver. 9.

4. *He tasted death for every man*, i. e. all were benefited by his death, which sealed a new and universal covenant, in which all mankind were parties. This is explained hereafter: at present, for the purpose of softening the prejudices of the Hebrews, it is just alluded to as the result of the merciful appointment of God. He did but taste of death: he saw no corruption: he was raised on the third day, before any change took place; and the reproach was obliterated almost as soon as it began.

5. The parts of the prophecy which are represented as actually fulfilled are, First, that he was made lower than the angels, a mortal man, who by divine appointment suffered death. Second, that he is now advanced to glory and honour, that is, raised from the dead and exalted at the right hand of God.

6. One part of the prophecy remained unfulfilled. "We do not yet see all things put under him."

Ch. II. Ver. 9. Nor do we, who live at the distance of seventeen centuries, yet see this prediction completely verified. But if there be truth in prophecy, the religion of Jesus will eventually become the religion of the world. The doctrine of the cross will ultimately bear down all opposition; and those events which, to our limited apprehensions, appear most hostile to its progress, will in the end appear to have been essential parts of the wise and mysterious plan of Providence, and subservient to the ultimate and universal triumph of the Christian cause.

3. That there was an expediency in appointing that the Saviour of men should be a sufferer, ver. 10.

10. *For it became him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, to make the leader of many sons*[1] *to glory, even the captain of their salvation, perfect through sufferings*[2].

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[1] *The leader of many sons.*] Wakefield. εις δοξαν αγαγοντα· "It is not God that is here said to be bringing many sons to glory, for then it would have been in natural construction αγαγοντι, not αγαγοντα, but it is the Captain of their Salvation who was to bring many sons to glory. The sense of the place is, It became the goodness and wisdom of God to make his Son, who was to bring many sons to glory,—sons, who were to go through many sufferings in this life,—to make his Son, I say, an example to them to bear sufferings, to encourage them to persevere steady and immovable, till they obtained the reward of their sufferings." Sykes.

[2] *To make perfect through sufferings.*] "τελειωσαι, *to bring to an end, to finish, to perfect:* the possession of his kingdom was the perfection of our Leader." Sykes. Dr. Doddridge approaches nearer to the true meaning of the author: "It became him, &c. to make the leader of salvation completely fit

You might naturally expect, like the rest of your nation, that the great deliverer would appear as a prince and a conqueror; whereas it is evident, as I have just observed, that the honour to which Jesus is advanced was attained by the suffering of death: and, however contrary the event may prove to our views and hopes, there can be no doubt, that the glorious Being who is the first cause and the last end of all, and by whose councils the whole plan of man's salvation is conducted, had the wisest and the best reasons for what he has chosen to bring to pass. And we may be assured that no better way could be devised for executing his gracious purpose, than by appointing him, who was ordained to conduct multitudes of the sons of God to glory and felicity, and to be himself the first who should take possession of it as their pattern and forerunner, to become qualified and completed for this high and sacred office, and as it were consecrated to it, by passing through a previous scene of suffering and death. Some of the most obvious reasons for this appointment I shall proceed to state. Ch. II. Ver. 10.

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for the full execution of his office by a long train of sufferings, whereby he was, as it were, solemnly consecrated to it." There can be no doubt that this is the sense in which the word τελειοω, *to make perfect*, is used in this epistle (see ch. vii. 28), and this sense, as Peirce observes, is confirmed by the words which immediately follow. See ver. 11.

"I would observe," says Dr. Priestley, "that all that follows in this chapter has no other object, and he never could have written it with any other idea, than that of Christ being as much a man as any of his followers who bore the Christian name."

Ch. II. Ver. 10.

4. This glorious leader and his followers are all equally the spiritual descendants of Abraham, ver. 11—13.

11. *For both he who sanctifieth*[1], *and they who are sanctified, are all*[2] *of one* Father[3]; *for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.*

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[1] *He who sanctifieth*] "is he that puts persons into a separate state from others in respect to God; and they that are sanctified ought to live up to the relation they stand in to God." Sykes.

[2] *Are all.*] Peirce thinks that by the use of the universal term *all*, the writer means to allude in a manner as inoffensive as possible to the conversion of the Gentiles.

[3] *Of one* Father.] ἐξ ἑνός. The original is elliptical: some supply the ellipsis with the word *God*, ver. 9. "The sanctifier Christ, and the sanctified, his disciples, are all of one Father, God." Newcome. So Sykes. "all of one family; all the descendants of Adam, and in a sense the seed of Abraham." Doddridge. "Ἐξ ἑνός sc. αἵματος, *vel* σπέρματος, *vel* γένους. *Omnes eandem habent, vel habere debebant naturam: quam interpretationem sequentia confirmant. cap.* v. 1. *Conveniens erat auctorem salutis humanæ non esse angelum, sed humana natura præditum.*" Rosenmuller. "All of them are of one father Abraham—the father of the faithful, the great pattern of believing." Peirce. This is the interpretation adopted in the paraphrase, but I am doubtful whether that of Rosenmuller does not better suit the connexion. "They are all," says Dr. Whitby, "of one original and nature." It is the professed design of the writer in this section to show that the founder of the new dispensation, though far superior in rank to all preceding prophets, was nevertheless a human being in the proper sense of the word, and nothing more than such. As such, he acknowledges that he is not ashamed to call his disciples his brethren; that like them he is dependent upon the protection of God, to whom he is to give an account of his mission, and to present at the throne of God those who through divine mercy have been saved by him, his children, his beloved disciples, who are also beings of the same order and nature with himself. After which, the writer proceeds to show how necessary it was that he who came to save from the curse of the law should himself be a man like his brethren subject to the law.

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This illustrious teacher, who sanctifies his disciples and separates them from the unbelieving world, as a people consecrated to God, and they who are thus consecrated by him, are all of them sons of God, the common parent of mankind, they are all beings of the same species, partakers of the same common nature, and are all the children of Abraham the holy patriarch, who is renowned for the confidence which he placed in the promises of God. He does not therefore assume any superiority over his faithful disciples; but though honoured with such an important mission he represents himself as their brother in rank, and their companion in tribulation, equally with them depending upon and confiding in the promises of God, to whom all his success was owing. Ch. II. Ver. 11.

Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren[4], *in the midst of the assembly I will celebrate thy praise.* 12.

This is the language which David, in the twenty-second Psalm, ver. 22, puts into the mouth of that holy person who is the object of this prophecy, and

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It may be remarked that this writer, who so explicitly asserts the proper humanity of Christ, makes no reserve, puts in no salvo in favour of a superior and divine nature which was not subject to these humiliations. In truth, he had no idea of any such distinction. The fable of two distinct natures existing in one person was not then invented.

[4] *To my brethren.*] "The passage here cited," says Peirce, "is taken from Ps. xxii. 22; and the whole Psalm seems to me to belong entirely and solely to Christ. That he was not ashamed to call his disciples *brethren,* we learn from John xx. 17, Matt. xxv. 40, xxviii. 10."

Ch. II. Ver. 12. who is the same that we now call our master; and who thus condescends to speak of his faithful disciples as his brethren.

13. *And again, I will continue to put my trust in him. And again*[1], *Behold I, and the children whom God hath given me*[2].

The same conclusion may be drawn from a passage in the prophecy of Isaiah, ch. viii. 17, 18; where a great teacher predicted under the name of Immanuel, who is the person of whom I am speaking, the head of the new dispensation, declares his resolution to place his confidence in God under great difficulties and trials; and thus approves himself a genuine son of Abraham: and as he immediately speaks of his disciples as children given to him by God, they likewise are with him the spiritual de-

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[1] *And again.*] The two clauses here cited stand together in Isaiah viii. 17, 18; but being cited as separate testimonies, it has been conjectured that the writer takes the former from Psalm xviii. 2, or 2 Sam. xxii. 3. See Peirce and Sykes *in loc.* But it seems equally probable that the words και παλιν have been repeated from the first clause, by the inadvertence of some early transcriber. This was the opinion of Wall. See Bowyer.

[2] *Behold I,* &c.] This is language which, according to the interpretation of Mr. Peirce and Mr. Dodson, the prophet puts into the mouth of Immanuel, or the Messiah. It seems to be introduced here to show that the Messiah was the heir of Abraham's faith; and that believers, being his spiritual children, were together with him the spiritual descendants of Abraham. See Peirce *in loc.* and Dodson on Isa. viii. 17. "The argument," says Peirce, "stands thus: All that believe in God, whether they are Jews or Gentiles, are children of Abraham. Christ, as appears by this testimony, believed in God; consequently he must himself be a son of Abraham; and all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, must be his brethren."

scendants of the believing patriarch, and heirs of the promise. Ch. II. Ver. 13.

In this way does the author represent to the believing Hebrews that the great leader of the Christian faith was, and that it was foretold that he would be, like their renowned ancestor, eminent for his firm and cheerful reliance upon God in seasons of great difficulty and trial, and thus he gradually reconciles their minds to the acknowledgement of a suffering Messiah.

5. As he came to deliver men, and not angels, from the curse of the law and the fear of death, it was necessary that he should be a man and not an angel, ver. 14—16.

Inasmuch then as these children partook in common of flesh and blood, he also in the very same manner participated[3] *in the same, that through death he might destroy*[4] *him who hath the power of death, that is, the devil*[5], *and might deliver those* 14. 15.

[3] *In the very same manner participated.*] παραπλησιως μετεσχε. The expression in the public version, "took part" of the same, seems to imply that the participation of human nature was, in Jesus, a voluntary act; an idea which the original by no means conveys. Mr. Peirce well observes, that the word παραπλησιως does not here import 'a faint likeness,' or 'resemblance,' but 'a proper and exact conformity;' he partook of flesh and blood as completely as the children do."

[4] *Destroy.*] καταργηση. The word properly signifies to *render ineffectual.* Rom. iii. 31. See Dr. Macknight. It might have been rendered, *to defeat, to bring to nought.* 1 Cor. i. 28, ii. 6, xv. 24. See Peirce.

[5] *That is, the devil.*] Some have thought that the devil is

Ch. II. Ver. 16. *who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to slavery. For it layeth not hold of angels*[1], *but it layeth hold of the posterity of Abraham.*

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said to have the power of death, because he is the inflicter of death; a power which Mr. Peirce, who is willing to attribute it to him to a certain extent, justly thinks ought not to be attributed to him universally. But, in fact, what evidence is there that he possesses it in the least degree? Peirce himself, and many others, understand the expression as an allusion to his having tempted our first parents in paradise, and thereby bringing death upon themselves and their posterity; an assumption for which the account of the Fall lays no foundation. But what inference is too incredible or too formidable, if the fact be once admitted, that a being such as the devil is commonly described to be, shares with the Supreme in the government of the universe?

The devil, which is sometimes a personification of the principle of evil, is, in this passage, probably put for the accusing and condemning power, that is, THE LAW, which accuses, convicts, and passes a sentence of condemnation upon all who are subject to its authority, and who break its commands; and might well fill the hearts of all who are amenable to its tribunal with dismay. It is the law which thus possesses the power of death, and which being abolished by the death of Christ, all who believe in him are released from its condemning sentence, and emancipated from the fear of death.

For this interpretation, which appears to me to remove all difficulties from a very obscure text, I am indebted to the late Samuel Prime, Esq. of Whitton, whose zeal in biblical research was only equalled by his enlightened liberality in the diffusion of Christian knowledge.

[1] *It layeth not hold of angels:*] *i. e.* the fear of death. This interpretation is advanced by the late Rev. John Palmer of Macclesfield, and ingeniously and learnedly supported by him in the *Theological Repository*, vol. v. p. 161. It is greatly to be preferred to that of Sykes, Peirce, Newcome, and others; viz. "For indeed he, *i. e.* Christ, helpeth not angels." The text as it stands in the public version, "Verily he took not on him *the nature* of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham," is a lamentable proof how much King James's translators were misled by their prejudices. Perhaps the words might

Ch. II. Ver. 16.

The great object to be accomplished by the mission of Christ was to deliver his brethren the children of Abraham from the fear of death; a fear which in some persons, and in some circumstances, is so prevalent as to take away all comfort and to make life itself a burden.

This is a fear to which angels and beings of a superior order are not exposed, not being liable to mortality; but it is in a peculiar degree incident to the descendants of Abraham, who are not only, as men, subject to the universal law of death, but who are also placed under a law which pronounces sentence upon every transgressor, without remission, exposing to a fearful and unknown doom every one who falls short of sinless obedience.

It was therefore expedient that he who was commissioned to deliver his brethren from the curse of the law, should be, not an angel, or a being of superior order, who could feel no true sympathy with their condition; but a proper human being, in every respect like themselves, not only as a man, but as one of the posterity of Abraham, born under the

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be rendered thus: He, *i. e.* the devil, the accusing power, layeth not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham. This would keep up the spirit of the allegory. And this interpretation would supply a very obvious answer to Dr. Sykes's just and pertinent question: "Why should it be said that Christ came to help the seed of Abraham, and not the seed of Adam?" The true answer to which is: That it was the posterity of Abraham *only*, who, living under the dominion of the law, were subject to its accusation, and whose lives became a burden to them in consequence of that sentence of condemnation of which they were apprized, and from which they could not escape.

Ch. II. Ver. 16. law, exposed to the weaknesses and fears of human nature, and who himself suffered the penalty of the law.

Not indeed as a transgressor, for his obedience was perfect, but with a nobler purpose; that by death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil. Do not mistake me: do not imagine that Jesus died to exterminate some evil spirit who possesses power to increase the agonies of death. No such mischievous being exists in the works of God. The devil which Christ abolished by his death, was the accusing and condemning power, the law itself, which with relentless severity pronounced sentence upon transgressors, and thus possessed the dreadful power of adding horror to the horrors of death. But the death of Christ, which sealed the covenant of pardon and peace, has put an end to the law, and disarmed death of its terrors.

We see here with what caution and ingenuity the sacred writer insinuates to the believing Hebrews that most offensive of all doctrines, that the law having answered its purpose is now completely abolished, and that believers under the new covenant are no longer subject to its yoke.

6. A complete resemblance to his brethren was requisite to inspire the leader of the new dispensation with sympathy, and to qualify him for the office of high-priest, ver. 17, 18.

So that it was right[1] *for him in all things to be like to his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest*[2] *in things relating to God, in order to propitiate the sins of the people*[3]. Ch. II. Ver. 17.

It was quite necessary that this great deliverer should be in every circumstance similar to his brethren, both as to his being a real man, and subject to the dominion of the law; for without this he

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[1] *It was right.*] See Wakefield's translation.

[2] *A merciful and faithful high-priest.*] This is the first mention of Jesus Christ as a high-priest, upon which character the writer afterwards expatiates at large. He is merciful and faithful, ελεημων και πιστος, *i. e.* the high-priest of a dispensation in which *mercy* is promised to *faith*, as distinguished from *works*, which were required by the law, on the failure of which it pronounces a sentence of condemnation.

[3] *To propitiate the sins of the people.*] Not εις το ιλασκεσθαι περι των αμαρτιων, not, as is commonly rendered, *to propitiate*, or "*make reconciliation* FOR the sins of the people," but to *propitiate* or *reconcile* the sins themselves. Mr. Peirce, who admits this to be the literal interpretation, says "there is no sense in it." But if it be interpreted as a prosopopœia, the sins, the accusing powers, which clamour for punishment, may be quieted, appeased, silenced, by the dispensation of the gospel, as the law, the condemning power, is abolished by it.

Dr. Sykes also observes, "The form of expression here is quite unusual: ιλασκεσθαι Θεον, or περι αμαρτιων, *to appease God*, or *to appease God on account of sins*, is frequent; but the expression here used, *to reconcile sins*, or *appease sins*, is something very particular." He well explains it, that "Christ, as a high-priest, did his part that our sins might be passed over, and not brought to account." Had it occurred to these learned writers to consider sins in this connexion as a personification of the accusing power, as prosecutors invoking the penalty of the law, the construction of the language would have been easily explained.

The meaning probably is, to remove all legal obstructions and disqualifications, so that those who were excluded as sinners from the privileges of the old covenant might be admitted to the benefits of the new dispensation, and might be called and made *holy*.

Ch. II. Ver. 17. would not have been duly qualified to exercise that office which he now sustains, and upon which I shall presently expatiate more at large, namely that of a high-priest, under a dispensation which proclaims mercy to those who believe: under which character he conducts the Christian dispensation as one grand act of temple worship; and thus he silences the clamours of sin, invoking vengeance and condemnation, as he abolishes the law which passes the sentence of death.

This I believe to be the true meaning of the writer, whose words are not that he propitiates God for the sins of men, but that he propitiates the sins themselves. Having in the preceding sentence personified the law as the condemning power whose sentence aggravated the terrors of death, but which was abolished by Christ, he now personifies the sins of transgressors as accusing powers, which were not utterly destroyed like the law, but which were silenced and pacified by that dispensation of grace, to the ministration of which Christ was consecrated by his death, and which proclaimed *mercy* to those who *believed*. On which account Christ is called a *merciful* and *faithful* high-priest; or a high-priest of that dispensation which requires faith as the condition of mercy.

18. *For wherein he hath suffered being tried, he is able to help*[1] *those who are under trial.*

[1] *Able to help.*] βοηθησαι " means *to encourage, to strengthen,* not by any supernatural aid, but by the example which Christ

If it was an angel that suffered and not a man, or if he suffered as some think only in appearance, his instructions would lose their effect, and his example would be of no use; for the cases of the teacher and the disciple would be totally dissimilar: but just in the degree in which he has suffered he can benefit his fellow sufferers. Since, therefore, he was a man like ourselves, who had all the frailties, all the feelings, and all the fears of a human being, and who suffered all the pains which any other man in the same circumstances would have endured, and since, by the exercise of faith and resignation, he triumphed over the fear of death, and was in due time raised from the grave, his doctrine and example may now be of the most essential benefit to his fellow sufferers, both as it teaches them to bear affliction of every kind with dignity and fortitude, and as it enables them to triumph over death in its most terrible aspect, by exciting the assured and glorious hope, that because he lives they shall live also. Ch. II. Ver. 18.

SECTION III.

THE WRITER briefly touches upon the superiority of Jesus to Moses. Ch. iii. 1—6. Ch. III.

The writer of this epistle having, ch. i., stated

himself exhibited of suffering in the cause of truth and of God." *Theolog. Repos.* vol. v. p. 165.

Ch. III. the great superiority of the founder of the new dispensation to all former prophets and teachers, and having, ch. ii., proved that in order to accomplish the purposes of his mission it was necessary that he should be not an angelic being, but a frail and suffering man, advances now to assert the superiority of Jesus to Moses. Upon a subject so delicate and so unacceptable to the prejudices of his countrymen he touches with great tenderness and brevity, and the train of his argument stands thus:

Believers in the gospel constitute one great family, ver. 2, 6, of which the father and ruler is God, ver. 4. To this family Moses in his place was a faithful servant, the Mosaic institute being intended to prefigure and attest the Christian dispensation, ver. 5. Whereas Jesus is a son in the same family, appointed by the Father to rule over the whole household, ver. 6.

With this general key to the author's meaning it will be easy to interpret particular expressions.

1. He calls upon the believing Hebrews to consider the perfect resemblance between the fidelity of Jesus and that of Moses, ver. 1, 2.

Ver. 1. *Wherefore, holy brethren*[1], *partakers of the heavenly calling, consider attentively this apostle and*
2. *high-priest*[2] *of our profession, Jesus*[3], *who was*

[1] *Holy brethren.*] See Peirce on the text, who recollects no other instance in which Christians are directly addressed under this character, and supposes an allusion to ch. ii. 11.

[2] *High-priest.*] As an apostle, or divine messenger, he was superior to Moses; as a high-priest, he excelled Aaron.

faithful to him who appointed him[4], *as Moses also was, in all the family* of God[5]. Ch. III. Ver. 2.

My beloved fellow worshipers, children of the same father, brethren of the same deliverer, separated by your faith in him from the unbelieving world, and consecrated to the service of God; who have wisely accepted the invitation of the gospel, and have been admitted to participate in its divine privileges and exalted hopes, reflect seriously upon the facts which I have just stated. Meditate upon the conduct of Jesus our master, the authorized teacher, the great high-priest of that new dispensation into which we are introduced; remember that he was a frail suffering mortal man like ourselves, who felt and endured all that we should feel and

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[3] *Jesus.*] The received text reads *Jesus Christ.* But Χριστον is omitted in the Alexandrine and other ancient manuscripts, and in the Æthiopic and Vulgate versions, and by Griesbach. It is plain that this writer purposely avoids speaking of Jesus as the Messiah, till he directly asserts, and in his way proves, his superiority to Moses, ver. 6.

[4] *To him who appointed.*] τω ποιησαντι· for this sense of the word ποιεω see Mark iii. 14, and Peirce's note. Some of the ancients objected to the genuineness of this epistle, because Jesus is here represented as *made* by God.

[5] *Family* of God.] In the original it is "his family," that is, as some understand it, the family committed to Moses. See Archbishop Newcome's Translation. The writer unquestionably alludes to Num. xii. 7, where God saith, "My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all my house." The house or family here mentioned is therefore the family of God—it is *all* the household—it includes, therefore, the Christian as well as the Jewish church—in this family Moses is declared to be nothing more than a servant—but Jesus, as the Messiah, is universally allowed to be a son, and therefore, by the authority of the Jewish scriptures themselves, Moses is inferior to Jesus.

Ch. III. Ver. 2. endure in similar circumstances: consider how hard a task he had to accomplish, and mark the faithfulness, the zeal, the fortitude, the perseverance with which he fulfilled the office assigned him. Of Moses, the great prophet and minister of the old dispensation, we read, Numbers xii. 7, that God bore testimony to him, that his servant Moses was faithful in all his house; and what can be more evident than that the same honourable character is equally applicable to him who has been appointed to the still more dignified office of publishing the new and better covenant?

2. Jesus is superior even to Moses himself, being a son and a ruler in that family in which Moses sustained no higher character than that of a faithful servant, ver. 3—6.

3. *For*[1] *he hath received as much greater honour than Moses, as the ruler of a household*[2] *hath more honour than the household.*

You may be surprised, and your feelings may be shocked at what I am about to assert; but you will find it strictly true. This Jesus, this frail suffering

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[1] *For.*] "γαρ, *referendum ad.* v. 1. *Nunc enim ratio affertur, cur attendere debeamus Jesum, quia nempe major est Mose.*" Rosenmuller.

[2] *The ruler of a household.*] ὁ κατασκευασας. "the regulator of a family." Wakefield. "He who framed the household, he who constituted, disposed, set in order any society, hath greater honour than that society or any part of it." Newcome. "Οικ. *est familia—*ὁ κατ. *non est Ædilis, ut multi volunt, sed omnibus rebus necessariis, instruens domum et familiam.* v. Matt. xi. 10." Rosenmuller.

man, of whom I have been discoursing, is superior to our great prophet and lawgiver, even to Moses himself. And as I have alluded to that scripture in which Moses is declared to have been a faithful servant to the household of God, I will add, that Jesus, our teacher and lawgiver, is as much superior to Moses, as the ruler of a family is to any one of the domestics, or even to all united. Ch. III. Ver. 3.

For every household is under some ruler, but he who ruleth all things is God[3]. 4.

In every family there must be some person who has the management and chief direction of the affairs of the household; and in the great moral family to which I allude, the church of God, in all its comprehension and to its utmost extent, the chief manager, the parent and governor of the whole, is God. It is he that appoints to every individual his respective station and employment, and to him they are accountable.

And Moses indeed was faithful in all the family of God[4] *as a servant, for a testimony*[5] *to those things which were afterwards to be spoken.* 5.

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[3] *He who ruleth all things.*] "Every society is and must be ordered and regulated by somebody who is considered as superior to those who are under his jurisdiction; and to show that this is a true state of the case, it extends to all things, and to the government of all; even to God the supreme governor of all, who, therefore, has the supreme glory and honour." Sykes.

[4] *The family* of God.] So Wakefield. Gr. *in all his family.* See ver. 2.

[5] *For a testimony.*] "The meaning seems to be, that Moses was designed to prepare God's church for the message which

Ch. III. Ver. 5. The scripture assures us that Moses was faithful to the great family of God, in which he bore a distinguished office: but it expressly declares that the character he sustained was only that of a servant; and the office he performed to the universal household, including all the people of God, of all ages and countries, was by bearing testimony to the truth and divinity of the doctrine which was to be published by a greater teacher at a remote period of time. This he did both directly, by announcing that such a teacher and prophet would appear, and indirectly, by arranging his institute under divine direction, so as to be typical of, and preparatory to, another and a better dispensation.

6. *But Christ*[1] *as a son, over his family*[2], *which*

Christ was to bring; and that by his writings he so testified of Christ, as that they who duly attended to what he said might come to a certain knowledge of the truth of what Christ should deliver when he came. This is a further hint of the superiority of Christ to Moses. If Moses was thus to prepare men for Christ, it is but reasonable to think that Christ was superior to him." Peirce. "Moses was faithful to his declaration of those things which were afterwards more particularly spoken of. He declared that one should arise like himself. And the prophets afterwards spoke of several particulars about the person of the Messiah, his sufferings, and his being to be cut off." Sykes.

[1] *But Christ.*] This writer uses much address to avoid giving a shock to the prejudices of his countrymen; and there can be little doubt that the epistle was intended for the perusal of the unbelieving as well as the believing Jews, and perhaps chiefly for those who were in a state of suspense, the number of whom was, no doubt, very considerable. He does not mention the obnoxious name of Jesus till ch. ii. 9, after having prepared the way by a sublime description of his character and office; and at the same time connecting his sufferings with the state of glory to which he was advanced in consequence of them, and

family[3] *we are, if we hold fast the confidence*[4], *even the rejoicing of our hope, firm*[5] *unto the end.* Ch. III. Ver. 6.

Your surprise at my assertion of the superiority of Jesus, the founder of the new dispensation, to Moses, the legislator of the Sinai covenant, will be considerably diminished, when I remind you that Jesus is the Christ: that this glorious but suffering man, of whose dignity and humiliation I have been so long discoursing, is that very Messiah of whom Moses prophesied, and to whom the hopes and expectations of our nation have been so long and so eagerly directed. But the Messiah is by all acknowledged to be the son of God; and therefore, of course, he takes precedence in that household

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of their great benefit to mankind. And he never gives him the title of the Messiah till it becomes necessary to his argument to establish his superiority to Moses, and to reconcile the Hebrews to so offensive a doctrine. And even here he carefully avoids introducing any mention of his having been a sufferer. I do not recollect that any of the expositors have noticed the extreme caution with which he connects the names of Jesus and of Christ; though many have remarked his prudence in concealing his own.

[2] *Over his family:*] that is, God's. Not as a son, over his own house, which Peirce says "is utterly disagreeable to the scope of the context, and spoils the sense." See Griesbach, Newcome, and Sykes.

[3] *Which family.*] οὗ is the reading of the Corbey MS., and marked by Griesbach as of considerable authority. The reading of the received text is, *whose* family.

[4] *Confidence.*] παῤῥησιαν. Mr. Peirce thinks there is an allusion here to the profession made of their faith and hope at baptism, which they expressed with joy and glorying. See iii. 14, x. 22, 23.

[5] *Firm.*] βεβαιαν is wanting in the Syriac version: Peirce says it is exegetical, and gives the translation in the text. See ver. 14, where it occurs again.

Ch. III. Ver. 6. over which his Father has appointed him to preside; and in which Moses, however illustrious and venerable, occupies only the humble station of a servant. Of this happy and highly privileged family, we, my friends, are the honoured members, if we courageously persevere in the profession of that faith which we solemnly declared at our baptism, and in which we gloried, and if we stedfastly adhere to the joyful hope of the gospel and regulate our conduct thereby to the end of life.

SECTION IV.

THE rest promised to believers, and into which Jesus introduces his followers, being far superior to that of Canaan, into which Joshua led the Israelites, the writer solemnly warns the Hebrews, from the example of their rebellious ancestors, of the extreme danger of neglecting that state of sabbatism, which Jesus grants to his followers, by which he means their evangelical state.—Ch. iii. 7—iv. 13.

The writer was aware how revolting the doctrine he had advanced was to the prejudices of his readers: and therefore he immediately enters a caution against the natural effect of such prejudices, by reminding them of the great danger of apostasy from the faith. Their ancestors had forfeited the pro-

mised land because they would not give credit to Moses, notwithstanding the miracles to which they had been witnesses in Egypt and the wilderness; and they will sustain a far greater loss, namely, that of all the privileges and blessings of the gospel (which is what he means by *rest*), if they cease to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, after all the evidence which they have had of his divine mission. Ch. III.

1. He introduces from Psalm xcv. an account of the rebellion and punishment of the Israelites in the wilderness, ver. 7—11.

Wherefore, as the holy spirit saith[1], *To-day, when ye*[2] *shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the bitter provocation*[3] *in the day of that trial in the wilderness, wherewith*[4] *your fa-* Ver. 7. 8. 9.

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[1] *The holy spirit saith.*] Perhaps the writer meant nothing more than to say, that a pious writer thus expresses himself in the person and under the character of God. If he meant, as he is usually understood, to assert the inspiration of the Psalmist, it would by no means follow that the Psalmist was actually inspired, because this unknown writer, whose own inspiration is very problematical, affirmed it. The Psalmist himself lays no claim to inspiration; and there is nothing either in the sentiments or the language of that beautiful ode, which an intelligent and pious though uninspired writer might not be very well supposed to have written.

[2] *When ye.*] See Macknight; and Whitby, who proves this to be the proper sense of εαν. Gen. xiii. 8, Job vii. 4, &c.

[3] *The bitter provocation.*] παραπικρασμῳ. See Macknight. "*exacerbatio.*" Schleusner.

[4] *Wherewith.*] οὐ. "According to the manner of the Greek construction, this word relates to the τῃ πειρασμῳ, *temptation*, rather than to ερημῳ, the *wilderness*; and this translation makes the Greek agree exactly with the Hebrew." Peirce.

Ch. III. Ver. 10. *thers tried me*[1], *proved me*[2], *and saw my works forty years*[3]. *Therefore was I grievously offended*[4] *with that generation, and said, Their hearts are always wandering, and they consider*[5] *not my ways; so I sware in my anger, They shall not enter into my rest*[6].

There is a passage in the book of Psalms (xcv. 7—11) in which the writer, whether David or some other pious man, animated with a spirit of devotion and zeal, earnestly exhorts his countrymen, in the name and person of God, to obey his voice, and not to resist his will as their ancestors had done in the wilderness. There, though they had seen the wonderful works of God for forty years together, they murmured at his dispensations, and rebelled against his authority, till at last, as the just pu-

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[1] *Tried me.*] "distrusted his power or goodness." Whitby.

[2] *Proved me.*] εδοκιμασαν. "went about to try and prove him whether he could or would punish sinners; and to provoke and dare him to do his worst." Pococke *ap.* Whitby.

[3] *Saw my works forty years.*] Mr. Peirce supposes that the Hebrew copy which this writer used might agree in its punctuation with his quotation from it.

[4] *Grievously offended.*] προσωχθισα. So Peirce. "exceedingly displeased." Macknight. "I was enraged." Wakefield. See Macknight's note on ver. 17.

[5] *They consider not.*] ουκ εγνωσαν. So Wakefield. "They always err, not from ignorance, but from perverseness of disposition, and they have utterly disliked my method of dealing with them." Macknight. *To know* is a common hebraism for *approve.*

[6] *They shall not enter.*] Gr. *If they shall enter: q. d.* "I am not the true God if, &c." Newcome. The citation does not entirely agree either with the Hebrew or the LXX., but perhaps the author quoted from memory, or his copy might read differently.

nishment of their transgressions, the whole generation of those who had grown to maturity when they left Egypt, died in the wilderness before they reached the promised land. Ch. III. Ver. 11.

2. He warns the Hebrews against following this evil example, ver. 12.

So likewise[7] *take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from the living God*[8]. 12.

The warning addressed by the Psalmist to his contemporaries may with equal justice be addressed to you. After all the mighty works, and the extraordinary scenes, to which you have been witnesses, suffer not your prejudices to gain the ascendancy over your understanding, so as to induce you to reject a doctrine which God has so fully attested, because it contains some truths at the first proposal of which your feelings are disposed to revolt.

3. He exhorts them to animate each other to zeal and perseverance, ver. 13—15.

But exhort one another daily, while it is called "To-day[9]*," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of this sin*[10]. 13.

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[7] So likewise.] See Newcome. This verse connects with διο in the seventh verse.

[8] *The living God.*] "the God who ever lives to punish those who offend." See Whitby.

[9] *While it is called "To-day."*] αχρις ε το σημερον καλειται *i. e.* "as long as you can use this expression, that is, every day." Sykes. Mr. Peirce proposes putting ver. 14 in a pa-

Ch. III. Ver. 13. From day to day that proclamation of the Psalmist is addressed to you: "To-day while you hear his voice harden not your hearts." I solemnly charge you to excite each other's serious attention to the important admonition: lest the many plausible pretences which are continually occurring to induce you to desert your profession should unhappily prevail over your better judgement and your Christian resolution.

14. (*For we are made partakers of Christ*[1], *if we retain firm to the end the confidence with which we began*[2].)

I am the more earnest in exhorting you, and in urging you to exhort one another to perseverance, because it is only by steady practical adherence to those great principles of the Christian doctrine with which you set out in your pious career, that you can attain the reward promised in the gospel and share

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renthesis, resuming the sentence ver. 15, with a little alteration in the construction, not unlike the manner of Paul. See Gal. iii. 4—10. See Peirce and Bowyer.

[10] *This sin:*] *i. e.* the sin of apostasy and unbelief, which has many plausible pretences to offer in its own behalf. See Grotius *in loc.*

[1] *Partakers of Christ.*] "partakers of the benefit of Christ's office." Peirce. "the blessings of Christ's house." Macknight. "sharers with others of the doctrine or the benefits." Sykes.

[2] *The confidence with which we began.*] "the begun confidence; literally, the beginning of the confidence. Perseverance in faith and obedience is requisite to your enjoying the privileges of Christ's house." Macknight. "ὑποστασις, *confidence*, is used in the Old Testament for *hope* or *expectation*. Ruth i. 12, Ezek. xix. 5; here it is used for that hope which is grounded upon Jesus Christ." Sykes. See ver. 6.

in your master's triumph. Therefore exhort each other, CH. III.

While it is said[3], *To-day when you shall hear his voice, harden not your heart as in that bitter provocation.* VER. 15.

Hearken to the solemn admonition while it is continued, and comply with it before it be too late. Be warned by the sad example of your rebellious forefathers.

4. He argues the extreme danger of apostasy from the case of the Israelites in the wilderness, ver. 16—iv. 1.

For who when they heard did bitterly provoke? Yea, did not all they who came out of Egypt under Moses[4]*?* 16.

Can you flatter yourselves that the numbers of those who apostatize will secure impunity to each? But was this any security to your rebellious ancestors? Who were the persons that provoked God

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[3] *While it is said,* &c.] "If ver. 14 be read as a parenthesis, then εν τῳ λεγεσθαι will be resuming what he said ver. 13, 'Exhort one another whilst you are saying, or can say, To-day,' &c. See Ps. xli. 3. 10." Sykes.

[4] *Did not all,* &c.] See Griesbach *in loc.* "This turn of the sentence better suits the writer's argument, as well as the succeeding clauses. It is ably defended by Whitby." See Pyle, and Bengel in Bowyer. "The common reading is that of Newcome, For some, when they had heard, provoked *God;* however, not all who came out of Egypt under Moses, viz. Caleb and Joshua." "*Accedo Chrysostomo, Theodoreto, et aliis, qui hæc verba interrogative sumunt.* τινες γαρ. γαρ *non est particula rationem reddens, sed interrogatio. Sic igitur cohærent* ver. 15, 16. Αλλ' ϑ, *Annon?*" Rosenmuller.

Ch. III. Ver 16. with their murmurs when they heard the report of the spies? Was it a small proportion of the people only? Or was it not rather the whole congregation of Israel whom Moses had conducted out of Egypt, with the exception of two individuals only, namely, Joshua and Caleb? And yet their numbers did not screen them from punishment. Nor will numbers rescue you.

17. *And with whom was he grievously offended forty years?* Was it *not with those who sinned, whose carcases fell in the desert?*

Do not you recollect that the apostates were the persons with whom God was offended; those who, when they left Egypt, professed allegiance to him, but afterwards distrusted him and rebelled against him? And did they not all in the course of forty years perish in the desert? Did any who were guilty escape punishment?

18. *And to whom did he swear that they should not enter into his rest, but to those who believed not?*

Who were the persons that were excluded from the land of promise? The rebels who refused to obey the voice of God. And why did they refuse? From unbelief: because, though they had been witnesses to the astonishing miracles by which they had been rescued from the land of Egypt, they could not trust the power and the promise of God to settle them in Canaan: and they were so disheartened by cowardly fears at the lying report of the spies, that when ordered to advance they refused to obey.

So we see[1] *that they could not enter in because of their unbelief. Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left of entering into his rest, any of you*[2] *should fall*[3] *short of it.* Ch. III. Ver. 19. Ch. IV. Ver. 1.

From what has been said, it is evident that distrust of the promise of God, a want of faith in his power and goodness, was the primary cause of the apostasy and destruction of your ancestors in the wilderness. And we are in circumstances similar to theirs. To us likewise a rest is promised. We are invited to participate in all the glorious privileges of the new dispensation. The condition of this covenant is faith in the appointed messenger of God. Let us then be solicitous, and I do indeed feel the most earnest solicitude on your account, lest any one of you should, in consequence of any unreasonable and inveterate prejudice, renounce your profession and forfeit all your privileges and your hopes.

We have here another instance of this writer's extreme caution, and fear of wounding the prejudices of his countrymen. The rest he alludes to is the privileges of the gospel; which can be obtained upon no other terms than a belief in Jesus as the Messiah. This he obliquely hints at, but

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[1] *So we see.*] και βλεπομεν· this translation is justified by Dr. Whitby.

[2] *Any of you.*] He was not anxious for himself, but fearful for them. Some copies of little note read ἡμων, *us.*

[3] *Should fall.*] δοκη υστερηκεναι, *should seem to fall*; a common Atticism which does not imply a doubt. See Newcome, Peirce, Wakefield.

Ch. IV. Ver. 1. does not expressly mention, because he has not yet said what he deems sufficient to reconcile their minds to the doctrine of a suffering Messiah.

5. The writer notes the similarity between the circumstances of the ancient Israelites and the believing Hebrews, both having a promise of rest of which faith was the condition, ver. 2, 3.

2. *For we have received glad tidings*[1] *as they also* did; *but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in the hearers.*

I have been cautioning you to be upon your guard that you do not forfeit the promised rest: and there is good reason for this caution; for the circumstances of your ancestors and your own present condition are very similar. To them were announced the glad tidings of a land where they should rest after the fatigues and dangers of the wilderness: to us is announced a better rest; the state of light, of peace, and liberty, which the gospel brings. To your unhappy ancestors the promise was of no value, for they gave it no credit. Nor will the promise of the peace of the gospel be of use to us if we will not believe.

3. (*For we who are believers*[2] *do enter into this*

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[1] *Glad tidings.*] Archbishop Newcome renders the words, "For unto us glad tidings have been proclaimed, as well as unto them." See also Peirce, and Wakefield.

[2] *We who are believers.*] I inclose this clause in a parenthesis, which makes the sense and connexion of the succeeding clause easy and intelligible. Mr. Peirce, in an excellent note,

rest) *agreeably to what is said, So I sware in my anger, They shall not enter*[3] *into my rest.* Ch. IV. Ver. 3.

The indispensable condition of obtaining the blessings of the gospel is faith: believers, and only such, are admitted into rest; either that of Canaan or this of the gospel. Unbelievers are excluded from these privileges, just as your ancestors in the wilderness excluded themselves from the promised land, by refusing to believe in Moses speaking by authority from God: which sad consequence of their folly and their crime is represented as provoking God to anger, and inducing him solemnly to declare that they should not enter into Canaan.

6. The rest of which the Psalmist speaks was not the rest of the sabbath, ver. 3—5.

And although the works were finished from the foundation of the world (for the scripture[4] *somewhere saith thus concerning the seventh day: And God rested on the seventh day from all his works);* —3. 4.

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has vindicated at large the interpretation given in the exposition to the clause in the parenthesis.

[3] *They shall not enter..*] The form of expression in the original is, "*If* they shall enter," &c. This was the Hebrew form of taking an oath: viz. God do so to me, and more also, if the head of Elisha shall stand, &c. 2 Kings vi. 31. See the note on ch. iii. 11.

[4] *For* the scripture.] Including the 4th verse in a parenthesis seems to make the writer's meaning more distinct. See Peirce. The argument is, that as the psalmist speaks of a rest from which the Israelites were to be excluded long after the institution of a sabbath, of which institution they had enjoyed the benefit, it is plain that the sabbath was not the rest intended in the psalm.

Ch. IV. Ver. 5. *yet in this it saith again, They shall not enter into my rest.*

The rest to which David alludes cannot be the rest of the sabbath; for that day of rest, according to the Mosaic writings, was instituted from the beginning of the world, when God rested from his labours. The patriarchs, therefore, and the Israelites in the wilderness, enjoyed this rest, not excepting even those who, by the righteous judgement of God, were excluded from Canaan. The observation of the Psalmist, therefore, glances at some blessings that were still future.

7. Neither was that rest to which the Psalmist, in the name of God, invites his readers, the rest of Canaan, but something more distant still, even that of which believers are now put into possession, ver. 6—9.

6. *Seeing then*[1] *that* a promise *is left that some* are

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[1] *Seeing, then, that* a promise *is left.*] Peirce contends for this sense of the clause. Upon the authority of Dr. Macknight, I adopt this construction of the paragraph, though with some diffidence, and take ver. 9 as the conclusion from ver. 6, 7, including ver. 8 in a parenthesis. This seems to me to make the easiest sense. But Mr. Peirce doubts whether αρα, ver. 9, can be the proper redditive for επει, ver. 6; ει being the more usual antecedent. Also, ver. 7, παλιν ought to have και prefixed to it, if there are two distinct arguments. According to Peirce, the train of argument stands thus: Since some are to enter in, and the first did not possess it, therefore he by David fixes another day for seeking an entrance, &c.; plainly showing that the rest alluded to was different both from the sabbath and from Canaan, and therefore he concludes, ver. 9, that this rest is still in reserve, &c.

to *enter therein, and* seeing *that they to whom the glad tidings were first proclaimed did not enter in, because of unbelief; moreover,* seeing *that he mark-eth out a certain day, saying by David so long afterwards, To-day, as the expression is, To-day, when ye shall hear his voice, harden not your heart. (But if Joshua had introduced them into that rest,* God *would not afterwards have spoken of another day.) Therefore there remaineth a sabbath rest*[2] *for the people of God.*

Ch. IV. Ver. 7. 8. 9.

If you consider the case calmly, and reason upon it consistently, you must allow that the rest to which David alludes can be no other than that happy state of peace and privilege which we enjoy under the dispensation of the Messiah.

The Psalmist calls upon his countrymen to attend to the voice of God, that is, the voice of promise, similar to the promise made to their ancestors; this promise still remains to be accomplished, and it shall be fulfilled. It *remains*,—for the deluded wretches to whom it was first made believed it not, and forfeited its blessings. And many ages afterwards God by the Psalmist renews his promise;

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[2] *A sabbath-rest.*] σαββατισμος. This is the free and happy state which believers enjoy under the gospel: it is a perpetual sabbath. The writer no doubt means to insinuate the great superiority of the state of believers in Christ to that of the Jews in Canaan, of the Christian leader to Joshua, and of the Christian sabbath, which extends through every day in the week, to that of Moses, which was limited to one day in seven.—"*Ad hujus quietis participationem perducet nos resurrectionis dies. Interim et* in hac vita *est ejus gustus aliquis, tum in pace conscientiæ, tum in* libertate a ritibus judaicis." Grotius.

Ch. IV. Ver. 9. and in the time of David, the Israelites are invited, even then, to attend to the promise of God. Also, though the Hebrew nation under Joshua took possession of Canaan, yet even after this there is a promise of rest which would not have been made if the possession of Canaan had been the sole object of the promise. Since, therefore, a rest is promised which is neither the rest of the sabbath nor that of Canaan, but is predicted even in the time of David as a future blessing, it can be no other than the gospel dispensation. This is that delightful sabbath of which the believers in Jesus, who are now the chosen people of God, are invited to partake.

We may here remark, 1. This is a specimen of that loose species of reasoning from the scriptures of the Old Testament, which was common among the Jews at the time when this epistle was written, and the conclusions from which are, to say the least, very precarious.

2. The state of things under the gospel dispensation is, by this writer, called a sabbatism, or sabbath rest. It was a rest from the yoke of ceremonial institutions, as well as a release from the bondage of ignorance, idolatry, and vice, and from the condemning sentence of the law. This way of representing the privileges and the blessedness of Christianity was adopted by the earliest Christian writers[1].

[1] *The earliest Christian writers.*] Justin Martyr, in his Dialogue with Trypho, represents the Christian dispensation as a perpetual sabbath. "The new law," says he in his argument

The happy state into which believers are introduced is by them represented as a sabbath; and under the Christian law they acknowledge no other sabbath but that of an habitual rest from all wickedness, and the habitual practice of all virtue: and therefore the Christian sabbath is not limited to any particular day; but the whole life of a true Christian is a perpetual sabbath, wholly consecrated to God. Ch. IV. Ver. 9.

8. The writer urges the Hebrew Christians to an earnest solicitude for the attainment of this rest, ver. 10, 11.

Moreover, he who entereth into God's *rest, hath rested also from his own works, as God* did *from his*[2]. 10.

He who, by faith in the Messiah, has actually become a partaker of the privileges of the gospel, rests, like God, from his former works: he divests himself of all his former prejudices, and gives up all

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with the Jew, "will have you keep a perpetual sabbath; and you, when you have passed one day in idleness, think you are religious, not knowing what was commanded you. The Lord our God is not pleased with such things as these. If any among us is guilty of perjury or fraud, let him cease from these crimes; if he is an adulterer, let him repent; and he will have kept the kind of sabbath truly pleasing to God." Just. Martyr's *Dial. Tryph.* p. 229, ed. Par.

[2] *He who entereth*, &c.] The writer speaks of Christians as having already entered into God's rest; this expression, therefore, cannot mean the happiness of a future life, but the peace and liberty of the gospel state. And the works from which they rest are the superstitions, idolatries and vices of their unconverted state. "*Utitur hic scriptor verbo αορισῳ, non tantum quia futurum illud certissimum est, verum etiam quia in hac ipsa vita, ut jam diximus, quidam ejus quietis gustus datur.*" Grotius.

Ch. IV. Ver. 10. his superstitious, idolatrous, and vicious practices, that he may lead a holy and new life, becoming the state into which he is introduced.

11. *Let us earnestly endeavour, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any one fall after the same example of unbelief*[1].

Take great pains to surmount your prejudices, and to establish your faith in Jesus as the Messiah, how revolting soever to your feelings, recollecting the crime and punishment of your ancestors, and entertaining an habitual fear, lest being chargeable with a similar offence any one of you should fall into a similar condemnation.

9. He concludes this digression with the remark

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[1] *The same example of unbelief.*] Refusing to believe in Moses forfeited the land of Canaan, and not believing that Jesus is the Christ excludes from all the benefits of the Christian covenant. Much, I think, of the beauty of this passage is lost, and much of the pertinence of the writer's observations and reasonings is overlooked, in consequence of the rest of which he speaks, being almost universally understood of the happiness of a future life, instead of the state of relief and liberty under the dispensation of the Messiah, which I have little doubt was the idea which was uppermost in the author's mind. Grotius is the only commentator who seems to have glanced at this interpretation. See his note upon ver. 9, 10. It appears, however, by the following extract from Rosenmuller, that the interpretation here proposed has been adopted by some modern theologians in Germany, and particularly by the celebrated Griesbach.—"*Ven. tamen Griesbachius in Progr.* 1792 *scripto, eorum sententiam probat, qui αναπαυσεως nomine indicari volunt, cessationem ab operibus Mosaicæ legis: quietem ac liberationem a jugo cervicibus Judæorum imposito, quod neque patres eorum nec ipsi ferre poterant,* Act. xv. 10. *quod vero excutiunt, qui aures suas dant Christo blande compellanti ad me venite, &c.* Matt. xi. 28—30."

that the gospel produces a thorough change in those who cordially embrace it, and that the hypocritical professors of religion shall not escape with impunity, ver. 12, 13. Ch. IV. Ver. 11.

For the word of God[2] *is living*[3] *and powerful*[4], *and sharper than any two-edged sword, and pierceth even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit*[5], *and of the joints and marrow*[6], *and is a discerner of the thoughts and intentions of the heart.* 12. *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest before it: but all things are naked and open*[7] *to the eyes of him with whom we have to do*[8]. 13.

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[2] *Word of God.*] "The word uttered by Christian teachers and prophets in that age of divine illumination. See ver. 2, ch. ii. 2, vi. 5." Newcome.

[3] *Living.*] "full of life, of spirit, and animation. 1 Pet. i. 3." Newcome.

[4] *Powerful.*] "Efficacious in converting mankind, in teaching, exhorting, and comforting them when converted. 1 Cor. xiv. 3, 1 Thess. ii. 13." Newcome.

[5] *Soul and spirit.*] An allusion to the philosophical but groundless notion, that man consists of three parts, *body, soul,* and *spirit.* 1 Thess. v. "The gospel influences the passions by the most affecting motives, and convinces the reason by the most powerful arguments: it pervades the inmost recesses of the human mind." Newcome.

[6] *Joints and marrow.*] "This seems to allude to the dividing into its several parts the carcases of the beasts that were sacrificed. But the word or power of God can penetrate further than the knife of the priest, even to the thoughts and intents of the heart." Dr. Priestley.

[7] *Open.*] τετραχηλισμενα—ἀ τραχηλος, collum: τραχηλιζειν *est retorquere, reflectere alicujus collum. Hic facies sursum vertitur, fit igitur conspicua, magis venit in conspectum.* Dr. Sykes thinks that the allusion is "to the custom of skinning a beast quite to the neck, and at last skinning neck and all; whence the word comes to signify *quite open, made open to every part: q. d.* as is the meat in a market after it is skinned and laid open,

Ch. IV. Ver. 13.

The gospel of Jesus, which is the doctrine of God, is a living operative principle; where it is duly received, it penetrates the heart and separates what has been long most intimately united. It divides the Jew from his prejudices, the gentile from his superstitions, and the sinner from his crimes: and entering as it were into the recesses of the mind, for it sees every thing in every person, it speaks peace to the humble and the upright.

Nor can the hypocritical professor escape its notice and its just rebuke. If unbelief lies at the bottom of the heart, whatever be the profession of the lips, the word of God discovers it there, and passes a just sentence of exclusion from all the benefits of the gospel. And this sentence shall be ratified by

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and we can look upon it and examine it perfectly." See Newcome.

[8] *Of him with whom we have to do.*] προς ὁν ἡμιν ὁ λογος. "*coram illo verbo de quo nunc agimus.*" Grotius. "of God the inspirer of this word." Newcome. "concerning whom we are speaking; or, with whom we have to do; or, to whom we must give account." Sykes.

Crellius remarks, that some understand *the word of God* as expressive of the person of Christ, and others, of the doctrine of his gospel; with neither of which the description well agrees. He adds: "*Quocirca per sermonem istum Dei intelligenda sunt Dei decreta, quibus incredulos, et contumaces, interitui et supplíciis destinat: cujus generis est illud ipsum Dei juramentum, quo patres illos, et in illis omnes eorum similes, a sud requiete excludere constituit:*" *q. d.* Endeavour to enter into rest; for the word of God, which excludes unbelievers, cannot be imposed upon, cannot be eluded, and will certainly fulfill its purpose in the punishment of the guilty. "*Verum est quod Deus minatur et promittit—Minæ Dei gravissime animam vulnerant, et tristissimos habent effectus—comminationes Dei etiam ad cogitata nostra pertinent. Minis Dei tribuitur quod proprie Dei est.*" Rosenmuller, similar to Crellius.

that Being whose word it is, who knoweth all things, who is the author of our existence and the disposer of our lot, and whose omnipotence shall fulfill all the purposes of his wisdom, and the declarations of his will. Ch. IV. Ver. 13.

SECTION V.

THE WRITER argues the superior dignity of the priesthood of Christ to that of Aaron. Heb. iv. 14—vii.

Before we enter upon the discussion concerning the priesthood of Christ, it may be proper to remark, that many lay an unwarrantable stress upon this writer's figurative language, and suppose some great mystery to be involved in the priesthood of Christ; whereas, in truth, no greater mystery is contained in comparing Christ to a high-priest, than in comparing him to a shepherd or a householder. In order to enter thoroughly into the meaning and spirit of this writer, we must keep in mind that he has two objects in view. The first is, to abate the exorbitant attachment of the Hebrew Christians to their ceremonial institute; and the second, to reconcile their minds to that most obnoxious of all doctrines, a suffering Messiah. To accomplish this design, he represents, in a variety of ways suited to their capacities and views, the superiority of the Christian dispensation to that of

CH. IV. Moses, even in those particulars which they regarded as the most glorious distinction of their own ritual. Amongst other things, they gloried in the splendour and magnificence of the Levitical priesthood: to meet which prejudice, he reminds them, that the Messiah is predicted under the character of a high-priest of an order superior to that of Aaron [1]. And as every priest must offer a sacrifice, so this great high-priest offered himself to God, a victim of far greater value than any of the sacrifices under the law: and by this figurative representation he endeavours to soften the minds of his prejudiced countrymen. This allusion he illustrates by a variety of arguments and quotations from the Jewish scriptures, some of which are indeed of little intrinsic value, but which were well adapted to the conceptions of his readers, and to their peculiar habits of thinking and reasoning.

In the prosecution of his subject this writer, First, describes the character of Jesus and his qualifications for the priestly office, and asserts his divine designation thereto: ch. iv. 14—v. 10. Secondly, he introduces a pertinent digression con-

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[1] *Superior to that of Aaron.*] "Let us come, saith he, to God's throne of grace with freedom, as having there such a high-priest in whom are all things by way of excellency to be found for which the Levitical priesthood was ordained and repaired to, as having, 1. A better priesthood, viz. after the order of Melchisedec, ch. vii.; 2. A better consecration, viz. by an oath; 3. A better tabernacle in which he ministers; 4. A better sacrifice offered there; 5. A better covenant established in his blood." Whitby. See Dr. Priestley's excellent note.

cerning the importance and difficulty of the subject, and the great danger of apostasy: ch. v. 11—vi. Thirdly, he demonstrates at large that Christ, as a priest after the order of Melchisedec, is greatly superior in dignity to Aaron and his descendants: ch. vii. Ch. IV.

I.

The writer describes the character of Jesus, asserts his qualifications for the priestly office, and vindicates his claim to a divine appointment. Ch. iv. 14—v. 10.

1. The character of Jesus as a high-priest is an encouragement to perseverance and to hope, ver. 14—16.

Having therefore a great high-priest[2], *who is passed* into *the heavens*[3], *Jesus the son of God*[4], *let us hold fast* our *profession*. Ver. 14.

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[2] *A great high-priest.*] The writer resumes the subject which he had introduced ch. ii. 17, 18, iii. 1, Jesus is a *great* high-priest, as he was superior to all former prophets and messengers of God: ch. i. See Peirce.

[3] *Passed* into *the heavens.*] "passed through the heavens in order to obtain the highest." Sykes. The Jewish high-priest entered once a year into the holy of holies, which was the residence of the shechinah. Jesus is here described as having entered into the heavens, or *passed through* the heavens to the immediate residence of God himself, of whom the cloud of glory on the mercy-seat in the Jewish sanctuary was only a symbol.

[4] *Jesus the son of God.*] He had before spoken explicitly of Jesus as the Messiah, ch. iii. 6; he here expressly calls him the Son of God, a title appropriated to the Messiah; and who is so called, as appears from the explanation of the word in the New Testament, because he was the first who was raised from the dead to an immortal life. Rom. i. 4, Col. i. 18.

Ch. IV. Ver. 14. Having already stated the superiority of Jesus, the Messiah, to Moses our celebrated lawgiver, and represented the danger of rejecting his claim, however novel and revolting to preconceived opinions, I proceed now to another topic, at which indeed I have already hinted, to illustrate the superior excellency of Jesus in his priestly office: and having already mentioned that this suffering man, who, in his character of Messiah, is the son of God, has assumed the office of a high-priest, and in this capacity is entered not into an earthly sanctuary, but into heaven itself, and into the immediate presence of God in our behalf, let us persevere in the profession of his religion, that we may not lose the benefit of his official interposition.

15. *For we have not a high-priest who cannot sympathize with our infirmities, but one who hath suffered trials*[1] *in all* respects *like* ourselves, though *without sin*[2].

Our great high-priest, so highly exalted, is nevertheless a man like ourselves, and has in the course of his mission and ministry passed through trials and sufferings similar to ours; yet his faith

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[1] *Suffered trials.*] πεπειρασμενον. The Clermont and many of the ancient writers read πεπειραμενον, *pierced;* which is marked by Griesbach as of great authority. "The meaning is, that he was pierced through, or underwent in the severest manner all the evils of life." Sykes.

[2] *Without sin:*] *i. e.* without deserting his post, and apostatizing from his profession; and therefore he can sympathize with, and is a proper example for, others in similar situations. "without falling away from truth, or doing any thing amiss." Sykes.

and fortitude failed not. He now sympathizes with us. We share in his compassion: let us imitate his fortitude, his resolution and his piety. Ch. IV. Ver. 15.

Let us therefore approach with confidence to the throne of grace[3], *that we may obtain mercy and find favour for seasonable relief*[4]. 16.

As our high-priest is already in the most holy place, we also may take courage to approach the mercy-seat, where, in answer to humble supplication, we shall obtain mercy to forgive past transgressions, and all seasonable assistance to carry us through present and future difficulties.

The meaning of the writer, stripped of his figurative language, is this: The resurrection and ascension of Jesus is a clear proof of his divine mission and of his acceptance with God: if his disciples imitate his example of faith, and fortitude, and piety, they likewise shall be accepted, and in answer to their earnest prayers they shall be supplied with all the assistance which is requisite to their ultimate success.

2. The qualifications and duties of a high-priest are described, ver. 1—3.

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[3] *The throne of grace.*] the mercy-seat, our high-priest being already there. See Peirce.

[4] *Seasonable relief.*] βοηθεια is "help obtained in consequence of crying aloud for it." Macknight. "that we may find favour to have help whenever it is wanted. Seasonable opportune help, if at any time we should fall into times of persecution," &c. Sykes.

Ch. V. Ver. 1. *Now every high-priest taken from among men*[1] *is appointed in behalf of men* in *divine services, to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins*[2].

You know, my brethren, the official duties of the high-priest: it is his business to take the lead in religious worship, especially upon great occasions; and particularly, to offer both voluntary sacrifices and sin offerings.

2. *Who can be mildly affected*[3] *towards those who*
3. *err through ignorance*[4], *being himself encompassed with infirmity; and for this* reason *he ought, as for the people, so for himself also, to offer* sacrifices *for sins*[5].

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[1] *Taken from among men.*] This implies, that Jesus was taken from among men; that is, that he was properly a man, otherwise the parallel will not hold.

[2] *Sacrifices for sins.*] The high-priest's duty was to officiate for the people in presenting before God both free-will offerings as tributes of gratitude, and sin-offerings, particularly on the day of atonement.

[3] *Mildly affected.*] See Newcome. "μετριοπαθειν, *modice affici.*" Budæus. Peirce observes that "the word is borrowed from the Platonists, in opposition to the Stoics. The wise man is moderate in his affections, not destitute of them."

[4] *Those who err through ignorance.*] Literally, those who are ignorant and out of the way: a common hendiadys for those who err through ignorance. See Peirce.

[5] *For himself also.*] Hence Grotius infers, that Christ must have offered for himself a sacrifice for sin; *i. e.* that he might be delivered from those sufferings to which he was liable for the sins of mankind: ch. vii. 26, 27. Grotius's notion of Jesus offering a sacrifice for his own sin is certainly right; but the author means by *sin*, not moral evil, but ceremonial impurity. "In this respect," says Dr. Priestley, "he shows that the Hebrew high-priest resembled the Christian; since his offering for himself as well as for the people showed that he was liable to transgression as well as they: the sacrifices that he offered being for sin." But it does not appear to have occurred to Dr. Priest-

The law makes no provision for wilful transgression; but sacrifices are provided to reinstate those who, by ignorance and inadvertency, forfeit the blessings of the Mosaic covenant. It is the high-priest's duty to offer these sacrifices; and being himself liable to these inadvertencies, he will the more readily sympathize with others in the same situation, and be more disposed to offer sacrifices for others, being himself in need of a similar purification. How far this analogy holds, and the great comparative superiority of the Christian high-priest, will hereafter be explained. Ch. V. Ver. 3.

3. The writer vindicates the divine designation of Jesus to this high office, ver. 4—6.

And as *no one taketh this honour to himself,* 4.
but he who is called by God as Aaron was, *so also* 5.
Christ did not assume to himself the honour of being made a high-priest, but he conferred the office upon him *who said to him, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee*[6]*: as he saith also in another* 6.

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ley at the time, that the sacrifices in both cases were offered for ceremonial and involuntary, not for moral offences.

[6] *This day,* &c.] Hence Whitby, Peirce, and others, infer that Jesus did not enter upon his priestly office till after his resurrection; which Doddridge and others vehemently oppose. But the controversy appears to me to be as trivial as it would be to dispute when he entered upon the office of a shepherd. These learned writers do not appear to have sufficiently adverted to the fact, that the author of this epistle strains the allegory of Christ's priestly office merely to accommodate himself to the prejudices of the Hebrew Christians.

Ch. V. Ver. 6. psalm, *Thou* art *a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.*

A divine appointment is essential to the validity of the priesthood. We all know that Aaron was constituted the high-priest by immediate direction from God, and the priesthood was made hereditary in his family. Jesus also is divinely appointed to a similar office. Nor would he have presumed to have arrogated this honour without a divine designation to it. And that he is so appointed is evident: for I have already established the important fact that Jesus is the true Messiah. And of the Messiah God saith in the second psalm, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee: in allusion, as I have before observed, to his resurrection from the dead. But of the same distinguished personage it is also said in another psalm, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. I shall therefore, in the subsequent discourse, assume it as the principle and ground of my argumentation, that Jesus is, by divine appointment, a high-priest of this rank and description.

4. Jesus was qualified for his office by the discipline of sufferings, ver. 7—10.

7. *He, in the days of his flesh, having offered prayers and supplications with strong crying* [1] *and tears to him who was able to deliver him from death,*

[1] *With strong crying.*] Referring to his agony in the garden of Gethsemane, related by three of the evangelists.

and having been delivered from his terror[2], *though he were a son, learned obedience by his sufferings; and having been made perfect*[3], *he became the author of eternal salvation*[4] *to all that obey him; having been addressed by God*[5] *as a high-priest according to the order of Melchisedec.* Ch. V. Ver. 8. 9. 10.

This Jesus, who is now our great high-priest, was once a sufferer, and by his sufferings was disciplined to obedience and to sympathy. During his personal ministry, and especially as it drew near to a close, having a clear and distinct foresight of the

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[2] *From his terror.*] εισακουσθεις απο της ευλαβειας. Dr. Whitby has fully justified this translation in his excellent note upon this text. That εισακουσθεις signifies *deliverance* in answer to prayer, is evident from Ps. xxii. 21, xxxiv. 6, lv. 2; and that ευλαβεια signifies *fear* in general, is clear from Josh. xxii. 24, Heb. xii. 28, xi. 7, Acts xxiii. 10. Our Lord was not delivered from those sufferings which were the objects of his dread, but from that distress of mind which would have prevented him from passing through them with becoming dignity and fortitude. And the history of his sufferings shows, that after the paroxysm of terror and agony in the garden, the whole of his behaviour through every stage of his succeeding unparalleled sufferings, was calm, collected, and heroic, in the highest degree. "*in hoc exauditus, fuit ut ab isto metu liberaretur.*" Grotius.

[3] *Made perfect.*] Τελειωθεις seems here to mean nothing more than his being in consequence of his sufferings perfectly qualified for the office of high-priest. "*consummato opere.*" Grotius.

[4] *Author of eternal salvation.*] Having taught the doctrine, and being himself an example of the fact; having led the way to eternal life.

[5] *Addressed by God.*] προσαγορευθεις. In Psalm cx. God is the speaker, and he addresses the Messiah as a high-priest after the order of Melchisedec. This is the circumstance to which the writer alludes. Macknight renders the words, "being saluted by God." "something more than called: just as a man is saluted or proclaimed emperor." Sykes.

Ch. V. Ver. 10. indignities to which he was to be exposed, and the cruel sufferings he was to endure, the exquisite sensibility of his mind was for a season overpowered, and he earnestly and repeatedly implored of his heavenly father that if possible the bitter cup might pass from him; but he tempered his desires and his distressing apprehensions with the humblest and most dutiful resignation to the will of God: Nevertheless, if it may not pass from me, thy will be done. And you cannot fail to recollect, that though his heavenly Father did not grant the direct object of the petition, the crucifixion of the Messiah being an essential part of the wise plan of providence, yet he bestowed what was a full equivalent. He calmed all his painful apprehensions, and infused that fortitude and dignity of spirit which so eminently distinguished the closing scenes of his life. Thus, though the son of God, the true Messiah, his mind, like that of other men, needed the discipline of suffering to form it to a proper temper both of resignation and of tender pity, such as I have before described to be essential qualifications of a high-priest: and being thus eminently qualified for his office, he was at the proper season invested with it, and became the pattern and the guide of his obedient disciples to everlasting life; having long before been announced by God himself in the language of prophecy as a high-priest after the order of Melchisedec.

II.

The writer now introduces a pertinent digression

concerning the importance and difficulty of the subject upon which he is about to discourse, and the danger of apostasy; expressing at the same time his good hopes concerning the believing Hebrews, and earnestly exhorting and encouraging them to persevere in their Christian profession. Ch. v. 11—vi. 20. Ch. V. Ver. 10.

A former digression was introduced (ch. iii. 7), by way of caution to the believing Hebrews, immediately after the writer had announced the very offensive doctrine, that Jesus, the crucified man, was the true Messiah and superior to Moses. The present digression is introduced upon a similar occasion, and for a similar purpose, now that he is about to establish the equally obnoxious fact, that the priesthood of Jesus, after the order of Melchisedec, is appointed to supersede the Levitical priesthood, and with it the whole of that institute, of which their ministration constituted an essential part, in order to make way for a new and a superior dispensation. He previously warns them, therefore, of the great danger of apostasy from the Christian faith, how offensive soever the doctrines of the Christian religion may be to their feelings and prepossessions.

1. He informs them that he has much to advance concerning the analogy between the priesthood of Jesus and that of Melchisedec, which, however, he is apprehensive that they will hardly be able to understand, ver. 11—14.

Ch. V Ver. 11. *Concerning whom we have much to say, and difficult to be explained, to you who are dull of apprehension* [1].

There is a spiritual and mystical sense in the history of Melchisedec which I am desirous of opening to you; but your plain unlettered understandings have been so much used to take the story in its literal sense, that I fear I shall hardly be able to make you comprehend its figurative meaning.

12. *For whereas by this time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need on the contrary* [2] *to be taught yourselves the first elements* [3] *of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk* [4], *and not of strong food.*

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[1] *Dull of apprehension.*] "dull of hearing." Wakefield. "*remiss, careless*; that has little or no desire to hear or learn." Sykes.

[2] *On the contrary.*] παλιν. So Wakefield. "ye have again need that some one should teach you." Gronovius, Peirce, Bowyer.

[3] *The first elements.*] τα στοιχεια της αρχης, "the very elements." Sykes. Whitby remarks, that all the ancient commentators understand by first principles "the *humanity of Christ*; because the preachers of the gospel spake of that only to them who were not yet perfect in the faith." A memorable concession, not much to the credit of the doctrines so suppressed. He refers to Theodoret, whose words he quotes; to Chrysostom, to Œcumenius, Theophylact, and Irenæus.

[4] *Ye have need of milk,* &c.] "you are to be taught the first principles of revelation, instead of being taught what concerns the office of Christ, and what you are to suffer or go through for his name's sake. Not that the apostle would have some doctrines taught to some, and other doctrines taught to others; or some doctrines concealed, while others only are to be taught; but as Christians are able to improve in the knowledge of the oracles of God, so they were to go on to perfection." Sykes.

I am inclined to believe, that as the allegorical interpretation

I am very apprehensive that instead of improving you are gone backward in religious knowledge; that instead of being qualified to be teachers of others, as might reasonably have been expected from the date of your conversion, you have forgotten some of the first principles of the Christian doctrine; and that you are really returned to the state of infants in understanding, who can apprehend only the easiest and the plainest principles; instead of having grown up to manly sense, capable of relishing and digesting strong and wholesome though unpalatable truths. Ch. V. Ver. 12

For every one who partaketh of milk only, *is unskilled in the doctrine of justification*[5], *for he is* but *an infant: but strong food belongeth to full grown* 13.

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of the Old Testament was at that time much in fashion, they who found out a sense the most remote from the true and primary signification of the words were considered as the most learned, they were men in understanding who relished strong meat, while they who understood and approved only the primary and literal meaning were babes who were fed and pleased with milk. This writer, who was no apostle, and who appears to be well satisfied with his own skill in figurative interpretation, speaks disparagingly of the Hebrew converts, because of their want of skill in this sort of learning, and their disrelish to it.

[5] *Justification.*] This is a phrase which often occurs in the epistles of Paul, particularly in those to the Romans and the Galatians. It signifies a covenant or privileged state: that state which the Jews had forfeited by their violations of the Mosaic law, and into which Jews and Gentiles were now introduced by faith in the gospel independently of all ritual institutions. Rom. iii. 21 to the end. The use of this expression, so common in the writings of Paul, though it will not of itself prove that the apostle was himself the author of the epistle, may be considered as a presumption that the writer, whoever he might be, was at least a companion of the apostle, and familiar with his style and manner.

Ch. V. Ver. 14. *men, who by habit have their senses exercised to the discernment both of good and evil.*

They who are satisfied with simple and obvious interpretations of scripture are not well skilled in the doctrine of Christ, the belief of which brings us into a state of privilege and covenant with God. But they who see into the mystical sense of the Old Testament are men of understanding, capable of judging of the force of an argument, and of distinguishing between right and wrong.

Upon this singular paragraph it may be remarked,

1. That it is plain that by the things *hard to be understood* the writer means the allegorical turn which he gives in the following discourse to the history of Melchisedec.

2. That he censures, in language bordering upon severity, the ignorance of the Hebrews with respect to the allegorical meaning of the Old Testament. This was a favourite method of interpretation in the age in which this author wrote, and for that reason he is the more excusable, it being the error, not of himself in particular, but of the age in which he lived. The same method of interpreting the writings of the New Testament was very early introduced into the Christian church; so that plain Christians, who contented themselves with understanding plain language in its obvious sense, were regarded with contempt[1] as simple ignorant people;

[1] *Contempt.*] Vid. Eusebius's *Eccl. History*; where Papias,

and by these means the tenets of a false philosophy were early engrafted upon Christianity, which, when they could not be supported by the obvious sense of the scriptures, were pretended to be proved by the mystical interpretation. Ch. V. Ver. 14.

I cannot therefore agree with the author of this epistle in the censure which he passes upon the believing Hebrews; for I do not conceive that a mystical interpretation of a plain historical narrative is either a judicious or an useful way of interpreting the scriptures either of the Old Testament or the New.

2. Notwithstanding his apprehension that they may not thoroughly comprehend his meaning, he nevertheless proceeds to advance the doctrine to which he alludes, ch. vi. 1—3.

Wherefore, dismissing[2] *the first principles* of the doctrine *of Christ*[3], *let us advance*[4] *towards per-* Ch. VI. Ver. 1.

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a venerable man, contemporary with the apostles, is treated with contempt for his attachment to the literal interpretation; and Origen is highly commended for his early inquiries into the mystical sense of the scriptures. *Euseb.* lib. iii. c. 31.

[2] *Wherefore, dismissing.*] "Since, considering the time, ye ought to understand higher doctrines:" ch. v. 12. Newcome. See also Peirce.

[3] *The principles* of the doctrine *of Christ.*] "τον της αρχης τε Χριστε λογον, by a hypallage, or την τε λογε τε Χριστε αρχην, which seem to carry the same sense as the first elements of the oracles of God: ch. v. 12." Owen *apud* Bowyer. "let us leave discoursing on the principles *of the doctrine* of Christ." Newcome.

[4] *Let us advance.*] "I go on to offer you something more solid and fit for you as adult persons." Peirce; who observes that "the writer seems to have had an eye to what he had said

Ch. VI. *fection (not laying again the foundation*[1] *of repent-*
ance from dead works, and of faith towards God,
Ver. 2. *of the doctrine of baptisms, and of the imposition*
of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and
3. *of the everlasting judgement): and this let us do*[2],
if God permit.

Since therefore all of you ought to be well informed in the doctrine of Christ, and some of you, I trust, are so, I shall cease to insist upon those fun-

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in the last verse of the foregoing chapter." Eph. iv. 11—15; Col. i. 28.

[1] *The foundation.*] Mr. Peirce considers the Old Testament as a more obscure representation of Christ, and that the Jewish religion contained a rough draught, or imperfect rudiments, of Christianity; the insisting upon which, after the meaning of them had been set in so clear a light by the coming of Christ, is waved by the author. He explains, therefore, all the articles here enumerated as expressive of something under the Jewish dispensation. But the fact is, that the author takes great pains to explain the allusions of the Old Testament, whether real or imaginary: these he calls the strong meat for men advanced to maturity; whereas he insists but little upon the obvious principles of Christianity, which, though of the highest importance in themselves, were level to every capacity, and which he calls "milk for babes." These, therefore, appear to me, as to the generality of expositors, to be the true sense of the articles here specified. Dr. Macknight adopts Mr. Peirce's interpretation.

"Fundamental doctrines," says Dr. Sykes, "were not in those early days the same as they grew to be in ages of contention, when Christianity came to be a matter of abstruse, metaphysical, unintelligible jargon, involved in thick darkness and covered with mystery; but men were taught the easy and plain doctrines of faith in one God, the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ his son our Lord, and repentance from dead works, and the meaning of laying on of hands, and of baptism, and a resurrection, and a future judgement."

[2] *Let us do.*] "Include in a parenthesis, from *not laying again*, ver. 1, to *judgement*, ver. 2. And ver. 3 we should read ποιησωμεν as φερωμεθα, ver. 1." Markland *ap.* Bowyer. See Griesbach.

damental articles of the Christian faith which are familiar to you, and with divine permission I shall proceed to instruct you in those points which are better adapted to the manly age of Christian discipline, and shall lay open to you the hidden meaning of the Old Testament scriptures, that you may clearly discern the analogy which subsists between the old dispensation and the new, and the decided superiority of the latter. Ch. VI. Ver. 3.

The writer still alludes to his proposed mystical interpretations, which he calls meat for strong men, as distinguished from the great first principles of Christianity, which he represents as milk for babes. Of these principles he has here given a distinct enumeration, which, having been drawn up by an apostolical man in the apostolic age, may be justly regarded as the only genuine apostles' creed, differing indeed in many articles from the ancient symbol which now bears that venerable name, and much more from those masses of absurdity, which the ignorance and arrogance of those who have usurped the authority of Christ in succeeding ages, have presumed to impose upon the ignorance and credulity of the Christian world.

(1) The first of these fundamental articles is "repentance from dead works[3]," that is a change of

[3] *Repentance from dead works.*] "works which lead to death, or works wrought by those who are dead in sins. See 1 Tim. v. 6." Newcome. Dr. Sykes observes, that "*dead works* are no where mentioned but in this epistle, and that they are such as

Ch. VI. Ver. 3.

mind with respect to the importance of those ceremonial practices which the Mosaic institute imposed, and upon the breach of which the law inexorably pronounced sentence of death. These rites, upon which the Hebrews once laid so mighty a stress, and in which they once placed their chief confidence, were given up as of no use, and exchanged for the milder requisitions of the gospel.

(2.) "Faith towards God," believing the record that God has given of his son, 1 John, v. 11, and admitting the mission and doctrine of Jesus upon the authority of his divine credentials.

(3.) "The doctrine of baptisms[1]," the baptism of water, by which they who embraced the Christian religion publicly professed their faith in Christ, and the baptism of the holy spirit, by which that faith was ratified and confirmed.

(4.) "The imposition of hands[2]," which was a

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lead to death, such as God will punish with death." But the writer seems rather to mean a *change of mind* (μετανοια) with regard to ritual impositions. The Hebrews laid too much stress upon the works of the law; the gospel requires that they should build their hopes upon faith in Christ, which brings forth fruit unto holiness, the end of which is everlasting life. Whereas, by the works of the law no flesh living can be justified. The law leaves its votaries under a sentence of death: the works of the law, therefore, may justly be called dead works: and the first principle in which the converted Jew was instructed, was to renounce the hope of justification by the law; he was taught repentance from dead works. μετανοια is used in the same sense ch. xii. 17.

[1] *Baptisms.*] "that is, Christian baptism; the plural for the singular superlative. Compare Eph. iv. 5." Simpson's *Notes on Scripture.*—"βαπτισμοι est baptismus qui in plures homines confertur." Rosenmuller.

[2] *Imposition of hands.*] viz. "the use and purport of this

rite practised in the apostolic age as a token of the effusion of the holy spirit, and also as a solemn designation to the office of an elder or an evangelist, where no supernatural powers were pretended to be communicated. Ch. VI. Ver. 3.

(5.) "The resurrection of the dead[3]" is justly introduced as a fundamental article of the Christian faith, and is with great propriety mentioned to the believing Hebrews, whose views upon this subject, previously to their acquaintance with the Christian doctrine, were very limited and obscure.

(6.) The most essential doctrine of all is, "the eternal judgement[4]," or that awful decision, which assigns both to the righteous and to the wicked their respective portions in the future life: for the

practice, sometimes to give the holy ghost; sometimes to appoint persons to offices, Acts vi. 6, xiii. 3; sometimes to heal, Acts ix. 12, 17." Sykes.

[3] *Resurrection of the dead.*] This is a doctrine not taught in the Old Testament, though a future life was probably expected by the pious Jews, and after the return from the captivity the Pharisees taught the resurrection. But it was represented as a privilege belonging to the Jews only. See Joseph. *De Bell. Jud.* lib. viii. c. 8, § 14.

[4] *The eternal judgement,*] "the effects of which will continue for ever." Newcome.—Mr. Peirce understands the expression of those tremendous judgements of which the books of Moses give an account, such as Sodom and Gomorrha, Pharaoh and his host, &c.; not thinking it likely that the writer would pass over a doctrine of such consequence. But the writer was far from meaning to represent these doctrines as of no moment; on the contrary, he holds them up as the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, but at the same time so obvious, that all who professed faith in Christ believed and acknowledged them; but he declines to insist upon them at present, it being his design to enlarge upon certain doctrines which, though important, were remote and obscure.

Ch. VI. Ver. 3. Christian revelation most explicitly and positively announces that we shall all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, to receive the things done in the body according to that we have done, whether it be good or whether it be evil.

Such are the fundamental articles of the Christian faith, and happy had it been for the Christian world had they been left in the simplicity of this primitive and apostolic representation.

3. The writer solemnly warns his readers of the great danger of apostasy, ver. 4—8.

4. *For it is impossible to renew*[1] *those to repentance who have been once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift*[2], *and have been made partakers of* 5. *the holy spirit*[3], *and have tasted the excellent word*

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[1] *For it is impossible to renew.*] *q. d.* "I speak particularly to you who are disposed to go on to perfection. To apostates I have nothing to say. For (γαρ) it is impossible," &c. Owen, see Bowyer. The construction requires that the word corresponding to αναχαινιζειν should in the translation be placed before the accusatives depending upon it. Macknight, Newcome.—It is *impossible*, because whatever could be said or done to that end had been said or done already. Le Clerc on Hammond, Newcome.

[2] *Heavenly gift.*] "the bounty of God bestowed on men through the gospel. John iv. 10, Rom. v. 17." Newcome. "To taste this gift is to perceive, to be sensible of the truth of such gift." Sykes.

[3] *Made partakers of the holy spirit.*] "If it be imagined that every Christian enjoyed some extraordinary gift of the holy spirit, this is more than can be inferred from this place; for if a person were convinced of the truth of the gospel by a careful study of the scriptures, or by seeing himself, or being fully satisfied of the miraculous powers and assistances of the first

of God[4], *and the mighty works of the age that was to come*[5], *and yet have relapsed*[6], *since they again crucify to themselves the son of God, and expose* him *to public infamy*[7]. Ch. VI. Ver. 6.

Without dwelling therefore any longer upon these obvious principles, I shall immediately proceed to those more difficult subjects to which I have alluded; for indeed it would be a total loss of time and labour to attempt to reclaim those who have apostatized from the Christian faith in opposition to that commanding evidence which has been ex-

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preachers of the gospel, he might be properly enough said to be a partaker of the holy ghost. However, if the apostle be thought to speak of such as actually had the gifts of the holy ghost, and yet fell away from Christianity, his reasoning is still stronger, and the unlikelihood of bringing such back to truth still greater." Sykes.

[4] *Excellent word of God.*] καλον· "the good word of God dictated by the spirit." Newcome. "the comfortable and sure word of God, which instructs men how to act with uprightness and honesty in every station and circumstance of life." Sykes.

[5] *Mighty works of the age to come.*] "had experience of the extraordinary miracles wrought in this age of the Messiah." Peirce. To the same purport Newcome, Wakefield, Sykes.— "*experiri, quid religio Christiana efficere possit.*" Rosenmuller.

[6] *And yet have relapsed.*] παραπεσοντας παλιν, "have fallen away again." This punctuation is more correct than that which joins παλιν to ανακαινιζειν, where it is redundant. Erasmus, Peirce, Bowyer. Macknight observes that και is here taken in its adversative sense. Also that "our translators have, after Beza, without any authority inserted the word *if* (if they fall away), that the text might not appear to contradict the *Calvinistic* doctrine of the perseverance of the saints."

[7] *Expose* him *to infamy.*] "By their practice they in effect crucify the son of God, and expose him to infamy. See Matt. i. 19." Peirce. "They treat him as if they thought he deserved the sentence executed upon him." Sykes. "*ανασταυρειν idem est quod σταυρειν, nec significat* rursus crucifigere." Rosenmuller.

Ch. VI. Ver. 6. hibited before you, and which effected your conversion to the gospel doctrine. It is indeed a hopeless case, and morally impossible to recover those who have relapsed into their former state of unbelief after having discerned the evidences of Christian truth, and having enjoyed the liberty which the gospel gives; after having even participated in the spiritual gifts, and been convinced by them of the divine authority of the doctrine of Jesus, having not only been witnesses to the stupendous miracles wrought by the first teachers of Christianity, but having themselves been endued with miraculous powers. Persons who resist evidence like this are absolutely irrecoverable, as no stronger evidence will, or can, be produced to overcome their prejudices. Such persons, by their conduct, show that they regard Jesus as an impostor, and that, in their judgement, he deservedly suffered an ignominious death: and corresponding to their principles and their conduct will be their final state.

7. *For the land*[1] *which drinketh in the rain that*
falleth often upon it, and produceth herbage useful
to those for whom it is cultivated, receiveth a bless-
8. *ing* from God[2]: *but that which beareth thorns and*

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[1] *For the land.*] "These cannot be restored, *for* (γαρ) as good men resemble fertile ground, these resemble what is barren." Newcome.

[2] *Receiveth a blessing* from God.] See Gen. i. 11, xxvii. 27. Wakefield places απο Θεω after υετον, without which he says the passage is absurd. His version is: "the land which drinketh the rain that is often falling upon it from God, and beareth herbage useful to the tillers of it, receiveth praise."

briars, is *rejected, and near to a curse*[3]; *whose end is to be burned up*[4]. Ch. VI. Ver. 8.

A fertile soil, which thrives under the cultivater's hand, and is enriched by the rain from heaven, is acceptable and useful to the proprietor, and by further cultivation becomes more abundantly fruitful: and in like manner, they who attend to and improve Christian instruction shall advance in knowledge, virtue and usefulness, and in the favour of God. But as rocky barren land, which resists all the arts of cultivation, and produces nothing but thorns and briars, at length wearies out the patience of the husbandman, and is left by him under the original curse, and for want of water and manure is burned up by the scorching heat of the sun; so shall they, who wilfully stop their ears against the mild and gentle voice of instruction and discipline, be, after sufficient season of trial, abandoned by God and man, and left to suffer the just and awful consequences of their own obstinacy and folly.

4. The writer expresses his good hope concern-

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[3] *Near to a curse.*] "near being pronounced barren." Newcome. An allusion to the curse, Gen. iii. 17, 18. The writer uses a soft expression, that he might not appear to represent their case as already desperate: they were nigh unto a curse." Peirce.

[4] *Whose end is to be burned up.*] Dr. Macknight observes, that "a principal part of the eastern agriculture consists in leading rills of water from ponds, &c., to render the fields fruitful. When this is neglected, the land is scorched by the heat and drought of the climate."

CH. VI. ing the character and state of the Hebrew Christians, founded upon their past conduct, ver. 9, 10.

Ver. 9. *But, beloved*[1], *we are persuaded better things of you, and things that belong to salvation, though we thus speak.*

My dear brethren, though I have thought it necessary, in order to put you upon your guard, to represent the great danger of apostasy from the faith, I am very far from intending to insinuate that you are chargeable with this great offence. On the contrary, I entertain the best hopes concerning you, that you still maintain, and will continue to hold fast, that firm faith and that unshaken fidelity, and will persevere in the practice of those evangelical virtues, which will ensure your eternal happiness.

10. *For God is not unjust, so as to forget your active love*[2] *which ye have shown to his name*[3], *in having relieved and in* still *continuing to relieve the saints*[4].

You have shown your love to God and your regard to his authority, not by empty professions, but by active obedience, and particularly by the kind sympathy which you have manifested, and the seasonable relief which you have afforded, and which

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[1] *But, beloved.*] Mr. Peirce observes, that this softening expression is much in the manner of Paul. See 2 Thess. ii. 13, Eph. iv. 20, Rom. viii. 9.

[2] *Your active love.*] τυ εργυ και της αγαπης, your work and love: "an hendiadys." Newcome. Griesbach, upon the authority of many copies, drops the words τυ κοπου.

[3] *Shown to his name.*] "το ονομα Θευ, *ipse Deus. Sensus: ex obsequio apud Deum.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *Relieve the saints.*] See Wakefield. In what manner they had particularly exerted themselves he describes ch. x. 33, 34.

you still continue to administer, to afflicted and persecuted Christians: and you have served a just and bountiful master, who will not forget your kindness to his suffering friends, but will regard it as done to himself, and will publicly acknowledge it, and honourably requite you for it another day. Ch. VI. Ver. 10.

5. His design is to encourage and stimulate them to Christian perseverance, ver. 11, 12.

But we desire that every one of you would show the same diligence even to the end, in order to the complete consummation[5] *of* your *hope.* 11.

My only design in suggesting these alarming admonitions is to engage every individual among you, without any exception, to persevere in the same active faith and pious duty, and in the same kind and benevolent conduct, to the end of life, and to suffer no consideration whatever to alienate your hearts from your Christian profession, and then you may rest assured that your hopes shall in due time re-

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[5] *The complete consummation.*] Connect ενδεικνυσθαι with αχρι τελος, "show the same diligence to the end." Bengelius ap. Bowyer. εκαστον, we desire not only that *many*, but that every one of you without exception. See Peirce. "προς την πληροφοριαν της ελπιδος, *non est rectitudo, sed impletio, sive consummatio.* Col. ii. 2, 1 Thess. i. 5, 2 Tim. iv. 5." Grotius.—"*spes plena.*" Rosenmuller. "that *your* hope may be complete—*my* hope." Macknight. "the object of hope, Jesus Christ: that you may acknowledge him to the end of life." Peirce. Rather joining the construction of Bengel with the interpretation of Peirce: We desire that every one of you would show to the end of life the same diligence in the service of God, that you may ultimately obtain the object, the consummation of your hope, in your everlasting salvation.

Ch. VI. ceive their complete accomplishment, and that your highest expectations shall be greatly exceeded.

Ver. 12. *That ye be not slothful*[1], *but imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises*[2].

And my desire also is to rouse your exertions in the practice of duty, and to induce you to imitate the bright examples of your brethren in different parts of the world, who, by the exercise of persevering faith in the great doctrines of Christianity, are in actual possession of the privileges promised to the spiritual descendants of Abraham, and joyful expectants of infinitely better blessings in reversion.

6. He reminds them that it was by perseverance in faith that Abraham eventually obtained the promised blessing, ver. 13—15.

13. *Now when God made the promise*[3] *to Abraham,*

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[1] *Slothful.*] "νωθρος, tardus ad sperandum: *qui non facile sperat, sed semper dubitat: proprie,* tardus ad ambulandum: *pro homine* stupido *sumitur,* ch. v. 11." Rosenmuller.

[2] *Inherit the promises.*] Commonly understood of those who by death are supposed to be advanced to future happiness, and this text is alleged as an argument for the intermediate state. See Doddridge. I think, with Peirce, that the writer alludes to the converted Gentiles, or in general to all who were stedfast in the profession of Christianity. "He means such good Christians as had persevered in their profession of Christ, and were now in possession of what God had promised to Abraham." Sykes.

[3] *God made the promise.*] "This alludes to the promise made to Abraham, upon the occasion of his offering up Isaac, Gen. xxii. 15, 16; which was the only time when the promise to this patriarch was confirmed by an oath." Peirce.

because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Assuredly I will abundantly bless thee, and I will abundantly multiply thee. And thus Abraham having waited patiently obtained the promise[4]. Ch. VI. Ver. 14. 15.

Our pious ancestor Abraham is an eminent example of that patient perseverance in faith which I recommend to you. God commanded him to quit his native country, and promised him a posterity by Sarah in whom all nations should be blessed: he believed and obeyed. And after Isaac was born, in a season of great trial, when, as the history relates, he had shown a readiness to offer this child of promise upon the altar, as a reward of his unhesitating faith, the supreme Being bound himself by an oath to fulfill every promise he had made to his virtuous and faithful servant: and the faith of the patriarch remaining unshaken under these severe trials, he was in due time rewarded by the accomplishment of the promise; first in his own person, in the gift and preservation of his son; afterwards in a numerous progeny descending from him; and ultimately, in the innumerable multitude of his spiritual descendants, who, being the heirs of his faith, are also co-heirs with him of the divine promise.

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[4] *Obtained the promise.*] "Abraham waited with patience many years ere he could see any posterity from Isaac; but at length what was promised about the increase of his family was made good, and he obtained, not the *promises* but the *promise*, the particular promise of blessing and multiplying him, or enlarging his family: ver. 14." Sykes.

Ch. VI. 7. The promise and the oath of God are the ground of a believer's hope, ver. 16—18.

Ver. 16. *For men indeed swear by one who is greater, and to them an oath for confirmation is an end of all contradiction* [1].

Oaths amongst men are an appeal to God, the searcher of hearts and the judge of all, for the truth of a declaration; and what a man solemnly avers or promises upon oath is generally believed, and the oath silences all objection.

17. *Wherefore* [2], *God being willing very abundantly to manifest to the heirs of the promise the immutability of his counsel, included it in an oath* [3].

Thus God himself, in great condescension to human infirmity, and to our imperfect mode of conception, and in order to impress upon the minds of believers a more deep and affecting sense of the value and of the immutability of his promise, made that

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[1] *An end of contradiction.*] αντιλογιας. "That the apostle is here speaking of promissory oaths," says Dr. Whitby, "is evident from the occasion of this discourse, viz. the promise made to Abraham. Now, these oaths being equally conducive to this good end in all ages, we have just reason to believe that Christianity allows of them for these ends." "The thing promised should be unquestionably good and in our power." Peirce.

[2] *Wherefore.*] εν ω. Peirce. "in which view." Wakefield. *i. e.* δια τουτο, *quam ob causam.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Included it in an oath.*] εμεσιτευσεν ὁρκῳ. "placed his promise, as it were, in the middle of an oath." Peirce; which is the sense given by the Syriac version. "μεσ. *intervenire, et speciatim, intervenire jurejurando: interponere jusjurandum.*" Rosenmuller. "interposed an oath." Wakefield. "by an oath." Newcome; who explains it, "transacted the matter between himself and mankind."

promise the subject of an oath; and sware by his own great and venerable name that he would confer the most important blessings upon the posterity of the believing patriarch, provided that they became the heirs of his faith and expectants of the promises. Ch. VI. Ver. 17.

That by two immutable things, in which it was *impossible for God to deceive, we might have strong encouragement*[4], *who have fled for refuge*[5] *to lay hold on the hope set before us*[6]. 18.

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[4] *We might have strong encouragement.*] It is asked who are we to understand by *we?* Probably, the Hebrew believers only; for to Abraham and his posterity only was the promise made, which was confirmed by oath. And as the author is only addressing the believing Hebrews, it is not at all necessary to suppose, with Peirce, that he is speaking of Gentile converts only, or, with Sykes and others, that he includes all believers, all who are the spiritual seed of Abraham. The discourse will be more intelligible if the words are restricted to Hebrews only. They were the natural posterity of Abraham; to them, as such, was that promise made, which was confirmed by an oath; to them that promise was now fulfilled by the mission of Jesus as the Messiah, and by the new dispensation which he hath introduced, confirmed by the promise and the oath of God: he earnestly exhorts the believing Hebrews to flee for refuge both from the old and worn out dispensation which was just about to be dissolved, ch. viii. 13, and from the danger of unbelief and apostasy, which he had just described, ch. vi. 1—9.

[5] *Who have fled for refuge:*] as the man-slayer to the city of refuge from the avenger of blood, Numb. xxxv. 6, Josh. xxi. 27. See Grotius. The idea is beautifully illustrated by Dr. Doddridge: "Thither (to the hope of the gospel) let us flee for our lives; flee, as if we heard the footsteps of the avenger of blood just behind us, and our lives depended upon the speed of the present moment."

[6] *The hope set before us:*] the new dispensation, the gospel, the foundation of hope. "κρατησαι, *i. e.* εις το κρατησαι, *qui eo confugimus, ut firmiter teneamus spem nobis propositam, nempe evangelio.*" Rosenmuller. "to lay hold of Christ, who is the

Ch. VI. Ver. 18. This condescension of God, in ratifying his promise by his oath, is intended for our encouragement and consolation, who are the heirs of this precious promise. For we, lying under a sentence of condemnation by the law, and fleeing from the avenger of blood to the gospel of Jesus, as to a city of refuge, could hardly be induced to think ourselves secure if our feeble wavering hopes were not confirmed and established by the most solemn and explicit declarations of the God of eternal truth: but, relying upon his unchangeable covenant, we now banish every fear.

8. The hope of believers is now fixed upon that state of blessedness of which Jesus is gone to take possession in their name, ver. 19, 20.

19. *Which* hope *we keep fast as an anchor of the soul both steady and strong, and which also entereth within the veil*[1].

This confidence in the divine promise is an anchor, firm and strong, which will never fail, and which keeps our little bark safe and steady amidst the billows of affliction and persecution: and this hope penetrates within the veil and fixes itself upon

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hope proposed to us. Hope is here put for the object of hope." Peirce.

[1] *Entereth within the veil.*] "Hope is to the soul in the midst of temptations, what an anchor is to a ship tossed about in the sea; it is a stay upon which we may rely firm and sure; and it is what will lead us to heaven itself, that true Holy of holies which lies within the veil: *i. e.* that part of the tabernacle which was behind or within the second veil." Sykes.

the throne of God: the great object of it being a state of eternal peace and happiness in the divine presence. Ch. VI. Ver. 19.

Whither our *forerunner hath entered for us*, even *Jesus, made a high-priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedec*[2]. 20.

And this allusion to the veil of the temple, which separates the holy from the most holy place, brings me back to the subject of my discourse: for into this holy of holies, where God resides, has Jesus our forerunner already entered, as a pattern of the high honour and felicity to which his faithful followers are hereafter to be admitted; and, if I may so express it, to plead their cause and to assert their right in consequence of the gracious promise of God, and even to take possession of it in their name, in order to bestow it hereafter upon his victorious and persevering followers. Thus officiating in the double capacity of a king and a priest, after the example of his prototype Melchisedec.

III.

The writer, returning from his digression, proceeds to state at large that the dignity of Jesus, as a priest after the order of Melchisedec, is greatly superior to that of the Levitical priesthood, which institution he is therefore commissioned to supersede. Ch. vii. Ch. VII.

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[2] *Order of Melchisedec.*] "The author returns to his subject from which he had digressed. Ch. v. 11." Newcome.

Ch. VII. 1. He argues the superiority of Melchisedec to Abraham and Levi, ver. 1—10.

We have had repeated occasion to remark, in the course of this epistle, how frequently the writer rests his argument upon the ambiguity of words, and reasons from passages in the Old Testament which, in their primary sense, bear no relation to the subject of his discourse. This mode of reasoning is evidently inconclusive, and in the present enlightened age is altogether discarded; but it was admired and approved in the age when this epistle was written, and was probably well adapted to the crude conceptions and to the inveterate prejudices of the simple and illiterate Hebrews.

The paragraph which we are now about to consider is a remarkable instance of that kind of loose, allegorical, and verbal reasoning to which I allude. The design of the writer is sufficiently obvious; so likewise is the weakness and inconclusiveness of his argument.

But learned expositors having first assumed as a principle, that the epistle is under the impulse of inspiration, and then seeing that the obvious sense of the author is inconsistent with this supposition, have puzzled themselves to invent a meaning less repugnant to their groundless hypothesis: and it is curious to observe the difficulties into which they plunge themselves by their respective systems. Some have thought that the whole history of Melchisedec was an allegory; others have fancied that Melchisedec was the holy ghost, or Jesus Christ in his

pre-existent state; or some other celestial spirit, who upon this occasion appeared to Abraham; or, that he was Shem the son of Noah [1]. Whereas the truth is, that the author has taken a very plain and simple narrative from the Old Testament, and has, by a fanciful comment, strained it to his purpose of proving the superiority of Christ to Aaron, and to the whole order of Levitical priests: and it is far better to acknowledge at once that this mode of reasoning is injudicious and inconclusive, than to expose the evidences of Christianity to the scoffs of unbelievers, by first pleading for the plenary inspiration of the sacred writers, and then, in order to save their credit, annexing such a meaning to their language as every man of understanding must see to be foreign to the author's design. CH. VII.

Without therefore pretending to justify [2] the au-

[1] *Shem the son of Noah.*] This was the interpretation of the Jewish rabbis. See Whitby. That very learned and very honest writer enumerates, and thinks it worth his while to confute, these absurd suppositions.

[2] *Without pretending to justify.*] "Because the allegorical writers of the Jews," says Le Clerc, "at that time accommodated innumerable passages to the Messiah, not relying upon any grammatical interpretations, but a certain old custom of explaining the scripture after this manner, and because they interpreted Psalm cx. of the Messiah, the sacred writer makes use of that interpretation to his purpose: and because they acknowledged the Messiah ought to be like Melchisedec, he reasons against them from their own concessions, not against other men who might have denied what he affirmed. Otherwise, if the thing be considered in itself, no stronger grammatical argument can be drawn against others from that history: and therefore such things are not to be too much urged now, because that way of explaining scripture is gone out of use." See Whitby on Heb. vii. 1.

"In

Ch. VII. thor's reasoning, I shall proceed to state that reasoning as it is; but for the better understanding his meaning, I shall first introduce that very brief account of Melchisedec which is contained Gen. xiv. 18—20.

"And Melchisedec, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine, and he was priest of the most high God, and he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth, and blessed be the most high God who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hands; and Abram gave him tithes of all *the spoils*."

This is all that is said concerning this celebrated person in the Old Testament, except Psalm cx. 4, supposed to be addressed to the Messiah: "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." It is from this account that the author of the epistle draws his parallel.

1. He introduces a parabolical description of this eminent person, ver. 1—3.

Ver. 1. *For this Melchisedec*[1], *king of Salem*[2], *priest*

"In his observations upon this subject," says Dr. Priestley, "we find more of imagination than of judgement: it proceeds, however, upon such an application of the scriptures as the Jews were accustomed to, and laid much stress upon; and therefore would have weight with those to whom he wrote, as I doubt not they had with himself; but this should not prevent our judging for ourselves, and rejecting whatever does not appear to be sufficiently well founded: and there is nothing that is more open to objection than his reasoning concerning Melchisedec."

[1] *For this Melchisedec.*] Jesus is a priest after the order of

of the most high God, who met Abraham returning Ch. VII.
from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him,
to whom even Abraham divided a tenth part *of all* Ver. 2.
the spoils, *being first by interpretation king of*
righteousness, and then king of Salem also, which
is, king of peace, without recorded *father*[3] *or* 3.
mother, and without priestly *pedigree, having nei-*
ther beginning of days nor end of life[4]*, but re-*

Melchisedec. "*For* this Melchisedec resembles Christ in many respects." Newcome. "It does not appear," says Dr. Priestley, "that Melchisedec was more of a priest than Abraham was. He was a petty prince; and in these times all princes were likewise priests of their several tribes, and occasionally offered sacrifices as did Abraham."

[2] *King of Salem:*] Probably Jerusalem. See Ps. lxxvi. 2. "Jerom says, that Salem was a village near Scythopolis, where the ruins of Melchisedec's palace were still to be seen." Sykes.

[3] *Without* recorded *father.*] "Without *recorded* mother." Newcome. Elsner *Obs. Sac.* ver. 2, p. 347, shows that it was usual to apply the words απατωρ, αμητωρ, to persons whose parents were unknown; and he rightly interprets the text as expressing that the name of Melchisedec was not to be found in the genealogies of the priests. To explain the text as comparing Jesus to Melchisedec, because he had no mother in his divine nature, and no father in his human nature, is unworthy of the good sense of some expositors who have given this interpretation. See Peirce and Doddridge. Mr. Wakefield translates the passage thus: "of whose father, mother, pedigree, birth, and death, there is no account."

[4] *Neither beginning of days nor end of life.*] The priests under the law began their ministrations at thirty years of age, and ended when they were fifty. See Numb. iv. The writer means that there is no recorded limitation of Melchisedec's priesthood Mr. Peirce would render αρχην by *omnino prorsus*, and translates the text thus: "having plainly neither an end of days nor of life." He argues, that it would not be proper to say, that Melchisedec resembled the Son of God in not having a beginning of the days of his priesthood, because we certainly know when the days of the priesthood of Christ began, viz. at his resurrection. This, however, will not be universally allowed. And

Ch. VII. Ver. 3. *sembling the son of God*[1] *remaineth a priest continually.*

Having just remarked that Jesus is a perpetual high-priest after the order of Melchisedec, I proceed now to state more particularly the circumstances of resemblance: and in recurring to the brief history of this distinguished character in the book of Genesis, you may observe that he was both a king and a priest, and that his very name and titles express that he was a righteous and a peaceful prince; he blessed Abraham and received tithes from him; he had no title to his office by descent and pedigree; and as there is no report either of his birth or death, this eminent person, to whom we have compared the son of God, may be figuratively regarded as a living and perpetual priest: at least, as no account is given of any successor to him in office, we may presume that he had none.

2. The writer argues the superiority of Melchisedec to Abraham, ver. 4—7.

4. *Now consider how great this man* was[2], *to whom*

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it is sufficient for the writer's purpose that Melchisedec had no antecedent and no successor.

[1] *Resembling the Son of God.*] The eighth verse is a commentary upon this clause. Nothing is said of Melchisedec's death: therefore we may suppose him alive, that he is still exercising his office, and that no one is to succeed him.

[2] *Consider how great this man* was.] The superiority of Melchisedec to Abraham is here inferred from his taking tithes of him. "But though," says Dr. Priestley in his note upon ver. 1, "Abraham gave Melchisedec a tenth of the spoils which he had recovered from the kings whom he had defeated, it does not

even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth part *of the spoils.* Ch. VII. Ver. 4.

If he who receives the tribute is greater in office and higher in dignity than he who pays it, you must acknowledge the superiority of Melchisedec even to Abraham our great and honoured ancestor.

And indeed those of the sons of Levi who receive the priesthood, have authority[3] *under the law to take tithes of the people, that is, of their own brethren, though sprung from the stock of Abraham; but he whose pedigree*[4] *is not* reckoned *from them, received tithes from Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. Now, without all contradiction, the inferior is blessed by the superior*[5]. 5. 6. 7.

Those descendants of Levi who hold the priestly office, namely the posterity of Aaron, are authorized by the law of Moses to receive tithes, and thus are elevated to an official superiority over their brethren, descended from the same ancestor, the patriarch Abraham: and they claim their dues upon the ground of their descent from the stock of Aaron. But Melchisedec had no such pedigree to plead,

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appear that he gave it with any religious view, or as any thing which was due to him. It was perhaps to indemnify him for what he had suffered from the incursions of those kings."

[3] *Authority.*] " εντολην, *permission.* John x. 18, Matt. xix. 7, 8, compared with Mark x. 4, 5." Peirce.

[4] *Whose pedigree.*] " whose genealogy is not reckoned from the same stock with them." Newcome.

[5] *The inferior by the superior.*] το ελαττον for ὁ ελαττων, *the less by the greater.* See John vi. 37. " He who blesses is supposed to be in higher favour with God." Newcome. " Though Pharaoh was blessed by Jacob, the superiority of the patriarch consisted in nothing more than his greater age." Priestley.

Ch. VII. Ver. 7. and yet he received tithes from Abraham himself, our great progenitor. And what still more strongly proves the superiority of his rank, he even pronounced a blessing upon him, upon the very man to whom the promise was made, *that in him all nations should be blessed:* and Abraham himself submitted to be blessed by Melchisedec; and thus, as all will allow, acknowledged in that royal priest an official superiority. For it is the superior that pronounces, and the inferior that receives, the blessing.

3. The superiority of Melchisedec is further argued from his being represented as a living priest, ver. 8.

8. *And in one case men who die receive tithes, but in the other he* received them, *concerning whom it is testified that he liveth*[1].

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[1] *He liveth.*] *i. e.* nothing is mentioned in the history of Melchisedec concerning his death. "The difference here considered is, that of men who *die*, and of one of whom it is witnessed that he *liveth*. Men that die have their successors, to whom tithes are paid: but Melchisedec is not said to have any successor; but himself to continue a priest for ever. So much then as a priest for ever is superior to a successive priesthood, so much must that of Melchisedec excel that of Aaron." Sykes.

It is not to be supposed that the author of the epistle was so weak as to believe that Melchisedec never died, and that he was, at the time when the epistle was written, a living priest; but he ingeniously seizes upon every circumstance, and every expression, in the brief history of that eminent person, which can by any means be twisted so as to serve his purpose of illustrating the superiority of the priesthood of Melchisedec, which is that of the Messiah, to the priesthood of Aaron, which is that of the law.

It is observable that the writer speaks of the Jewish priests as at *that time* receiving tithes; and that here, and upon all

The priests, the descendants of Aaron, are dying men, and the priesthood is transmitted from generation to generation: but Melchisedec has no successor: he appears in the history as a living priest; and though there can be no doubt that he died many ages ago, yet, as he is represented in the history as a living man, and no mention is made of his death, we may take advantage of this circumstance in explaining the similitude, and may in our imaginations conceive of Melchisedec as exercising an immortal priesthood. Ch. VII. Ver. 8.

4. Melchisedec's superiority is further argued, as the Levitical priests themselves, who received tithes, virtually paid tithes to him, ver. 9, 10.

And, if I may use the expression[2], *even Levi, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes through Abraham,* 9.

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occasions, he, without any affectation, alludes to the temple service as then existing; which is a proof that the epistle was written in the apostolic age, and though not penned by Paul, the style proving the contrary, was probably written by an apostolic man, and contains apostolic doctrine, though shrouded and obscured by allegorical interpretations and inconclusive reasonings.

[2] *If I may use the expression.*] ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν, "in a manner." Wakefield. He softens the harsh expression of Levi paying tithes before he was born, by a qualifying clause equivalent to the Latin phrase *ut ita dicam*. Grotius and Raphelius *in loc.* If there was any validity in the argument, it would prove, as has been often observed, that Melchisedec was superior to Christ as well as to Levi. See Whitby on the place, who guards against the conclusion which some are disposed to draw, that all the posterity of Adam sinned in him, as being in the loins of Adam when he sinned.

Ch. VII. Ver. 10. *for he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchisedec met* Abraham.

I will mention another argument in favour of the superiority of Melchisedec to Aaron and his descendants; but I do not indeed profess to lay any great stress upon it. Isaac was not begotten when Abraham paid tithes; and therefore all the descendants of Abraham by Isaac, and consequently Levi and all his posterity, including the priests of the house of Aaron, who are themselves the receivers of tithes according to the law, may be considered as having paid tithes in the person of their great progenitor: thus virtually acknowledging the superiority of the order of Melchisedec to that of Aaron, and consequently the superior dignity of the priesthood of Christ to that of the descendants of Levi.

II. The writer infers, from the premises which he has advanced, that the Levitical dispensation is to be superseded, and a new dispensation to be introduced under the direction of a superior priesthood, ver. 11—28.

1. The Levitical dispensation is to be superseded, ver. 11—19.

1.) He draws this conclusion from the change which is to take place in the nature and character of the priesthood itself, ver. 11, 12.

11. *Now if perfection*[1] *were* to be obtained *by the*

[1] *If perfection.*] The word τελειωσις only occurs once more

Levitical priesthood, concerning which[2] *the people received a law, what further need* was there *that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchisedec, and that he should not be called according*[3] *to the order of Aaron? For if the priesthood be changed, there is of necessity a change of the law also*[4]. Ch. VII. Ver. 11. 12.

If the promise which had been made to our great ancestor Abraham, that all the families of the earth should be blessed in him, could have been accomplished by the ministry of the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who were instituted agreeably to the

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in the New Testament, viz. Luke i. 45. It is there used in the sense of the fulfilment of prophecy, and is translated, There shall be performance of those things which were told her. The word is probably used in the same sense in the present connexion. *q. d.* "If a full accomplishment of the things promised had been made by the Levitical priesthood, there would have been no need of any other priesthood to come after it." Peirce.

[2] *Concerning which.*] επ' αυτη. See this translation vindicated by Peirce. It was an observation of little moment, and indeed hardly consistent with truth, that the law was given under the Levitical priesthood; but it was of great importance to remark, that the law concerning the priesthood was so interwoven with the whole Mosaic institute, that one could not subsist without the other: so that, to supersede the priesthood was to abolish the law.

[3] *And not according.*] Mill and Wakefield reject the last clause of the eleventh verse upon the authority of the Æthiopic version, "but evidently without reason," says Dr. Owen, *ap.* Bowyer.

[4] *There is of necessity a change of the law.*] "How does this follow? The truth is, so much of the law concerns the priesthood immediately, all their sacrifices, purifications, the great day of atonement, and the temple service, that, supposing these to be set aside or abolished, their law itself may properly be said to be changed." Sykes.

Ch. VII. Ver. 12. laws given by Moses concerning them, there would surely have been no occasion for the introduction of a priesthood of a different order, with different offices, privileges, and powers. There must have been some singularly important reason why the inspired Psalmist should have announced the future appointment of a priest after the order of Melchisedec, rather than that of Aaron. For you cannot but observe that the necessary consequence of a change in the nature and functions of the sacerdotal office is the abrogation of the whole Mosaic institution; the very being of which depends upon the continuation of an order of priests similar to that which was originally appointed by Moses. So that a prophecy of the change of the priesthood is in effect a notice from the highest authority that the law itself would be repealed.

2.) The argument is further corroborated by the consideration, that this predicted priest was not to be of the Aaronic family, but of a different tribe, ver. 13, 14.

13. *Moreover, he of whom*[1] *these things are spoken belongeth to another tribe, out of which no one gave*
14. *attendance at the altar. For* it was *plain of old*[2]

[1] *He of whom.*] ἐφ' ὃν for περὶ ὃ. *q. d.* the high-priest, of whom these things are spoken: see ver. 6. Dr. Owen *apud* Bowyer.

[2] It was *plain of old.*] Mr. Peirce justifies this sense of the word προδηλον, as distinguished from καταδηλον in the next verse. Mr. Wakefield also adopts it, and mentions it as the interpretation given by the Æthiopic translator.

that our Lord was to spring[3] *out of Judah*[4], *with respect to which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood.* Ch. VII. Ver. 14.

A change of the functions of the priestly office must have involved in it a change of the law; but the scriptures foretell not only a change of the functions, but even of the family of the priests: for you cannot but admit, as our whole nation doth, that the cxth Psalm is a prophecy of the Messiah. Now it is allowed by all that the Messiah was to descend from the tribe of Judah and from the family of David, who were by law prohibited from exercising any of the functions of the priestly office. But the existence of the Mosaic institute depends upon the continuance of the family of Aaron, for the law makes no provision for a succession of priests if that line should fail[5]. The prophecy, therefore,

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[3] *Was to spring.*] ανατεταλκε, *was to spring:* this is Mr. Wakefield's translation, which the connexion requires. "Grammarians observe, that the preterperfect is sometimes used for the present." Peirce.

[4] *Out of Judah.*] That the Messiah was to descend from the tribe of Judah was inferred from the prophecy of Jacob, Gen. xlix. 10. That he was expected to be the descendant of David, who was of the tribe of Judah, is also apparent from Matt. xxii. 42, Luke xx. 41.

[5] *The law made no provision for a succession of priests.*] This is a remarkable fact, and a presumptive evidence of the consciousness of the divine authority under which the Jewish lawgiver acted. After the death of Nadab and Abihu, Aaron had but two sons left, Eleazar and Ithamar; and as the whole Jewish polity depended upon the continuance of the priesthood, a person who had legislated upon the principles of human prudence only, would have made some provision for a succession of priests, if the line of Aaron should fail.

Ch. VII. Ver. 14. which foretells the transfer of the priestly office into another family, does in effect announce the abolition of the law of Moses.

3.) This conclusion is further strengthened by the prediction of the perpetuity of that priest, who was the object of the prophecy, ver. 15—17.

15. *And this is still far more evident, if another priest ariseth*[1], *according to the similitude of Mel-*
16. *chisedec; who becometh such, not according to the law of a carnal*[2] *commandment, but according to*
17. *the power of an indissoluble life. For* the scripture *testifieth,* " *Thou* art *a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedec.*"

There is another circumstance which proves the abolition of the Mosaic institute still more strongly than any which I have already mentioned. Whether Melchisedec himself be alive or dead, it is evi-

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[1] *If another priest ariseth.*] εἰ, *if.* Owen *apud* Bowyer, Whitby, Peirce, and Newcome, give εἰ the sense of ὅτι, *that,* or *because.* With Sykes, I adhere to its usual sense *if, q. d.* " it is still more evident that the law must be changed *if* a priest ariseth who is never to die, but to live for ever."

[2] *Carnal.*] σαρκινης. Griesbach. The law concerning the priesthood is called a carnal commandment, because the priests who were appointed by it were frail and dying men; whereas that which appointed Jesus as high-priest was a law which supposed the person so appointed, to possess immortal life and vigour, for it ordains him to be an everlasting priest. See Peirce, and Macknight, and Whitby. " A carnal commandment is opposed to the power of an indissoluble life. A carnal commandment, therefore, is a law which concerns the flesh that dies: whereas a priesthood for ever, does not depend upon flesh, which in the common course of things soon comes to an end." Sykes.

dent that the person typified by him, and who was to be appointed a priest, according to his similitude and order, is not like the priests of the line of Aaron, constituted by a law which supposes the priest to be a frail and dying man, and which provides successors accordingly, but by an edict which implies that he should possess immortal life and energy. For this is the strain of the prophetic declaration, this is the language of the salutation addressed to him by Jehovah: "Thou art an everlasting priest, according to the order of Melchisedec." Ch. VII. Ver. 17.

4.) The incompetency of the Mosaic ritual is a further and sufficient reason for its abrogation, ver. 18, 19.

There is, therefore, an abolition[3] *of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, (for the law made nothing perfect*[4]*,)* 18. 19.

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[3] *There is an abolition.*] The opposition does not lie between the two clauses of ver. 19, as is commonly supposed, but between that and ver. 18, including the clause *for the law made nothing perfect* in a parenthesis, and γινεται being understood. Peirce says, the construction seems to have been mistaken by all commentators. This construction is adopted by Estius, Bengelius, Markland (see Bowyer), Newcome, Wakefield.

[4] *The law made nothing perfect.*] "The apostle," says Dr. Sykes, "teaches that the law made *nothing*, i. e. *no man*, perfect: he considers it as what it was, instituted for temporal purposes; and consequently unfit and unable to attain the ends which the Jews expected from it. They expected to be justified by God by their observance of the law. No, says the apostle, the law did not propose to make the observers perfect; and therefore the Hebrews ought to recur to Christ." "The law was unfit and unable to make the priesthood perfect, for it made

Ch. VII. Ver. 19. *but an introduction of a better hope*[1] *by which we draw near to God*[2].

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nothing perfect, and if it made nothing perfect it could not make the priesthood so, or confer the advantages to be expected from the office." Peirce.

Neither of these ingenious and learned expositors appears to me to have correctly apprehended the writer's meaning. Addressing the Hebrews upon their own principles, he argues the superiority of the new covenant by Christ, over the old one introduced by Moses; and contrasts the perfection of the priesthood of Christ, with the imperfection of that of Aaron. Both covenants agree in this, that no provision is made for the wilful transgressor. The soul that sinneth it shall die, is the language of the old covenant. And if a man sin wilfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, is the doctrine of the new.

But under the law there were many ways by which a person contracted ceremonial pollution, such as touching a dead body and the like, for recovery from which, provision was made by certain sacrifices and ablutions, by which they were restored to ceremonial purity: but the neglect of which excluded them from the pale and privileges of the commonwealth of Israel. Now it is obvious that many of these ceremonial pollutions might be contracted through inadvertence unknown to the parties themselves; and in the course of a year there would hardly be a single individual Israelite who had not through inadvertence forfeited his privileges as a member of the community of Israel. To obviate this calamity the annual day of atonement was appointed, for sins of ignorance only, Heb. ix. 7, when the high-priest entered into the holy of holies, and sprinkled the blood of the victim before the mercy-seat, after having made a confession of the sins of the people, and having laid his hand upon the head of the scape-goat, which was afterwards sent into the wilderness as a symbol that the sins so atoned were done away: while the sprinkling of the blood indicated that the covenant was renewed, and the congregation reconsecrated. See Lev. xvi. This institution, however, was imperfect, for, 1. It required annual repetition. 2. The priest was obliged to offer a sacrifice annually for himself as well as for the people. 3. The priest was mortal, and the office successive.

In all these views the new covenant greatly excelled the old. 1. The one sacrifice of Christ was equal to all the sacrifices of

The arguments which I have advanced plainly prove, notwithstanding the strong prepossession of Ch. VII. Ver. 19.

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the law: it consecrated both himself and his followers once for all, so that under the new dispensation there are no ceremonial pollutions, no sins of ignorance; but the individual who is once admitted into the Christian community can never be excluded from it but by his own voluntary transgression. 2. The high-priest is perfect, and being once consecrated is consecrated for ever. 3. He is immortal, and being at the right hand of God in heaven, he is ever present in the celestial holy of holies, interceding, that is, officiating as a priest in the most holy place, so that the benefit of his redemption extends to every believer through every age.

In this manner the author of this epistle carries on a very ingenious parallel between the Aaronic priesthood and the priesthood of Christ, to the great advantage of the latter, in order to soften the prejudices of his Hebrew readers: all the while meaning nothing more than that the dispensation introduced by Christ relieves those who yield obedience to it from the yoke, the ceremonies and the sacrifices of the law, that it requires nothing but the practice of virtue, and is intended to last for ever.

With this key, if I mistake not, it will be easy to understand the scope, the reasonings, and the allusions of this writer, and to see how little foundation this celebrated epistle lays for the modern unscriptural doctrine of atonement, of which it is thought to be the main support, and upon which many lay such an unwarrantable stress.

[1] *An introduction of a better hope.*] The new dispensation is here called a better hope, because it leads us to hope for that perfection which the law could not reach: a perfect priest, a perfect service, an immutable and everlasting covenant, from the blessings of which nothing can exclude but wilful disobedience.

[2] *By which we draw near to God.*] Under this new covenant we have access to God, as reconciled through his son. All our past ceremonial and legal offences are forgiven: with the true Israel of God we are admitted into the holy place, where we take our stand as acceptable and approved worshipers, separated from the unholy and unclean: no longer needing an annual atonement for legal transgression, but continually abiding in the love and favour of God, unless we exclude ourselves by actual transgression.

Ch. VII. Ver. 19. our nation to the contrary, that the dispensation of Moses is to be abrogated and annulled by the superior dispensation of the Messiah: and it is fit that it should be so; for the dispensation of rites and ceremonies was not able to fulfill the elevated expectations which the promises of God to our pious ancestors, and particularly to Abraham, justly excite. I have shown that the Levitical priesthood is imperfect and inadequate to the desired end. And no wonder, for the law could make nothing perfect; and though it answered a temporary purpose, and was partially beneficial, it fell far short, both in extent and in degree, of the complete accomplishment of the promise. This dispensation therefore is justly set aside, and a new œconomy is introduced, which lays a foundation for better hopes, and will be productive of far more extensive and durable blessings: this is the dispensation of which Christ is the head, by which not merely a separate and privileged order of men, but all believers, without distinction, are admitted into the sanctuary of God, and are encouraged to approach the throne of mercy. In conformity to the institutions of this new and liberal dispensation, we now regulate our modes of worship, and by its merciful declarations we are authorized to regard the great object of our religious homage as a reconciled God, a father and a friend, from whose favour nothing can separate us but our own voluntary transgression.

2. The great superiority of Jesus, the high-priest

of the new dispensation, is illustrated and established, ver. 20—28. Ch. VII. Ver. 19.

1.) He was inaugurated with an oath, ver. 20—22.

Moreover, inasmuch as he was *not* made a high-priest *without an oath, (for they indeed were made priests without an oath, but this with an oath, by him who said to him, The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou* art *a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec,) by so much was Jesus made the surety* [1] *of a more excellent covenant* [2]. 20. 21. 22.

Having proved, from premises which cannot be controverted, that the Jewish scriptures themselves

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[1] *The surety.*] εγγυος, a *sponsor*, or *surety:* this is the only place in which the word occurs in the New Testament. The priests under the Mosaic covenant were sureties that God would perform his promises to the Jews, because they offered those sacrifices which were the appointed ratification of the divine promise. Jesus is the surety of the new covenant, because his blood ratifies the promises of it. See Peirce.

[2] *More excellent covenant.*] διαθηκη, a *covenant*, the usual sense of the word improperly rendered *testament*. The Mosaic dispensation was the old covenant, in which the contracting parties were God and the Jewish nation: the promise of the covenant was the possession of Palestine: the conditions of the contract were, abstaining from idolatry and obedience to the ceremonial law: the sanction and seal of the covenant was the blood of the victims.

The Christian dispensation is the new covenant, in which God and believers are the contracting parties: the promise of the covenant is a resurrection to immortality: the conditions of this covenant are faith and obedience: the mediator and surety of the covenant is Jesus Christ, and the sanction and seal of it is his blood shed upon the cross. "The reasoning is," says Dr. Sykes, "the more solemn and awful the manner is in which any one is appointed to his office, the more important is the office."

Ch. VII. Ver. 22. announce the abolition of the institution of Moses, and the introduction of another and better order of things, I now advance to state, upon grounds equally satisfactory, that Jesus, the high-priest of this new dispensation, sustains an office of far greater dignity than any of the priests, the descendants of Aaron: and my first argument is taken from the superior solemnity with which Jesus was inaugurated into his sacred office. It cannot indeed be denied that Aaron and his posterity were, by divine direction, selected and consecrated to exercise the office of priests under the Mosaic institution: and this was no doubt a very solemn designation. But the solemnity with which Jesus was publicly announced to this high and holy office was far superior: for when the inspired psalmist foretells the priesthood of the Messiah, he declares, in the name of God, that this appointment is confirmed and ratified by the immutable oath of God himself. And as the appointment of the priesthood under the Mosaic dispensation was a proof and pledge of the mercy of God to his chosen people, and of his willingness to maintain a gracious intercourse with them, and to fulfill his promises to them, so is the appointment of Jesus, the true Messiah, as the high-priest of the new dispensation, a pledge of the faithfulness of God to that covenant of mercy into which all believers are now introduced, and of the full accomplishment of all the great and precious promises contained in it: and the superior solemnity of his inauguration proves a proportionable superiority

both in the importance of its blessings, and in the dignity of him who is the pledge and surety of its promises. Ch. VII. Ver. 22.

Observe here, 1. That the gospel dispensation is called a covenant, an engagement between two contracting parties, and not a testament, or will, to which it is difficult to annex any distinct idea. In this covenant God promises to all who believe, eternal life, as the reward of faithful obedience. This is a notion which the author here introduces incidentally, and upon which he afterwards insists at large.

2. Of this covenant Jesus is the surety: not as though the promise of God could not be credited without the addition of human security, much less can it be supposed that the writer means to insinuate, as some strangely maintain, that Jesus is surety for the sinner's debt, or a substitute to bear the divine wrath in the sinner's stead: but Jesus is the surety of the gospel covenant, first, because his mission is a proof and pledge of the divine mercy; and secondly, because his death was the seal, or solemn ratification, of the evangelical promise. This is the topic upon which the writer enlarges in the succeeding chapters.

2.) The priesthood of Christ is perpetual, ver. 23—25.

And those priests indeed were many, because they were hindered from continuing by death; but 23. 24.

Ch. VII. Ver. 25. *he, because he continueth for ever, retaineth the priesthood without succession*[1]: *whence also he is able to save completely*[2] *those who approach to God through him, as he ever liveth to intercede for them*[3].

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[1] *Without succession.*] ἀπαράβατον, "a priesthood that does never pass from one to another. The Aaronical priests were many and successive; but our high-priest, by reason of his continuance for ever, exercises an unchangeable priesthood. This is another reason for the superior excellence of the Christian covenant." Sykes.

[2] *To save completely.*] σωζειν εις το παντελες, παν τελος εχων —εις παντελες, *prorsus, perfectè, plenè, consummatè, omnino.*" Schleusner. "Christ living for ever himself could save for ever them that came to God through him. Παντελες always signifies *completely.*" Sykes.

The writer is here running a parallel between the functions of the Aaronic high-priest and Jesus Christ the high-priest of our profession, in order to show the great superiority of the latter. The Aaronic priests, in their successive generations, on the day of atonement sanctified the people, and restored to the commonwealth of Israel those who had forfeited their privileges by sins of ignorance: ch. ix. 7. Christ is an immortal high-priest; he ever lives to save completely those who approach to God through him. Believers in the gospel are saved through Christ; by faith in him they are rescued from the bondage of idolatry and vice, and from the condemning sentence of the law. They *draw near to God* through him: they become a holy people, admitted to worship in the holy place; separated by their profession from the unbelieving world. If they apostatize, they are turned out of the sanctuary into the congregation of unbelievers, and delivered over to Satan: but if they do not wilfully transgress, nothing can exclude them from the new covenant. Under the law, sins of ignorance excluded from the Mosaic covenant; to the blessings of which they were restored by the offices of the high-priest on the day of atonement. Not so under the gospel: no sins of ignorance, no involuntary violations of ritual precepts, exclude from the new covenant. Christ has completely saved his disciples from all lapses of this kind; and as he lives for ever, so the benefits of his salvation extend to all his followers to the end of time.

[3] *He ever liveth to intercede for them.*] εντυγχανω is a word

The descendants of Aaron were frail and mortal, and provision was made for the transmission of Ch. VII. Ver. 25.

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of very general import. It signifies *to interpose* in any way, either ὑπερ *for*, or κατα *against*, another. See Sykes. Mr. Wakefield renders it, "to manage their concerns for them." He refers to Epictetus, sect. 40, and to Heb. ix. 24; and observes, "there is no need of authorities to establish this sense of the word. It is applied to Christ only twice in the New Testament, here and Rom. viii. 34; and upon the slender foundation of these two texts is built the modern and popular doctrine of Christ's intercession, and pleading with the Father the merits of his blood and righteousness: a doctrine upon which many lay a mighty stress, though it is no where to be found in scripture.

I have ventured to use the word *intercede*, taking it in the sense of a learned writer in the *Commentaries and Essays*, vol. ii. p. 265; viz. "to officiate, to discharge the office of a high-priest on their behalf." The Jewish high-priest on the day of atonement was to sprinkle the blood of the victim upon, and before, the mercy-seat. See Lev. xvi. 19. He was not instructed to offer any prayer or to utter a word. By this action he *interceded, interposed*, did all that God required for the people, and they were *atoned, reconciled, restored* to covenant, which they had lost by sins of ignorance. But Christ is the Christian high-priest, who is passed into the heavens to the right hand of God, into the holy of holies; where he appears, not like the Jewish high-priest for a short time, once in a year, but continually and for ever. And by this appearance alone, without any verbal address or any external act, he *intercedes;* and accomplishes that purpose completely, and for ever, which the Jewish high-priest effected on the day of atonement only, viz. preserving a memorial, that all legal offences had ceased, and that nothing but their own voluntary apostasy can exclude his followers from the privileges of the covenant.

Not that any thing real, or virtual, is said or done by the Christian high-priest; or that our Lord ever, properly speaking, performs the office of high-priest at all, any more than he sustains the character of a shepherd, a householder, or a husbandman. Nothing of this sort occurs in any other portion of the Christian scriptures, and here it is only introduced metaphorically by this ingenious but unknown writer; who pursues the figure as far as it will bear, for no other purpose than to reconcile the Hebrew believers to the offensive doctrine of a crucified Messiah.

Ch. VII. Ver. 25. their office from generation to generation: but the priest who is solemnly introduced as invested with an office similar to that of Melchisedec, is at the same time announced as one who was to exercise a perpetual priesthood. Nor is any provision made for a successor to him in office, nor any notice given of the introduction of a succeeding dispensation. Such a priest is Jesus: being raised from the dead, he lives for ever: to him therefore no successor is nominated; and to the end of time all who are as it were introduced by him into the sanctuary of God, shall derive from him all the blessings which in his sacerdotal capacity he is authorized to confer; because he is already in the most holy place, where he will ever be engaged in the duties of his sacred office. In other words, since Christ is risen from the dead, and ascended to the right hand of God, the law of ceremonies is superseded, sins of ignorance are abolished, sacrifices and days of expiation are unnecessary, the office of a priest is superfluous, every thing which the law requires may be considered as accomplished in Jesus; and no believer to the end of time can ever be excluded from the benefits of the new dispensation but by his own voluntary act, by wilful presumptuous transgression.

3.) The qualifications of Jesus for the sacerdotal office are peculiar and transcendant, ver. 26—28.

26. *For such a high-priest suited us*[1], *who is holy,*

[1] *Such a high-priest suited us.*] " επρεπε, conveniebat, talem

harmless, unpolluted, separate from sinners[2], *and raised above the heavens*[3]. Ch. VII. Ver. 26.

The gospel dispensation being so much superior to that of Moses, required the ministrations of a superior high-priest; and such is that exalted high-priest whom God has appointed for us: eminent for his moral virtues as well as for his sacerdotal qualifications; pious towards God; benevolent to men; exempt from all ceremonial impurity; separated from the unholy and unbelieving world; set apart for the service of the spiritual sanctuary, and admitted into heaven itself, the most holy place, the immediate presence of God.

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pontificem nobis dari: necessarius nobis erat talis pontifex maximus." Rosenmuller. "became us." Public Version. "was proper for us." Wakefield. The superior dignity of the dispensation required a proportionate superiority in its chief officer.

[2] *Holy, harmless, unpolluted, separate from sinners.*] *holy,* ὁσιος, not ἁγιος. It expresses a moral quality, not a separation to the service of God. "*pious, merciful.*" Peirce. *Harmless,* ακακος. "If the former character be understood to express his respect to God, this may import his innocence towards men." Peirce. *Unpolluted,* αμιαντος. "This is analogous to what was prescribed for the high-priests under the old law; who were above all others to avoid legal defilements, and more especially on the great day of expiation, when they were to go into the most holy place." Peirce.—"*Qui non tantum pollutus non fuerit istis contaminationibus externis, sed nec ullo vitio.*" Rosenmuller. *Separate from sinners.* Free from all sin, ceremonial and moral: completely sanctified, and dedicated to God.

[3] *Raised above the heavens.*] "exalted above the angels." Peirce. But surely there can be no doubt that the writer alludes to what he had said a little before, ch. iv. 14, where he speaks of Christ as having passed into the heavens, as the high-priest into the most holy place.

Ch. VII. Ver. 26. The writer means nothing more than that Jesus is fully qualified for the office to which he is appointed; but in order to accommodate himself to the prejudices of the Jewish Christians, he uses language expressive of the qualifications of a Jewish high-priest, not meaning to be taken in a strict literal sense.

27. *Who needeth not from time to time* [1], *like those high-priests* [2], *first to offer sacrifices for his own sins, and after that for those of the people, for this he did once for all* [3], *when he offered up himself.*

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[1] *From time to time.*] καθ' ἡμέραν, *daily, from time to time.* The word is indefinite, and often used for time. The expression is equivalent to κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν (ch. x. 1.), *every year.* The day of atonement came but once a year. Peirce, Sykes.

[2] *Like those high-priests.*] The duty of the high-priest on the day of atonement is described Levit. xvi.; where he is required, first to offer a sacrifice for his own sins, and then for those of the people. But it was only for ceremonial pollution and sins of ignorance, not for voluntary transgressions. This is expressly stated Heb. ix. 7.

[3] *This he did once for all.*] τοῦτο γὰρ ἐποίησεν. This text has greatly puzzled the commentators; and is indeed, when rightly understood, a complete refutation of the popular doctrine of the *atonement:* viz. that Christ died to expiate, or make atonement, or offer satisfaction, or appease the wrath of the Father for the sins, the moral offences of mankind. THIS HE DID once for all: What? The construction plainly requires, that the antecedent should be, '*he offered sacrifice first for* HIS OWN SINS, and after that for those of the people.' So Grotius: "*Videtur hic et supra dici* c. v. 3. *Christus quoque obtulisse non sæpius quidem, sed semel pro peccatis non populi tantum, sed et* SUIS." So Crellius: "*Principaliter hic de oblatione pro* ipsius pontificis peccatis *agi, ex superioribus, ipsoque rationum contextu manifestum est.*" To avoid, however, the shock which it would naturally give to the feelings of those who did not understand the author's meaning, and indeed in perfect consistency with their own mistaken views of the subject, most of the commentators introduce an exceptive clause, unwarranted by the text. So

You know that the high-priest every year, upon the day of atonement, first offers a sacrifice for his Ch. VII. Ver. 27.

So Peirce expounds the passage, "Who has no need, like the priests under the law, from time to time to offer up sacrifice first for his own sins, and after that for the people's. For this latter he did once for all, when he offered up himself; and as to the former, he had no occasion to do it at all." So also Sykes: "He had no sins of his own, and therefore could not offer for them." And Doddridge: "of the former of these he never had need, nor could there be any room for it: and this last he did once for all." See also Whitby, Rosenmuller, &c. And, no doubt, if the writer of the epistle had entertained the same ideas of the doctrine of the atonement which these learned and pious expositors did, he would have made the same reserve; whereas, as Crellius justly remarks, the context plainly points out the sins of the high-priest as the principal object.

In what sense, then, can it justly be said that Christ "offered up a sacrifice for his own sins?" It is universally agreed, that Christ in his moral character was sinless: it is impossible, therefore, that he should have offered sacrifice for his own moral offences, for he had none. Grotius and Crellius, by *the sins of Christ* understand his sufferings, which were terminated by his death: but this interpretation, unnatural in itself, is successfully opposed by Whitby. The plain interpretation is, that the sins of Christ were merely ceremonial, such as the high-priest was accustomed to expiate on the day of atonement: ch. ix. 7. Our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood: ver. 14. He was, therefore, as to the priesthood, in an unconsecrated state; that is, ceremonially a sinner. And as Aaron was consecrated to his priestly office by the blood of animal sacrifices, so Christ was consecrated to his nobler office by his own blood. In this sense he offered a sacrifice for his own sins. This way of representing the death of Christ was adapted to conciliate the prejudices of the Hebrew Christians. Also, as the posterity of Aaron were successively removed by death (ver. 23), successive priests were consecrated by successive sacrifices. But Christ lives for ever, a consecrated priest, and has no successor. Further, priests under the law were subject to infirmity, and might desecrate themselves by ceremonial pollution and inadvertent acts: ver. 28. It was necessary, therefore, that they should be reconsecrated by daily and by annual sacrifices; but Christ being in-

Ch. VII. Ver. 27.

own involuntary transgressions, by which he has ceremonially desecrated his character and disqualified himself for his office: and after this service he offers another sacrifice for the involuntary transgressions of the people, by which they have excluded themselves from the privileges of the Mosaic covenant:

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capable of ceremonial desecration, his one sacrifice is sufficient. He is now perfect for ever.

And, let it be remarked, IN THE VERY SAME SENSE in which Christ offered a sacrifice for his own sins, in that very sense did he offer sacrifice for the sins of the people. There is no distinction. But the sins of Christ were not moral, but ceremonial: the contrary supposition is absurd. Such, then, and no other, are those sins of the people for which Christ offered a sacrifice; like his own, they are not moral, but ceremonial. No sacrifices are appointed for moral offences, either under the old dispensation or the new; no atonement, no appeasing of divine wrath, no satisfaction to offended justice. But as Christ by his one sacrifice consecrated himself for ever, transferred himself from a ceremonially unholy to a ceremonially holy state; so, exactly in the same way, those who believe the gospel are by the sacrifice of Christ made ceremonially pure. From sinners they become saints; they are transferred from the community of unbelievers and enemies to that of believers who are reconciled to God; and from this holy community nothing can exclude them but wilful apostasy, voluntary transgression: and for these no sacrifice is provided.

What the writer means is this: that as Aaron and his sons were consecrated to the priestly office by sprinkling of the real blood of the animal victim, Lev. viii. 30: so converts to the gospel are consecrated to God by the figurative application of the blood of Christ; and he gives this view of the purpose of the death of Christ, merely to reconcile the minds of the Hebrews to a fact, to them the most mortifying that could possibly be conceived, the crucifixion of the Messiah.

"We have been directed," says Dr. Priestley, "to a variety of circumstances as implying the superiority of the priesthood of Jesus to that of Aaron: but it is only by way of figure that he can be said to be a priest at all; being in reality no more a priest than he was a door or a vine, or any thing else to which he is occasionally compared."

and thus, according to the divine appointment, they become reinstated in their forfeited charter. But the high-priest of the new dispensation is under no such degrading obligation. Being indeed of the tribe of Judah he was ceremonially unholy, and therefore needed a rite of consecration to his priestly office. This rite was his own death: the voluntary sacrifice of himself has consecrated him for ever to the service of God, and, as he cannot again contract ceremonial impurity, he can never need another sacrifice of consecration. The same observation may be applied to all believers. Being consecrated to God by faith in Jesus, while they continue to believe they need no stated renewals of their covenant obligation. Till they exclude themselves by apostasy, or voluntary transgression, they remain the holy servants of God, entitled to all the privileges of the Christian community. Ch. VII. Ver. 27.

This, I doubt not, is the true sense in which the author uses the harsh expression that Jesus offered up a sacrifice for his own sins. Jesus was the holiest of the human race; and this the writer expressly declares. The sins therefore for which he offered a sacrifice were those ceremonial disqualifications which were inconsistent with the office of high-priest. These he represents as removed by his death, in order to accommodate himself to the notions of the Jews, who thought that no person or thing could be consecrated without shedding of blood.

Ch. VII. Ver. 27. Observe further, that in the very same sense in which Jesus is said to have offered sacrifice for his own sins, in that identical sense he offered sacrifice for the sins of the people: and that is not in a moral but in a ceremonial sense. He was descended from Judah and not from Levi, and therefore was ceremonially unclean, in the eye of the law a sinner; and, figuratively speaking, he was consecrated by his own blood. And the Mosaic law being now abrogated, Jews and Gentiles are all equally in an unholy uncovenanted state, that is, in a legal sense, sinners. The blood of Jesus ratified the new covenant, and all who believe become thereby ceremonially holy: they are introduced into a privileged state, which if they improve, they shall ultimately partake of all its promises in their fullest extent. Not a word is said of the sacrifice of Christ satisfying the justice of God, and making compensation for moral offences.

28. *For the law constituteth high-priests men liable to infirmity; but the declaration by oath, which* was *after the law,* constituteth *a son, made perfect, for ever.*

It is highly reasonable that the Jewish high-priests should at stated times renew their sacrifices; because, being liable to inadvertencies, and even to external accidents, by which they were occasionally disqualified, it became necessary to the validity of their ministrations that their inauguration should be as it were from time to time renewed. But that great high-priest, who was long after the promulga-

tion of the law designated to his office by the solemnity of an oath, is liable to no such imperfection. He cannot, by any ceremonial defect, disqualify himself for his high station; but being, by his resurrection from the dead, declared to be the son of God, he remains for ever a consecrated priest, complete in every qualification of the sacerdotal character. Ch. VII. Ver. 28.

SECTION VI.

THE WRITER now proceeds to reconcile the minds of the believing Hebrews to the very offensive doctrine of a suffering Messiah, by representing the death of Jesus as the sacrifice of an illustrious victim to ratify the conditions of the new and better covenant. Ch. viii. 1.—x. 18. Ch. VIII.

I.

The writer represents the priestly office of Christ as executed in the heavenly sanctuary, of which the grand Mosaic tabernacle was but a faint imperfect copy, ver. 1—6.

When God commanded Moses to construct a magnificent tabernacle for the purposes of religious worship, he not only gave him the most explicit directions concerning even the minutest particulars, but he exhibited to his view upon the Mount an exact model of the building which was about to be

Ch. VIII. reared, requiring a strict conformity to this model in every particular in his future operations. See Exod. xxv. The writer of this epistle, in order to accommodate himself to the prejudices and feelings of the believing Hebrews, represents this visionary tabernacle as having a real existence in heaven, and describes Jesus as the officiating priest in this celestial sanctuary, and performing offices here similar to those performed by the priests of the Mosaic tabernacle, but in a style as much superior as heaven to earth, and as a perfect model to a faint imperfect copy.

This is the idea and the scenery which we must carry in our minds if we are desirous to understand the sense and design of the author in the following chapters: and it must be particularly noted, that as the tabernacle which Moses saw in the Mount was a visionary and not a real structure, so every thing which the writer here advances concerning Christ's officiating in this visionary sanctuary, is also visionary and scenical, and not real. The majority of readers, and even of commentators, not adverting to this circumstance, having understood that in a literal which was intended in a symbolical sense, have run into the most unaccountable and unintelligible, not to say absurd, doctrines concerning the priesthood of Christ, and the satisfaction made by his atonement to the divine justice for the sins of men; nothing of which is intended or alluded to by the author, whose whole meaning terminates in this simple proposition, that the new covenant was

ratified by the blood of Jesus. Let him now speak for himself. CH. VIII.

1. To prepare the way for what he was about to advance concerning the purposes of the death of Christ, he briefly recapitulates the circumstances of his sacerdotal office and exaltation, ver. 1, 2.

Now the chief article[1] *of what has been said is this, We have such a high-priest*[2], *who is now sitting at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens*[3], *a minister of the most holy place*[4], *even of the true tabernacle*[5] *which the Lord hath fixed, and not man*[6]. Ver. 1. 2.

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[1] *The chief article.*] The Alexandrine manuscript reads εν for επι. *q. d.* This is the chief among all the things which have been said. In this sense the text is understood by the Syriac and Vulgate, and by Chrysostom and Œcumenius. See Peirce, Whitby, and Grotius.

[2] *Such a high-priest.*] τοιουτον· that is, such an one as became us, such as I have described. See ch. vii. 26.

[3] *The right hand of the throne.*] See Ps. cx. 1. *i. e.* a priest who corresponds with the prophecy, after the order of Melchisedec, both priest and king. The phrase, "at the right hand of the throne," expresses dignity and authority: how far it is personal with regard to Christ, is no where revealed. But he rules his church by his gospel; that is, his law.

[4] *Most holy place.*] "αγιον, the most holy place. See ch. ix. 8, 12, 24, x. 19." Newcome.

[5] *Even of the true tabernacle.*] και, *even;* an expression exegetical of the former. The true tabernacle is not heaven, as Newcome and others explain it, but that tabernacle which Moses saw in the Mount; which he supposes to have a real existence in heaven, and to be the sanctuary in which Jesus in his exalted state officiates.

[6] *Which the Lord hath fixed.*] The tabernacle which Moses saw was made by God himself, of which that constructed by Moses was a poor imperfect copy.

Ch. VIII. Ver. 2. I have written much to illustrate the distinction between the priesthood of Melchisedec and that of Aaron, and to show the great superiority of Jesus, who is a priest of the former description, to the Levitical priests, who are of the order of Aaron. The main point that I mean to establish is this, which I would have you keep in mind, that you may understand what I have further to advance, namely, that we who are parties in the new dispensation have a high-priest in every respect suited to the dispensation under which we live; perfect in his character, completely qualified for his office, who in his regal capacity is advanced to the highest station of dignity and authority in the church; and in his sacerdotal office has entered into that celestial sanctuary which God himself has constructed; into that original and splendid tabernacle, which no human skill or power could have reared, and which was exhibited to Moses as a model for that tabernacle which he was commanded to build.

2. Under the character of a priest it was the office of Jesus to present a sacrifice, ver. 3.

3. *Moreover, every high-priest is constituted to offer both gifts and sacrifices: therefore it is necessary that this* high-priest *also should offer something.*

You well know that the business of the high-priest is to offer gifts and sacrifices: such was the duty of Melchisedec, and such the office of Aaron and his successors: since therefore Jesus is foretold under the character of a high-priest, you are naturally led

to expect that he likewise must have somewhat to offer; and so he has: what this offering is I shall soon explain at large. Ch. VIII. Ver. 3.

3. By the law of Moses he was excluded from officiating in the earthly temple, ver. 4—5.

But if he were on earth, he would not be a priest[1]; *since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law; who perform divine service*[2] *with the copy and shadow*[3] *of heavenly things; as* 4. 5.

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[1] *He would not be a priest.*] It is debated among divines, whether Jesus officiated as a priest on earth. The controversy is frivolous; because it is only in a loose and figurative sense that he is said to be a priest at all. As he voluntarily submitted to death for the benefit of mankind, he may be said as a priest to have offered himself as a sacrifice. But it suited the design of the author of this epistle to represent Jesus as not interfering with the Levitical priesthood, and therefore as not invested with the sacerdotal office till he was introduced into the celestial tabernacle. Dr. Sykes argues from this text, "1. That Jesus never did act as a priest on earth. 2. That he did not offer himself as a sacrifice upon the cross: for, if he had, he must have acted as a priest. 3. That the cross is not, nor can it be considered in any sense as, an altar. 4. That the oblation of himself upon earth, or the shedding his blood, was no part of his sacerdotal office: for this was all done and over before his priesthood began." "If there is any strength," says Peirce, "in our author's reasoning, as no doubt there is a great deal, I can't see how it can consist with the assertion that Christ was a priest in his death. For if he could not be a priest on earth, because there were priests who offered gifts according to the law, the same reason would hold good while he actually was upon earth."

[2] *Perform divine service.*] λατρευσι, "pay religious service." Wakefield.—"λατ. *proprie*, servio, colo religiosè, *haud raro*, *per* sacra facere, munere sacerdotali fungi, *reddendum*." Schleusner.

[3] *With the copy and shadow.*] That is, they do service in that tabernacle and with those holy instruments; which are a faint imperfect copy of what was exhibited to Moses in the Mount.

See

Ch. VIII. Ver. 5. *Moses was instructed by God*[1] *when he was about to make the tabernacle; for, See, saith He,* that *thou make all according to the model shown thee on the Mount.* Exod. xxv. 40.

The Messiah having been foretold as a great high-priest, you were naturally led to expect a splendid ritual, and are ready to take offence at the simplicity of Christian institutions. But if you reflect, you must see, that by the law of Moses he was necessarily excluded from officiating in the earthly sanctuary: being of the tribe of Judah, and a priest of a different order, he would not be suffered to invade the office of the Levitical priests. These, and these only, were appointed to officiate in the earthly tabernacle; which, though framed agreeably to the express direction of God, and very splendid in its structure and mode of worship, was, after all, nothing more than a faint imperfect copy of that transcendently glorious model which was exhibited by God to Moses in the Mount, and in which our great high-priest now officiates.

4. The services in which Jesus is employed are far more honourable than those of the Levitical priesthood, ver. 6.

See Peirce. "In the idea of this writer, this superior sanctuary is that in which Jesus now officiates; but it is evident, that what was shown in the Mount was nothing more than a pattern of what was to be made." Dr. Priestley.

[1] *Instructed by God.*] κεχρηματισται. Newcome. "according to that divine direction." Wakefield. "χρηματιζω proprie aliquam rem tracto—oraculum divinum edo." Schleusner.

But now he hath obtained a more excellent ministry[2], *inasmuch as he is also the mediator*[3] *of a better covenant, the law of which hath been established*[4] *on better promises*[5]. Ch. VIII. Ver. 6.

The services of our high-priest are not attended with any circumstances of external grandeur; for they are invisible, being performed in the heavenly sanctuary: but they are nevertheless far more dignified and solemn than those of the temple on earth, and necessarily must be so, because the covenant which he has introduced and sanctioned is far superior, both in its obligations and its promises, to that which was promulgated by Moses and ratified by the sacrifices appointed by the law.

II.

Having spoken incidentally of a better covenant, the author digresses[6] to show that such a covenant had been the plain object of a direct prophecy. Ch. viii. 7, *to the end.*

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[2] *A more excellent ministry.*] "Because the service which he conducts is that of the heavenly tabernacle." Peirce.

[3] *The mediator:*] that is, the medium of communication between God and man; as Moses was the mediator between God and the Israelite nation. Gal. iii. 19. There is no greater mystery in the mediation of Jesus than in that of Moses.

[4] *The law of which hath been established.*] So Mr. Wakefield translates the word νενομοθέτηται.

[5] *On better promises.*] "Eternal life, not temporal blessings." Newcome.

[6] *The author digresses.*] Mr. Peirce observes, that this paragraph comes in by way of parenthesis; and that the beginning of the ninth chapter connects properly with the sixth verse of the preceding.

Ch. VIII. 1. It is remarked that the imperfection of the first prepared the way for the introduction of the second covenant, ver. 7.

Ver. 7. *For if that first* covenant *had been unexceptionable, there had been no room*[1] *for a second.*

Having mentioned our great high-priest as the person appointed by God to introduce and ratify a new and better covenant than that of Moses, I must allow that this appointment does necessarily imply that the Mosaic dispensation, though of divine institution, and excellently adapted to answer the end for which it was intended, was not calculated to accomplish in its full extent the promise of God to our great ancestor Abraham: for if it had been able perfectly to bring to pass all the purposes of the divine wisdom and mercy, it would not have been set aside as deficient, to make room for a more perfect comprehensive dispensation.

2. That such a dispensation was intended to supersede the Mosaic ritual, is argued from the clear and explicit prophecy of Jeremiah[2], ver. 8—12.

8. *For finding fault*[3] with the former covenant, the scripture *saith to them, Behold the days are coming,*

[1] *There had been no room.*] See Worsley. "Gr. 'no place would have been sought.'" Newcome.

[2] *Prophecy of Jeremiah.*] This paragraph is taken from Jer. xxxi. 31—34. The whole chapter is a plain prediction of the conversion and restoration of the Israelite nation, which has not yet received its accomplishment. The citation is made from the LXX.

[3] *Finding fault.*] μεμφόμενος. "*minoris faciens pactum prius, dicit illis,*" &c. Grotius.

saith the Lord, when I will execute with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah a new covenant: not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, at the time when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, when they continued not in my covenant, and I gave up my care of them[4], *saith the Lord. For this* is *the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws*[5] *into their minds, and I will*

Ch. VIII.

Ver. 9.

10.

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[4] *I gave up my care of them.*] ημελησα. So Wakefield. This is the reading of the Alexandrine copy of the LXX. adopted by this writer, and approved by the majority of critics. It is cited from Jer. xxxi. 32, where the original reads בעלתי, which in the public version is rendered, *although I was a husband to them.* To account for the sense which the LXX. have given, Dr. Pococke says, that the word בעל in the Arabic signifies, not only to *govern*, but to *reject*, to *despise*, to *nauseate*. See Whitby. Others have conjectured that the true reading of the Hebrew text is נעלתי, I have *loathed:* see Jer. xiv. 19. And others, that the true reading is בחלתי, I *abhorred:* see Zech. xi. 8. This is the reading preferred by Peirce and Newcome.—See Peirce's learned note.

But Dr. Blayney, in his judicious and learned *Translation of Jeremiah*, printed at the Clarendon press, 1784, contends for the purity of the Hebrew text, and vindicates the translation of it in the public version, which he adopts. He appeals to ch. iii. 14, where the same word occurs in the same sense; and observes, that εμελησα is the word which stands in the generality of copies of the LXX., which materially agrees with the Hebrew: "although I took care of, or protected them." In the Alexandrine copy, as well as the Epistle to the Hebrews, the word ημελησε is found; which bears a quite contrary sense. But Dr. B. expresses a doubt whether εμελησε might not have been the original word in the epistle, but altered by the inadvertence of some early transcriber. For this conjecture, however, there appears to be no authority, nor indeed any necessity.

[5] *I will put my laws.*] Dr. Whitby observes that these two

Ch. VIII. Ver. 11. *inscribe them on their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach*[1] *every one his* fellow-*citizen*[2], *and every one his brother, saying, "Know the Lord," for all shall know me from the least of them to the* 12. *greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteous deeds, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.*

This declaration of the prophet Jeremiah, in

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metaphors, in the scriptures and in Jewish writers, signify, 1.) A clear and perspicuous revelation of the mind and will of God. 2.) An efficacious impression of them upon the memory and the soul. Deut. xxx. 11, 14, Rom. x. 8, 9, Rom. ii. 15, Deut. vi. 6, Deut. xi. 18, Prov. iii. 1, 3, vii. 1.

[1] *They shall not teach*, &c.] "It cannot be imagined," says Mr. Peirce, "that the common methods of instruction, and particularly of educating youth, will then be laid aside, and that all will be done by an immediate inspiration. The expressions here used must be understood not absolutely but comparatively; and hereby is intended the vast increase there shall be among them of the knowledge of God."

Dr. Priestley has a very peculiar idea of the state of things which will take place in the Hebrew nation when these prophecies are fulfilled. "That in this new and future state of things the forms of the ancient law will be resumed and continue to the end of time," says that enlightened interpreter of scripture, "is evident from the very particular description of the temple, and the service of it, in the book of Ezekiel. And that there will be no change of the priesthood, is evident from its being there declared that it will be in the family of Zadoc, while the temporal sovereignty will be in the family of David; so that both the king and the priest will be according to the ancient constitution, and the business of sacrificing will be conducted by them as it had been before."

[2] Fellow-*citizen*.] πολιτην. This is the reading of the Alexandrine, Clermont, and Corbey manuscripts, and of many others, and of the Syriac and other versions. It is taken into the text by Griesbach and Newcome. The received text reads πλησιον, *neighbour*.

which, in the name of God, he solemnly announces the divine purpose of introducing a new and a better covenant, with the express design of superseding that of Moses, demonstrates the truth of the doctrine which I have advanced, that the Mosaic covenant was not intended, nor calculated, to fulfill all the gracious purposes of God to his chosen people: and the introduction of this new covenant may in this view be considered as expressing dissatisfaction with the old covenant because of its imperfection, though well adapted to the circumstances in which it was given. You ought not, therefore, to be offended when you are told that the Mosaic œconomy is to be superseded, since your own prophets so expressly teach the same doctrine. Ch. VIII. Ver. 12.

This prophecy is cited by the writer, from the Greek translation of Jer. xxxi. 31—34, which in the main agrees with the Hebrew original. Upon this prediction we may observe,

1. That it does not represent the Mosaic covenant as faulty and unworthy of God, but merely as incomplete, and incompetent to answer all his beneficent purposes to the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

2. This prophecy extends to the whole Hebrew nation, consisting of all the twelve tribes, and is limited to them: it is accompanied in the original text of Jeremiah with a promise of restoration to their own country: it certainly was not fulfilled in their restoration after the Babylonian captivity,

Ch. VIII. Ver. 12. nor has it yet received its proper accomplishment. It therefore relates to some important blessings which are yet in reserve in the councils of divine wisdom for that extraordinary people.

3. The writer of the epistle represents the new covenant, which is the subject of this prophecy, as that which God has made with believers in general, whether Jews or heathen, by Jesus Christ, and which is ratified by his death. And there seems no reason to doubt that this is the true sense of the prophecy.

4. In this view, as applied to the Hebrew nation, the prophecy announces that the descendants of Abraham shall at length embrace the Christian faith, and shall then be restored to their original country: an event, the expectation of which is countenanced by many other passages in the Jewish and Christian scriptures, and which, when it takes place, will establish beyond all doubt the divine authority of the Christian religion.

5. God is said in this, as in some other passages of scripture, to do that which is the certain and foreknown result of the dispensations of his providence. The Hebrew nation will, in the course of events, at the appointed time be induced to believe and obey the gospel. This is foretold by the expressions, "I will put my laws into their minds and inscribe them upon their hearts."

6. Under the old dispensation rites and ceremonies were so numerous, that public instructors were indispensably necessary to teach the people their

legal duties. It is here foretold, that the new dispensation would be so plain and simple that all should understand it almost without the necessity of instruction: "They shall not teach every man his fellow-citizen, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all shall know me [1], from the least of them to the greatest." A plain intimation, not that all instruction will be superfluous, for then human nature must cease to be what it is, but that all ritual observations, which could only be performed by a regular priesthood, should cease; and perhaps, that, in the flourishing state of the Messiah's kingdom, there would be no occasion for a distinct order of men to officiate as public instructors. Ch. VIII. Ver. 12.

7. The great promise of the new covenant is, that Jehovah will be their God, and that all iniquity shall be forgiven, that is, that he will take believers into covenant at present, and reward the virtuous with happiness hereafter. He is not ashamed to be called their God, because he hath prepared for them a city. So our Lord himself argues the doctrine of a future life: he is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him, and will be raised by him.

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[1] *All shall know me.*] Dr. Macknight observes, that "this promise is amply accomplished under the new covenant, by the multiplication of the copies of the scriptures, the translation of them into many different languages, the preaching of the word, the regular performance of the public worship of God, and by the pains which the ministers and teachers of religion take in instructing the people."

Ch. VIII. 3. He draws the inference that the old covenant will soon vanish, ver. 13.

Ver. 13. *When he saith, A new* covenant, *he representeth the first as old; but what is going to decay from age* must *shortly disappear*[1].

The Mosaic ritual is wearing out apace and falling rapidly into decay: in a very short time, though you little think of it, it will be suddenly and totally dissolved.

The writer is here supposed to allude to the approaching destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Romans, under Titus Vespasian: which catastrophe took place about ten years after this epistle is conjectured to have been written.

III.

Ch. IX. The writer argues, that as persons and things in the earthly tabernacle were purified and consecrated by the blood of animal victims, so it was expedient that under the new and better covenant, and in the heavenly tabernacle, they should be purified and consecrated with the blood of a better victim, that is,

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[1] *Must shortly disappear.*] Wakefield. ἐγγυς· this word implies, that the temple service was not abolished at the time when this epistle was written. Whitby says, "that though the Judaical sacrifices after the death of Christ ceased to be obliging, yet these words seem to intimate that the church, state, and polity of the Jews was not come to its full period till the destruction of the temple and city of Jerusalem." "According to some, the destruction of the city and temple by the Romans happened ten years after the writing of this epistle." Newcome.

of the high-priest, the Messiah himself. Ch. ix. 1 —14. Ch. IX.

1. He gives a brief detail of the grand Mosaic tabernacle and its furniture, ver. 1—5.

Now indeed the first covenant[2] *had ordinances of worship and a worldly sanctuary*[3]. Ver. 1.

The Mosaic covenant, as you well know, had its rites of religious worship, and its holy places; but these, though of divine appointment, and very splendid, were in real value greatly inferior to those in which Jesus officiates, and into which his followers are introduced. The Mosaic sanctuary and its costly furniture were made of earthly materials, and by human artificers, an imperfect imitation of a perfect model.

For there was a tabernacle made. The first, in which was the candlestick and the table[4], *and the shew-bread. This was called holy.* 2.

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[2] *The first* covenant.] Many copies read σκηνη, *tabernacle*; and Dr. Whitby, Mr. Peirce, and Dr. Doddridge think that this word best suits the connexion. But ἡ πρωτη seems evidently to refer to την πρωτην in the preceding sentence, where it is unquestionably used for *the first corenant*; and the meaning of the writer is, that as the first dispensation had its tabernacle and furniture, so also has the second. See Macknight, Newcome, &c.

[3] *Worldly sanctuary.*] "public sanctuary." Wakefield. κοσμικον, *worldly*, in opposition to the true and heavenly tabernacle exhibited to Moses on the Mount, ch. viii. 2, 5. See Peirce and Newcome. Some commentators suppose that it is called *worldly*, as being a symbolical representation of the universe according to the notions of the Jews. But the other sense is preferable. See Grotius and Macknight.

[4] *The table*, &c.] Exod. xxv. 23—30, xl. 22—26.

Ch. IX. Ver. 2. You remember that, agreeably to the directions of God to Moses, Exod. xxvi., a splendid tabernacle was erected in the wilderness, which was divided into two apartments. The first, and the largest, was called the holy place, which contained, amongst other things, the golden candlestick with its seven branches, and the table upon which were placed twelve loaves, which were renewed every sabbath, as a tribute of gratitude to divine providence.

3. *And behind the second veil* [1] *was the tabernacle,*
4. *which was called the holy of holies* [2]*, containing the golden censer* [3]*, and the ark of the covenant* [4]*, overlaid every where with gold: in which was the golden pot that held the manna* [5]*, and the rod of*

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[1] *The second veil.*] The first veil opened into the holy place, Exod. xxvi. 36, 37; the second veil separated the holy from the most holy place, Exod. xxvi. 31, 32, xxxvi. 35.

[2] *Holy of holies:*] the form of the Hebrew superlative, *q. d. the most holy place*, into which none entered but the high-priest on the day of atonement; here the shechinah, or cloud of glory, rested upon the mercy-seat between the cherubim.

[3] *Golden censer.*] Moses makes no mention of a golden censer; but as the priest was required, Lev. xvi. 12, 13, to carry a censer with incense with him into the most holy place, there probably was, as the Jews say, a golden censer appropriated to this use; which might be laid up in the most holy place, very near the veil, so that the priest might reach it without going into the holy of holies. The writer makes no mention of the golden altar, for the construction of which, and its uses, very particular directions were given to Moses, Exod. xxx. 1—10. I should have suspected that *censer* (θυμιατηριον) had been a slip of the author's pen for *altar* (θυσιαστηριον), or the error of some early transcriber; only that this writer, himself a Hebrew, writing to Hebrews, could not possibly have mistaken the situation of the golden altar, which was before the veil, not within it.

[4] *The ark of the covenant.*] Exod. xxv. 10—16, xxxvii. 1—5.

[5] *The golden pot.*] Exod. xvi. 32—34. The LXX. expressly

Aaron that blossomed[6], *and the tables of the covenant*[7], *and over it the cherubim of glory*[8], *shadowing the mercy-seat*[9], *concerning which it is not my present purpose to speak particularly.* Ch. IX. Ver. 5.

In the Mosaic tabernacle you know were two veils: one hung down over the entrance of the tabernacle and screened the priests, while performing the rites of religious worship, from the gaze of the profane. The second veil was within the tabernacle, and separated the holy from the most holy place. Behind this veil, and within this sacred repository, was placed the golden censer, with which the high-priest officiated when he entered into the most holy place on the day of atonement. Also, that precious

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call it a golden pot; the Hebrew makes no mention of the metal.

[6] *The rod of Aaron.*] Numb. xvii. 1—10. No mention is made either of the rod of Aaron or the pot of manna being deposited in the ark, so that some suppose that εν ᾗ only signifies *being near the ark;* it seems to be generally believed that they were at first deposited in the ark, but by some accident or other were lost before the time of Solomon, when it is expressly said, that nothing remained in the ark but the two tables of stone, 1 Kings viii. 9, 2 Chron. v. 10.

[7] *The tables of the covenant.*] It was expressly ordered that the tablets of stone containing the ten commandments should be deposited in the ark, Exod. xxv. 16, xl. 20.

[8] *The cherubim.*] Exod. xxv. 17—22, xxxvii. 6—9. Moses gives no description of the cherubim; they were probably similar to the figures in Ezekiel's vision, Ezek. i. 4—14, and were hieroglyphical representations of universal worship.

[9] *The mercy-seat.*] ἱλαστηριον. This is described Exod. xxv. 21, 22. Here the divine mercy as it were, took its stand, and from the cloud of glory oracles were delivered. In allusion to this Jesus is called a mercy-seat, Rom. iii. 25; which our translators improperly render *a propitiation,* instead of *a propitiatory.*

Ch. IX. Ver. 5. chest which, being made of wood, was wholly overlaid with gold; and which, from the use to which it was applied, was justly denominated the ark of the covenant; which originally contained that golden pot which Moses was required to fill with manna, that the children of Israel, through all their generations, might possess an ocular and sensible proof of the miraculous manner in which their ancestors had been supported in the wilderness. It also contained the rod of Aaron, which miraculously budded, blossomed, and bore fruit, as an attestation of the will of God to select that family in preference to all others, to exercise the priestly office. The two tables of stone, on which the ten commandments, the observance of which was the essential condition of the promised blessing, were engraved by the finger of God himself, were also deposited in the ark, and remained there till the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar; though the vessel of manna and the rod of Aaron were lost before the building of Solomon's temple. The golden lid of this holy chest was, as you must remember, called the mercy-seat; for upon this the shechinah, or cloud of glory, rested, which was the symbol of the divine presence; and from which, proceeded those oracles which were intended for the instruction, consolation, and encouragement, of the people of God. Over this chest were placed the cherubim, which were symbolical figures in a worshiping posture, whose spreading wings overshadowed the mercy-seat, and which represented the whole creation as offering its homage

to the supreme Being. I have much to say concerning the symbolical use of all these articles, and might easily show, as in the case of Melchisedec, that each of them was typical of something more truly great and splendid under the Christian dispensation: but for the present I forbear, intending to limit myself to the subject of priests and sacrifices, and to show the analogy between the consecration of things and persons under the law by the blood of animal victims, and under the gospel by the blood of Jesus. Ch. IX. Ver. 5.

Thus we see that it was the main design of this writer to conciliate the minds of the believing Hebrews, by drawing an analogy between the old dispensation and the new; and by representing every thing great and splendid in the Mosaic ritual, as typical of something still more great and more splendid in the spiritual service of the heavenly tabernacle, in which Jesus is supposed to officiate. He conducts his allegory with much ingenuity; and he plainly insinuates that it was in his power to have carried the allusion much further; as indeed he easily might; for to such kind of writing there is no limit, but a writer's own fancy or discretion. And all this might answer a very good purpose to the simple and prejudiced Hebrews: but when Christians interpret literally what the author meant figuratively; and when they apply such observations to all Christians, in all ages, which were intended and adapted only to a particular descrip-

Ch. IX. Ver. 5. tion of Christians in the primitive age, they totally mistake and pervert the writer's meaning; and upon this mistake they erect a fabric of absurd and mischievous opinions, which they exhibit to the world in lieu of the plain, simple and majestic structure of Christian truth; and thus, by powerfully impressing the imagination, they oft divert the attention of the multitude from the pure and spiritual worship of the living and the true God.

2. The writer proceeds to describe the different offices which were performed in the holy and in the most holy place, ver. 6, 7.

6. *These things therefore being thus prepared, the priests enter*[1] *continually into the first tabernacle,*
7. *performing the services* of God; *but into the second the high-priest alone* entereth *once every year, not without blood, which he offereth for the sins of ignorance, of himself, and of the people*[2].

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[1] *The priests enter.*] Archbishop Newcome justly observes, that "the present tense is here used, and *offereth* in the next verse, because the temple was then standing."

[2] *The sins of ignorance.*] The ritual for the day of atonement is prescribed Lev. xvi. The high-priest is required to sprinkle the blood of a young bullock for himself, and of a kid for the people. This is called the *atonement*, not because the anger of God was supposed to be appeased by the substitution of the blood of the victim for that of the offender, for in the first place it was only for sins of ignorance that this sacrifice was appointed; and secondly, the high-priest is said to make atonement for the altar and for the sanctuary, and to reconcile the holy place and the tabernacle, as well as to atone for the priests and to reconcile the people, ver. 17, 18, 20, 33. Hence it follows, that the business of the day was only to reconsecrate

Ch. IX. Ver. 7.

The tabernacle of Moses having been thus constructed and divided into two parts, a ritual was established for each, which in substance is observed in your temple at Jerusalem even to the present day. It is the custom for the inferior priests to go every day into the holy place to light the lamps, to offer the morning and the evening sacrifice, and to perform the stated rites of divine worship: but into the holy of holies, within the veil, no one is ever permitted to enter but the high-priest, and even he, only one day in the year, the day of general atonement, when he is required to sprinkle the blood of a bullock for himself, and of a goat for the people, before the mercy-seat; as a solemn form of renewing the covenant with God, if it had been inadvertently violated, either by the priest or the people.

In order to understand the meaning of the writer in this passage, it is necessary to remember that there were various incidents by which a person became ceremonially polluted, and thereby excluded for a time from the benefit of the Mosaic covenant, till he had purified and reinstated himself by certain prescribed ablutions and sacrifices. When the cause of pollution was known, the rite of readmission was determined, as in the case of touching a dead body: but incidental pollutions were no doubt frequently

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things or persons which had been accidentally polluted; and in general, to renew the covenant which might have been, and probably had been, in the case of every individual inadvertently violated.

Ch. IX. Ver. 7. contracted unawares, and by these sins of ignorance a person was inadvertently excluded from the covenant. For such cases, and for these *alone*, were the sacrifices of the day of atonement provided. And by the ceremony of the sprinkling of the blood of the victims on that day, the priests and the people, who, by inadvertent acts, or unknown circumstances, might have become ceremonially polluted and profane, now became ceremonially pure and holy; the outlawry, if I may so express it, was reversed; and the whole people, on this solemn occasion, annually renewed their covenant with Jehovah. From this brief state of the case, every one may see how little foundation there is for the strange opinion that the blood of the victim was offered to appease the wrath of God, or the life of the sacrifice as a substitute for that of the offender.

3. The mystical signification of this ritual was, that the Mosaic œconomy left its votaries in a very imperfect state, ver. 8—10.

8. *Whereby the holy spirit signified*[1], that *the way into the* holy *of holies is not yet made manifest while*
9. *the first tabernacle is standing*[2], *which* is *a figure*

[1] *The holy spirit signified.*] This writer does not himself pretend to inspiration, and he produces no kind of evidence to prove that any such mystical meaning was intended by the Deity in the tabernacle service as he has annexed to it. It can therefore only be considered as the private opinion of this unknown writer; who perhaps, after all, meant nothing more than that the tabernacle service, spiritually understood, might be considered as teaching this lesson.

[2] *While the first tabernacle is standing.*] See Newcome. "The

of the present time[3], *in which* tabernacle *are offered* Ch. IX. Ver. 9.
both gifts and sacrifices, which cannot, as to his
conscience[4], *make perfect him that worshipeth* God
only with meat and drink offerings[5] *and divers* 10.
washings, which are *carnal ordinances*[6] *appointed*[7]
until the time of reformation[8].

Now, my brethren, all this ceremonial which I

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first tabernacle here signifies the court of the priests, or the holy place. See ver. 2, 6. And this sense best suits the author's argument. For as that court led to the holy of holies, and was accessible to none but the priests, who were themselves prohibited from entering the most holy place, it is plain that as long as this remained in its ancient state and use, the way into the holiest was not then manifest." Peirce.

[3] *A figure of the present time.*] εις τον καιρον. In Valesius's readings it is τω καιρω παραβολη. "a type or imperfect delineation of the advantages of the present time, now Christ is come." Peirce. But surely, the state of the first tabernacle, in which the way to the holiest was not yet manifest, was rather a sketch of the times under the law, which is here called the *present time*, as the temple was then standing, and its service conducted in the usual manner. Compare ver. 11.

[4] *As to his conscience.*] No sacrifices were appointed for voluntary transgressions, Psalm l. 8—14, li. 16, 17. The sacrifices on the day of atonement were expressly appointed for sins of ignorance, ver. 7.

[5] *With meat and drink* offerings.] Gr. *with meats and drinks.* επι is used for εν. This sense is suggested by Peirce; who justly observes, that "nothing can be more to the author's purpose."

[6] *Carnal ordinances.*] Peirce adopts the Alexandrine reading, δικαιωματα, and supplies the words, ἀτινα ην· "*which were* carnal ordinances laid on the Jews."

[7] *Ordinances appointed.*] An expression very similar to many in Paul's epistles. "The author brings in this clause to disparage the ordinances upon which the Hebrews set so high a value." Peirce.

[8] *Time of reformation*:] that is, the times of the Messiah, in opposition to the present time, ver. 9. "The reformation is the change that Christ made of the way and manner of serving God." Peirce.

Ch. IX. Ver. 10. have described has a mystical meaning, which I will explain to you in its proper order, and thereby convince you of the propriety and expedience of the sufferings of the Messiah. In the first place, the sanctuary, which is before the veil where the ordinary priests officiated, is a symbol of the present, I mean the Mosaic dispensation: and as the veil was never removed while the priests were officiating in the holy place, this shows that the new and better dispensation, that of the Messiah, will never take place till the old Mosaic covenant is abrogated. And this is the more evident, as the sacrifices and ablutions, the meat and drink offerings, which are prescribed by the law for the purification of ceremonial pollutions and sins of ignorance do not extend to voluntary offences, and are nothing more than external rites to answer a temporary purpose; and which may with propriety be laid aside when the season of reformation comes, and a new and spiritual dispensation is introduced.

4. The office of the high-priest, on the day of atonement, is a mystical representation of the office of Christ under the new dispensation, ver. 11, 12.

11. *But Christ, the high-priest of blessings which*
12. *were to be*[1], *being come*[2], *entered once for all, not*

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[1] *Blessings which were to be.*] των μελλοντων αγαθων. So Wakefield. *i. e.* blessings of the future age; the times of the Messiah; the Father of the age to come. Isaiah ix. 6. "It has respect, not so much to the heavenly felicity, as to the advantages we have by Christ in this present world." Peirce. The

indeed with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, into the most holy place, through that greater and more perfect tabernacle[3], *not made with hands, that is, not of the same workmanship, having obtained everlasting redemption*[4]. Ch. IX. Ver. 12.

As the high-priest entered once every year into the holy of holies, within the veil, to renew the covenant with God for all the chosen people by the blood of animal victims, so Jesus, the Messiah, the high-priest of the new dispensation, the dispenser of its promised blessings, foretold by the prophets, has also entered into the most holy place, to ratify with blood that better covenant into which his disciples are now initiated. But the office of our great high-priest far transcends that of the priests of the line of Aaron in a variety of important particulars. In the first place, the Jewish high-priest enters into

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high-priest of future blessings seems to be opposed to the time present, ver. 9.

[2] *Being come.*] παραγενομενος is to be taken in construction with εισηλθεν. "being come to the most holy place, he hath entered in. See Acts xxiii. 16." Peirce.

[3] *Through that greater and more perfect tabernacle.*] He does not officiate in the earthly sanctuary, but in that celestial tabernacle which was shown to Moses in the Mount, and which was the model of that which he erected. And even here he does not officiate in the outer court, the court of the priests, but passing through, he enters the holy of holies. This celestial tabernacle is not, like that of Moses, made by human artists, nor of earthly kind, being of heavenly construction, and the model of the Mosaic.

[4] *Everlasting redemption.*] "not a yearly, but everlasting redemption." Newcome. From the yoke and the curses of the law. It is not to be forgotten that the sins which were propitiated on the day of atonement were only sins of ignorance of the past year.

Ch. IX. Ver. 12. the most holy place one day only in the year, but our high-priest is entered into his sanctuary to dwell for ever there. Again, The high-priest of the house of Aaron carried in with him the blood of a bullock and of a goat, by the sprinkling of which he purified the ceremonially unclean; but Jesus is gone in with his own blood to ratify the new covenant, by which all who believe are sanctified and consecrated. Further, the Jewish high-priest performed his ministrations in an earthly sanctuary, an imperfect copy of a celestial model, but the Christian high-priest performs his office in that very tabernacle, that celestial structure, of which that of Moses was but a faint resemblance. Lastly, The Jewish high-priest performed his office every year, and was obliged annually to repeat the sacrifices for annual transgressions of inadvertence. But the covenant ratified by the Christian high-priest is irrevocable; and they who believe in Jesus are redeemed for ever from the bondage of the law, and from the yoke of idolatry, so that while they continue to believe they cannot exclude themselves from the external blessings and privileges of the gospel by any involuntary transgressions of ceremonial institutions.

5. It is reasonable to expect that the blood of the Messiah would be efficacious to a far more valuable purpose than that of animal victims, ver. 13, 14.

13. *For if the blood of bulls, and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on the unclean*[1], *sanc-*

[1] *Sprinkled on the unclean.*] The precepts concerning this

tify to the purification of the flesh[2], *how much more will the blood of Christ*[3], *who by the holy spirit*[4] *offered himself spotless to God, purify your conscience from dead works*[5], *that ye may serve the living God?* Ch. IX. Ver. 14.

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rite are contained in Numb. xix. It is observable here that ceremonial pollution is produced, not only by actions innocent, necessary, and often unavoidable, such as touching and burying the dead, but by circumstances wholly involuntary and accidental, such as touching the bone of a dead man, or being in a tent when a person died, ver. 13, 14, and it extended even to inanimate things, to open vessels, &c. ver. 15. The expiations of the law only cleansed ceremonial pollutions.

[2] *Purification of the flesh.*] "Legal impurities debarred the Jews an attendance on the public service; from these they were freed by the sacrifices, washings, and sprinklings appointed by the Mosaic law, and so became qualified again for public worship. This our author speaks of under the notion of sanctification." Peirce. Consisting so much in washing and sprinkling, they are properly enough called *purifications of the flesh*. But if these rites were neglected, the offender was cut off from the congregation of Israel, *i. e.* excommunicated, forfeited his rights and privileges as a citizen. Numb. xix. 12, 13, 20. See Sykes.

[3] *The blood of Christ.*] of *the* Christ, the Messiah.

[4] *The holy spirit.*] This is the reading of the Clermont and some other MSS. and of the Coptic, Vulgate, and other versions. It is wanting in the Æthiopic. The received text, with the Alexandrine and other copies, and the Syriac and other versions, reads αιωνιε, *eternal*, or everlasting; an epithet not usually applied to the spirit, but upon which many build an argument (very precarious) for the personality and godhead of the third person in the trinity. Mr. Peirce understands it as strangely "of the Logos, or divine nature of our Lord."

[5] *Dead works.*] νεκρων εργων this is a phrase peculiar to this author, and occurs only here and in ch. vi. 1, where *repentance from dead works* is represented as one of the first principles of the Christian doctrine, and immediately connected with *faith in God*; as in this case the purification of the conscience from *dead works* is the preliminary to the *service* or worship, λατρευειν, *of the living God.*

The phrase not being defined by the writer, it becomes ne-

Ch. IX. Ver. 14. Observe, my brethren, the course and the conclusiveness of the argument which I am pursuing.

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cessary to discover his meaning in the best manner we are able.

The most common interpretation of the passage is this: that as the blood of bulls and goats purified the worshiper from ceremonial offences, so the blood of Christ purifies the conscience from moral guilt, either by atoning for sin, according to some, or, as others explain it, by the merit of his obedience; or finally, by affording an assurance of pardon, or exhibiting a motive to virtue. None of these explanations appears to be satisfactory.

The main design of the author of this epistle is to reconcile the believing but wavering Hebrews to the doctrine of a suffering Messiah, and to the abolition of the ceremonial law, two things as offensive as can well be imagined; which, however, he manages with great delicacy and ingenuity.

He never mentions the crucifixion of Jesus, and its attendant circumstances of degradation; but with consummate address he represents the death of the Messiah as his own voluntary act, under the character of the high-priest of the celestial tabernacle, performing the most solemn and sacred duty of his office; entering into the celestial holy of holies on the great day of expiation, once for all offering his own blood, and remaining for ever in the celestial sanctuary to intercede, that is, to perform all priestly offices for his people.

The efficacy of the service of the Levitical high-priest in the earthly sanctuary is described as sanctifying to the purification of the flesh. The sacrifices were expressly offered for sins of ignorance, ch. viii. 7; and they reinstated priest and people in that covenant from which they had excluded themselves by inadvertent and involuntary violations of the ceremonial law.

But the blood of Christ, that spotless and voluntary victim, answered a far superior purpose; it purified the conscience from dead works 'to serve the living and true God.'

The expiations of the law were limited to sins of ignorance; the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ extended to the purification of the conscience, and therefore to voluntary acts.

These acts are described as *dead works;* repentance, or a change of mind with respect to which, is represented as one of the first principles of the Christian faith, ch. vii. 1: comp. xii. 17. The writer, as a Hebrew, is addressing Hebrews; and this change of mind with respect to dead works, we are led by the context

Inadvertent acts, of which the performer is often unconscious, sometimes occasion ceremonial pollution, and place men in an unholy and uncovenanted state: but such are restored to the privileges of the Mosaic covenant by the sacrifices and lustrations of the day of atonement, and by other rites, which were

Ch. IX. Ver. 14.

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to understand as a renunciation of the works of the law, as the ground of justification.

The works of the ceremonial law are with great propriety called *dead works*; they are dead, as being of no moral benefit either to the agent or to others; and they are dead, as the law passes an irrevocable sentence of death upon the wilful transgressor; they are works which leave the offender under a sentence of legal condemnation.

The blood of Christ purifies the conscience from *dead works*. The voluntary renunciation of the law as a ground of justification, which is the first requisition of the gospel, was the greatest offence against the law which a Hebrew could commit. But the offering of the blood of Christ in the celestial sanctuary purified the conscience from this offence; it obtained the pardon of the transgressor; it protected him from the sentence of the law; and set him at liberty to worship the living and true God, agreeably to the liberal and spiritual dispensation of the gospel.

All that the writer really means is, that the Mosaic dispensation being terminated by the death of Christ, who was the messenger of heaven to introduce the new and merciful dispensation of the gospel, all who believe are now released from the obligations of the ceremonial law, and are at liberty to worship God without restraint, agreeably to the mild and liberal spirit of the gospel.

But this doctrine, so offensive in its simple form to the prejudices of the Hebrews, the author has with great ingenuity dressed up in such a manner as would best meet the conceptions of his countrymen, and would greatly abate, if not altogether overrule, their objections to the obnoxious doctrines of a suffering Messiah and an abrogated law.

A similar instance of ingenuity in accommodating an unpalatable doctrine to the prejudices of his readers occurs ch. ii. 14, 15; where he describes the abolition of the law by the destruction of the devil, or the accusing power, through the death of Christ.

Ch. IX. Ver. 14.

not meant as compensations for transgression, but merely as solemn forms of readmission into the congregation of Israel, and restoration to public worship. How reasonable then is it to expect that a covenant ratified with the blood, not of animal victims, but of Jesus himself, the true Messiah, who by express divine direction submitted for this purpose as an innocent victim to a violent death, should as far excel the Mosaic œconomy, in the extent and value of its blessings, as in the mode of its confirmation! Such is the fact. The law made no provision for voluntary transgression: the soul that sinned presumptuously was condemned to death: but the blood of Christ, that spotless victim, extends its purifying influence to a voluntary act which, in the eye of the law, would be the greatest of offences, and upon which it would denounce its severest anathemas. I mean the absolute and total rejection of all its ceremonial institutions as the ground of justification, and as essential to our admission into the community of the people of God.

This renunciation of the unprofitable works of the law, the gospel, which requires faith alone as the ground of justification, absolutely demands; and from the condemning sentence of the law the believer is protected by the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin, and which, by ratifying the new covenant, cancels the obligation of the old; and by putting an end to the reign of the law, annihilates both its right to command and its authority to

condemn; and sets the believer at liberty to worship the living God with a spiritual service. Ch. IX. Ver. 14.

IV.

The writer shows that a new and better covenant required to be ratified by the blood of a new and nobler victim. Ch. ix. 15—24.

1. He states the necessity of introducing a new and a better covenant, ver. 15.

And for this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant[1], *that death having taken place for the redemption*[2] *of transgressions against the first covenant, they who are invited might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.* 15.

The law of works, as a ground of justification,

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[1] *The mediator of a new covenant.*] διαθηκης καινης· in the public version, *a new testament*, or *will*. But it is allowed by the most judicious critics that the context does not require this sudden change and unusual sense of the word διαθηκη. See Whitby, Peirce, Sykes, Doddridge, Wakefield, Newcome, &c.

The mediator: "that is, the person by whom it is transacted and confirmed." Newcome.

[2] *Death having taken place for the redemption.*] *Dead works*, that is, the *law of works*, being renounced, as a first principle under the gospel, the believer loses his standing in the first covenant, and is exposed to its anathemas. Hence the necessity of a new covenant of which Christ is the mediator, sanctioned by death, viz. the death of the mediator himself, as the victim; by the blood of which, all who had desecrated themselves by abandoning the old covenant, are reconsecrated and redeemed, or delivered from the curse, by the new; and so having been invited, and having accepted the gospel call, they become heirs of immortal life.

This seems to be the true meaning of the author in this passage; and it makes the sense of the context clear and obvious.

Ch. IX. Ver. 15. being thus voluntarily abdicated, as the first step towards faith in the gospel, the believer is thereby deprived of all benefit from the first covenant, which he has thus voluntarily discarded, and has exposed himself to all its anathemas. Hence arises the necessity of a new covenant to protect believers from the curses of the old: and this, in fact, is the gracious errand upon which Christ is sent. He is the mediator of a new covenant, appointed to transact business between the covenanting parties, to offer the terms, and to announce the promise: and moreover, as the victim by whose death the covenant is ratified, and by whose blood believers are as it were sprinkled and purified, he redeems and delivers them from the anathemas of the obsolete and superseded law, and reconsecrates them as the peculiar people of God under the new covenant, in a far better state than under the old dispensation: the promises of the former covenant being limited to an earthly and temporal, but those of the new being extended to a spiritual and everlasting inheritance.

2. This new covenant required the death of a suitable victim to ratify and confirm it, ver. 16, 17.

16. *For where a covenant exists, the death of that by which the covenant is confirmed*[1] *must be pro-*

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[1] *By which the covenant is confirmed.*] ὁ διαθεμενος. "whilst that which establishes the covenant is alive." Wakefield. See Whitby and Doddridge on the text. διαθεμενος properly signifies either a *testator*, or a *covenanter*. But the writer is not treating of a testament, but a covenant; and covenants, if not

duced[2]. *For a covenant* is *confirmed over dead* Ch. IX. Ver. 17.
victims, *and is of no force at all while that by which it is confirmed liveth.*

I have mentioned death, in connexion with the new covenant; for it is a usual thing to ratify covenants between man and man, as well as between God and man, with the blood of a victim offered upon the occasion. And where this is the rite agreed upon by the contracting parties for this purpose, the covenant has plainly no validity till the death of the victim is satisfactorily authenticated. For till the victim is slain, the covenant is without force, and either party is at liberty to recede from his engagement.

3. Agreeably to this state of things, the first covenant was ratified in blood; and every person and every thing was consecrated with blood, ver. 18—22.

Wherefore, even the first covenant *was not con-* 18.
firmed[3] *without blood. For after every command-* 19.

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uniformly, were frequently ratified in the blood of victims. In this case Christ, who is the mediator of the covenant, is himself the victim in whose blood it is both confirmed and consecrated; and if the word is taken in this sense, though a very unusual one, it gives a clear and pertinent meaning to a passage which is otherwise very obscure.

[2] *Be produced.*] φερεσθαι, a forensic term. "must be produced or producible, or else the whole transaction may be deemed not obligatory." Sykes.

Archbishop Newcome thinks that the 17th verse "has the appearance of an interpolation from one who supposed that διαθηκη signified a *testament* or *will*."

[3] *Was not confirmed.*] εγκεκαινισται. "dedicated." New-

Ch. IX. Ver. 19. *ment of the law had been spoken by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of the calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled the book itself and all the people,*
20. *saying, This is the blood of the covenant which*
21. *God hath enjoined you. And he sprinkled with blood in the same manner the tabernacle likewise,*
22. *and all the vessels of the ministry. And under the law, almost all things are purified with blood; and without shedding of blood there is no remission.*

With respect to the use of blood, there is a great analogy between the first covenant and the second. After the ten commandments had been delivered with an audible voice from mount Sinai, the assem-

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come. "solemnized." Wakefield. Archbishop Newcome observes, that "the original word, *dedicated*, is used metaphorically for *confirmed*, because the blood of victims was shed at the dedications of holy things, as at the ratifications of covenants, Numb. vii. 88, 1 Kings viii. 62, 63." It is in both these senses that the efficacy of the blood of Jesus is represented by this writer; it confirms the new covenant, and it sanctifies believers; being, as it were, sprinkled upon them, it separates them from the unbelieving world as effectually as the ceremonial purifications of the first covenant.

The account of the first solemn ratification of the covenant is contained Exod. xxiv. 6—8. No mention is made of the goats, the water, the scarlet wool, or the hyssop; but Dr. Sykes observes, that "they might possibly be used during the ceremony of sprinkling." Nor is any mention made of sprinkling the book; which, however, is not improbable. In Lev. viii. there is an account of the consecration of the tabernacle and its furniture, but it is not said they were sprinkled with blood; they were sanctified by the anointing oil. "Though many things were purified with blood, some were purified with water alone, Exod. xix. 10, Lev. xvi. 28. Others by the water of separation, Numb. xix. 9, &c. Others were cleansed by fire, Numb. xxxi. 22, 23." Sykes.

It is plain that the writer did not mean to be literally correct.

bled congregation gave their explicit and solemn assent to them, and offered sacrifices of oxen to the Lord; and Moses sprinkled half the blood upon the altar, and the other half on the people, and announced it as the blood of the covenant which God had made with them, by which they were separated from the idolatrous world and consecrated to God: Exod. xxiv. 3—8. Upon other occasions other rites of purification were instituted; some by water, and some by fire, but very seldom without the shedding and sprinkling of blood. In this way the children of Israel were first separated, or consecrated, as a holy and peculiar people; and in this sense the sins of their heathen state are said to be remitted. Inanimate things likewise are *consecrated:* that is, set apart from a common to a holy purpose, by being sprinkled with blood; and being antecedently in a ceremonially unholy state, the law speaks of atonement being made for them, as though they had been actually sinners: and under the law there is no remission of offence, either in animate or inanimate beings; that is, there is no translation of them from a common to a sacred use, without the blood of the animal victim. See Lev. xvi. 18—20, 33. Ch. IX. Ver. 22.

Observe here, 1. That the account which this writer gives of the ceremony of sprinkling with blood as a ratification of the covenant and a rite of purification, does not agree in all its particulars with the narration of that fact in Exod. xxiv., where

Ch. IX. Ver. 22. no mention is made, either of the blood of goats, or of water, or of scarlet wool, or of hyssop; but only that Moses sprinkled the people, probably a few who stood near him, and who were representatives of the rest, with the blood of bullocks or calves. The disagreement is of no consequence, if inspiration is out of the question: it might be owing to a slip of memory, or it might be a tradition of the Jews. Neither does Moses mention the sprinkling of the book of the law; the circumstance, however, is not improbable, but to us is very immaterial.

2. It is of more importance to remark, that the tabernacle, the vessels of the service, and other inanimate things, are here represented as purified with blood; and of these it is said, that without shedding of blood there was no remission. In exact conformity to this, the priest is said, Lev. xvi. 18—23, by sprinkling of blood to make atonement for the altar, and to reconcile the holy place, the altar, and the tabernacle, as well as the priests and the congregation, ver. 33.

Inanimate beings are thus represented as sinners which need remission, atonement, and reconciliation, by the sprinkling of blood. The meaning is obvious. Previously to the lustration, they were in a profane and unholy state; by the application of that rite they were set apart and dedicated to the service of God.

This explains the sense in which the word *sinner* often occurs in the New Testament; and also that in which the blood of Christ is said to cleanse from

sin, for it is never said to atone for it. *They* are called *sinners* who live neither under the Mosaic nor under the Christian covenant; and who are therefore said to be in an unholy state, how excellent soever their moral character may be. And they are called *saints*, or *holy*, who publicly profess the Christian religion, whatever be the imperfection of their moral characters. And these are purified by the blood of Christ, because his death ratified the new covenant; and his blood is in a figurative sense said to be sprinkled upon believers, to separate them from the unbelieving world to the service and worship of God. Ch. IX. Ver. 22.

A person who does not attend to this sense of the words *sin* and *holiness* will lose much of the meaning and spirit of the apostolic writings.

4. By parity of reason, the heavenly sanctuary and its worshipers must be consecrated with the blood of a more excellent victim, ver. 23, 24.

It was *therefore necessary that the copies of things in the heavens should be purified with these* victims, *but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these*[1]. *Therefore Christ hath* 23. 24.

[1] *The heavenly things.*] Some have supposed that the writer means to insinuate, that heaven itself would be polluted by the presence of such sinful creatures as we are, if not previously purified by the blood of Jesus. See Doddridge. But this is widely distant from the author's view. He argues, that as the earthly tabernacle and its worshipers were purified by the blood of animal victims, so the heavenly tabernacle and its worshipers, *i. e.* the great body of believers, are to be purified and set apart by the blood of a better victim, viz. of Christ.

Ch. IX. Ver. 24. *not entered into a sanctuary made with hands, which is the resemblance of the true, but into heaven*[1] *itself, now to appear in the presence of God in our behalf.*

As, by divine appointment, it was necessary to separate the earthly tabernacle and its furniture, which were made after the celestial model, from a common to a sacred use, by sprinkling them with the blood of animal victims, it is equally necessary that the sanctuary in heaven, where our great high-priest officiates, should be consecrated for a similar purpose by the blood of a far more excellent victim, that is, of Christ himself: and for this end Christ has actually entered, not into the earthly sanctuary, but into that heavenly tabernacle which is the model of that made by Moses, and in this most holy and glorious place he produces his own blood before the throne of God, as that by which the Christian church and all its members are as it were sprinkled, separated from the unbelieving world, and consecrated to the service of God.

Thus the writer pleads, in order to conciliate the prejudices of the believing Hebrews, that as the

[1] *Into heaven itself:*] *i. e* into the celestial tabernacle which was shown to Moses in the Mount.

It is obvious to the attentive reader how promiscuously this author uses the expressions, *dedicated*, ver. 18, *purified*, *remitted*, ver. 22, as expressions of the same meaning, namely, *consecrated to God:* set apart from the unbelieving world; which is accomplished by the figurative sprinkling of the blood of Christ, not by his making atonement or satisfaction, or bearing the divine displeasure, or the expiation of human guilt.

actual sprinkling of the blood of the animal victims upon the worshipers and vessels of the Mosaic tabernacle was the symbol of their separation from a common to a sacred use, so the figurative sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, in the supposed celestial tabernacle, is the symbol of the separation of the worshipers in that heavenly sanctuary, that is, not saints in heaven, but the great body of Christians on earth, from the unbelieving world to the service of the true God. All this is figure and allegory accommodated to the conceptions and prejudices of the Hebrews, who were accustomed to the temple service. The great moral lesson which we learn from it is this, that Christians are, by their profession, consecrated to God, and that it is their indispensable duty to dedicate their time and all their powers to him, and to employ them in his service. Ch. IX. Ver. 24.

V.

The writer closes the argumentative part of the epistle by proving, at large, that it was not necessary that this illustrious victim should suffer more than once. Chap. ix. 25—x. 18.

1. He argues that the supposition of the necessity of repeating the sacrifice of the Messiah would involve a palpable and offensive absurdity, ver. 25, 26.

Nor indeed was it necessary[2] *that he should offer* 25.

[2] *Nor* was it necessary.] See Peirce and Newcome, who

Ch. IX. Ver. 26. *himself often, as the high-priest entereth into the most holy place* [1] *every year with other blood* [2] *(for then he must have suffered often* [3] *since the foundation of the world); but now he hath been manifested once, at the conclusion of the ages* [4], *to remove sin* [5], *by the sacrifice of himself.*

Nor let it be thought, my brethren, that accord-

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supply the ellipsis from ver. 23, though Peirce acknowledges the construction to be unusual. "To complete the sense, bring down αναγκη from ver. 23, and insert it after θδε." Owen *apud* Bowyer.

[1] *The most holy place.*] ἁγια, the holy of holies. See Newcome.

[2] *With other blood:*] *i.e.* with the blood of an animal victim; not, like Jesus, with his own blood.

[3] *He must have suffered often.*] The writer reduces to an absurdity the supposition that the repetition of the Messiah's sacrifice was as necessary as the repetition of the high-priest's: *q. d.* You might as well say, that the Messiah's mission ought to have been as early as the age of Aaron, or even of Adam; and then you would have had as many suffering Messiahs as you had annual expiatory sacrifices; than which no supposition can be more revolting or absurd. No, this is not the constitution which God hath ordained: he hath sent forth the Messiah once for all, at the fittest season, at the close of the Mosaic dispensation, to put an end to sin, by putting an end to the covenant of rites and ceremonies, which was the great cause of offence, by offering himself a voluntary victim, to seal and ratify with his own blood that new dispensation by which the old covenant is superseded and abolished.

It is evident all along that he is addressing the Hebrews upon their own principles, labouring to reconcile them to the offensive doctrine of a crucified Messiah and an abrogated law, without the least allusion to a supposed atonement for the moral offences of mankind.

[4] *At the conclusion of the ages.*] At the end of the Mosaic dispensation. See Peirce, Mede, Doddridge, Wakefield. Compare ch. i. 2.

[5] *To remove sin:*] that is, the *law* which is the *strength of sin;* which first gives occasion to sin, and then condemns it without mercy. See Rom. vii.

ing to this way of stating the necessity and advantage of the voluntary suffering of the Messiah, it would be requisite for that illustrious victim to offer himself annually, as the high-priest offered his animal sacrifices on the day of atonement. This would indeed be a most unworthy thought: and, in fact, it might with equal reason be supposed that the annual sacrifice of a Messiah had been necessary from the beginning of time; than which nothing can be more extravagant or more revolting. But that is not our doctrine. What we teach is, that the great Messiah, the chief of all the prophets and messengers of God, has been revealed now, at last, at the conclusion of the Mosaic dispensation, by the voluntary sacrifice of himself once for all, to put an end at once, and for ever, not only to those sins of ignorance, which required annual expiation, but to those voluntary transgressions of the ceremonial law for which their sacrifices made no provision. And this he hath done by the utter and entire abolition of the law of ceremonies itself, if not as a rule of practice, yet altogether as a ground of justification. We are now no longer under the law, but under grace. Ch. IX. Ver. 26.

2. The frequent repetition of the death of the Messiah would be inconsistent with his nature and condition as a human being: his return, therefore, is not to be expected till his final appearance, ver. 27, 28.

And as it is appointed unto men[6] *to die once,* 27.

[6] *Appointed unto men.*] Mr. Peirce observes, that "the au-

Ch. IX. Ver. 28 *and after this the judgement, so Christ also having been offered once to bear away the sin* [1] *of many* [2], *to those who are waiting for him, will appear a second time, without sin* [3], *unto salvation.*

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thor had several times asserted, that Christ was made like to us in all things; and this consideration he seems to allege in this place in order to clear what he says of Christ's only dying once. By dying once, he submits to the condition they were in for whom he died; but being freed from death, he has no more occasion than they to die any more."

[1] *To bear away sin.*] "The Greek phrase is only used here and 1 Pet. ii. 24." Archbishop Newcome; who observes, that "some suppose an allusion to the scape-goat Lev. xvi. 20—22." See also Macknight; who translates it, *to carry away*. But Jesus is compared to the victim which was sacrificed, not to that which was suffered to escape. To take away sin, therefore, is the same as to remove or abolish it, ver. 26: that is, by the figurative sprinkling of his blood all sin or legal disqualification was removed. "*αναφερω, sursum fero—sacrificium offero—aufero, tollo.*" Schleusner.

[2] *Many:*] *i. e.* all mankind, Jew or Gentile; there is no legal impediment to prevent any who are willing from entering into this covenant. For this extensive application of the word *many*, see Rom. v. 19, Matt. xxvi. 28. "to bear away the sins of all." Wakefield.

[3] *Without sin.*] *χωρις ἁμαρτιας, without a sin-offering.* See 2 Cor. v. 21. Newcome. The writer continues the same allusion. Christ, the high-priest of the new dispensation, having offered himself a sacrifice for sin, enters into the celestial holy of holies with his own blood, like the high-priest on the day of atonement into the earthly sanctuary with the blood of his animal victims. And, like the Jewish high-priest, he will at the appointed time appear again: not, however, till the consummation of all things, when he shall come to accomplish the hopes of those who have placed their confidence in him. He will then appear, not like the Levitical high-priest, to return again into the sanctuary at the stated season with the same victims; nor, as he himself once entered, to put an end to sin by the sacrifice of himself. He will have done with sin altogether. And as the high-priest issues from the holy of holies, after having finished the services of the day of atonement, in his golden dress, announcing pardon and reconciliation, and com-

You remember, my brethren, that in the former part of this epistle I represented to you that our great teacher and master was, not a being of a different species, and of superior rank, but a man like ourselves, in all respects like other men. Now, it would be greatly inconsistent with the state and condition of a human being to be repeatedly subject to the stroke of death: nor is any thing of this kind intended in his case. But as it is the general lot of the children of Adam to resign their breath at the time appointed by God; and after this, in some future period, to rise again, and to be fixed in a state of happiness or misery correspondent to their respective characters, and to die no more; so Jesus, the Messiah, has died once, and will also appear again. He died a voluntary sacrifice for all mankind, to set aside all legal ceremonial disqualifications, and to open a way for the admission of all believers, without distinction, to the blessings of the new covenant. But, as he is now gone into the celestial sanctuary, as our high-priest, to present his offered blood, so, like the high-priest of the Mosaic

Ch. IX. Ver. 28.

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manding the silver trumpets of the Jubilee to sound, so Christ will appear in robes of majesty and glory, to announce that the reign of sin and death is for ever closed; that the era of life, and joy, and everlasting triumph is begun; and that those who by patient continuance in well doing, have been seeking for glory, honour, and immortality, shall now find all the promises fulfilled, all their expectations exceeded, and that they have not in vain trusted to a merciful and faithful Creator. This beautiful allusion to the return of the high-priest from the sanctuary on the day of atonement in his golden dress, to announce the Jubilee, is borrowed by Dr. Doddridge from Limborch.

Ch. IX. Ver. 28. institute, who, at the close of the solemn rites of the day of atonement, appeared to the people in the glory of his magnificent attire to announce their reinstatement in the covenant with God, and at the proper season to proclaim the year of jubilee; in the same manner will our exalted high-priest in due season return again, not in the mean and humble form in which he appeared before, when he came to offer a sacrifice for his own purification and that of his followers, but he will appear in his own and his Father's glory to close the dispensations of divine providence, to rescue his faithful disciples from the power of the grave, to put them into possession of the kingdom prepared for them, to fulfill every promise, and to exceed every expectation and every hope.

3. The Jewish scriptures foretell one great efficacious sacrifice, which should supersede all the inefficient sacrifices of the Mosaic ritual, ver. 1—10.

1.) If the legal sacrifices had been of sufficient value and efficacy, they would have ceased long ago, ver. 1—3.

Ch. X. Ver. 1. *Wherefore*[1], *the law having a shadow of future good things*[2], and *not the originals*[3] *themselves, is*

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[1] *Wherefore.*] γαρ, *for*, the reason of the preceding assertion. See Newcome. Or, according to Macknight, *wherefore*, introducing an inference: see ver. 4. Perhaps *moreover*, introducing a collateral argument. See Peirce.

[2] *Future good things:*] "*i. e.* the kingdom of glory in heaven." Newcome. See also Peirce and Sykes. More probably the blessings of the dispensation of the Messiah. Col. ii. 17.

by no means able, with the same sacrifices which Ch. X.
are offered every year, to make those who present
themselves[4] *perfect*[5] *for ever*[6]. *For then these* Ver. 2.
offerings would have ceased[7]; *because the wor-*
shipers being once purified would have had no more
consciousness of sin; whereas in those sacrifices 3.
there *is a yearly acknowledgement of sin.*

I have another argument to advance, to satisfy you that the Messiah need not to die more than once: it is derived from the representations of the holy and prophetic scriptures. I have already observed that the Mosaic tabernacle and its costly furniture were but a faint resemblance of that far more splendid sanctuary which Moses saw, and in which it was intended that our great high-priest should officiate. It could not therefore be supposed that

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[3] *The originals.*] So εικων in this connexion must be understood. See Peirce. The tabernacle shown to Moses in the Mount, in which Jesus is represented as now officiating. "Εικων, *res ac veritas: ipsa rerum substantia.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *Who present themselves.*] τους προσερχομενους. See Wakefield. "The same as λατρευοντας, *the worshipers*, in the next verse." Peirce.

[5] *Perfect.*] τελειους *i. e.* consecrated, ceremonially holy. See ch. vii. 11, 19, 28, ix. 9. Mr. Peirce and others erroneously interpret it as signifying *entirely free from guilt:* forgetting that the writer is here treating of ceremonial impurity only.

[6] *For ever.*] εις το διηνεκες. See ver. 14. Wakefield, Newcome. This is undoubtedly the true arrangement, though commonly joined with the preceding clause: *v. g.* year after year continually.

[7] *Would have ceased.*] See Wakefield. The Syriac, Vulgate, and Æthiopic versions want the negative particle; which, being retained in the common copies, makes it necessary to read the sentence with an interrogation: "Would they not have ceased to be offered?"

Ch. X. Ver. 3. the annual sacrifices offered, by the appointment of Moses, on the day of atonement, should be a permanent and perpetual consecration of the worshipers. Had they been such, they would not have been repeated. For if, being once consecrated, they had been consecrated for ever, they would have known that they had been so, and would not have imagined themselves to have been in a condition which required repeated sacrifices and purifications. Whereas, in fact, the annual solemnities of the day of atonement were a perpetual memorial, that by errors and transgressions they had excluded themselves from the privileges of that covenant in which they were thus reinstated.

2.) Hence the writer infers the incompetency of animal victims to effect permanent sanctification, ver. 4.

4. *Wherefore*[1] it is *impossible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.*

The appointment of the annual sacrifice proves that the efficacy of those sacrifices lasted only from year to year; and that the blood of animal victims, though it answered the purpose for a limited time, could not completely purify the people, and perma-

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[1] *Wherefore.*] γαρ. In the illative sense. "*Besides.*" Macknight. See ver. 1. The animal victims were offered yearly; therefore they could not completely remove ceremonial pollution. The writer is far from meaning to say, that though animal blood could not purify from moral evil, the blood of Jesus could. This is quite foreign to his argument.

nently deliver them from their ceremonial and legal disqualifications. Ch. X. Ver. 4.

3.) The writer, to establish his doctrine, cites a pertinent passage from the Psalms of David, ver. 5—7.

Wherefore one *when he cometh into the world saith*[2], *Sacrifice and offering thou choosest not, a body hast thou prepared for me*[3]: *in burnt offer-* 5. 6.

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[2] *He saith.*] The passage cited is Psalm xl. 6—8. Archbishop Newcome remarks, that "the words of the Psalm from the LXX. version are here accommodated. A great Christian truth is expressed in them, and no reasoning from them is intended." The Psalmist is commonly understood as speaking in the person of Christ.

Dr. Sykes, however, contends that the fortieth Psalm is no prophecy of Christ, nor is it cited as such, nor is Christ the speaker in this quotation, nor is he represented as such by the author, who only cites a few verses from the Psalm, alleging the authority of David to prove, that under the Mosaic dispensation itself sacrifices were held in no estimation in comparison with the practice of virtue and obedience to the will of God. He shows that the difficulties which occur in attempting to interpret the Psalm as the language of the Messiah are insurmountable. He interprets the whole, therefore, as the language of David. There is no mystery in the phrase *coming into the world*: "They are the words," says Dr. Sykes, "of one who lived many hundred years before Christ came into the world. They are the words of the Psalmist, and they agree to him. They are descriptive of the Psalmist himself, who from a low and mean condition was advanced by God's providence to be a mighty king. And he declares expressly the little worth of sacrifices, and says that the only thing which could make a man acceptable to God was the doing his will: Surely his authority was rightly urged."

[3] *A body hast thou prepared for me.*] σωμα κατηρτισω μοι. In the Hebrew, "mine ears hast thou opened," or *digged*, or *bored*. Supposed to be an allusion to the law which required that a servant, if he chose to bind himself to his master for life, should

Ch X. Ver. 7. *ings and in sin offerings thou hast no complacency. Then I said, Behold I come; in the volume of the book*[1] *it is written of me to do thy will, O God.*

That the comparative insignificance of these often repeated sacrifices is not unduly estimated by me, and that I am not alone in my judgement of them, is evident from the strong language of David in the

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have his ear bored through with an awl. Exod. xxi. 6, Deut. xv. 17. Mr. Peirce prefers the reading of the LXX., from which this writer cites the passage: and by ingenious conjectures he shows in what way the Hebrew might have been corrupted; which, however, he believes to have agreed with the LXX. when the epistle was written. Peirce applies the whole fortieth Psalm to Christ, and endeavours to show that it contains nothing inconsistent with that supposition. He, with the whole stream of commentators, applies this clause to what is called the incarnation of Christ.

Newcome adopts the conjecture of Lambert Bos, that the original reading in the Greek was, ὠτια, *ears*. See Bowyer. But the writer alludes to the word σωμα, ver. 10, which plainly shows how he read the text; and is perhaps an indication that he quotes the passage as the words of Christ, whether allusively or otherwise. Dr. Sykes says, "The meaning is, Thou hast given me a body, strength, constitution, whereby I am enabled to do thy will, and I am resolved to do it for ever." He adds, "one thing seems very clear from this citation, that this epistle was written originally in Greek, and not in Hebrew; and that we have it in its native language, and not in a translation."

[1] *In the volume of the book.*] εν κεφαλιδι. "In what book was this written concerning David? Ans. The promise made to Abraham was, 'Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.' Gen. xv. 18. This will of God was not accomplished by any who lived before David. He having subdued all opposition, to the river Euphrates, might properly say, that it was *written of him* that he should *do the will of God*. Κεφαλις was the first roll, or volume of a book, with the title prefixed. When David here speaks of the head or first volume of the book, he says plainly enough that this was written of him in the book of Genesis, and there we find it." Sykes.

fortieth psalm; in which he alludes to the power of God, in raising him from a very low condition to a situation of great dignity and importance, though surrounded with many difficulties; and expresses his firm determination to obey the will of God with all his heart, as what he knew would be far more acceptable than the most costly sacrifices he could offer. He acknowledges the interposition of God in the predictions of his advancement and success, which had been transmitted in the books of Moses, and which had been fulfilled in him. He is thankful for the means of instruction which had been afforded him, for the capacity which he possessed of executing the divine purpose, and expresses his determination above all things to obey the commandments of God, in comparison with which the whole ceremonial institute was of no value; *q. d.* Thou takest no pleasure in offerings or sacrifices of any description, and therefore my chief concern shall be to execute thy whole pleasure every where, and at all times, agreeably to the precepts of thy righteous law, and then I am sure that I shall obtain thy favour. Ch. X. Ver. 7.

4.) The writer comments upon the text, and argues from it that the Levitical sacrifices are superseded by the great Sacrifice of Christ, ver. 8—10. 8.

After saying first[2], *Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt offerings, and sacrifices for sin thou dost not choose, neither hast pleasure in them which are*

[2] *After saying first.*] So Wakefield. ανωτερον λεγων. "Above he saith." Newcome.

Ch. X. Ver. 9. *offered according to the law, he saith next, Behold, I come to do thy will*[1]. *He removeth the first*[2], 10. *that he may establish the second. By which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ*[3] *once-for-all.*

Now, my brethren, if you will permit me to accommodate the words of David to our present subject, and to argue upon them as though the Messiah were the speaker, you observe that he first represents all the Levitical sacrifices of every kind as of no value in the sight of God, and as affording him no pleasure even though they were rites of his own appointment: not indeed that they were really displeasing and offensive. The Psalmist speaks comparatively. The Messiah, whom I assume as the speaker, declares that they are of no efficacy in comparison with that which he was about to offer in obedience to the will of his Father and his God.

And let me particularly direct your attention to this circumstance in particular. The speaker does not represent the sacrifices required by the law, and that offering which in duty to God was presented by the Messiah, as contemporary sacrifices, but suc-

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[1] *Thy will.*] The received text adds ὁ Θεος, *O God*, which is wanting in the best copies, and dropped by Griesbach.

[2] *He removeth the first.*] "He abolisheth the former will and prescription of God concerning legal sacrifices, that he may establish the latter concerning the sacrifice of Christ." Peirce. "He speaks negatively of sacrifices, the stronger to establish the obligation of doing the will of God." Sykes.

[3] *The body of Jesus Christ.*] *i. e.* Jesus Christ himself, see ver. 5. This allusion shows that σωμα was the reading of the LXX. where the author of the epistle cited the text.

cessive. The first are removed out of the way, to make room for the latter. The sacrifices of the law are superseded by the far superior sacrifice of the gospel: that sacrifice, which was a great act of filial obedience in him by whom it was presented, and on that account most highly acceptable to God. I mean that one sacrifice of his own person on the cross, by which he consecrated both himself and all his followers once for all, and which being itself the seal and ratification of the new covenant which abolishes the old, puts an end to all the claims of the law, and to all its ceremonial injunctions and pollutions, and makes it impossible for those who are once sanctified and received into covenant to desecrate themselves again. Ch. X. Ver. 10.

4. The advancement of Christ to dignity and dominion proves that the sacrifice which he offered was sufficient to accomplish every necessary purpose without repetition, ver. 11—14.

And indeed every high-priest[4] *continueth ministering from time to time*[5], *and offering frequently the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.* 11.

The high-priests under the law, from year to

[4] *Every high-priest.*] The Alexandrine and Clermont manuscripts, and the Syriac and Æthiopic versions, read αρχιερευς, *high-priest*; which indeed the connexion requires, as the writer has been speaking of no other. See Peirce.

[5] *From time to time.*] Gr. "from day to day." Peirce remarks, that καθ' ἡμεραν is applied to the high-priest ch. vii. 27, and may denote nothing more than the expression *from time to time*.

Ch. X. Ver. 11. year, upon the day of atonement, enter into the holy of holies, offering continually their animal sacrifices, whose effect only lasts for a year; at the expiration of which the same sacrifices must be repeated in order to renew the violated covenant.

12. *But this* priest[1], *after he had offered one sacrifice*
13. *for sins, for ever*[2], *sat down at the right hand of God, waiting, after this, till his enemies be made his footstool*[3].

Our great high-priest, having entered into the heavenly sanctuary to present that acceptable sacrifice which was to ratify the new covenant, and to put a final period to all the transgressions and sacrifices of the old; having performed the duties of his priestly office, was put into possession of his regal dignity; being appointed head and governor of the universal church. And he is now waiting at the right hand of God in full confidence in the divine promise, that his dominion shall be universal; that error, idolatry, and vice, shall be subdued by the power of truth, and that even death itself shall ultimately be destroyed.

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[1] *But this* priest.] ὁυτος, this *man*. "Christ." Wakefield. The received text reads αυτος, *he*. See Griesbach.

[2] *For sins for ever.*] "after offering for ever one sacrifice." Wakefield. For this construction see Bowyer. Having finished his priestly he assumed his regal office, as a priest after the order of Melchisedec: Psalm cx. 1.

[3] *His enemies be made his footstool.*] Οἱ ἐχθροι sunt, quicquid impedit salutem quam Christus suis impetrare voluit, scelera, superstitio, idololatria, et mors ipsa ut explicat Paulus 1 Cor. xv. 26.

Therefore, his *one offering*[4] *hath made those who are sanctified*[5] *perfect for ever*[6]. Ch. X. Ver. 14.

We may therefore justly conclude, that as Christ is exalted to dignity and dominion, his sacrifice has been accepted and needeth not to be repeated. All those who believe in him, or who, in successive generations, may by faith become members of that holy community of which he is the head, will be considered as sprinkled with the blood of the federal victim, and as incapable of desecrating themselves again by any transgressions of the ceremonial law. In other words, the first covenant being superseded by the second, which is confirmed by the death of

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[4] *Therefore* his *one offering*.] γαρ, *therefore*. See Macknight. The exaltation of Christ to his throne proves that his one offering had been accepted, μια προσφορα, in the nominative case. See Bengel *ap.* Bowyer, and Wakefield.

[5] *Those who are sanctified*.] ἁγιαζομενους, those who having discarded *dead works*, the works of the law, ch. ix. 14, have entered by faith into the holy community of which Christ is the head.

[6] *Perfect for ever*.] See ch. vii. 11, ix. 9, x. 1. So perfectly free from all legal, or ceremonial offences, voluntary or involuntary, as never to be liable to them again: the law of works being completely superseded by the law of faith, that new covenant of which Christ is the mediator, and his death the seal. The meaning is obscurely expressed by Peirce: "by his one offering he hath made an expiation, which avails perpetually to render all those who partake of the virtue of it completely qualified for the worship of God." This learned writer, and the generality of modern commentators, perplex themselves and darken the meaning of the author, by imputing to the death of tthe Messiah an expiatory influence for moral offences, when the writer only means to satisfy he Hebrews that the death of Christ has put an end to the Mosaic institute, the law of works; and that of course it for ever supersedes the necessity of sacrifices to those who believe in Christ.

Ch. X. Ver. 14. Christ, nothing but wilful transgression of its moral precepts can exclude the believer from its privileges and promises.

5. The Jewish scriptures themselves, by declaring the complete remission of sins under the new covenant, virtually announce that all sacrifices are at an end, ver. 15—18.

15. *And the holy spirit also beareth testimony*[1] *to*
16. *us; for after having first announced, This* is *the covenant which I will make with them in those days, the Lord saith*[2], *I will put my laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them upon their minds;*
17. *and* he addeth[3], *Their sins and their iniquities I*
18. *will remember no more. Now where remission of these* is, *there is no more* any *sacrifice for sin*[4].

And now to bring my argument to a conclusion. The doctrines which I have advanced in the course of it must, I know, my brethren, have been very

[1] *The spirit beareth testimony.*] "The holy ghost concurs with us in the truth of what we have been saying." Sykes. See Peirce. With what address the writer at the close of his argument appeals to the testimony of the prophetic scriptures: a testimony which would have the greatest weight with those to whom he was writing!

[2] *The Lord saith.*] For this construction see Markland, Owen, Bowyer, Griesbach. *I will put my laws.* The LXX. reads διδες δωσω, which makes the construction complete.

[3] *And* he addeth, &c.] These words in the prophet follow at some distance from those before cited, and should be marked as not being a continued citation. See Markland in Bowyer. Jer. xxxi. 32, 34.

[4] *No more sacrifice for sin.*] So that the very scriptures themselves lead to the conclusion that all sacrifices shall be abolished; and the Levitical law of course superseded.

offensive to your earliest and most cherished prepossessions. A suffering Messiah, and an abrogated law, are revolting to your feelings: and yet, with respect to the former, I trust that you will allow, upon calm reflection, that there is nothing disgraceful to the Messiah, or inconsistent with the dignity of his character, in his once offering himself up as a victim to ratify the new and better covenant before he took possession of his regal office. And as to the latter, the inspired prophetic writings expressly announce the abolition of the old covenant, and the substitution of the new. In that very prophecy of Jeremiah which I have lately cited, ch. xxxi. 32, God himself, after having foretold that he is about to introduce a new covenant, the laws of which, instead of being engraven on tables of stone, should be inscribed on the tables of the heart; or, in other words, the precepts of which would be so few and simple that all might understand, retain and practise them; in the continuation of the prophecy adds these remarkable words,—"Their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." Now you cannot suppose that God means to say, that under the new covenant he will overlook all moral guilt. Far from it. It is very true that he will freely and graciously pardon all offences, however great and aggravated, which are truly repented of and forsaken: a declaration which was frequently made under the old covenant. But the sins here spoken of are those legal offences, for the remission of which sacrifices were provided under the old Mosaic dis- Ch. X. Ver. 18.

Ch. X. Ver. 18. pensation: ceremonial pollutions; offences against holy rites, holy times, holy places, and restrictions relating to food. All these shall be abolished: they shall have no existence under the new dispensation: the one sacrifice of Christ has put an end to them all, by introducing a new and better covenant. But if the offences are abolished, the penalties are of course abolished too. Where there is no transgression, no remission is necessary, no sacrifices are required. The covenant into which you have now entered is a law of liberty.

Such is the reasoning, and such the conclusion, of this pious and eloquent, but uninspired writer. His main and obvious design is to reconcile the believing but unstable Hebrews to the revolting doctrines of a suffering Messiah, and an abrogated law: and he produces arguments which, though not all strictly logical, nor correctly scriptural, are many of them valid, some of them very ingenious, and all of them such as would be acceptable to the taste of the age in which they were written, and were calculated to produce the desired effect upon those to whom they were addressed.

It is sometimes difficult to make out the writer's meaning; but I am inclined to think that the difficulty lies more in the prejudices of the reader, than in the style of the writer. His object is simple and intelligible: he never deviates from his main design; and he is very much in earnest in the prosecution of it. To us, who live in a remote age and

country, and under different opinions, habits, and laws, the abolition of the Mosaic ritual is a matter of indifference; and we have no prejudices against a crucified Messiah. But to a Jew, the law was every thing. The Mosaic institute was the great charter of his rights and privileges: it distinguished his nation from all others as the chosen favourites of God. To be told, therefore, that this law was to be repealed, and these privileges were to be laid open to the Gentile world, was the bitterest mortification to Jewish pride; and the subject required to be treated with a very delicate hand. This is the true key to the interpretation of this celebrated epistle. Ch. X. Ver. 18.

But the mass of modern critics having their imaginations occupied with the persuasion that the death of Christ was, some how or other, an expiation for the moral offences of mankind, an idea which never crossed the mind of the writer of this epistle, mix up this notion, of which their minds are full, with all which this writer advances upon the subject of ceremonial pollutions and Levitical sacrifices; by which means they miss the true meaning of the author, and involve themselves and their readers in inextricable difficulties; of which we have many instances in the notes of those pious, learned, and laborious expositors, Mr. Peirce and Dr. Sykes[1]. If the present writer has succeeded better

[1] *Mr. Peirce and Dr. Sykes.*] It is curious, and even amusing, to see how these and other ingenious commentators writhe under the pressure of difficulties of their own formation, and

Ch. X. Ver. 18.

in elucidating this epistle than his learned and able predecessors, it is entirely owing to the help which they have supplied, and to his having happily escaped from those popular and erroneous opinions in which they, with all their learning, piety, ability, and integrity, were much entangled, and by which they were misled.

The remainder of the epistle consists chiefly of practical advices and exhortations, adapted to the circumstances and views of the Hebrew believers, and urged with great eloquence and force.

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the pains and ingenuity which they display in their contrivances to darken a clear text, and to accommodate the language of the writer to their own preconceived hypothesis. And that without any suspicion that they have misconceived his meaning.

Thus, ch. vii. 28, where the writer speaks of Christ as offering sacrifice for his own sins as well as those of the people, meaning his ceremonial disqualification for the priestly office, as being of the tribe of Judah; the commentators, misled by their unscriptural notion of an atonement for sin, almost unanimously, and without hesitation, flatly contradict the author, by saying, that Christ needed it not, and did not offer any such sacrifice for himself. And again, ch. x. 14, where the writer asserts that "one offering has for ever perfected them that are sanctified:" meaning nothing more than this, that believers in Christ were for ever exempted from the danger of committing any ceremonial offences; a position which his Hebrew readers would perfectly understand: commentators are greatly puzzled in their attempts to reconcile this assertion to their mystical notions concerning the atonement made by Christ for the sins of the world, to which they imagine that the author here alludes. Dr. Sykes, in his long note upon ch. x. 18, shows how much he is gravelled by the broad assertions of this writer; which however are literally true, according to his own sense of them, though not easily reconcileable to certain modern doctrines, however fashionable or popular.

PART THE SECOND.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINES ESTABLISHED.

SECTION I.

THE WRITER, entering upon the Practical Part of the Epistle, presses upon the believing Hebrews a stedfast adherence to their Christian profession, and suggests many considerations to guard them against apostasy. Ch. x. 19—37. Ch. X.

1. The writer urges the believing Hebrews to a cordial acceptance of the Christian doctrine, which releases them from the terrors of the law, ver. 19—22.

Having, therefore, brethren, liberty of entrance into the most holy place[1] *by the blood of Jesus*[2], Ver. 19.

[1] *Liberty of entrance into the most holy place.*] παρρησιαν. "full liberty to go into the sanctuary." Wakefield. Though almost all the expositors interpret this of heaven, yet the connexion clearly shows that it must signify the Christian covenant, typified by the celestial tabernacle exhibited to Moses in the Mount, in which Jesus, our high-priest, is represented as officiating.

[2] *By the blood of Jesus:*] *i. e.* as the high-priest went into the most holy place purified with the blood of the animal victim, so we, sprinkled with the blood of Christ, may enter into the heavenly sanctuary, *i. e.* the Christian covenant.

Ch. X. Ver. 20. *which* entrance *he hath consecrated for us*[1], *a lately opened and living way*[2], *through the veil, that is,* 21. *his flesh*[3]; *and having a high-priest over the family of God,* 22. *let us approach*[4] *with a true heart, in full assurance of faith*[5], *having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience*[6].

Having stated what appeared to be needful to re-

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[1] *Consecrated for us.*] "When the temple was rebuilt and set apart for religious purposes, it was called its *encænia* (consecration), Ezra vi. 16; when, therefore, the law of Moses was laid aside and its ceremonies removed, and another means to the favour of God was established, the same term was very properly employed." Sykes.

[2] *A lately opened and living way.*] "προσφατον, propriè recens dictum, deinde generatim recens: cui opponitur παλαιφατον. Ὁδος ζωσα, amœna, jucunda: ut regio amœna dicitur vitam nobis reddere." Rosenmuller. "*A living way*, a way to life." Sykes. Faith is the new and living way, in opposition to the old way of dead works, the works of the law. See ver. 22.

[3] *The veil, that is, his flesh.*] Many suppose an allusion to the incarnation of Christ, but without necessity. The doctrine of the epistle is, that the death of Christ put an end to the old covenant and introduced the new. To this event probably the writer alludes, as the medium of access to the sanctuary. *through the veil,* that is, through *his flesh:* q. d. through himself, through his death and the sprinkling of his blood.

[4] *Let us approach.*] προσερχωμεθα. "let us come to that place to which we may have free access, and to which we are so graciously invited." Sykes.

[5] *Full assurance of faith.*] "*plena fide et fiducia.*" Rosenmuller. This explains what he means by the new and living way, ver. 20. "In full conviction of mind that Jesus is the Christ, and of the consequences of that great and important truth." Sykes.

[6] *Sprinkled.*] An allusion to the purification of persons and things under the law by the sprinkling of blood: Heb. ix. 9, Numb. xix. 2—10. With minds free from all scruples relating to the precepts or the anathemas of the abrogated law. Mr. Peirce justly observes, that the 22d verse should end at this clause, which ends the sentence in most of the Greek copies.

concile your minds to the offensive doctrines of a suffering Messiah, and an abrogated law, and having shown that, notwithstanding all the external simplicity of the Christian institution, it may still boast of a priest and lawgiver, of a temple and a service, of a sacrifice and of a sanctuary, far more glorious than that of Moses, permit me now, my beloved brethren, to press upon your consideration some of the important practical consequences which naturally follow from the facts which I have established. Ch. X. Ver. 22.

And first, be true to the principles you have adopted, and allow them their proper weight and influence upon your minds: and, seeing that all who believe have free access, through the blood of Jesus, into the celestial sanctuary, by that path which leads to life, which he has so lately opened and consecrated, through the veil of his humiliation and sufferings, into the most holy place, into which he is already entered, and where he is ever ready, as the high-priest of our profession, to present the children of the family at the mercy-seat of their God and Father, let us, my brethren, enter boldly into the sanctuary and lay claim to our privilege. Let us be Christians indeed, undaunted by difficulties, unfettered by prejudices: let us be strong in faith and upright in heart; and, being sprinkled with the blood of the new covenant, let us shake off the fetters of the old; nor let us torment ourselves with groundless apprehensions of any evil consequences of those anathemas which the abrogated law may

Ch. X. Ver. 22. denounce against such who withdraw their allegiance from its obsolete requisitions.

2. Having made profession of their faith in baptism, he exhorts them to adhere stedfastly to the Christian doctrine, to govern their lives by Christian principles, and to unite with their brethren in Christian communion, ver. 22—29.

23. *And having had* our *bodies washed*[1] *with pure water, let us hold fast the profession of* our *hope*[2] *unmoved: for he that hath promised* is *faithful.*

24. *And let us consider one another, that we may pro-*

25. *voke to love*[3] *and to good works: not leaving off the assembling of ourselves*[4] *together,* as *the custom*

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[1] *Our bodies washed.*] Peirce observes, that the writer here speaks of the initiatory rite of baptism; and that if moral purity had been intended, *χειρας, the hands,* would probably have been used, instead of *σωμα, the body.* Some think that an allusion is intended to the washing of the high-priest previously to his entering the most holy place. Lev. xvi. 4.

[2] *The profession of* our *hope.*] Our translators read *faith,* upon the authority of one manuscript only: *hope* is unquestionably the authentic reading. See Griesbach.

[3] *Provoke to love.*] Mr. Peirce thinks that the author glances at some misconduct of the Hebrew Christians to the Gentile converts; and observes, that "the verse is happily translated in the public version, the word *provoke* having a middle signification like *παροξυσμος* in the original.

[4] *Not leaving off the assembling ourselves.*] *επισυναγωγην,* "for public worship. Some deserted these assemblies through fear of persecution." Newcome. Peirce supposes an allusion to the prejudices of the Jewish against the Gentile Christians, which induced them to forsake the Christian assemblies upon account of the Gentiles being admitted into them. The word occurs but once more in the New Testament, 2 Thess. ii. 1; where it signifies the gathering together to Christ at the day of judgement, to which Sykes supposes there may be an allusion

of some is, *but exhorting* to it, *and so much the more as ye see the day approaching* [5]. Ch. X. Ver. 25.

Having been baptized as an emblem of our purification from all ceremonial pollution, and as a symbol of initiation into the Christian covenant, let us stedfastly adhere to those principles which we profess, and which lie at the foundation of our immortal hope. And since our faith and hope rest upon the promise of a faithful and unchangeable God, we have

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here. Or it may signify, *q. d.* "Do not leave off the assembling yourselves together, and thereby making a public profession of your faith. Some of you seem ashamed of the gospel, and keep away from all public meetings, not considering their true use." "not abandoning our association in the gospel." Wakefield. Peirce thinks that the writer uses the word επισυναγωγην that he may not be supposed to recommend attending at the synagogue.

"The Gnostics," says Dr. Priestley, "laid no stress on public worship, or any of the positive institutions of religion. They had no regular officiating ministers or places of worship; and by this means they more easily escaped persecution. But the apostle insists upon a very different system, urging the importance of public assemblies of Christians, which answer several very excellent purposes. One is, that of an open profession of Christianity, to which all Christians are bound; another is that of public instruction; and a third of no less consequence is, that of forming Christians into a regular body, connecting them together, and thus bringing them under an obligation to mutual exhortation and assistance; which in time of persecution is of the greatest use."

"*deserere την επισ. deficere a religione Christiana. Sed verba καθως εθος τισι, hanc interpretationem vix admittere videntur. Omnia autem optime adhærent, si cogites, hanc negligentiam in frequentandis cœtibus Christianis fuisse initium defectionis ab ipsa religione.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *The day approaching.*] The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, which Jesus had foretold: the accomplishment of which prophecy was then visibly approaching. "The great day of retribution coming on, as our life draws to an end, and the danger of death is increased by persecution." Newcome.

Ch. X. Ver. 25. a sure foundation for steady confidence. Therefore, let our Christian principles produce their proper effect upon our conduct: and, instead of watching each other, in order to discover something amiss in each other's temper, views, or conduct, to justify or palliate the use of bitter and exasperating language, let us rather emulate each other's excellencies, and vie with each other in good will and good works. Remembering that we profess one common faith, and are united under one common head, let us not quarrel upon lesser points, nor desert Christian assemblies, as some do, for differences of opinion concerning rites and ceremonies which now cease to be obligatory. Instead of this uncandid behaviour, let us exhort each other to Christian communion, and to a regular attendance on social worship, and the rather as you cannot but remark, from the commotions which are taking place in different parts of Judea and its neighbourhood, that the great day of calamity and destruction, so solemnly and explicitly foretold by Christ, cannot be far distant. At this season security and peace are promised to the true disciples of Jesus amidst great national calamity and desolation: it is therefore of the utmost importance that you should not forfeit your claim to this privilege by excluding yourselves from Christian assemblies.

The writer here touches, but very gently, lest he should give offence, upon the extreme jealousy which the Jewish Christians entertained of the Gentile con-

verts, and of their unwillingness to hold communion with them unless they would submit to the rites of the law; and the argument he urges would come home very powerfully to their personal feelings. For, by excluding themselves from the communion of the church, they excluded themselves from its privileges, and from that protection which Christ had promised his disciples in the day of national desolation: while, therefore, they were giving vent to their spleen and prejudice against the Gentile converts, they were inadvertently exposing themselves to the greatest personal danger, and placing themselves out of the protection of the divine promise. Ch. X. Ver. 25.

3. The writer warns them earnestly against apostasy from their Christian profession, ver. 26—37; and,

1.) He reminds them of the severe and inevitable punishments to which apostates are exposed, ver. 26—31.

For if we sin wilfully [1], *after having received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remaineth* any *sacrifice for sin* [2], *but a certain fearful ex-* 26. 27.

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[1] *If we sin wilfully.*] The author is here speaking, not of every presumptuous sin, but of deliberate apostasy. See ver. 29. Peirce, Macknight, and Seeker *ap.* Newcome.

[2] Any *sacrifice for sin:*] *i. e.* there is no sacrifice by which persons guilty of this offence may be restored to a covenant state. Why not? Because apostasy in such circumstances, when the strongest evidence has been resisted, is a state from which it is morally impossible that a man should recover. Under the

Ch. X. Ver. 27. *pectation of judgement* [1], *and a fiery indignation* [2], *that will devour the adversaries.*

My brethren, above all things beware of apostasy. It has been our privilege to receive the truth in the knowledge of it. We not only admit the gospel doctrine to be true, and receive it as a truth of the highest importance which has ever been communicated to man, but we receive and acknowledge it upon the most cogent evidence, upon evidence which commands our most deliberate assent, and which subdues our most inveterate prejudices. Let us stedfastly adhere to our profession; for wretched

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law sacrifices were instituted for many offences against ceremonial institutions: under the new dispensation all sacrifices are abolished, because the offences which required them are themselves abolished. No such transgressions can exclude from the gospel covenant; but apostasy, wilful deliberate apostasy, does exclude, and no sacrifice remains to restore the offender to his privileges again. The reason is, that it is morally impossible that he should repent. And the writer expresses himself strongly, to deter the timid and unstable Hebrews from apostasy; but he no where says that if they repent they will not be restored. "Suppose," says Dr. Sykes, "a man to sin wilfully, and suppose, too, that there is no sacrifice for sin, because all sacrifices are put down, yet Repentance is left; and God is merciful, and repentance will produce its effect."

[1] *A certain fearful expectation of judgement.*] "a certain frightful, formidable expectation of condemnation, arising from the sense of justice in God, and the fitness of punishment to sin." Sykes. Perhaps arising also from our Lord's predictions of national calamity and desolation which were upon the verge of being accomplished to the uttermost.

[2] *Fiery indignation.*] πυρος ζηλος, "*zeal of fire:* a thorough disposition and resolution to punish most severely the adversaries of Christ." Sykes. "a raging fire." Wakefield. *Which is about to devour* (μελλοντος) *the adversaries:* q. d. The wrath of God, like a consuming fire, is just ready to fall upon the malignant enemies and persecutors of the gospel.

beyond conception will be our lot if we apostatize from it. If it could possibly happen, that after such conviction and such profession as ours we could basely desert the cause of truth, and become open enemies to the faith of Christ, our case were hopeless indeed. No sacrifice remains: no provision is made for the restoration of apostates under such circumstances. Having already resisted the strongest evidence, and overcome the most powerful motives, it is morally impossible that they should be reclaimed. They have nothing more to expect but the vengeance of an insulted God, and to be speedily involved in the approaching inevitable ruin of their hardened and abandoned countrymen. Ch. X. Ver. 27.

Any one who breaketh[3] *the law of Moses*[4] *dieth without mercy, upon* the evidence *of two or three witnesses: of how much severer punishment, think ye, will he be deemed worthy, who trampleth upon*[5] *the son of God, and accounteth the blood of the* 28. 29.

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[3] *Any one who breaketh.*] ἀθετήσας. So Wakefield, Sykes. "sc. ἐκκαίως. Ἀθετειν, ὑφιζειν, καταφρονειν. *Hesychius. Qui Mosis legem violat, contemnit.*" Rosenmuller. "The presumptuous offender. Numb. xv. 35." Sykes. The form of expression implies that the Jewish polity still existed.

[4] *Law of Moses.*] Peirce justly observes, that the law of Moses must here be restricted to the ceremonial law, otherwise the argument *a fortiori* would not hold. This is confirmed by a reference to the law itself, Numb. xv. 30, which immediately precedes the account of the man who was stoned to death for gathering sticks on the sabbath-day.

[5] *Trampleth upon.*] This, as Peirce observes, is an expression of scorn, Isa. xxvi. 5, 6, Mal. iv. 3; and of rage, Isa. lxiii. 3, xiv. 25, Dan. viii. 10.

Ch. X. Ver. 29. *covenant, by which he was sanctified*[1], *an unholy thing, and insulteth the spirit of grace*[2].

The law of Moses passes an irreversible sentence of death upon the presumptuous transgressor of its ceremonial precepts, when convicted upon sufficient evidence. How much more severe, then, must be the punishment of the apostate from Christianity, whose offence is so much greater, and the aggravations of it so peculiar; who, having first admitted the claims of Jesus as the Messiah, now rejects him with scorn and rage; who, having once become a party in the Christian covenant, now renounces his concern in it, regards the death of the great federal victim as that of a common malefactor, and disowns all relation to him; and who, having once been convinced of the truth of the Christian doctrine by the miraculous powers of its first teachers, now rejects this divine evidence, and malignantly represents the

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[1] *The blood of the covenant, by which he was sanctified.*] The blood of Christ is the blood of the covenant, not the blood of atonement, but that by which the covenant was ratified; by which he, the apostate, was *sanctified*, that is, ceremonially separated from the unbelieving world, not morally purified. *An unholy thing:* κοινον, a *common* thing. They regarded his death in no other light than that of a common malefactor. See Peirce.

[2] *Insulteth the spirit of grace.*] "shows contempt of the holy spirit gratuitously shed on Christians." Archbishop Newcome. "the mercies of the gospel." Wakefield; who observes, that "Christianity is entitled the *spirit*, in contradiction to the carnal ceremonies of the Jews." Sykes gives a similar interpretation. It is more consistent with the writer's argument to suppose that he refers to spiritual gifts and miraculous powers.

miracles of Jesus and his apostles as the effect of fraud and diabolical agency? Ch. X.

For we know who hath said[3], *Vengeance* belongeth *unto me*[4]; *I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord will judge his people*[5]. It is *a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*[6]. Ver. 30. 31.

Conversant as you are with the writings of Moses, you remember that in his celebrated prophetic song, he introduces God himself as declaring, that it is his prerogative to punish guilt; and to prove that he is

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[3] *We know who hath said,* &c.] This is commonly understood of God: "*quis et quantus.*" Grotius. And Newcome observes, "that there is great dignity in the expression."

[4] *Vengeance belongeth,* &c.] Peirce observes, that the quotation differs both from the Hebrew and the Greek; and he suggests an ingenious criticism, by which to reconcile it to the original. It is cited from Deut. xxxii. 35. The words, *saith the Lord,* are not either in the Hebrew or the LXX.; and in the Epistle they are wanting in the Clermont and some other copies and versions. They are needless, and perhaps spurious. The same text is cited Rom. xii. 19. See Griesbach, Whitby, and Sykes.

[5] *The Lord will judge his people.*] This text almost immediately follows the preceding quotation, Deut. xxxii. 36. It is understood by most expositors in a favourable sense: *q. d.* the Lord shall avenge his people. Mr. Peirce contends, that it is to be taken in the sense of punishing, both here and in the original. There can be no doubt that it is quoted in that sense by this author. Dr. Sykes says, "it is cited only as an evidence that God will certainly take notice of and punish with severity his people that wilfully offend. The general words are to be taken in their general sense; and that is what they are quoted for."

[6] *The living God.*] The prophets who foretold the punishments that should be inflicted upon apostates are dead, but God ever lives to fulfill those threatenings which he authorized them to denounce. "who ever liveth to execute his vengeance." Newcome.

Ch. X. Ver. 31. not there speaking of the heathen only, he adds, a little further on, "The Lord shall judge his people;" by which he declares his firm purpose to punish those who have stood in the nearest relation to him, and have been most highly favoured by him, if they violate their engagements and break his laws. And, from these declarations, we may certainly conclude, that apostates from the Christian faith shall suffer condign punishment. What that punishment will be, it is impossible to conceive or to describe. But of one thing we are assured,—that it will be dreadful and insupportable. And though the prophets of God, who proclaim his judgements, are one after another removed from the land of the living, nevertheless God himself remains from age to age, to fulfill to the utmost, and be assured that he will fully accomplish all that his wisdom and his justice have denounced.

2.) As an antidote to apostasy, the writer urges upon them the recollection of their former zeal, fortitude, and resolution, ver. 32—35.

32. *But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were enlightened, ye endured a*
33. *great combat*[1] *of suffering: partly while ye were made a public spectacle*[2] *by reproaches and afflic-*

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[1] *A great combat.*] Chrysostom observes, that "he does not say *trials* (πειρασμες), but *combat* (αθλησιν): a word that denotes great praise and commendation." See Peirce.

[2] *Made a public spectacle.*] Θεατριζομενοι, "exposed as upon a theatre." Peirce. 1 Cor. iv. 9. Grotius. "to wild beasts and other deaths." Newcome.

tions; and partly, while ye shared with those who were so treated. For indeed ye sympathized with those who were in bonds[3]*: and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods: knowing that ye have for yourselves*[4] *a better and an enduring substance*[5]. *Therefore, cast not away your confidence*[6], *which will receive a great reward.* Ch. X. Ver. 34. 35.

Are any of you now become lukewarm in your attachment to the gospel, and ready to abandon the profession of it? Are you disgusted with its doctrines, ashamed of its reproach, and afraid of suffering for it? Recollect, I beseech you, how differently you thought and felt a few years ago, when the joy-

[3] *Those who were in bonds.*] δεσμιοις. This is the reading of the Alexandrine and Clermont manuscripts, and of the Syriac, Coptic, and Vulgate versions; also of Chrysostom, Theodoret, &c. It is adopted by Griesbach, Peirce, and Newcome. The common reading is, *with me in my bonds*, τοις δεσμοις μου. "Ye had compassion on me in my bonds. Or, ye had compassion upon those who were in chains for Christ." Sykes. "τ. δ. μ. *Effecta esse videtur hæc lectio a librariis, qui hoc etiam argumento confirmare voluerunt Pauli esse hanc epistolam.*" Rosenmuller.

[4] *For yourselves.*] εχειν ἑαυτοις. The best authorities omit εν before ἑαυτοις. Griesbach, Newcome. Mr. Hallett, the learned continuator of Mr. Peirce's *Commentary*, which was broken off by death while he was examining this text, upon the authority of the Alexandrine and other manuscripts and versions, reads ἑαυτους, "knowing that ye yourselves have," &c.

[5] *Enduring substance.*] The received text adds εν ουρανοις, *in heaven*; which words are wanting in the Alexandrine and Clermont manuscripts, and the Æthiopic, Vulgate, and Italic versions. See Griesbach and Wakefield.

[6] *Your confidence.*] παρρησια properly signifies courage and resolution in professing truth. Mark viii. 32, John vii. 26, Acts iv. 13, 29, 31. Hallett, Grotius. "Hold fast that liberty, that freedom of access which is granted to you to enter the holy of holies." Sykes.

Ch. X. Ver. 35. ful tidings were first proclaimed. Recollect how irresistible was the evidence of these glorious facts: how strong the conviction which it carried to your mind, how it dispelled the darkness of your understanding, triumphed over the most inveterate prejudice, and satisfied you completely as to the wisdom of the Christian scheme, its correspondence with the prophecies, and its harmony with all preceding dispensations. Think how soon you were called out to suffer for this profession, when Stephen was stoned, when James was beheaded, when Peter was imprisoned, when enraged persecutors breathed out threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. Recollect the firmness and fortitude with which you bore the severe conflict: some of you being publicly exposed to insults, and severe corporal punishment, as though you were the worst of malefactors, and others being compelled to be the wretched spectators of torments inflicted upon persons dearer to them than themselves; and whom they would willingly have redeemed by suffering in their place. For indeed you sympathized tenderly with those who suffered bonds and imprisonment for Christ and his religion, and endured heroically the loss of all things, relying with joyful confidence on the mercy of God and the promises of the gospel: and assured of ample recompense both here and hereafter, in present peace, in triumphant hope, and in a resurrection to eternal life and happiness. Having set out in your career with these just and animating views, and with this undaunted vigour

and resolution, let me entreat you to persevere, and do not, now that the conflict is almost closed, and victory is at hand, disgrace your character, dishonour your profession, and endanger your immortal interests, by deserting the cause, by casting away your armour, and in a cowardly manner quitting the field. I conjure you to keep up your courage, and maintain the struggle a little longer, and then your success is certain, and your reward will be glorious. Ch. X. Ver. 35.

It would be inexcusable not to remark upon the irresistible evidence arising from the facts stated by this writer, in favour of the truth and divine authority of the Christian religion. These Hebrew Christians, to whom the epistle is addressed, were contemporaries with Christ and his apostles, and lived in the very place where he taught his doctrine, performed his miracles, suffered crucifixion, and was raised from the dead; and where the gifts and powers of the holy spirit were first, and most abundantly and publicly communicated. They had the best opportunities of inquiring into the truth of these facts, and were prompted by the most cogent motives. They could not be deceived: and so well were they satisfied as to the truth of them, that they yielded up their most cherished and deeply rooted prejudices, and submitted to the most cruel persecutions for the profession of a doctrine entirely founded upon them. These facts therefore must be unquestionable, and the Christian doctrine must be true and divine.

Ch. X. Ver. 35. 3.) The shortness of the time in which their patience would continue to be exercised is suggested as an additional argument for persevering fortitude, ver. 36, 37.

36. *For ye have need of patience, that when ye have done the will of God ye may receive the promise*[1].

37. *For yet a very little while indeed,* and *he that is to come*[2] *will come, and will not delay.*

I will not deceive you by representing the profession of Christianity in your circumstances as a safe or an easy thing. Believers in Jesus, in the land of Judea, in its present state, must expect still to suffer cruelty and indignity, and still to sympa-

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[1] *To receive the promise*] "is, to receive the accomplishment of the promise. Luke xxiv. 49, Acts vii. 17, i. -, Gal. iii. 14." Hallett.

[2] *He that is to come.*] Mr. Hallett thinks that the original expression in the prophet Habakkuk ii. 3, should be rendered *it:* i. e. the vision will surely come; and that this version best suits the design of the writer in this quotation. *q. d.* that blessing tendered in the promise of the new covenant will come, &c. But it appears more probable that the writer here alludes to the escape of the Christians at the destruction of Jerusalem: which had been promised by Christ, and which was fulfilled remarkably at that dangerous and critical season: see ver. 25, also ch. viii. 13. See Whitby's note. "The apostle," [the writer of the epistle,] says Dr. Sykes, "had plainly the words of the prophet Habakkuk in view, ch. ii. 3, 4. But yet, as he has not so much as hinted at any thing as written in the prophet, nor said whose sentiment he used, we are not to understand him as appealing to a prophecy, but only as applying the prophet's words to his own purpose. The Hebrews were to wait with patience and perseverance, that they might receive the promise of an eternal inheritance. They were to hold out yet for some time, be it more or less; and he that is to come will come, and will not delay his coming beyond the time appointed."—"*Non probandi causa Paulus hæc verba affert, sed utitur prophetæ verbis ad suos animi sensus exprimendos.*" Rosenmuller.

thize with Christian sufferers. You must arm yourselves with patience, you must persevere in obedience, you must submit to persecution: if you fall back, you will forfeit all your hopes: but if you persevere, you shall not be disappointed: God will be faithful to his promise: and be assured, for your encouragement, that the remaining season of trial will be very short. For, to allude to the declaration of the prophet Habakkuk, in a very short time indeed, much shorter than either you or your enemies and persecutors may apprehend, He, who has declared that he is about to appear, to the confusion of his enemies, and for the succour and avenging of his friends, will indeed fulfill his awful declaration. And by the instrumentality of the Roman power, though he may not personally appear upon the occasion, he will inflict signal vengeance upon his enemies and yours, from which all those who believe his gospel and regard his admonitions shall be happily exempted. Ch. X. Ver. 37.

There can be little doubt that the writer here alludes to the approaching destruction of the city and the temple, in which dreadful catastrophe myriads of the unbelieving Jews perished, while the great body of Christians, warned by the declarations of Jesus, escaped in time from the desolating storm.

SECTION II.

Ch. X. *THE WRITER, after having explained the nature of faith, illustrates its excellence by the examples of those worthies whose history is recorded in the Old Testament.* Ch. x. 38—xi. 40.

1. He reminds the believing Hebrews that perseverance is the only means of ensuring the reward of faith, ver. 38, 39.

Ver. 38. *Now the just by faith shall live*[1]*: yet if he draw back,* God saith *I will have*[2] *no complacency in*

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[1] *The just by faith.*] This is a quotation from, or rather an allusion to, Habak. ii. 4, in the Greek version; which in this case differs from the Hebrew, though it agrees with the Arabic. There are, however, two manuscripts which countenance the LXX. and Arabic versions, which Hallett and others think was the original reading. "The meaning of the prophet," says Archbishop Newcome in his note on the original, is, "the good or righteous man who believes in my prophets and obeys their directions, shall live at the time of the Babylonish invasion. See Jer. xxi. 9, xxxviii. 2, 17, 18. In the New Testament the words are accommodated." This observation is perfectly just; and in the instance before us, it is applied by the writer of the epistle to the escape of the believing Hebrews, who took warning from the prophecies of Jesus, from the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans: by their faith they saved their lives. The clauses are transposed. Archbishop Newcome's version from the Hebrew is, "Behold! his soul is lifted up, it is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith." The LXX. reads, "If he draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him; but the just shall live by faith."

[2] *I will have.*] Gr. "my soul will have," &c. See Newcome. This is one instance among innumerable others to prove, that

him. But we are not of those who draw back to destruction, but of those who have faith to their own deliverance[3].

Ch. X. Ver. 39.

I have been reminding you, that in a very short time that desolating calamity will take place which Jesus foretold immediately before his crucifixion. If you are sincere believers in Jesus, you shall escape from the unparalleled miseries of that awful crisis. For, as the prophet Habakkuk observes upon a similar occasion, "He that is just by faith shall live," so I now assure you, that if you believe the doctrine and the declarations of Jesus Christ, and avow yourselves his disciples, and, warned by his predictions, provide for your escape, you shall live through the approaching storm. But on the other hand, if you desert your principles and abandon your profession, your conduct will be highly displeasing to God, and you will suffer as your forefathers did, and as your unbelieving countrymen will do, the just consequences of your folly and guilt. But I trust, my Christian friends, that we shall all act a wiser part: I trust that we shall not be found in the wretched number of those who, by apostatizing from

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the *soul* does not signify a separate immaterial substance, but a person's self. No one will maintain that God has a separable soul.

[3] *To their own deliverance.*] εις περιποιησιν ψυχης, *to the deliverance of the soul:* or, as Mr. Wakefield translates, *of our lives.* Alluding to the escape of the believing Hebrews from the approaching calamities of their country. "to the saving of the soul." Newcome, and the generality of commentators. An excellent and most important sense certainly; but not so agreeable to the context.

Ch. X. Ver. 39. our profession, shall perish with our countrymen, but that we shall persevere in giving credit to the declarations of Jesus, and thus provide for our safety in the general ruin.

2. The writer defines that faith which was the operative principle in the eminent characters recorded in the Old Testament. Ch. xi. 1, 2.

Ch. XI. Ver. 1. *Now faith is the confident expectation*[1] *of things hoped for, the firm conviction*[2] *of things not seen.*

2. *For by it the ancients obtained an honourable testimony*[3].

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[1] *Now faith is the confident expectation.*] ὑποστασις, "which we translate *substance*, is properly the basis or foundation, or groundwork, upon which any thing is built; and it is plain that such things as we hope for, must have some ground or reason, or else we should hope without reason; which would be nothing less than folly. Faith in the promise of God is the foundation of our hope of future happiness." Sykes. "Faith," says Hallett, "is such a firm persuasion as gives, as it were, a substance, or present existence, to the good things we hope for." He observes, that "the word ὑποστασις is here used in its most natural and usual sense;" and adds, that "this sense is confirmed by the Syriac version." "Now faith is a persuasion concerning those things that are in hope, as if they did actually exist." Chrysostom's comment is: "Things that are only hoped for seem to have no ὑποστασις, *subsistence*, but faith gives them a subsistence, or *being*." Newcome observes, that "the word *faith* is elegantly taken up from ch. x. 39."

[2] *The conviction.*] ελεγχος. Hallett remarks, that "the original word properly signifies a demonstration, or such kind of argument as both convinces the understanding, and engages a man to act according to that conviction." "The object of faith," says Newcome, "is either το ελπιζομενον, as the happiness of a future state, or το μη βλεπομενον, as that God made the world."

[3] *The ancients obtained an honourable testimony,*] which they would not have done if their faith had been a mere speculative

If you want to know what that faith is which will afford you security in the season of danger, and will ensure deliverance here and hereafter, I must inform you that it is not a mere speculative assent to truth, but a living practical principle. It lies at the foundation of Christian hope: it is an unhesitating assent to the promise of God through Christ: it is such an assured conviction of the truth and reality of the facts related, as shall induce you to act as if you had yourselves been present with them, and eye witnesses of them. This is the faith which will guide and govern the feelings and the conduct as powerfully as the immediate impressions of sense: and it was by such a faith as this that those holy men, whose histories are recorded in the Hebrew scriptures, obtained that high reputation in which they were held by their contemporaries and by posterity, and performed those extraordinary actions of which God himself was pleased to testify his approbation. Ch. XI. Ver. 2.

3. By faith we learn that the moral dispensations of God to mankind have a supernatural origin, ver. 3.

By faith[4] *we understand that the ages*[5] *were* 3.

assent. "By the term πρεσβυτεροι," says Bishop Barrington, "in this passage is evidently meant, the ancestors of the Hebrews. This and some other texts in which the term occurs, induce me to be of opinion, that πρεσβυτερος in the New Testament frequently signifies, not an office, but a character of age, of standing in the Christian church, and particularly the first fruits of conversion to the gospel, in a nation, province, or congregation."

[4] *By faith:*] that is, in the history of the divine dispensations

Ch. XI. Ver. 3. *arranged by the power of God, that so what is* now *seen*[1] *did not arise from* things *which* before *appeared.*

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recorded in the scriptures.—It is from them we learn that God revealed his word to Adam, to Noah, to Abraham, to Moses, &c. So that the revolutions in the moral state of things which then took place were not the result of any peculiar wisdom in Abraham, or Moses, but of an immediate divine interposition and command.

[3] *The ages.*] τους αιωνας. "This word," says Archbishop Newcome, and most interpreters with him, "is explained in the following clause by the *things that are seen*; so that it must be understood of the visible material world, called into being by the word or command of God." See Gen. i. 1. "Reason," says Hallett, "could not discover that God spake the word, gave the command, and that hereupon the creatures came into being." He observes that "the *word* here spoken of is not the divine Logos, but God's word of command (ῥημα), which ordered the creatures into being."

Dr. Sykes, however, understands the word αιωνες to signify *ages*, or certain periodical revolutions of time: 1. from Adam to the flood; 2. the patriarchal age to the law; 3. the age of the law to Christ. He renders the clause, "By faith we understand that the ages were adapted or fitted by the word of God; *i. e.* by his command or direction suited to their proper ends." He even says, note on Heb. i. 2: "There is not any one instance in the New Testament in which more than this seems to be meant by the word αιων." Mr. Wakefield adopts the same interpretation, and renders the text, "by faith we understand that the ages were so ordered by divine power, that the present state of things arose not from what did *then* appear."

[1] *That so what is,* &c.] εις το μη κ. τ. λ. "so that things which are seen," &c. Public Version. "This," says Hallett, "is certainly a wrong translation. Εις το can never signify *so that*; but must be rendered *that so, to the end that,* or the like. See Eph. i. 12, 1 Cor. x. 6. *q. d.* to the end that the things which are seen may not *seem, or be thought to* have been made of things that do appear. That they may not be thought to have been made of some pre-existent matter: to prevent any suspicion of this, he assures us that God made them by his mere word of command." If αιωνας is translated *ages*, the meaning seems to be, that the several dispensations were introduced, not by natural means, but by an immediate divine interposition.

The first object of faith is, that God governs the world; and that he has from time to time interfered in an extraordinary and supernatural manner for the moral instruction and improvement of his human offspring. The scriptures teach us that he first gave to Adam, and afterwards to Noah, a law for the government of all their posterity. Afterwards, when mankind degenerated into idolatry and vice, he called Abraham out of his idolatrous state, and made a covenant with him and his posterity. In a succeeding age he delivered the law to Moses from Mount Sinai: and latterly he has spoken to us by Jesus Christ, by whom he has entered with us who believe, into a new and better covenant. These interpositions of his mercy he has revealed us, to the end that we might not imagine that these revolutions in the moral circumstances of mankind were mere natural or casual events, brought to pass by human power and wisdom: but that we might know and acknowledge them in their successive order to have been introduced by the immediate interposition, the power and goodness of the great Author of nature and parent of mankind, that we might admire his wisdom in all his dispensations, and might rejoice and be thankful that our happy lot is cast under the reign of the Messiah. Ch. XI. Ver. 3.

4. The writer illustrates the excellence of faith by the examples of many eminent persons whose histories are related in the Jewish scriptures, ver. 4—40.

CH. XI. 1.) The excellency of faith is exemplified in the conduct of Abel, ver. 4.

VER. 4. *By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained testimony that he was righteous, God bearing witness to his offering; and through this, though dead, he still speaketh.*

I shall now proceed to illustrate the excellence of faith, by calling to your remembrance some eminent examples of its powerful and beneficial influence contained in your sacred history, which may both explain my doctrine and excite your emulation.

And let me, first, remind you of the faith of Abel, whose sad history is related in the book of Genesis, where it is recorded that both he and his brother Cain brought their offerings to Jehovah, each of them from the produce of his respective occupation. Cain, who was a cultivator of the land, brought a present of the fruit of the ground; and Abel, who was a shepherd, offered the choicest of the lambs of his flock. The outward act was similar in both. In each, by an appropriate gift, gratitude was apparently expressed to the sovereign benefactor. But the eye of God penetrates the heart; and he saw that where the external acts were similar the inward temper was widely different. The history tells us that Jehovah testified approbation to Abel and his offering, but the contrary to Cain and his offering. In what manner he manifested this approbation and disapprobation we know not; for the history is si-

lent, and conjecture is vain. But the foundation of it was the different character of the different men. Abel entertained just apprehensions of God, his faith was practical, his heart was right, and therefore his sacrifice was accepted: while that of Cain, whose faith had no influence upon his conduct, and who was in his heart malignant and envious, a liar and a murderer, was for this reason justly rejected. And the important lesson which the sacrifice of Abel teaches us to this day is this, that a firm and practical faith is the only principle of acceptable worship [1]. Ch. XI. Ver. 4.

2.) The faith of Enoch is next celebrated, ver. 5, 6.

By faith Enoch was translated, so that he saw 5.
not death, and was no more found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he obtained this testimony, that he pleased God. Now 6.
without faith it is *impossible to please* him: *for he who cometh to God must believe that he exists, and is the rewarder of those who diligently seek him.*

If we pass on a little further in the history, we shall meet with another memorable example of the

[1] *Acceptable worship.*] This appears to me to be the just and obvious meaning of the passage. As to all the inferences which have been drawn from the story of Abel concerning the divine appointment of animal sacrifices, the necessity of a propitiatory offering, Abel's faith in the atonement of Christ, and the like, they are to the last degree precarious, and seem to originate wholly in the fond partiality of men to their own mysterious and unscriptural notions, without the least foundation in the narrative.

Ch. XI. Ver. 6. excellence and efficacy of faith in the antediluvian patriarch Enoch, of whom it is related, Gen. v. 24, *that he walked with God, and he was not to be found, because God took him.* Now, if we attentively consider the circumstances of the narration, we shall see that this great distinction of exemption from death was owing to the firmness and the practical influence of the patriarch's faith. He walked with God, that is, he conversed with his Maker in acts of devotion, and habitually lived under an impressive sense of the divine presence, and a solicitous concern to approve himself in the sight of God. And this character which is given of Enoch in the history necessarily implies that he was acceptable to God: of which God was pleased to give this signal proof, that he translated him from a mortal to an immortal state in the midst of life, before he had finished half the time usually allotted to man at that period; and miraculously exempted him from the stroke of death: thus exhibiting to the antediluvian world, which was then beginning to be very degenerate, a signal proof of his moral government, and of the future expectations of man. But this excellence of character in Enoch was unquestionably the result of a vigorous faith: for he could not have been that humble, dutiful, and habitual worshiper of God, that fearless professor of religion, in a depraved and degenerate age, if he had not been a firm believer both in the existence and moral government of God. For the worship and service of God necessarily supposes a previous persuasion that

there is an original all-perfect Being, who approves of virtue, and who will not suffer real integrity to go without its just reward [1]. Ch. XI. Ver. 6.

3.) He celebrates the faith of Noah, ver. 7.

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[1] *Just reward.*] The writer assumes the truth of the narration in the book of Genesis, and, admitting the facts, his conclusions are just. Nevertheless, as the inspiration of the writer of that book is no where asserted, and as the sources of his information are of doubtful authority, I do not know that we are obliged to admit the truth of the facts without hesitation. In the present instance there appears to me sufficient reason for suspending assent. When Jesus was transfigured, Moses and Elijah appeared to him and conversed with him. Had Enoch been translated, as they probably were, it is reasonable to believe that he also would have appeared with them. Upon this subject, however, we are not very competent to judge, and must be content to leave the history in the same obscurity in which we find it.

It appears to me certain, from the appearance of Moses at the mount of transfiguration, Luke ix. 30, 31, that Moses did not die: and it seems very probable that the same two persons who were seen at the mount of transfiguration to converse with Jesus concerning his approaching sufferings, afterwards appeared at his tomb, Luke xxiv. 4, to announce his resurrection, and again at the Mount of Olives, Acts i. 10, 11, when our Lord ascended to announce his future visible and glorious return. It is some confirmation of this hypothesis, that the two persons who appeared upon these occasions are expressly called ἀνδρες, *men*.

"It were much to be wished," says Dr. Priestley, "but it is to no purpose, that we knew something more of what preceded the translation of Enoch. So great an event, and the first of its kind, had no doubt some very important cause. It is possible, but this we can only conjecture, that Enoch might have been authorized to teach the doctrine of a future life, and that, as a proof of its reality, he might be removed into it without dying, since his translation would be a miracle better adapted to confirm his doctrine than any other that should have had no relation to such a state." Dr. Priestley supposes that the doctrine of a future life, which is the great object of the whole scheme of

Ch. XI. Ver. 7. *By faith Noah having been warned by God*[1] *concerning things not then seen, moved with pious reverence*[2], *prepared an ark for the preservation of his family; by which he condemned the world*[3], *and became heir of the justification*[4] *which is by faith.*

The next remarkable instance of the excellence and efficacy of practical faith is that of Noah, one of the descendants of Enoch, of whose history we read in Gen. vi., and of whom the same character is given as of his pious ancestor, ver. 9, "He was a just man and perfect in his generation, and he walked with God." This character he bore in times still more degenerate and depraved than those of Enoch, and when the whole human race had be-

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revelation, must have been communicated to mankind in some period prior to the law of Moses. He conjectures that "it was communicated to Adam himself, and that it was further confirmed to Enoch;" and observes, that "the translation of Enoch and Elijah was not calculated to give mankind any idea of a state of happiness without the body, but the contrary."

[1] *Warned by God.*] χρηματισθεις, upon warning from heaven. "*Proprie, circa aliquam rem explicandam, vel constituendam, vel efficiendam versor —— oraculum divinum edo, divinitus admoneo.*" Schleusner.

[2] *Moved with pious reverence*] "and just regard to God." See ch. xii. 28. Sykes. "ευλαβηθεις, *pie ac religiose oraculum Dei colens.*" Rosenmuller.

[3] *Condemned the world.*] "He condemned the world of incredulity by his faith, which was well grounded and sufficiently attested." Sykes.

[4] *The justification.*] "obtained the deliverance." Sykes. "according to his faith." Wakefield. "Noah became entitled to those good things, which are promised to such whose faith in God makes them act from a hearty desire of pleasing him, however imperfect such acts may be." Sykes.

come so corrupt and abominable, that God, their creator, is said to have "repented that he had made man upon the earth," ver. 6, and he determined to destroy the whole race of human beings by a deluge, with the single exception of Noah and his family. Of this event he gave a direct warning to Noah, and ordered him to prepare an ark for his escape: and though there was no appearance which would lead to the expectation of so terrible a catastrophe; though every thing went on in its usual course for months and years after the warning had been given; though his profligate and abandoned contemporaries treated his solemn admonitions and exhortations with contempt, and no doubt ridiculed him as a dotard and a madman for the preparation he was making to escape from a calamity of which they had no apprehension; yet this holy patriarch, relying with unwavering confidence upon the truth of the divine declarations, and firmly convinced that the threatened catastrophe would assuredly take place at the appointed season, built the ark, agreeably to the divine direction, for the preservation of himself and his family, and the various species of terrestrial animals.—Thus did the vigour of his faith, and the wisdom of his correspondent conduct, illustrate and more distinctly exhibit the folly and the guilt of the unbelieving world, and the justice of their subsequent condemnation. And thus by faith he obtained the privilege of deliverance from that dreadful catastrophe which was justly inflicted upon his deluded and profligate contemporaries. Ch. XI. Ver. 7.

CH. XI. 4.) He exemplifies the efficacy and success of faith in the case of Abraham and Sarah, ver. 8—16.

(1.) The first memorable instance of the faith of Abraham was, his migration by divine direction from his native country to the land of Canaan, ver. 8—10.

VER. 8. *By faith Abraham, being called to depart for that place which he was afterwards to receive as an inheritance, obeyed; and departed, though he knew not whither he was going.*

Abraham, the founder of our nation, was originally a native of Chaldea and an idolater. He became a worshiper of the true God; and being exposed to persecution in his native country, he received a divine command to leave it and to go to the land of Canaan: a country to which he was an utter stranger, but in which God promised to bless and prosper him, and in due time to give it to his posterity, who should multiply so as to become a great nation. This eminent patriarch having certain evidence, such as God can easily communicate, that the suggestion was of divine origin, and not the conceit of a wild imagination, placed entire confidence in the divine declaration, and with all his family and all his property he set out for this unknown country: as it is related in the Mosaic history, Gen. xii. 1—5.

9. *By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as* in *a foreign* country, *dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, co-heirs* with him *of the same promise.*

It appears from the history (Gen. xii. 6, &c.),

that soon after Abraham's arrival in Canaan, God appeared to him and made a solemn promise to him that to his seed he would give the land. Relying upon this promise, the patriarch remained, and passed his life there with his wife and family, with Isaac his son, and Jacob his grandson; in whose line the promise was continued and renewed. These eminent persons, however, never possessed any permanent property in the country, but resided in tents, moving from place to place as occasion required, with their wives and children, their servants and their cattle. Ch. XI. Ver. 9.

For he expected that city which hath foundations, whose framer and builder is *God.* 10.

And indeed we are not to suppose that the promise of the future prosperity and grandeur of his family was the only motive to Abraham's conduct, and the only foundation of his hope. Though we are not informed that the doctrine of a future life was expressly revealed to him, there can be no doubt that he lived in expectation of it, and that he reconciled his mind to the many inconveniencies of a wandering and unsettled state, by the prospect of admission into that glorious city which God himself has founded for the future everlasting residence of the righteous, and in comparison with which the firmest of terrestrial edifices are perishing and transitory things.

(2.) Both Abraham and Sarah manifested an ex-

Ch. XI. emplary faith in the divine promise concerning the birth of Isaac, ver. 11, 12.

Ver. 11. *By faith Sarah*[1] *herself also received strength to conceive*[2], *even when she was past age, because she judged him who had made the promise faithful.*

12. *So that there descended, even from one, and him too become* as *dead*[3], a posterity, *in multitude as the stars of heaven, and innumerable as the sand upon the sea shore.*

Sarah was ninety, and Abraham a hundred years of age, when the promise was made that they should have a son to whom the promise should descend, and in whose posterity it should be fulfilled. Improbable as this event was in itself, yet as soon as they were convinced that the promise was truly divine they yielded their full assent to it, and, as a reward of their faith, the promise was fulfilled in its utmost extent, in the birth of Isaac and the unparalleled increase and prosperity of his descendants in succeeding generations.

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[1] *By faith Sarah.*] Sarah did not at first believe (Gen. xviii. 13, 14); but, no doubt, when she was convinced that the promise was divine, she gave credit to it. "Her laughter was an indication, not of unbelief, but that she was greatly pleased. So Abraham laughed Gen. xvii. 6." Sykes. But the learned writer forgets that Sarah was reproved for her laughter and doubting.

[2] *To conceive.*] The received text adds ετεκεν, *was delivered*; but this word is wanting in the Alexandrine, Clermont, and other manuscripts, and is omitted by Griesbach and Newcome.

[3] *Become* as *dead.*] How, then, came Abraham after this to have children by Keturah? Gen. xxv. 1. Mr. Hallett concludes that Keturah was a concubine of Abraham before he left Chaldea: which is, indeed, not improbable.

(3.) The author digresses to observe that the main object of the faith of the ancient patriarchs was the happiness of a future life, ver. 13—16. Ch. XI.

All these died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off[4], *and having hailed* them[5], *they confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims in the land*[6]. Ver. 13.

These holy descendants of Abraham, to whom the promise that the land of Canaan should be given to their posterity was repeatedly renewed, passed their lives in cheerful dependence on the divine declaration, though they did not, and indeed could not, reasonably expect to live to see the performance of it. But entertaining no doubt of the accomplishment of the promise at the appointed season, they triumphed in the glorious though distant prospect, and reconciled themselves to present temporary inconveniencies, by the assured expectation of the future glory and felicity of their descendants.

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[4] *Seen them afar off.*] The received text adds, *και πεισθεντες, were persuaded of them:* which words are wanting in the Alexandrine and other manuscripts, and in the Syriac, Æthiopic, and other versions, and are left out of the text by Griesbach and Newcome.

[5] *Having hailed* them.] "having with joy saluted them at a distance: a fine image." Newcome.

[6] *Confessed that they were strangers.*] "Who died in faith? The answer is, Not only Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, but all their descendants to the days of Moses. Yet, notwithstanding the promise, none of them received that land; but were fully persuaded that the promise would some time or other be made good. Abraham owned himself a stranger, Gen. xxiii. 4, to the sons of Heth. Jacob calls his whole life a pilgrimage, Gen. xlvii. 9." Sykes.

Ch. XI. Ver. 13. In the mean time they thought and spoke of themselves as strangers and sojourners in the land of Canaan, and in this world in general: thus the venerable patriarch, when introduced to Pharaoh, speaks of the days of the years of his own life, and of the lives of his pious ancestors, as the season of his and their pilgrimage. Gen. xlvii. 9.

14. *Now they who speak thus show plainly that they*
15. *are seeking for* their native *country*[1]. *And if indeed they had meaned that which they had left, they might have found an opportunity of returning*
16. thither. *But they were earnestly desirous of a better, that is, a heavenly* country[2]. *Therefore God is not ashamed to call himself their God*[3], *because he hath prepared for them a city.*

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[1] *That they are seeking for* their native *country.*] πατριδα. So Wakefield. See Newcome's margin. "Whilst they declare they seek a country, it is plain they have not a country. Abraham was in Canaan, Jacob in Egypt, where they called themselves strangers. If they meant that they had a home, a place where they had a right to be, they had time: they might have returned. But in truth they thought of a full possession of their own, where the promise of God was to be made good." Sykes.

[2] *A heavenly* country.] "They knew that God cannot lye nor deceive; and yet Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, notwithstanding the particular promises made to them, received nothing that could be called a reward. They had not any possession in Canaan; no, not a place to set their foot on, Acts vii. 5. Could any thing then be more natural, than to turn their thoughts upon some place very different from the place they lived in? and therefore they expected and desired a heavenly city, a place of sure reward." Sykes.

[3] *Is not ashamed to call himself their God.*] "But he would have been ashamed, humanly speaking, if he had not provided for them an abiding city, an everlasting life." Newcome.—"Ουκ επαισχυνεται αυτους, *wherefore God does not make them ashamed,*

The great object of the faith and hope of our pious ancestors was not solely the glory of their posterity, but a future happy and immortal existence to themselves. And their faith was similar to ours, though it was not founded in that clear and distinct revelation which God hath vouchsafed to us. The proof of this fact lies in narrow compass. They professed themselves sojourners and pilgrims in the country where they dwelt. They sought therefore and were anxious to go home to their true country: not indeed to Chaldea, from whence they came, for had that been their purpose and their wish, they might easily have found means of returning thither. The country, therefore, to which they looked must have been a far better region than Canaan or Chaldea. The object of their intense desire, and pursuit, was that celestial country where their God and Father dwells and reigns, and where they hoped to live in happiness and glory to endless ages. Ch. XI. Ver. 16.

Nor was this hope without just foundation: for, though the doctrine of a future life be not the main object of the Mosaic dispensation, and is no where explicitly revealed in it, yet there are many oblique intimations of it for the encouragement and consolation of suffering virtue. Amongst other arguments, one of the most convincing and affecting is, that God solemnly announces himself as the God

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in being called their God. Had they absolutely had no reward, it would have been matter of shame and folly in them to have called God their God." Sykes.

Ch. XI. Ver. 16. of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, and of their posterity, and that even after these patriarchs had been long in their graves. But this high and endearing relation he would have thought it a disgrace to have owned, had he not intended something better for them than what they actually possessed during their pilgrimage through life. But because he has provided a state of pure and perfect and everlasting happiness for them, he therefore glories in the character and title of their God, being fully resolved to fulfill in their utmost extent all the engagements and the claims of this high and honourable relation.

The persons of whom the author speaks must be the descendants of Abraham previously to their being reduced to a state of bondage in Egypt; for after that time it was not in their power, had they been ever so much disposed to it, to have returned to Chaldea. The argument he uses is exactly parallel to that which our Lord states, Luke xx. 37, 38, to convince the Sadducees of the doctrine of the resurrection. The justice of it cannot be questioned; but how far the patriarchs could see the force of this reasoning may perhaps be doubted. Upon the whole, however, though the object of the Mosaic dispensation was to teach the Unity of God, and not the doctrine of a future life, it can hardly be supposed that these virtuous patriarchs would be left in total ignorance of a doctrine so necessary to their moral improvement, their encouragement and their consolation.

(4.) The writer proceeds to illustrate the faith of Abraham in his obedience to the command to offer up Isaac, ver. 17—19. Ch. XI.

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac[1]; *and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son*[2]; even he *to whom* Ver. 17. 18.

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[1] *Offered up Isaac.*] I quite agree with Hallett, that God had as perfect a right to take away the life of Isaac as a victim upon the altar as by a common disease, or any other means; also, that God had an unquestionable right to put the faith of his father to the severe trial of requiring him to officiate as the priest upon the occasion: I am also ready to admit that Abraham, having clearly ascertained that it was a divine command, was not only perfectly innocent but highly meritorious in his ready obedience to a precept so harsh and painful; and finally, that a case so extraordinary as this would give no encouragement to human sacrifices, and could not reasonably be pleaded as a precedent for this purpose; and that it served in its peculiar circumstances as a memorable example of faith and submission to the will of God in this venerable patriarch. Still, however, it is an idea so improbable, so revolting, so unlike any thing and every thing in the divine character and dispensations, that a father should be required to sacrifice his own son upon the altar, that notwithstanding the testimony of the book of Genesis, appealed to as it is by the author of this epistle, whose authority, however, is of little value, I must acknowledge that I feel great doubt as to the reality of the fact. It is possible that the historian may only mean to relate a visionary scene; as it is generally allowed that some scenes are such which are described in the prophets as historic facts. Or, possibly, it may be a figurative way of representing that the life of Isaac, the heir of the promise, had by some means or other been exposed to extreme danger, in a situation in which the father had shown great fortitude, and an unwavering confidence in the divine promise.

[2] *His only-begotten son.*] μονογενη· not literally an only son: Abraham had Ishmael by Hagar, and others by Keturah. But Isaac was his only son by Sarah, or the only heir of the promise: having been himself the object of a promise, and through whom the promises were to descend: the best beloved son. By the evangelist John, and by him alone, the epithet is applied to Christ; not as indicating any mysterious generation from the

Ch. XI. Ver. 19. *it had been declared*[1], *In Isaac thy posterity shall be called*[2]: *reasoning with himself*[3] *that God* was *able even to raise* him *from the dead, whence he had also, comparatively speaking, received him*[4].

Father, for then, why should it not have been used by the other sacred writers? but merely as synonymous to *beloved, chosen*, &c. See John i. 14, 18, iii. 16, 18, 1 John iv. 9. See Schleusner.

[1] Even he *to whom.*] προς ὁν. So Newcome. "*Cui promissum erat, ex Isaaco habebis posteritatem.*" Rosenmuller. "that only son *of whom* it had been declared," &c. Wakefield and others.

[2] *In Isaac shall thy posterity be called.*] "*ex Isaaco habebis posteritatem*, Gen. xxi. 12. κληθηναι, *esse; verba enim nominalia sæpe sunt realia.*" Rosenmuller. "That is, that the posterity of Isaac should be accounted the seed of Abraham, and be made God's peculiar people." Hallett. "Thy posterity will be derived from Isaac." Wakefield.

[3] *Reasoning with himself.*] λογισαμενος. So Wakefield. "Abraham knew that the promise was made, and he knew who it was that had made it, and therefore he had no doubt that it would be made good." Sykes.

[4] *From whence he also, comparatively speaking, received him.*] "εν παραβολη, in a parenthesis (*ut ita dicam*). The English expression (comparatively speaking) answers to the Greek." Markland, Bowyer. "In a manner: *similitudine quadam.* By Isaac's miraculous birth, Abraham had, as it were, received him from the dead." Newcome. "And indeed from a like condition he at first received him." Wakefield. "Sarah was, as to her having children, comparatively speaking, dead before Isaac was conceived. If God, therefore, gave him at first in an extraordinary manner, he might, in order to make good his word, restore him in some extraordinary manner." Sykes. "This interpretation of Isaac's being born after Abraham was reckoned dead (says Hallett) cannot be right: the apostle does not speak of Abraham's being dead, but of Isaac's being dead and then raised. Also, Abraham's receiving Isaac from the dead is plainly subsequent to his offering him up. Isaac, then, was raised, and in a figure: not in a literal sense, inasmuch as he was not actually put to death. But here was, as it were, a resurrection, or the figure of a resurrection. In the same figurative sense Abraham is said to have offered him up." "παραβολη, *discrimen, præsentissimum vitæ periculum, a* παραβαλλεσθαι, *quod interdum est periculo se objicere, et exponere. Vid. Suid. et Hesych.*

Heb.

It is related of our pious ancestor Abraham, Gen. xxii., that his faith in the promises was put to a very extraordinary trial. He was required to offer up his son Isaac as a burnt offering to God upon Mount Moriah. And having the most undoubted evidence that this was a divine requisition, without any hesitation he obeyed the terrible injunction: he took his son to the appointed spot, he built the altar, he laid the wood, and he bound the victim: and this virtuous parent, to whom so many promises had been made of a numerous and flourishing posterity, was just about to plunge the fatal knife into the bosom of this darling son, the only child of his mother, the child of promise, the very person who had been marked out as the chosen seed with whom the covenant was made, and to whose descendants the promise was limited, Gen. xxi. 12, had not the deadly stroke been averted by a supernatural interposition at the very instant when it was about to have been given. Such was the strength of Abraham's faith, that he firmly believed that all

Ch. XI. Ver. 19.

Heb. xi. 19, *ubi Abrahamus filium suum vivum recepisse dicitur* ἐν παραβολῇ· h. e. *in ipso præsentissimo vitæ periculo, seu, quod eodem redit præter omnem spem et expectationem.*" Schleusner.

"If Abraham had not had the firmest faith in the power of God to raise Isaac from the dead, he would not have shown his faith," says Dr. Priestley, "by the sacrifice of his son: a thing to which he must have had the greatest possible reluctance, and he did it without any reluctance or hesitation that appears in the history. After such an act of obedience, subsequent to that of abandoning his country and going he knew not whither, on the simple command of God, it is no wonder that he obtained the title of the *father of the faithful*, or the pattern of all believers."

Ch. XI. Ver. 19. which had been promised would be faithfully and literally performed, even though his son should have suffered death in such circumstances by the hand of his father. For he reasoned thus justly with himself: The power of God was able to raise his dead son to life again, and that he certainly would do it rather than that any one of his promises should fail to receive its complete accomplishment. And the venerable man was the more encouraged in forming this conclusion, by the recollection that the birth of Isaac, from parents so far advanced in years, was itself equivalent to a rising from the dead; and he who could introduce him into existence in circumstances so extraordinary, was equally able to restore life after a short suspension of existence. And indeed, the rescue of Isaac by the miraculous interposition of the angel, at the very instant when his father's hand was lifted up to strike the fatal blow, was itself little less than the resurrection of the hallowed victim, and a restoration from a state of death to the arms and heart of his fond and agonized parent, whose faith must now be more than ever confirmed in the divine promise. Thus he was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and exhibiting to the virtuous in all succeeding ages a pattern of rational and cheerful confidence in God, in circumstances the most difficult and distressing, and of the good effects of such a firm and practical faith.

(5.) The writer celebrates the faith of Isaac, ver. 20.

By faith Isaac[1] *blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things future.* Ch. XI. Ver. 20.

The history (Gen. xxvii.) relates that Isaac, advanced in life, and blind with age, confiding in the promise of God to himself, and to his father, pronounced a blessing upon both his sons, foretelling, in the spirit of prophecy, that the posterity of Esau should for a time be in subjection to the descendants of Jacob. It was indeed far from the old patriarch's intention to have pronounced the better blessing upon the younger brother. But the artful contrivance of Rebekah, and the lying fraud of Jacob, imposed upon the poor blind father, and Jacob by stealth obtained the blessing before Esau was ready to receive it; and when pronounced it was

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[1] *By faith Isaac*] Nothing could be more unreasonable or incredible than the supposition that the descent of the divine promise should be made to depend upon the unjust partiality of a doting old man, upon the wicked machinations of an artful woman, upon the lying fraud of a deceitful boy, or, finally, upon the brute force, agility and skill of a half savage, in the sports of the field. And in fact the history states that this important question had been settled long before; and that previously to the birth of the twins, when, as the apostle observes, Rom. ix. 12, neither of them could possibly have done either good or evil, the oracle had expressly entailed the promise upon Jacob, and declared that the elder should serve the younger, Gen. xxv. 22, 23. Isaac was grossly mistaken if he thought that it would be in his power to reverse the order of providence. And perhaps, when he found himself tricked out of his intention by the base conspiracy of Rebekah and Jacob, it might bring to his mind the solemn declaration of the Divine Being before the children were born, and might make him more resolute in resisting the importunities of Esau, however indignant he might be at the deceit which had been practised upon him, and at the parties concerned in the conspiracy.

Ch. XI. Ver. 20. too late to recall it. The old patriarch, recollecting probably that it had been foretold before they were born, that the elder should serve the younger, refused to retract the blessing which had been so surreptitiously obtained, and confirmed the boon, not as a reward of the hypocrisy, treachery, and falsehood of Jacob, which deserved the severest animadversion, but as a token of submission to a prior divine designation in which it was his duty to acquiesce.

(6.) He celebrates the faith of Jacob, ver. 21.

21. *By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped* leaning *upon the top of his staff.*

To this aged patriarch it was revealed that the two sons of Joseph should be the heads of two distinct tribes in Israel, and that the posterity of the younger son should be more numerous and powerful than those of the elder: this he announced to the youths themselves when they came to receive his dying blessing, placing Ephraim before Manasseh in a way which gave offence to Joseph their father, who was partial to his first-born. But the patriarch refused to withdraw his hand, confiding in the spirit of prophecy with which he was then inspired: and when he had finished the prophetic benediction, he bowed his hoary head upon the staff which supported his tottering limbs, in token of grateful adoration to that Being who disposes all things according to his pleasure, and who, at the last stage of

his wearisome pilgrimage, had permitted his eyes to be closed by that son who was the darling of his heart, whom he had long mourned over as lost, but who was now restored to him in circumstances the most prosperous and splendid, and in a season the most critical and important, whose children he embraced, and the future prosperity of whose family he had then foretold, Gen. xlviii. Ch. XI. Ver. 21.

(7.) The author notices the faith of Joseph, ver. 22.

By faith Joseph, at the end of life, mentioned the departure of the children of Israel, and gave a charge concerning his bones[1]. 22.

This excellent man survived his venerable parent many years, and died at last in a good old age, crowned with the blessings of a people whom he had saved from famine, and who had flourished under his prudent administration, and of his own family, whose ill usage of him he had requited with tenderness and beneficence. But all the honours he had enjoyed in Egypt had not obliterated the memory of the promise of God to his ancestors: he

[1] *Concerning his bones.*] "Joseph ordered that he should not be buried in Egypt, but only embalmed there in the manner practised in that country; by which bodies were reduced to a state like wood, and rendered as incorruptible. Such bodies are now called *mummies*, and they are all brought from Egypt. Joseph gave these orders that in this state he might be carried along with them when they left that country, and nothing could express a stronger faith in the divine promise, that the land of Canaan was designed for them while they were detained in Egypt." Dr. Priestley.

Ch. XI. Ver. 22. died in the firm expectation that the posterity of Israel would in due time be put in possession of the land of Canaan; and with his latest breath he solemnly adjured them at that time to carry his remains with them, and to deposit them in the burying-place of his pious ancestors, Gen. l. 25; which charge was punctually obeyed when the appointed season arrived. Thus this virtuous patriarch stands upon record as a memorable example that elevation of station does not universally efface the principles of piety; and that habits of virtue, early contracted and firmly fixed, may be preserved inviolable even amidst the cares of government, and the temptations of a court.

(8.) The author celebrates the faith of the parents of Moses, ver. 23.

23. *By faith Moses*[1], *when he was born, was concealed three months by his parents, because they saw* that he was *a graceful child, and they were not deterred*[2] *by the commandment of the king.*

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[1] *By faith Moses.*] Exod. ii. 1—3. Josephus relates that God appeared to Amram the father of Moses in a dream, and promised him a son who should deliver the Israelites from the Egyptian bondage. To this tradition, whether true or false, which no doubt was current at the time, the writer of this epistle seems to allude. Faith in this promise encouraged these pious parents to conceal their child notwithstanding the personal danger which they incurred by it. Joseph. *Ant.* lib. ii. c. 9, sect. 5. See Macknight.

[2] *They were not deterred.*] Gr. *they did not fear, i. e.* they did not so fear the tyrant's authority as to be deterred from concealing the infant for three months: but afterwards their

The next instance of laudable and practical faith that I shall mention is that of the parents of Moses, who, trusting in the wise and powerful providence of God, so far disregarded the authority of the savage tyrant of Egypt, who had ordered every male child to be put to death, that at the hazard of their own lives they concealed Moses, whose infant beauty had excited the yearnings of parental affection in a more than ordinary degree, for three months in their own dwelling. After which, in reliance upon the same divine protection, they committed the little helpless innocent to an ark of bulrushes, and placed it where Pharaoh's daughter was accustomed to bathe, hoping that Providence would in some way or other accomplish its deliverance, which happened agreeably to their wishes, and crowned their pious faith with a rich reward; the mother of the child being appointed its nurse. Ch. XI. Ver. 23.

(9.) The writer celebrates the faith of Moses in renouncing the splendour of the Egyptian court, and choosing to associate with his persecuted countrymen, ver. 24—27.

By faith Moses, after he was grown up, refused to call himself the *son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer cruel treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin*[3] *for a short time*[4]. 24. 25.

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fears induced them to expose it. Mr. Wakefield renders the words "in defiance of the order of the king."

[3] *Pleasures of sin.*] Sin here seems to be put for the idolatry

Ch. XI. Ver. 25. Moses was brought up in Pharaoh's court as the son of Pharaoh's daughter; he was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and excelled both in arts and arms. He might, had he followed the dictates of ambition, have aspired to the throne: but his pious parents, by whom he was educated, had no doubt instructed him in the secret of his birth, and in the promises of God to his renowned ancestors. When therefore he had reached his fortieth year, he renounced the honours of the court, and publicly professed himself a citizen of the despised and insulted Hebrew nation, protecting his countrymen from injury while he retained his authority in the land, and escaping into the wilderness when his zeal for the rights of his countrymen had excited the jealousy of the Egyptian tyrant. For he preferred suffering persecution with the worshipers of the living and true God, to all the honours, dignities, and privileges, he could have enjoyed in an idolatrous court, the crimes and unexampled tyranny of which he foresaw must soon draw down the vengeance of the Almighty.

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of Egypt, with which it would have been necessary for Moses to have complied, in order to have retained his station in the Egyptian court. It does not at all appear that any other violation of rectitude is intended by the expression.

[4] *A short time.*] Exod. ii. 11—14. Moses might infer from the declaration of God to Abraham, Gen. xv. 13, 14, in which, no doubt, he had been instructed by his pious parents, that the season fixed in the divine councils, for the deliverance of the Israelites and the punishment of their oppressors, was now at hand.

Esteeming the reproach of the chosen people[1] *greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he looked forward to the reward*[2].

Ch. XI. Ver. 26.

He might have lived in wealth and splendour in the court of Egypt, and have enjoyed every blessing which fortune could bestow. Instead of which, he chose to cast his lot amongst a set of wretched and

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[1] *The chosen people.*] χριστὸν, *i. e.* λαὸν, ver. 25, *the anointed people.* The Israelites are called christs, or anointed, *i. e.* a chosen and consecrated people. Psalm cv. 15. Hab. iii. 13. "So that the reproach of Christ may be the reproach of the people of God." Whitby; which appears to me the most probable sense. "The sense may be, that Moses looked upon the contempt and indignity which he underwent from Pharaoh, on account of his professing himself a Jew, much preferable to all the riches and honours of Egypt." Sykes.

The reproach of Christ, "such as Christ suffered." Photius *ap.* Whitby, Newcome, Harwood. "the reproach of the Messiah." Wakefield. "the reproach he should suffer for his faith in a Messiah to come." Hallett. "the scoffs cast on the Israelites for expecting the Christ to arise among them." Macknight. "for acknowledging himself one of the Israelites whom Christ had taken under his peculiar protection." Doddridge. The great error is supposing Christ to be alluded to at all. But it is not improbable that the author, who likes to argue from verbal ambiguities, meant to avail himself of the double sense of the word Christ to insinuate that the Hebrews, to whom he was writing, ought to be as ready to sacrifice all for Christ the Messiah, and for the honours and rewards of his spiritual and everlasting kingdom, as their great lawgiver of old was to give up the splendour of Pharaoh's court, and to take his lot with the Christs, the anointed and chosen but despised and persecuted people of God in former times: to share in their reproach and danger, and to expect their reward.

[2] *The reward.*] primarily, of sharing with the Israelites in the possession of Canaan under the protection of divine providence. But as all the patriarchs are said to have sought a heavenly country, this expectation also may be alluded to here as the object of the desire and hope of Moses. "he looked off from them to the retribution." Macknight. "he was looking onward to his reward." Wakefield.

Ch. XI. Ver. 26. helpless exiles, destitute of all the common comforts of life, whose only privilege was, that they were chosen by and consecrated to God, and whose only treasure was, the promise made to their pious forefathers. These were the privileges, and these the possessions, which Moses wisely preferred to the wealth of Egypt. And in firm expectation that the promise of God would in due time be fulfilled, and that, if he should not live to see this glorious event, his own immortal interests would be secure, he willingly exposed himself to the disgrace which he must necessarily incur in the estimation of those who could not enter into his views and motives, and to whom his conduct must no doubt wear the appearance of absurdity and insanity.

27. *By faith he left Egypt*[1], *not deterred by the anger of the king*[2]; *for he remained firm as seeing him who is invisible.*

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[1] *By faith he left Egypt.*] "This," says Dr. Priestley, "is perhaps ascribing too much to the faith of Moses: he evidently fled for fear of his life. It is probable, indeed, that he was a pious man, and consequently had respect to him who is invisible, to the presence and providence of God; but at that time he does not appear to have had any intercourse with God, and therefore he had no promise respecting himself, as a foundation for any particular faith in God."

[2] *Deterred by.*] Gr. *not fearing the anger of the king.* It is so expressly said, Exod. ii. 14, 15, that, when Moses fled into the Desert, he was afraid, that many expositors, viz. Hallett, Doddridge, Macknight, &c., explain this passage as referring to his last interview with Pharaoh, or to his triumphant departure from Egypt when he led the Israelites through the Red Sea. But the order of the discourse naturally leads us to understand it of his first escape from Egypt, to which this expression will be no objection if we translate the words *notwithstanding*, or,

When Pharaoh heard that the zeal of Moses had transported him so far as to put to death an Egyptian for oppressing an Israelite, he was so offended that he threatened to put Moses himself to death. But such was the interest which this great man then had in the court of Egypt, that he might no doubt easily have obtained a pardon had he returned to his allegiance: but he had renounced the grandeur of a court, and had made up his mind to all the consequences of his virtuous choice. Confiding therefore in the promise and in the providence of God, this pious chief defied the resentment of Pharaoh; and supported by a consciousness of integrity, and trusting in the guidance of that powerful Being who, though invisible, was the great object of his faith and love, he fled into the dreary and solitary wilderness. Ch. XI. Ver. 27.

(10.) He celebrates the faith of Moses and the Israelites in their observance of the first passover, ver. 28.

By faith he kept the passover and the sprinkling of blood, that he who destroyed the first-born of the Egyptians[3] *might not touch theirs.* 28.

To Moses and Aaron God revealed his intention of destroying in one night all the first-born of the Egyptians, both of man and beast, Exod. xii. And

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with Mr. Wakefield, "in defiance of the anger of the king." See note on ver. 23.

[3] Of the Egyptians.] See Worsley's Translation of the New Testament.

Ch. XI. Ver. 28. to them he gave it in charge to direct the Israelites to kill a lamb, or a kid, in the afternoon of the preceding day, to roast and eat it with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, as a memorial of their severe bondage in Egypt, and their hasty departure from it, and to sprinkle the blood upon the door-posts of their houses, as a symbol of protection from the destroying angel. Upon these conditions it was promised that their own families should escape the dreadful catastrophe. Relying, therefore, upon the declaration and promises of God, Moses delivered and the Israelites obeyed the mandate. Nor were they disappointed in their expectations. At midnight a lamentable and universal outcry was heard in the houses of the Egyptians; for all their first-born were instantaneously cut off, from the eldest son of the monarch, and the heir of his crown, to the first-born of the poorest tenant of the cottage: but in the houses of the Israelites, under the protection of the Almighty, all was safe: their faith was their security; and the immediate consequence of this terrible visitation was their release from a servitude of four hundred years.

(11.) The author commemorates the faith of the Israelites in their passage through the Red Sea, ver. 29.

29. *By faith the* Israelites *passed through the Red Sea*[1] *as on dry* land, *which the Egyptians attempted, and were swallowed up.*

[1] *Through the Red Sea.*] Whether the passage through the

Another remarkable instance of faith in the divine promise, which also received its proper reward, Ch. XI. Ver. 29.

Red Sea were a supernatural event, as most expositors have maintained, or whether, as Dr. Geddes and some of the German commentators contend, Moses, having acquired a knowledge of the situation of the sands during his long residence in the wilderness, took advantage of the ebb tide to conduct the Israelites over the sands, where Pharaoh and his host for want of information perished, it is certain that it is represented by the historian, and was believed by the Jews to have been, a proper miracle, and as such it is alluded to by the author of this epistle, and his reasoning is founded upon this supposition. See Geddes's *Crit. Remarks on Exod.* xiv.

Dr. Geddes has succeeded but ill, however ingenious many of his criticisms are, in his attempts to explain away the miracles of Moses. Indeed, as he denies all supernatural communications to the Jewish lawgiver, and his divine legation altogether, it is necessary to his hypothesis to get rid of the miracles. But if the fact be admitted, which it seems impossible to deny, that the theism of the Jews was beyond all comparison superior to that of their more cultivated and polished neighbours, this fact can only be accounted for through immediate divine communications, which, as their history relates, were vouchsafed to Moses: and if Moses were the medium of divine communications, it is probable that he was authorized to work miracles. Difficulties and objections may be started against particular facts, which it may not be easy to obviate, nor is it necessary. For the law, having performed its office as a pædagogue to bring us to Christ, is now discharged; and as Christians, it is sufficient for us to believe that the Jewish institution in its pure and uncorrupted form was of divine original; that its main design was to support in the world the great doctrine of the Divine Unity, and to prepare the way for the dispensation of the Messiah; and finally, that the books of the Old Testament contain many prophetic declarations, which either have received or will receive their proper accomplishment in their appointed season.

"In all these transactions," says Dr. Priestley, "which were of a most wonderful nature, no doubt Moses and all pious Israelites were actuated by a proper faith in God. If the state of the Israelites in Egypt be considered, when they were numerous indeed, but unarmed and defenceless, their masters powerful and warlike, themselves without any friend from without,

Ch. XI. Ver. 29. was that of our ancestors the Israelites under the conduct of Moses, in their passage through the Red Sea, the history of which is related in Exod. xiv. The Egyptians, mad with rage, notwithstanding the calamities which they had endured by imme-

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and the country for which they looked possessed by nations perhaps more warlike than the Egyptians themselves, with a wilderness to travel through, in which such a multitude could not naturally have subsisted a single week; if it be considered that notwithstanding these circumstances, and all the opposition which the Egyptians could give to the Israelites, they nevertheless actually did leave Egypt, passed forty years in that wilderness, and then took possession of the land of Canaan, it must be evident that there must have been some miracle in the case.

"The history of Moses makes all these transactions perfectly credible; but every other hypothesis must be utterly inadequate to account for the known facts. It is impossible to read the history of Moses without perceiving the most undeniable traces of its being written at the time of the transactions. It is in some places almost a journal of the proceedings of every day, with such a particular mention of persons and places, as is never found except in authentic histories. The books of Moses were also received as genuine and faithful narratives of events by the whole Jewish nation; who in all their apostasies never entertained a doubt of the truth of their contents. This belief could only have been produced by the most satisfactory evidence. An attempt to impose upon a nation the belief of any thing similar to this, would be treated with ridicule, and could not succeed in any degree."

How far these arguments may satisfy a dispassionate inquirer that the Pentateuch was wholly written by Moses, and that every fact is to be received as true, must be left to the reader's own judgement. The safer course appears to be, after having inferred the divine legation of Moses from the perfection of Jewish theism, to consider how far we are warranted by evidence to receive the whole Pentateuch as written or dictated by Moses himself; and to inquire whether all the facts recorded are equally authentic; and by what criteria we may separate those which are worthy of entire confidence, from those which are of a doubtful or suspicious aspect.

diate divine infliction, and exasperated, rather than humbled, by the recent disaster of the death of the first-born, with their infatuated monarch at their head, pursued the Israelites in their march, resolving to reduce them again into bondage, or to perish in the attempt. The Israelites, inclosed in the wilderness between their enraged pursuers and the sea, forgetful of all past interpositions in their favour, gave up themselves for lost, and began to murmur against their venerable leader: but Moses soon cheered their spirits, and restored their confidence in divine protection, by the promise that Jehovah would fight the battle for them. And when he ordered them to advance, and to continue their march even into the sea itself, relying upon the promise that they should pass safely through, they cheerfully obeyed; and the laws of nature being suspended by the divine energy, the waters divided to make a passage for them, and rising on each side like a wall of adamant, the armies of Israel marched through upon dry ground. Far different was the fate of Pharaoh and his host: they likewise boldly rushed into the divided sea, believing probably that this phenomenon was nothing more than the natural effect of the violent wind; and imagining themselves as safe as the fugitives whom they pursued: but they soon learned their error to their cost; for no sooner were the chosen people safely landed upon the opposite shore than the rod of Moses, under the direction of the Almighty, restoring the suspended law of nature, the element instantly resumed its

Ch. XI. Ver. 29.

Ch. XI. Ver. 29. fluidity, and overwhelmed the Egyptian host in universal and undistinguished ruin.

(12.) The writer mentions the faith of the Israelites with respect to the destruction of Jericho, ver. 30.

30. *By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after a procession round* them [1] *for seven days.*

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[1] *A procession round* them.] See Wakefield's Translation, Josh. vi. The justification of the Israelites in the conquest of Canaan very much depends upon the truth of this fact: if a miracle was actually wrought to give them possession of Jericho, it was a public proof that this people in their invasion of Canaan, and the extermination of the inhabitants, acted under a divine commission. This would completely save their character. With regard to the Supreme Being, the difficulty and its solution are precisely the same, whether the Israelites were divinely authorized, or not, to execute their bloody purpose. What God permits he ordains; whatever be the means, or whoever the instruments that he employs for the execution of his sovereign purpose. And he had just as good a right to exterminate these wicked nations, with whose aggravated crimes he had borne so long, by the sword of the Israelites, as by famine, pestilence, or earthquake. And this mode of extermination possessed the further advantage, that it served as an awful warning to their successors to avoid the crimes of the people whom they had extirpated, that so they might escape their doom. See Macknight's note.

I shall further take leave to observe, that whether God did commission the Israelites to exterminate the Canaanites, according to the account in the Jewish history, or not, that history is at least consistent with itself: and it does not attribute this terrible commission to the chosen people, without at the same time affording evidence of it sufficient to satisfy and silence even the sufferers themselves. If it was true, as related in the history, that the Israelites were by a public incontestable miracle put into possession of Jericho, it must be allowed that they are to be regarded as the authorized executioners of divine justice. How far the authority of the history is sufficient to establish this fact, is quite a different question. I must, how-

When the Israelites entered the land of Canaan, armed with the terrible commission to exterminate the inhabitants both old and young, and to take possession of the country, it was absolutely necessary that there should be a solemn public indisputable attestation of the divine authority under which they acted. With this view, and to notify and establish their claim beyond all possibility of doubt, they were prohibited from using any military operations in their attack upon Jericho, the first fortified town at which they arrived; and were assured that without any efforts of their own it should be delivered into their hands. To this end the priests were required to carry the ark every day, for six days, in solemn procession, with sound of trumpet, once round the city; and on the seventh day to carry it round seven times in the same manner: and after the seventh time, the people were commanded to raise a loud shout while the trumpets were sounding, when it was promised that the wall of the city should instantly fall down: upon which

Ch. XI. Ver. 30.

ever, take the liberty to observe, that it does not appear to me to be a greater mystery in providence, or a problem of more difficult solution, that the Israelites should by supernatural authority be commissioned to exterminate the Canaanites, than that conquerors in all ages should be allowed, in the natural course of things, to lay waste the countries which they subdue. In fact, the difficulty with regard to the divine government is precisely the same, whether the Israelites were or were not authorized to destroy the Canaanites: for, whatever takes place in the ordinary course of things is as truly appointed by God as any supernatural event. All is his agency: in one case he acts by established rules, in the other by a deviation from them.

Ch. XI. Ver. 30. they were required immediately to go straight forward, to take possession, and to execute faithfully their stern commission. They believed the promise, they obeyed the order, they gained possession of the city, and they exterminated the inhabitants. But if they had not placed confidence in God, they could not have succeeded in their enterprize.

(13.) The writer shows the importance of faith in the escape of Rahab from the massacre of Jericho, ver. 31.

31. *By faith Rahab the harlot*[1] *perished not with the unbelievers, having entertained the spies in peace.*

The last case that I shall particularly notice, as illustrating in a striking manner the excellence and importance of faith, is that of Rahab, who though an ignorant, and perhaps once an immoral heathen,

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[1] *Rahab the harlot.*] Josh. iv. 25. I am much inclined to agree with those Jewish and Christian writers who think that πόρνη, when applied to Rahab, does not signify a prostitute. It is commonly understood by them to mean a keeper of a house of entertainment. Perhaps it means an idolatress: *q. d.* though Rahab had been a poor heathen idolatress, yet in this instance she believed in Jehovah, and was benefited by her belief, which was the means of saving herself and her family from destruction. It is generally admitted that Rahab was afterwards married to Salmon the ancestor of David, Matt. i. 5. But Dr. Geddes expresses a doubt whether this Rahab was the same person as Rahab the harlot, as she is called. See his note on Josh. ii. 1. But it is certain that she was contemporary with Salmon the son of Nahshon, Numb. ii. 3, and there does not appear to have been any other person of note of the same name. See Hallett on the text. "Rahab the hostess escaped among those who would not be persuaded." Wakefield.

was nevertheless convinced, by the report which she had heard of the wonders which God had wrought for the Israelites in the wilderness, that Jehovah was the true God, that Israel was his chosen people, that he would certainly give them a complete triumph over their enemies, and that he would put them in possession of the land of Canaan. Under this persuasion, she hospitably entertained the two men who were sent to bring an account of the country to Joshua, and concealed them from their pursuers, upon condition that they should spare her and her family when they obtained possession of the town. This promise they made and faithfully performed; and this poor woman not only escaped with her family from the destruction of her native city, but was afterwards married to a person of rank in the Hebrew nation, and from her descended, not only a line of illustrious princes, but in process of time the great Messiah himself. Ch. XI. Ver. 31.

(14.) The writer concludes his catalogue of illustrious examples of faith, by a brief recapitulation of the exploits and sufferings of many other eminent persons, upon which time does not permit him to enlarge, ver. 32—40.

1.] He commemorates some who in virtue of faith performed extraordinary exploits, ver. 32—35.

And what shall I say further? For time would fail me to discourse concerning Gideon[2]*, and Ba-* 32.

[2] *Gideon.*] See the history of Gideon, Judges vi.—viii.: con-

Ch. XI. Ver. 33. *rak*[1], *and Sampson*[2], *and Jephthah*[3], *and David, and Samuel, and the prophets; who through faith struggled successfully against kingdoms, wrought deliverance*[4], *obtained promises, stopped the mouths* 34. *of lions, quenched the rage of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, became strong from weakness, were valiant in war, put to flight the armies*[5] *of foreign*

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fiding in the divine promise, he is said, with a body of three hundred Israelites, to have surprised and routed an army of a hundred and thirty-five thousand Midianites.

[1] *Barak,*] depending upon the promise of God by Deborah, with comparatively a small force defeated the vast army of Jabin, Judg. iv.

[2] *Sampson.*] His history is well known. Judg. xiii.—xvi. The particular effect of faith here alluded to seems to have been the demolition of the house of Dagon and the destruction of the Philistines at his death, Judg. xvi. 28, in answer to his prayer.

[3] *Jephthah,*] whose history is related Judg. xi. He believed in the deliverances which God had wrought for Israel in former ages, and encouraged himself in the hope that God would still protect them. His vow was a foolish one: but it is utterly incredible that he should ever have thought of sacrificing his daughter to Jehovah, or should have been permitted to perform such a vow, if he had been wicked enough to make it. She was devoted to God, and bound to perpetual virginity, which in those days was considered as a great calamity: it was peculiarly such in the case of Jephthah's daughter, as she was an only child.

[4] *Wrought deliverance.*] δικαιοσυνην. *Righteousness* or *justification* is a phrase which often occurs in the writings of Paul, in the sense of deliverance from condemnation and death. In this connexion the heroes who delivered their country are said to have wrought *righteousness,* as they were the means of recovering their countrymen from those calamities in which their idolatry and apostasy had involved them. The word is used in the same sense as applied to Noah, ver. 7. See Wakefield.

[5] *Put to flight,*] or, "overturned the camps of foreigners:" παρεμβολας εκλιναν αλλοτριων. See Macknight. See the case of Jonathan, 1 Sam. xiv. 6—20; of Gideon, Judg. vii. 13. Sennacherib's disaster is recorded 2 Kings xix.

nations, received for women their dead children brought to life again[6]. Ch. XI. Ver. 35.

From the creation of the world to the invasion of Canaan I have been enumerating some remarkable instances of the wonderful efficacy of faith in divine declarations and promises; but to proceed in this detail would occupy more time than I have to spare, and swell this epistle to an inconvenient size. I shall therefore satisfy myself with allusions to facts and circumstances which your intimate acquaintance with the history of your nation will easily bring to your recollection. I shall first remind you of some extraordinary actions which have been achieved by the heroes and champions of faith, who ventured upon many exploits in reliance upon a divine promise which in other circumstances they would not have presumed to attempt. Joshua exterminated the Canaanites, and settled Israel in the promised land: Gideon and Barak, Sampson and Jephthah, in the days when the Israelites were under the government of generals, judges, and high-priests, and when, from their proneness to idolatry, they were often defeated and for a time reduced into subjection by the neighbouring nations, were raised up by providence to deliver their country, and relying

[6] *Received for women.*] γυναικῶν. "This most elegant reading," saith Mr. Wakefield, "far beyond the reach of transcribers, is preserved by the Syriac translator." The persons alluded to are, the widow of Sarepta, whose son was raised by Elijah, 1 Kings xvii. 14; and the Shunamite whose dead son was raised to life by Elisha, 2 Kings iv. 20—37. Griesbach takes no notice of this reading.

Ch. XI. Ver. 35.

upon the promise and protection of the Almighty were crowned with extraordinary success. David, by his zeal against idolatry, obtained the promise that the kingdom should be established in his posterity, and that the Messiah [1] should be numbered amongst his descendants: the prophet Daniel, confiding in God, escaped unhurt from the den of lions [2]; and the three pious and zealous youths who courageously refused to bend the knee to the golden image set up by the tyrant of Babylon, were in vain exposed to the scorching flames of the fiery furnace, which, while it destroyed their executioners, was not permitted to singe a hair of their heads [3]. Confiding in the protection of providence, the prophet Elijah boldly executed the duties of his mission, regardless of, and uninjured by the wrath of an incensed, idolatrous and revengeful queen [4]. Hezekiah, believing in the promise of God, communicated by the prophet Isaiah, recovered from a dangerous sickness, and fifteen years were added to his life [5]. Many of the heroes of the Hebrew nation distinguished themselves by their valour and success in battle; but the prince last mentioned, as the reward of his faith in the divine promise, was enabled to ransack and plunder the Assyrian camp [6], through the aid of the destroying angel, who in one

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[1] *The Messiah.*] See 2 Sam. xxiii. 1—7, and Gray on the last words of David.

[2] Dan. vi. 22, 23. [3] Dan. iii. 17, 18.

[4] 1 Kings xix. 1, 2. See also Exod. xviii. 4.

[5] Isa. xxxviii. 1—8.

[6] Isa. xxxvii. 36, 2 Kings xix. 35.

night swept away the greater part of Sennacherib's army by a pestilential blast: and to conclude, such is the efficacy of faith and prayer, that Elijah, the great reformer of Israel, restored to life the son of the widow of Sarepta[7], at whose house he had resided during the famine; and his successor Elisha raised the son of the Shunamite[8], who entertained and regarded him as a prophet of God[9]. Ch. XI. Ver. 35.

2.] The writer hints at the case of many whose faith supported them under the severest sufferings and torments, ver. 35—38.

And some[10] *were tortured*[11], *not accepting deli-* —35.

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[7] 1 Kings xix. 19.

[8] 2 Kings iv. 34.

[9] Upon this account of the wonders performed by faith we may remark, that the writer's argument only extends to the efficacy of faith in particular cases: he does not say any thing concerning the general character of the persons whose faith he celebrates. Some of them seem to have been persons of very loose morals, and chargeable with great crimes. They were bad men, and yet were selected by divine providence to accomplish its own benevolent designs. And this is perfectly agreeable to the general analogy of the divine dispensations, though very different perhaps from what we should antecedently have judged expedient.

[10] *And some.*] Most expositors understand the author of this epistle as alluding in this passage to the fortitude which the Jews displayed under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes; when many were put to death in severe tortures because they would not renounce their religion. The heroic conduct of Eleazar, and of the woman and her seven sons, is related in the sixth and seventh chapters of the second book of Maccabees. But Mr. Hallett thinks that no history is alluded to here but what is contained in the authentic Jewish scriptures.

[11] *Were tortured.*] ετυμπανισθησαν, "were tortured to death." Mr. Wakefield renders it, "were killed with clubs." The word is used both in a general sense and for a particular species of

Ch. XI. *verance, that they might obtain a better resurrec-*
Ver. 36. *tion*[1]. *And some experienced mockery and scourg-*
37. *ings, bonds also, and imprisonments. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were impaled*[2], *they were slaughtered by the sword; they went about in sheepskins*[3] *and in goatskins, desti-*
38. *tute, afflicted, cruelly treated, (of whom the world was not worthy,) wandering in deserts and in mountains, and in dens, and caves of the earth.*

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torture. See Hallett. 2 Macc. vi. 16, *τυμπανον, clava, baculus,* from *τυπτω*. Gataker; Newcome, who refers to Le Clerc on Hammond, and to H. Stephens.

[1] *A better resurrection:*] that is, than the resurrection of the children just mentioned, who were raised only to a frail and mortal life. That the Jews under Antiochus suffered torture and martyrdom in hope of a resurrection to immortal life, is evident from the account in 2 Macc. vii. 9, 11, 14, 23. "Thou, like a fury," exclaims one of the tortured youths to the inhuman tyrant, "takest us out of the present life; but the king of the world shall raise us up who have died for his laws, to everlasting life."

[2] *Were impaled.*] *επειραθησαν*, from *πειραω, transfigo.* "they were pierced with stakes." See Wakefield and Newcome. Archbishop Newcome adds, that two MSS. and Syr. omit the word, with the approbation of many critics. Mill, Hallett, and Griesbach retain the common reading, *επειρασθησαν, they were tempted,* as best supported by ancient authorities, and well suiting the connexion. Hallett combats the arguments of Whitby, who conjectures that *επειρασθησαν* was inserted by some ignorant transcriber for *επρισθησαν*.

[3] *In sheepskins:*] "*i. e.* in mean clothing." Newcome. Hallett observes, that "Elias is undoubtedly the instance which the writer had in his eye. It is said in our translation that he wore a mantle, 1 Kings xix. 13, 19, 2 Kings ii. 8, 13, 14; in all which places the Greek translator uses the word *μηλωτη*, a *sheepskin.*" Clemens Romanus saith, "Let us imitate those that walked about preaching the coming of Christ in goats' skins and sheeps' skins: I mean the prophets Elias, Elisha, and Ezekiel." See Harmer, vol. iv. p. 519.

Ch. XI. Ver. 38.

The energy of faith is as conspicuous in supporting the mind under trials and sufferings, as in prompting men to deeds of heroism and renown. I have just mentioned that faith in the power of God, on some special occasions, enabled some distinguished prophets to raise children from the dead, and to restore them to their transported mothers. I now add, that some, relying with cheerful confidence on the promise and providence of God, have submitted to death in the most excruciating tortures, nobly disdaining to accept of life, and opulence, and honours, by violating conscience and apostatizing from the divine law. To this heroic resolution they were animated by the hope of a resurrection, not like that of these children to a frail and dying life, but to a life of everlasting felicity and glory. This was eminently the case with some who suffered under the bloody persecution of Antiochus. Others again, who were not exposed to martyrdom, were exercised with trials, almost or altogether, as difficult to endure. They were subjected to the most grievous insults, to scourging, and imprisonment, and chains; but faith triumphed over all. Of those who obtained the crown of martyrdom, some, like Zechariah[4], were stoned to death; others, as Isaiah[5], were sawn asunder; others were

[4] *Zechariah.*] See 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21.

[5] *Isaiah.*] It is a tradition preserved both in the Babylonish and Jerusalem Talmuds, that the prophet Isaiah was sawn asunder by order of king Manasseh. This tradition is also mentioned by Justin Martyr and Jerome; and it is, says Hallett, universally agreed, that Isaiah is the person here referred to.

Ch. XI. Ver. 38. impaled; and others, as the prophets of Jehovah, by the command of Jezebel were cut off by the sword[1]. To escape the fury of their persecutors they fled into deserts, wandered in wildernesses, and lived in caves[2], clad with the meanest raiment, destitute, like Elijah, even of the necessaries of life, and, like him, so cruelly treated by their enemies and persecutors that to them death was often preferable to life: yet such was the worth and excellence of these holy men, that the world, which treated them with so much inhumanity, was unworthy of being honoured with their residence in it, and the greatest blessings which that world could confer were infinitely short of their deserts. These holy men were the instructors and reformers of the age in which they lived; but their unwise contemporaries undervalued and neglected their instructions, and insulted and persecuted their best benefactors and friends: and such in all ages has been the spirit of ignorance, bigotry, and daring profligacy. Nevertheless, these virtuous confessors persevered in their honourable career; and, animated by the hope of future reward and of ultimate success, when they were no longer permitted to benefit their fellow-creatures by their instructions, they were contented to do it by their sufferings[3].

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[1] 1 Kings xix. 10, 14.

[2] 1 Kings xviii. 4, 13, xix. 4.

[3] *By their sufferings.*] The writer is generally thought, as I have before observed, to allude to the persecution of the Jews for their religion under Antiochus Epiphanes, the tyrant of Sy-

3.] The writer concludes this catalogue of distinguished persons with remarking, that the faith which produced these extraordinary effects was exercised upon promises far less important than those which are now made to believers in Christ, ver. 39, 40. Ch. XI. Ver. 38.

Now all these[4], *though they obtained an honourable testimony through faith,* yet *received not the promise, God having long ago provided something better for us, that they without us might not be complete*[5]. 39. 40.

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ria, in which many suffered death in extreme tortures. Particulars are related in the second book of Maccabees, ch. vi. vii. The suffering heroes were offered life, liberty, and every favour which the tyrant could bestow, if they would renounce their religion; but they spurned his offers, and joyfully submitted to insult and scourging, and death, triumphing in the hope of a resurrection to immortality. How they acquired this faith in a resurrection is very difficult to be accounted for, as it forms no part of the Mosaic revelation. It was probably a tradition, founded upon an ancient revelation. The notions, however, which the Jews entertained upon this subject were very imperfect when Christ appeared, by whose gospel alone life and immortality are brought to light.

[4] *All these.*] This expression by no means implies, as Mr. Hallett seems to apprehend (see his note on ver. 32), that all the individuals mentioned or alluded to in this chapter were virtuous characters, and such as entitled them to the hope of salvation: they are only brought forward as examples of the efficacy of faith in specific instances. The victories of Jephthah and Sampson no more prove them to have been good men, than the miracles performed by Judas would prove him to be a true disciple of Jesus.

[5] *Might not be complete.*] It is a strange conceit of Mr. Hallett's, that good men under the Mosaic dispensation continued after death in a state of insensibility till the coming of Christ: but that all good Christians when they die enter immediately upon a state of activity and happiness, and that this is the better thing provided for us. Nothing but the clearest revelation

Ch. XI. Ver. 40.

All these extraordinary men have a high character in the sacred history, because of the vigour and practical excellence of their faith. Yet, after all, the object of their faith was mean, and of little value, in comparison with ours. Most of these eminent persons expected nothing better than temporal deliverances and blessings: or, if they looked forward to a future life, their hope must have rested on a precarious foundation, and their best prospect was that of the promised Messiah; a promise, the accomplishment of which they were not permitted to see. This privilege was reserved for us who live under the dispensation of the Messiah, in whom we believe, and by whose mission and resurrection we are elevated to the assurance of a future life. To complete the illustrious catalogue of those who

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could establish a fact so highly improbable as this. The better thing provided for Christians is the actual advent of the Messiah as the object of faith; and the phalanx of those who have distinguished themselves by the energy and triumphs of their faith in former ages is represented as incomplete, till joined by the army of Christian worthies and confessors. "*something better for us:* that is, the knowledge of the Messiah." Newcome.

"None of the people of old received, or could possibly know, how the promise was to be made good. All they could do was to expect and believe that it would be performed. But God *foresaw* and ordered matters so, that we should see the whole fulfilled. . . . . These good and faithful men were not perfect, or had not a complete notion of God's purpose." Sykes. —"God has provided some better thing for us: the promise to them was the first personal appearance of the Messiah; the better thing provided for us is the promise of Christ's second appearance, that they might *then* be made perfect, but not without *us*, though we have received the accomplishment of the first without *them*." Wolfius. See Doddridge.

are entitled to high distinction on account of the achievements of their faith, it has pleased God that the names of believers in Jesus should also be added, whose exploits and sufferings, in virtue of faith in their honoured chief, will make a splendid addition to the achievements of former times; for they who enjoy peculiar privileges may reasonably be expected to distinguish themselves proportionably by honourable exertions. Ch. XI. Ver. 40.

SECTION III.

THE WRITER, in this chapter, suggests a variety of weighty considerations to dissuade and deter the Hebrew Christians from apostasy. Ch. xii. throughout. Ch. XII.

1. He presses upon their minds the examples of persevering and triumphant faith which he has just celebrated, and he especially directs their attention to that of Jesus, ver. 1—4.

Wherefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses[1], *let us also lay aside every weight, and the sin*[2] *which easily entangleth us,* Ver. 1.

[1] *Cloud of witnesses.*] Not witnesses to our exertions, but witnesses to the truth; a multitude of confessors and martyrs by whose example we ought to be animated. See Grotius, Whitby, &c. "so thick a company of men who acted by the principle of faith, and endured so many afflictions." Sykes.

[2] *The sin:*] *i. e.* apostasy, which easily entangles (εὐπερίστα-

Ch. XII. Ver. 1. *and let us run with perseverance the race which is appointed us.*

I have defined the nature and represented the excellence of faith in the divine promises, by referring you to those eminent examples of the triumphs of faith which are recorded in the Hebrew scriptures. Here we read of many who suffered persecution, and torments, and death, rather than renounce their principles and abandon their hopes. What is the natural inference from this representation? Surely, that it is incumbent upon us to breathe the same honourable, inflexible, persevering spirit, by which our ancestors were so nobly distinguished. Since then we are encompassed with so great a multitude of confessors and martyrs to the great principle of confidence in God, let us be ambitious to enroll ourselves in the glorious fraternity. We are like candidates in the public games to run for a prize, and the race will require our utmost exertion: let us then throw aside every weight which would retard our course, and the very garments which, by entangling our steps, would impede our exertion, and let us press forward till we reach the goal. In other words, let us lay aside all prejudice against the gospel, and all that reluctance which we who have indulged expectations so widely different from the truth

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τον), which like a long garment folds about the legs of the racer and obstructs his speed, or throws him down. See Hallett and Newcome. "Not any one sin, but every sin which is apt to get round us and entangle us, and thus to hinder us in our course." Sykes. See 1 Cor. ix. 24, 26.

are so prone to feel against the mission and character of Jesus, and which is so constant and powerful a temptation to apostasy; and having upon just grounds embraced the truth, let us resolutely persevere in our adherence to it, and approve ourselves the worthy heirs of the faith of our ancestors. Ch. XII. Ver. 1.

Looking upon Jesus, the leader and the finisher of this faith[1], *who, with a view to the joy which was set before him, endured the cross, despising the ignominy, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.* 2.

I have a greater and more interesting example to propose to you than any or all that I have already mentioned. It is that of our master Jesus himself. Look, my Christian friends, to our great leader; trace him from the beginning to the end of his course. He was the first to begin the career of faith, and the first to receive its reward. How did faith exert itself in him, and how was it recompensed? Confiding in the promise of God, that his reward should be proportioned to his labours and his suf-

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[1] *The leader and finisher:*] *i. e.* the person who exhibited a perfect example of Christian faith from beginning to end, both in its exertions and its rewards. "Christ was not the Author of Faith, but the Leader on to it. He was the person that goes before and leads us on as captain. And thus is this word used as often as it is applied to our Saviour. Acts iii. 25, v. 31, Heb. ii. 10. The Leader of *faith* is one who leads the way in faith, encouraging others to follow. And the Finisher must be one that has gone through and brought to perfection *faith*: one who, by showing what may be accomplished or done by the practice of faith, has done and borne all that can be done in consequence of that principle." Sykes.

Ch. XII. Ver. 2. ferings, he endured crucifixion, he made light of the disgrace, he did not shrink from duty, or from suffering: and proportioned to his faith is his honour and reward. He was raised from the dead, and is exalted to the right hand of God, to power, and glory, and to be the head of his church. Shall we hesitate then to believe and to obey the gospel, when the pain and shame to which we are exposed by it can bear no proportion to what he endured for us?

3. *For consider*[1] *him who endured such opposition of sinners to himself, lest ye be wearied*[2]*, fainting*
4. *in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood combating against sin*[3].

In order to confirm your virtuous and Christian resolution, consider well the analogy between the sufferings of Jesus and your own: the fortitude

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[1] *Consider.*] ἀναλογισασθε, trace the analogy between his case and yours. "The word signifies, to reason, to argue from, to compare cases." Sykes.

[2] *Lest ye be wearied.*] "καμνειν est tædio laboris affici: εκλυεσθαι, lassari. Hæc duo verba a palæstra, et ab athletis recepta sunt, qui dicuntur καμνειν κ. τ. λ. quum vel animi, vel corporis robore ac viribus destituti, victas dant adversario manus, palmamque concedunt." Rosenmuller. "that ye may not give out." Worsley.

[3] *Combating against sin.*] "The phrase seems to be borrowed from gladiatorial exhibitions." Newcome. *Unto blood,* μεχρις αἱματος. q. d. *ad sanguinis usque profusionem. Pudeat vos defatigari levioribus malis. Illi quorum supra meminimus partim ad capitalia supplicia, partim ad tormenta rapti fuere, Christus ipse mortem, et quidem crucis perpessus est. Vos libertatis tantum et facultatum damna aut pericula incurristis.* ἁμαρτιαν *hic intellige defectionem a religione Christianâ.*" Rosenmuller. *Sin,* perhaps the persecuting power; and *sinners,* in the preceding verse, persecutors.

which he exhibited, and the glory which he acquired. You meet with opposition and persecution from the enemies of the gospel: so did he. His doctrine was discredited, his mission was despised, his character was calumniated, his miracles were ascribed to Beelzebub, his person was insulted, and, finally, he was condemned as a blasphemer, and crucified as a traitor. Yet he bore all with magnanimity; he declined no suffering which was expedient as a testimony to truth, and to accomplish the purposes of his mission. And what have you suffered in comparison with him? You have indeed been insulted, calumniated, robbed, and imprisoned, and you have borne all with a patience and fortitude which has done you the highest credit: but you have not yet, like your great leader, been called forth to sacrifice life in the defence of truth, and in the severe conflict with the persecuting power. Prepare yourselves, my dear brethren, for this last and greatest trial: animated by the example of your honoured master, by the pattern of his sufferings, and by the splendour of his recompense, faint not, halt not, in the career of glory; persevere in your honourable course, and cheerfully submit to bear the cross, that so you may ultimately obtain the crown. Ch. XII. Ver. 4.

2. The writer reminds the Hebrew Christians that persecutions themselves are proofs of paternal affection, and that they would be ultimately benefi-

Ch. XII. cial; consequently that they afford no just ground for apostasy, ver. 5—11.

1.) Correction in a limited degree is what every son may expect from a parent, and the persecutions they endured were proofs that God acknowledged them as his genuine children, ver. 5—8.

Ver. 5. *And have ye*[1] *forgotten the exhortation which reasoneth*[2] *with you as with sons* (Prov. iii. 11, 12), *My son, think not lightly of the discipline of*
6. *the Lord, nor faint under his reproof; for whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth*[3]?

I have just hinted that persecution is a fierce antagonist, with which it will be needful for you to struggle to the last extremity like your glorious leader, if you are desirous to win the prize. But this potent enemy may be regarded in a less formidable and more conciliatory light. Persecution is a divine discipline, intended to correct, to strengthen,

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[1] *And have ye.*] Mr. Hallett reads this as an interrogation; and observes, "that it is not likely that the writer here designed to accuse the Hebrews of having forgotten the scriptures."

[2] *Which reasoneth.*] διαλεγεται. See Macknight. Mr. Wakefield translates the passage, "have ye forgotten that encouraging voice, which talketh with you as with sons?"

[3] *And scourgeth.*] The modern Jews and our translation point and understand the original, Prov. iii. 12, as signifying, "even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." The writer of this epistle follows the Greek version, and the original equally admits both. But the parallelism of the sentence is better preserved in the LXX. than in the English translation. The Arabic, Syriac, and Chaldee follow the Greek version. The Latin Vulgate agrees with the English. See Hallett and Sykes.

and to improve the mind, and persecutors are a rod in the hand of God, employed by him to fulfill his gracious purposes; nor can they do less, or more, than his paternal wisdom is pleased to appoint. Your own scriptures, my beloved brethren, bear me out in this representation. Do not you recollect the advice and the reasoning of Solomon in the book of Proverbs, ch. iii. 11, 12, where, addressing himself to his reader, as a father to his son, he urges him neither to be insensible to the discipline of affliction, nor yet to sink into despondency under it: and he enforces this advice by the just and affecting consideration, that all affliction, of whatever kind, proceeds from God, and that it is a discipline with which he usually visits those whom he acknowledges as his sons, those who most resemble him, who are most dear to him, for whom he has provided an everlasting inheritance, and whom he is training up, by this painful but needful and salutary exercise, for the possession and fruition of it, when the season of maturity shall arrive. Ch. XII. Ver. 6.

Bear chastisement[4] *with patience: God is dealing with you*[5] *as with sons: for what son is there* 7.

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[4] *Bear chastisement.*] Mr. Wakefield observes, that "the old versions unanimously disown the conjunction εἰ, and this gives beauty and propriety to the passage." The Alexandrine, Clermont, and many other manuscripts read εἰς.

[5] *God is dealing with you.*] προσφερεται. "God is offered, or offereth himself, to you as to sons." Sykes. See this use of προσφερεται in Grotius, Raphelius, Xenophon, and Wetstein." Bowyer.

"*Hoc sensu verbum sæpe obvium est apud bonos auctores, præcipue Demosthenem.* Agit vobiscum tanquam cum liberis, *osten-*

Ch. XII. Ver. 8. *whom his father chastiseth not? But if ye be without chastisement, of which all* others *are partakers, certainly ye are spurious*[1], *and not* legitimate *sons.*

Let the considerations which the wise prince suggests to his readers reconcile you, my brethren, to a persecuted and suffering state. Look beyond second causes: think not upon the malice and wickedness of your adversaries: trace all to God: it is by his permission they act: it is he that is inflicting parental chastisement by their instrumentality. Murmur not at his dispensations. God is acting the part of a wise and affectionate parent. He corrects because he loves, and wills the happiness of his children. If you were not exercised with the discipline of suffering and persecution, as all true believers are, it would be a proof that you were not the children of God, but children of the world; for the world loves and cherishes its own offspring; and if your conduct was such as to escape persecution in times like these, it would be a proof that you are not what you profess to be, true believers in Christ; but wicked hypocrites, who make a profession of Christianity only so far as it suits your own convenience, and to answer some sinister end.

2.) The obligation they were under to acquiesce and submit to the divine discipline was beyond com-

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dit se vestri habere curam, saluti vestræ prospicere, ut solent patres, qui liberos bene educare student." Rosenmuller.

[1] *Spurious.*] "The meaning is, no due care is taken of you, no concern is shown about your welfare." Sykes.

parison greater than that under which they had lain to earthly parents, ver. 9—11. Ch. XII.

Have we then[2] *had natural fathers*[3] *who chastised* us, *and whom we reverenced? and shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits*[4], *and live*[5]? Ver. 9.

Has the discipline with which we have been exercised by wise and virtuous parents in the days of childhood produced that filial awe and reverence in our minds which has induced us upon all occasions, without hesitation or reluctance, to obey their orders? and is it not much more reasonable to resign ourselves entirely to the will and direction of our heavenly Father, to whom we owe existence and all its blessings? obedience to whom will ensure everlasting life, while disobedience will be attended with consequences far more terrible than the punishment

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[2] *Have we then.*] Wakefield, Newcome, and others, read this as a question. Mr. Wakefield observes, that the same elegant construction is found in other good writers. See Bowyer.

[3] *Natural fathers.*] So Wakefield. πατερας της σαρκος, *fathers of our flesh.*

[4] *Father of spirits.*] τω πατρι των πνευματων, "our spiritual father." Wakefield.—"patri spirituum: *cui nos omnes corpus et animam debemus, ut* Num. xvi. 22. *vel potius,* patri spirituali, *patri qui est spiritus perfectissimus, qui nunquam pro lubitu, sine idoneis rationibus castigat, vel errores in castigando admittit, ut patres humani solent. Nam describitur Deus ut parens, non ut creator.*" Rosenmuller.

[5] *And live.*] Dr. Doddridge observes that the writer here alludes to the law, Deut. xxi. 18, &c. which inflicts capital punishment on the disobedient child; and he mentions this as an instance of the writer's forcible way of suggesting the most weighty thought, sometimes in an oblique manner and in very few words. He ascribes the epistle to Paul, and observes that many such passages are to be found in that apostle's writings.

Ch. XII. of death, inflicted by the law of Moses on the rebellious son.

Ver. 10. *For they indeed corrected us for a short time*[1] *as they thought fit*[2], *but He for our advantage*[3], *that we might be partakers of his holiness*[4].

Earthly parents, in the discipline which they administered, generally intended well, and correction had its use: but the motives even of the best of parents are not always pure, nor their judgement infallible. Caprice, passion, partiality, nay, even cruelty, occasionally dictate paternal chastisement: and sometimes, with the best intentions, they are mistaken, both with regard to the cause, the nature, the measure, and the effect of the correction which they apply. But the father of spirits is infinitely remote from all infirmity of this kind. He has no motive but kindness; he has no measure but wisdom; he never errs as to the cause, the time, the degree, the nature, or the duration of the discipline with which he visits his frail and suffering

[1] *For a short time.*] προς ολιγας ἡμερας, *for a few days.* Dr. Doddridge observes, but perhaps it is too great a refinement, "that this is to be applied both to our earthly parents and to our heavenly Father; and it contains a beautiful and comfortable intimation that this whole life, when compared with our future being, is but as a few days: indeed infinitely less than the days of childhood to those of the longest life of man upon earth."

[2] *As they thought fit.*] κατα το δοκειν αυτοις, "as it seemed fit to them. Perhaps not always rightly." Newcome. "after their own humour." Wakefield.

[3] *For our advantage.*] επι το συμφερον. "for our profit." Newcome. "for our good." Wakefield.

[4] *Partakers of his holiness.*] "might become holy as he is holy." Newcome.

children: he intends their good, and he effects it; nor will he desist till he accomplishes his purpose; till he has moulded them to that filial temper and spirit to which it is his will to form them; to a resemblance to himself in holiness and purity. Nor are those sufferings, which are brought upon us by the envy and malice of persecutors themselves, to be regarded in any other light than as visitations from God. For the rage and malice of angry and violent men are as entirely under the direction and controul of divine providence as a disease or a tempest. Ch. XII. Ver. 10.

Now no correction for the present is a subject of joy[5], *but of sorrow: nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those that are exercised*[6] *by it.* 11.

I do not mean, by any thing which I have said, to divest you of the feelings of human nature, or to advise you to act as if you were insensible to suffering. All suffering is painful; and the sufferings

[5] *No correction is, &c.*] δοκει ειναι, *seemeth to be:* but δοκει is here an expletive. See Hallett and Newcome.

[6] *Exercised.*] γεγυμνασμενοις, "to those who are trained by it." Macknight; who remarks, that "there is an allusion to those who were trained to the combat by the exercises of the palæstra." Dr. Doddridge supposes that "the peaceful fruit of righteousness contains an allusion to the crown of olive given to the victor in the Olympic games, which was an emblem of peace." He mentions, that "Bos translates the word ειρηνικον, *pleasant, joyful;* and that Wolfius supposes an allusion to the peace of God, which we obtain by faith."

"Though at first all chastening is matter of sorrow, and not of joy, yet afterwards it produces quiet of mind, and such inward peace in the progress in virtue and goodness as abundantly compensates the grief at first felt." Sykes.

Ch. XII. Ver. 11. which you have endured, as well as those to which you will in all probability be called out, are of the most exquisite kind; they are such as you cannot but feel most severely: but let them not alienate your heart from God, nor tempt you to apostatize from your Christian profession: for be assured, that whatever you endure in the cause of truth shall hereafter find an abundant compensation; and persevering fortitude shall be crowned with distinguished honour and everlasting peace.

3. The writer urges the believing Hebrews to remove whatever might impede the progress of others, and to discountenance those whose evil example, like that of Esau, might have a pernicious influence, ver. 12—17.

1.) He exhorts the Hebrew believers, from the considerations which he had offered, to encourage themselves to a vigorous prosecution of their Christian course, ver. 12—14.

12. *Therefore set right*[1] *the hands which hang down,*
13. *and the enfeebled knees; and make smooth paths*[2]

[1] *Set right.*] ανορθωσατε. "*Quapropter remissas manus et genua languescentia erigite.*" Rosenmuller. "bring to their right position." Macknight. "Ανορθοω, *surrigo, sursum vel rursus erigo—metaphoricè, reficio, in pristinum meliorem statum reddo.*" Schleusner. The words are taken from Isa. xxxv. 3, LXX. with a little variation. The prophet calls upon the weak and feeble to rouse and exert themselves. As Rosenmuller observes, it cannot be supposed that the prophet alludes to the Grecian games, but rather to those who were faint and weary with a long journey. The Hebrews had been harassed with persecution, and were in danger of apostasy.

[2] *Smooth paths.*] "τροχιας οδους· τροχια, *semita, via. Sen-*

for your feet, that the limb *which halts may not* Ch. XII.
be put out of joint[3], *but rather be healed. Pursue* Ver. 14.
peace with all men, *and that holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord*[4].

Thus you see that affliction and persecution are no proof of a bad cause, nor any reason why you should desert your profession. On the contrary, they rather afford a presumption that you, and the cause for which you suffer, are under the special care and providence of God. Do not then, my brethren, give way to discouragement and despondency. Having advanced so far, persevere to the end: rouse your spirits, summon up your resolution, renew your vigour and your activity in your Christian career. You have indeed a rugged path before you, and the limbs of some of you begin to fail: but be not disheartened; do not stop, do not look back; level the ruggedness of the way; I have furnished you with materials; press forward, therefore, avoiding every occasion of stumbling, every

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sus igitur, Facite complanari vobis vias per quas ituri estis." Rosenmuller. Hallett says the word is used in the same sense Prov. iv. 11, 12, xi. 5, xii. 15.

[3] *Put out of joint.*] See Macknight. "*ἱνα μη το χωλον ἐκτραπῃ. Ne membrum debile luxetur, sed sanetur potius. το χωλον hic est membrum corporis ubi nervi aliquid de vigore suo perdidere.*" Rosenmuller. "*Talia membra, si iter fiat per loca inæqualia, facile loco suo excidunt, sive luxantur, quod hic est ἐκτρεπεσθαι.*" Grotius, Rosenmuller.

[4] *See the Lord.*] See Matt. v. 8, 1 Cor. xiii. 12, Rev. xxii. 4. In this expression some have supposed a beautiful allusion to the cloud of glory in the most holy place, into which none but the high-priest was permitted to enter. But in the new Jerusalem all shall be admitted to the beatific vision; all will be high-priests, clothed in holiness as in a pontifical robe.

Ch. XII. Ver. 14. act which would wound your integrity and disable you from proceeding. Live in peace: do not unnecessarily give offence, nor provoke persecution; and be not unwilling to associate in Christian communion with those who may not see the necessity of submitting to the yoke of the law. Above all things practise holiness; not legal holiness merely; but put on that robe of universal virtue, which, like the golden garments of Aaron, will qualify you for admission into the most holy place, and will secure your acceptance with God.

2.) He exhorts them to mark and to discountenance those whose evil example, like that of Esau, would have a pernicious influence upon others, ver. 15—17.

15. *Carefully observing lest any one fall short of the gift of God*[1], *lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble* you[2], *and by it many be polluted.*

Be watchful over one another. Often look attentively around, and see if there be any one of your number who is wavering in his profession, and ready

[1] *The gift of God.*] της χαριτος, *grace, favour:* the dispensation of the gospel, so called as the gratuitous gift of God. Titus ii. 11, 2 Cor. vi. 1. "*falling short of,* υστερων απο, is no where else used in the New Testament. It often occurs without a preposition, and signifies, *to be wanting,* or *deficient in.* Rom. iii. 23, 1 Cor. i. 7, John ii. 3. Here it means *failing to attain,* through sloth or carelessness." Sykes.

[2] *Trouble you.*] ενοχλη. This is the reading of all the copies and versions. But the words are a citation, or nearly such, from Deut. xxix. 18, LXX., where the reading is εν χολη, which is preferred by Grotius, Mill, and Wakefield, who translates the words, "lest any root of bitterness, as gall, spring up."

to decline from the faith, either through fear of persecution, or disgust at the doctrine of the gospel; and observe particularly whether there be any who, not satisfied with their own defection, are endeavouring to sow the seeds of discontent and disaffection among their brethren, so that others are in danger of being seduced by them from their allegiance to the truth; and if such dangerous members are to be found in your community, mark them well, and first endeavour to reclaim them, and, if possible, to bring them back to the faith: but, if they are irrecoverable, disown them altogether; hold no fellowship with them; but root up and cast away the poisonous weed, that it may not diffuse its baleful influence and destroy the crop. Ch. XII. Ver. 15.

Lest there be *any fornicator, or profane* person, *like Esau*[3], *who, for one repast, gave away* 16.

[3] *Fornicator, or profane* person, *like Esau.*] This account of Esau's selling his birthright is related Gen. xxv. 29: that of his unavailing regret at being cheated out of his father's blessing, Gen. xxvii. 30—40. Esau is called a fornicator; probably because he married into a heathen family, Gen. xxvi. 34; and perhaps he might tolerate, if not practise, idolatrous worship. Idolatry is often called *fornication* in the scriptures, not only because it allowed lewdness, and in some cases even required prostitution, but more especially because the connexion between God and his chosen people being represented as a marriage covenant, idolatry was a violation of that covenant. An idolater, therefore, is called a fornicator, and the idolatrous church a harlot. See Taylor's *Key to the Romans*, ch. ii. sect. 11. Esau is also called *profane*, because he despised and sold his *birthright*. The birthright that he sold was no doubt the entail of the promise, which he must have known to have been made upon the family of Isaac, and which probably he did not know to have been settled before his birth upon the posterity of his younger brother. He was criminal, therefore, in parting with

Ch. XII. Ver. 17. *his birthright. For ye know, that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no way to change* his father's *mind*[1], *though he sought it earnestly,* even *with tears.*

Observe further, whether there be any persons among you who are attached to the licentious indulgences of heathenism, who set little value upon the privileges and the promises of the gospel, and who are willing to sacrifice all their professions and all their hopes to the gratification of their appetites, and to their secular interests, as Esau sacrificed the

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a privilege to which he thought he had a claim. Perhaps he expected, that by the blessing of Isaac he might recover his lost birthright; but out of this he was again tricked by the base artifices of Rebekah and Jacob; nor could he by all his tears and passionate exclamations prevail upon his father to revoke the grant. But though the conduct of Esau was reprehensible, it is no excuse for the meanness, fraud, and falsehood of Rebekah and Jacob. And it ought to be remembered, that the descent of the promise did not in the least degree depend upon the success of these tricks and impositions of the younger brother, but had been fixed by Providence, independently on the merits of either, previous to their birth: Gen. xxv. 23, Rom. ix. 12. This state of things is in perfect unison with the general dispensations of divine providence, by which external advantages are continually dispensed promiscuously without any regard to character.

"To be *profane* is to treat with contempt any thing that God appoints, knowing it to be his appointment; or, if God himself be treated not with that reverence and respect which is due to his majesty, this is properly profaneness." Sykes.

[1] *To change* his father's *mind.*] μετανοιας. See Wakefield, Newcome. "μετανοια does not signify here *repentance,* but *change of sentiment.*" Owen *ap.* Bowyer. Vide chap. vi. 1, where the same word occurs in the same sense. *Repentance from dead works: i. e.* change of mind from the works of the law, called *dead works* because they leave those who rely upon them under sentence of death: ceasing to depend upon them for justification.

privileges of his primogeniture for one miserable meal, plainly proving that he valued them not. Wretched indeed is the case of these thoughtless and wicked apostates. Esau, the surrender of whose birthright had been extorted from him by the cravings of hunger, and by the ungenerous conduct of Jacob, and who had been cheated out of his father's blessing by the joint artifice of his mother and his brother imposing upon the credulity of a weak old man, was soon and deeply sensible of his loss. This, however, he could not repair, for all his tears and bitter exclamations could not prevail upon Isaac to recall the blessing. So, likewise, those wicked apostates who, in contradiction to their better judgements, sacrifice their Christian birthright, their principles and their hopes, to the gratification of their passions, and to views of self-interest, will another day, when it is too late, have their eyes opened to see and bitterly to lament their folly. In the mean time, it is your duty to exclude such persons from Christian communion, that others may not be corrupted by their pernicious example. Ch. XII. Ver. 17.

4. The writer presses this duty of stedfastness, from the consideration of the different spirit of the law and gospel, one being a dispensation of terror, the other of mercy, ver. 18—24.

1.) He represents the awful pomp with which the law was delivered at Mount Sinai, but which did not accompany the new dispensation, ver. 18—21.

Ch. XII. Ver. 18. *Moreover*[1], *ye are not come to the mountain which was the object of touch*[2], *and which burned with fire, nor to the thick cloud, and darkness, and*
19. *tempest, nor to the blast of the trumpet, and the sound of words, the hearers of which entreated*[3] *that the discourse might not be addressed to them*
20. *any more, for they could not endure that strict command, If even a beast touch the mountain, it*
21. *shall be stoned*[4]*; and so terrible was the appearance, that Moses said*[5], *I exceedingly fear and tremble.*

The mild and gentle spirit of the new dispensation, and the glorious privileges which it confers, form an additional and very powerful motive for a faithful adherence to it, which must operate very

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[1] *Moreover.*] γαρ. "This is not an inference from what immediately precedes, but an additional reason for perseverance: connected with ver. 15." Sykes.

[2] *Object of touch.*] ψηλαφωμενῳ, a hebraism for ψηλαφητῳ. Grotius. Not that *might be touched*, for the people were forbidden to approach it, but which was the *object of touch*; tangible, solid, in opposition to Mount Sion, the heavenly Jerusalem; which was spiritual, and not perceptible by the senses. Mr. Wakefield gives the sentence a different turn; viz. "a mountain spread all over and burning with fire." "an earthly material mountain." Newcome.

[3] *Entreated.*] See Exod. xix. 16—19, xx. 1, 18, 19.

[4] *It shall be stoned.*] Exod. xix. 12, 13. The words added in the received text, "or thrust through with a dart," are wanting in most of the ancient manuscripts and versions. "They were probably a marginal insertion." Owen, Bowyer.

[5] *Moses said.*] This declaration of Moses does not appear in the history: hence some have inferred that the epistle to the Hebrews was not written by a Jew, but there might be a tradition to this effect; and the circumstance itself is highly probable.

strongly upon every candid and ingenuous mind. There is nothing in the promulgation of the doctrine of Christ to alarm your fears, like the awful scenes which took place at the promulgation of the law. You are not conducted through a dreary and perilous wilderness to a lofty mountain, the object of sight and sense, burning with fire, enveloped in smoke, darkened with clouds, and involved in tempests. You hear no alarming blast of a trumpet, no supernatural voice, articulating sounds such as struck terror into the Jewish hosts, and induced the dismayed people unanimously and earnestly to request that Moses would be their mediator with God, to communicate the divine commands, that they might not again be terrified with those tremendous thunders. For they were struck with horror at all they saw and heard; and trembled at the rigour of the prohibition which had been issued to prevent their passing the appointed limits, which extended to beasts as well as to men: and Moses himself was no doubt exceedingly alarmed, though the history does not expressly mention it, and we must needs suppose that he dare not have ascended the mountain and ventured into the thick darkness *where God was*, if he had not been specially encouraged and fortified for the occasion. All this alarming apparatus was extremely well suited to the introduction of a dispensation of terror. But it is our happiness to have been admitted into a more mild and liberal dispensation, a dispensation of mercy and peace, which addresses itself, not to our senses and

Ch. XII. Ver. 21.

Ch. XII. Ver. 21. passions, but to our reason, not to our fears, but to our love and gratitude, and which required not to be published with such terrific pomp.

2.) The writer contrasts the mild spirit of the gospel with the severity of the law, under the figure of an introduction to the privileges and society of a free and a happy community, and to the solemnities of a spiritual temple in heaven, ver. 22—24.

22. *But ye are come*[1] *to Mount Sion*[2], *even to the*

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[1] *But ye are come.*] The design of the writer is to contrast the mild and gentle spirit of the gospel with the terrors of the law, and from this consideration to deduce an argument for stedfastness in the faith: and he effects his purpose by an ingenious allegory.

In the course of his epistle he has represented the visionary tabernacle which was exhibited to Moses in the Mount, for a model of the grand Mosaic tabernacle, as having a real existence in the heavenly Sion, and being beyond all comparison superior to that of which it was the model. In the sanctuary of this tabernacle God resides, upon his mercy-seat, and here Jesus officiates as the high-priest, propitiating with his own blood. Now, as the law at its first promulgation introduced the affrighted Israelites to the terrors of Sinai, so the gospel introduces believers to all the glories and privileges of this heavenly Jerusalem.

Keeping this imagery in view, the whole of the author's discourse in the three following verses is not only consistent and intelligible, but highly beautiful, and apposite. In a figurative style he describes the privileges of the gospel state. Whereas, upon any other supposition, if the author is interpreted literally, whether what he advances is applied to the state of things on earth, or in heaven, or partly to one and partly to the other, the whole appears unintelligible, inconsistent, and irrelevant. Of the commentators which I have consulted, Dr. Sykes appears to have approached the nearest to the true meaning of the writer.

[2] *To Mount Sion.*] Hallett justly observes that Sion was the old city where David dwelt. Solomon's temple was built upon

city of the living God[3], *to the heavenly Jerusalem*[4], *and to myriads of messengers* of God[5], *to the general assembly*[6], *and congregation of the* Ch. XII. Ver. 23.

Mount Moriah, 2 Chron. iii. 1. Hence Mount Sion never signifies the place of the old Jewish temple. Afterwards David and the other prophets speak of Mount Sion as the place where the gospel would be first published to all nations, and whither people of all nations, whether Jews or Gentiles, would assemble and worship together, Isa. ii. 3, 1 Pet. ii. 5, 6. "Ye have joined yourselves to a dispensation which has nothing terrible or difficult." Sykes.

[3] *The city of the living God.*] The gospel state, represented under the figure of a community consecrated to God, and under his direction. *The living God:* though the patriarchs, and those to whom the promises were originally made, died in faith, only seeing them afar off, God is living still, and will ever live, to fulfill all his promises. The city of God is the city where God resides, on the mercy-seat of that celestial sanctuary which was exhibited to Moses.

[4] *The heavenly Jerusalem.*] The city of Jerusalem was typical of the Christian church. The *upper* or heavenly Jerusalem is opposed to the Jerusalem that *now is;* i. e. to the state of things under the law, Gal. iv. 25, 26. And therefore the heavenly Jerusalem does not here signify heaven, or the place where all good men shall dwell after the resurrection, but the state of things under the gospel, or the community of believers. In the present allegory, it is the city where that heavenly tabernacle is fixed which Moses saw in the mountain.

[5] *To myriads of messengers* of God.] μυριασιν αγγελων, *myriads*, that is, tens of thousands, or a very large number of angels. But as the term αγγελος is ambiguous, and is used in the first chapter to express former prophets and messengers of God, there is no difficulty in taking it in a similar sense here; and of understanding the writer as alluding to the far greater number of prophets and teachers under the gospel than under the law, and especially to the great number of missionaries which were employed at the first promulgation of the gospel. These are called *angels* or *messengers* 2 Cor. viii. 23, Rev. i. 20.

[6] *To the general assembly.*] πανηγυρει. Dr. Doddridge observes from Albert, *Observ. Philolog.* p. 441, that "this word properly signifies a stated convention upon some joyful festival occasion, and is particularly applied to the concourse at the Olympic

Ch. XII Ver. 24. *first-born, enrolled in heaven*[1], *and to God the judge of all*[2], *and to just men made perfect*[3], *and*

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games: "in which view," adds Dr. Doddridge, "it expresses a very lively and elegant opposition to the case of the Israelites, who were struck with a general terror when they were convened before Mount Sinai." This is no doubt the writer's meaning here: *q. d.* in this city of our solemnities the gospel introduces us to the celebration of a joyful universal festival, in which our hearts, instead of shrinking with terror, may justly expand with delight. It is plain that he is speaking of a state of things now existing, not of what will happen after the resurrection. "πανηγυρις *sæpe est conventus populi Israelitici ad Deum laudandum.*" Rosenmuller.

[1] *Congregation of the first-born enrolled in heaven.*] εκκλησια πρωτοτοκων. "εκκλ. *church*, signifies all who are *called out* of the world, and entitled to an eternal inheritance in heaven." Sykes. "The right and privilege of the first-born was, that they were all God's property, and sanctified to him. Exod. xiii. 2, Numb. iii. 13, viii. 17. The Levites were taken instead of them. Now by Christ we are all called to be the first-born: *i. e.* to be hallowed, and to be God's peculiar." Sykes.

Enrolled in heaven, απογεγραμμενων. The allusion here is to a book that contained the names of the first-born. Numb. iii. 40. *in heaven:* in the heavenly Jerusalem, as citizens entitled to all the rights and privileges of the holy city, in whose records they are now registered. The same scenery is still supported.

[2] *To God the judge of all.*] "Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, were the only persons that were admitted to see the God of Israel. Exod. xxiv. 9, 10: the rest of the people were not permitted. But now every man is called upon to come to God, to see him as he is." Sykes. The *costume*, if one may so express it, is still kept up. Every believer is admitted into the holy of holies, to see the divine glory on the mercy-seat. To *see* God is to form those just and encouraging views of the divine attributes and character which the gospel exhibits.

Macknight justly remarks, that "God is fitly styled the Judge of all, or universal monarch, agreeably to the phraseology of the Hebrews, who called those persons *judges*, who exercised sovereign rule in Israel." "to God the judge and justifier of all believers, Jews and Gentiles." Hallett; who well observes, that "the word *all* was not carelessly inserted here."

[3] *And to just men made perfect.*] πνευμασι δικαιων τετελειω-

to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant[4], *and to a blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better than that of Abel*[5]. Ch. XII. Ver. 24.

μενων· "the spirits of just men made perfect." The *spirit* of a man is a man himself, 1 Cor. ii. 11; the spirit of God is God himself, ibid. The spirit of Timothy is Timothy himself, 2 Tim. iv. 22. See also 2 Cor. ii. 13, Rom. viii. 16, Philem. ver. 25: the *spirits of just men*, therefore, are *just men themselves*. Concerning these this writer teaches, that whereas the law could make nothing perfect, ch. x. 1, Christ hath by his one offering for ever perfected those who are sanctified." Heb. x. 14. To the assembly of just men thus made perfect does the gospel introduce those who believe; and who are themselves, therefore, justified and made perfect by the blood of Christ, that is, perfectly released from the condemning sentence, and from the tyrannical authority of the law which is abolished by the death of Christ.

By this interpretation the author appears to be intelligible and consistent. But if by the "spirits of just men made perfect," we understand separate souls in an intermediate state, the observation is not only irrelevant, but it is not true. For in what sense can believers in Christ be said to be now introduced into the society of separate spirits in heaven? or what privilege have they in this respect above good men under the law? "By this," says Dr. Priestley, "is not to be understood the state of good men in a future world, for to this they were not arrived; but to that greater perfection of character, and the superior privileges which the gospel enables them to attain."

[4] *Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.*] The writer has shown at large that Jesus, as mediator of the new covenant, after having suffered death as the victim by which the covenant is ratified, has since entered into the celestial tabernacle to officiate as high-priest in the holy of holies; where it is the privilege of believers to be introduced to him through the gospel. See ch. viii. 6, ix. 15—21.

The same scenery is still sustained: the meaning of which is, that by the gospel we become acquainted with the character, the mission, the doctrine, and the offices of Christ.

[5] *A blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better than that of Abel.*] Griesbach reads κρειττον for κρειττονα, and το for τον, *better* for *better things*, and *that of* Abel for *than* Abel.

The believer, introduced to Jesus in the sanctuary, is sprinkled by him with his own blood, ch. ix. 13, 19, 20; which speaketh better than that of Abel. The blood of Abel, spilt by his

Ch. XII. Ver. 24. I have been describing to you the terrors of the law, of Mount Sinai, of its darkness, its thunders, its lightnings and its earthquake: and of that tremendous voice of God, which our ancestors dared not continue to hear. I will now illustrate the gentle spirit of the gospel, the mildness of its introduction, and the excellence of its privileges.

Under the guidance of the gospel you have been led to *Mount Sion*, that holy mountain, the mountain of the Lord, from which the oracles of God have long since announced that his law should go forth, that there all nations should assemble to worship, Isa. ii. 2, 3.

You have been brought to the *city of the living God*, to that holy and happy place which was the subject of the divine promise to your pious ancestors, who never were put into possession, but died in faith: to a city consecrated to the God who, while generation after generation passes away, ever lives to fulfill his promises to the minutest iota; to that *heavenly Jerusalem*, where the true tabernacle is fixed, and that heavenly sanctuary is opened, in which our great high-priest officiates, of whom you

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wicked brother, cried for justice out of the ground, Gen. iv. 10; that of Christ, wantonly and maliciously shed by his wicked countrymen and brethren, also has a voice, but it is the voice of pardon, of kind intercession: "Father, forgive them! they know not what they do." And this blood, sprinkled on the believer, reconciles him to God; he no longer appears as an offender against the law. It reconciles believers of all descriptions to each other; for the death of Christ breaks down the wall which separates the court of the Gentiles from that of the Jews, and unites them in one holy and harmonious society.

have heard so much. And here you have been introduced to a large and unknown number of faithful servants and messengers of God, sent forth and qualified by him to instruct and reform the world. In former ages their number was small, and the word of God was scarce, when there were few settled teachers in Israel, and only now and then, at different times and in different ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets. But now, under the gospel dispensation, the Lord gives the word and great is the company of preachers, so that all may learn, and all be edified. You are here introduced to a vast assembly, an host that none can number, who are gathered together to celebrate and to enjoy the gospel feast. You are here joined to the universal church, collected from all nations and from all quarters of the world: you are become members of a community all of whom are heirs of promise, all of whom are entitled to the privileges of the first-born, all of whom are registered as citizens of heaven, how little soever they may be known or noticed upon earth, and all have an equal share in the privileges, the liberties, and the promises of the gospel. You are introduced into a community of which God is the sovereign, under whose just and beneficent reign all his faithful subjects are free and happy: and though he once acknowledged himself in a peculiar sense the God of Israel, he now assumes the character of the universal sovereign, the supreme judge of all the earth, the God of all; the powerful protector and the bountiful rewarder of all

Ch. XII. Ver. 24.

Ch. XII. Ver. 24. individuals, of all nations, who submit to his government, and who bow to the sceptre of his mercy. You are introduced into that holy and happy society who, by the efficacy of the gospel sacrifice, are made for ever free from the jurisdiction and from the condemning sentence of the law. Finally, my brethren, you are introduced to Jesus, the apostle and high-priest of our profession; to him who was the messenger of peace and good-will to men; to him who has sprinkled us over with his own blood, which consecrates us for ever to God, with that blood which, far from calling out of the ground for vengeance, like that of Abel, speaks peace to all, even to enemies, persecutors, and murderers, and, by putting an end to the legal dispensation, abolishes the enmity which hath subsisted among the different divisions of mankind, and united all into one great family, in which, as Moses once acted the part of a faithful servant, so Christ now sustains the character of the elder brother and first-born son, while God himself owns the endearing relation of the kind and impartial parent and benefactor of all.

Surely then, my brethren, you will enjoy your new and happy state with gratitude, will diligently fulfill your duties as children of God, as citizens of the new and heavenly Jerusalem, and will faithfully adhere to the engagements into which you have entered.

5. The writer concludes this section with insisting upon the abolition of the Mosaic institute and

the permanence of the Christian dispensation, the superior excellence of which would not fail to entail the severest punishment upon those who, from corrupt motives, rejected it, ver. 25—29. Ch. XII.

1.) The dispensation of the gospel requires a more serious attention than the law, considering the different circumstances in which they were promulgated, ver. 25.

Beware that ye refuse not[1] *him who is speaking*[2] *to you. For if they escaped not who refused* Ver. 25.

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[1] *Refuse not.*] παραιτησησθε. The same verb which occurs ver. 19: *q. d.* "do not deprecate God's speaking to you as the Israelites did of old." See Peirce. The scenery is still kept up in the author's mind of the delivery of the law to the Israelites from Mount Sinai, and of the gospel to the believers in Christ from Mount Sion.

[2] *Him who is speaking to you.*] τον λαλουντα· "*i. e.* God, who spake (ὁ λαλησας) to our fathers by the prophets, and who in these latter days hath spoken (ελαλησε) to us by his son," ch. i. 1. That God is the person referred to is evident, as Peirce observes, because "the person speaking is he whose voice at Mount Sinai shook the earth, and who had promised by the prophet Haggai, "yet once more, I shake not the earth, but also the heaven." This could not be Christ, because the same person is called by the prophet the Lord of Hosts, and promises that the desire of all nations shall come." *to you.* ὑμιν is the reading of the Clermont manuscript, and of the Syriac version. See Lindsey's *Sequel*, p. 356. Sykes and many others understand *him who speaketh* of Jesus Christ. By *him who spake on earth* they understand either Moses, or the angel of the covenant by whom the law was given; and by *him who speaketh from heaven* they understand the Son of God who came down from heaven, and whose voice then shook the earth. "This," says Archbishop Newcome, "favours the supposition that our Lord was the angel of the covenant who presided at giving the law." At any rate it could not be Moses whose voice shook the earth; and Whitby, Peirce, and others, have proved that it could not be Christ: for he who shook the earth was the same Being who declares by Haggai that "he will shake not only the earth but

Ch. XII. Ver. 25. *him when speaking*[1] *upon earth, much less shall we* escape *if we reject him* now he is speaking *from heaven*[2].

God once descended upon Mount Sinai, and there in awful and terrific pomp he delivered the law to the hosts of Israel. In milder glory he now makes known his will from Mount Sion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. The doctrine of salvation is now publishing, not in a strain of terror and alarm, but of peace and goodwill; and the most engaging motives are proposed

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the heavens." Now this Being is called repeatedly "the Lord of Hosts," and foretells that the Desire of all nations shall come. But the Lord of Hosts is a title appropriated to God the Father; and the Son is never represented as foretelling his own advent. He who speaketh, therefore, can be no other than God the Father, (even upon the Arian hypothesis,) who delivered the law by Moses from Mount Sinai, and the gospel through Jesus Christ from Mount Sion, as before explained.

[1] *When speaking.*] χρηματιζοντα. "who uttered oracles." Newcome. Peirce contends that this word and its conjugates universally signify in the Old and New Testaments, divine oracles and admonitions. This may be doubted: see Rom. vii. 3. But here no question can arise upon this subject, for the speaker is God himself.

[2] *Speaking upon earth—from heaven.*] At the giving out of the law God spake from earth, from the tabernacle upon Mount Sinai he communed with Moses. He is now speaking from Mount Sion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the most holy place whither our high-priest is ascended, and where he receives the oracles, the gospel doctrine which he reveals to us. The scenery is still kept up; and by attention to it the whole passage becomes easy and intelligible.—Peirce and Macknight understand the expression, "speaking from heaven," as speaking by the holy spirit sent down from heaven, 1 Pet. i. 12. This is a very rational interpretation; but it is not wanted, and does not suit the connexion. God spake through Moses from the earthly tabernacle on Mount Sinai: he now speaks to us, through Jesus, from the heavenly sanctuary on Mount Sion.

to excite men to the love and practice of virtue. But, if disobedience to the law, a system of terror, and a yoke of bondage, was punished with just severity, and no offender escaped its condemning sentence, how can we hope to escape a severer condemnation, if we contemptuously reject the gospel of Christ, a doctrine of truth and grace, which is recommended to us by the most powerful motives and the most irresistible evidence? We cannot plead, as our forefathers did, that human nature cannot support the terrors of the voice of God. If we deprecate and refuse to hear the messenger who addresses us in these mild and gentle accents, it is because we hate the message itself, and are determined to disobey. O my brethren! above all things beware that you do not, by an obstinate rejection of the gospel invitation, expose yourselves to inevitable ruin. Ch. XII. Ver. 25.

2.) To enforce the argument, there has been a solemn declaration of the abolition of the Mosaic, and of the perpetuity of the Christian covenant, ver. 26, 27.

Whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath expressly promised, Yet once more[3] *I am* 26. 27.

[3] *Yet once more.*] This prophecy, here cited from the LXX., is found in Haggai ii. 6, 7. It is thus translated by Archbishop Newcome in his *Minor Prophets.* The oracle is addressed to Zerubbabel, and the people with him who were disheartened when they saw the great inferiority of the second temple to that of Solomon, to encourage them to proceed: "Thus saith Jehovah, God of Hosts, Yet once more in a short time, I will

Ch. XII. Ver. 27. *about to shake*[1], *not the earth only, but the heaven also*[2]. *Now this* expression, *yet once more, signi-*

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shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all the nations. And the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith Jehovah God of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith Jehovah God of hosts. Greater shall be the glory of this latter house than of the former, saith Jehovah God of hosts. And in this place will I give peace, saith Jehovah God of hosts."

The Archbishop, with most Christian writers, interprets this prophecy of the advent of the Messiah after, or previously to, certain revolutions, political or religious, which are here foretold. His presence, as the Desire of all nations, would exalt the glory of the second temple above that of the first. But Dr. Heberden, in an ingenious communication to the learned Primate, subjoined in the notes, advances plausible reasons to prove that nothing more is intended than that "the splendour and riches of this new building should in time be very great;" and judiciously cautions the friends of revelation "against urging weak arguments in its support, which often give birth to the most plausible objections against it:" "And can there," says he, "be a weaker argument than that which sets out with doing violence to the original text in order to form a prophecy, and then contradicts the express testimony of the best historian of those times, in order to show that it has been accomplished?" The writer of the epistle plainly cites the prophecy as foretelling the dissolution of the Mosaic œconomy to make room for the unchangeable dispensation of the Messiah.

[1] *I am about to shake.*] σειω is the reading of some of the best copies and of the LXX., and is approved by Griesbach, ed. 2.

[2] *Not the earth only, but the heaven also.*] Mr. Peirce strangely supposes that "shaking the heaven" refers to some revolution in the celestial hierarchy. Dr. Sykes much more judiciously remarks, "that in prophetic language the heavens are put for the higher powers, for those who enjoy great dignities and honours, and the earth is put for the lower people; and therefore shaking the heavens and earth signifies commotions, distractions, and the overthrowing of men and kingdoms. When the temple was built, God declared by his prophet his intention, once, in no very long time to cause great commotions in Judea, and among all its inhabitants, and not only among them, but in all the known world; and then should the desire of all nations

fieth the changing of those things that are shaken[3], *as of things that had been appointed* for a season[4], *that the things not shaken may continue.* Ch. XII. Ver. 27.

When God descended to deliver the law upon Mount Sinai, the whole Mount quaked exceedingly, Exod. xix. 18, and all nature seemed to tremble in his awful presence: but since that memorable event, and in reference to the age of the Messiah, he has declared by the prophet Haggai (ii. 6), at the time of the building of the second temple, "Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land, and I will

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come. Accordingly, the Messiah came. But before he came, we find the world overturned by Alexander and his captains. And when all these kingdoms were subdued by the Romans, it was justly said that all nations were shaken."

To me it seems most probable, that by *the heavens* the writer here means the Mosaic dispensation. Dr. Priestley however says, "It is almost certain that this prophecy relates to those great convulsions of states and kingdoms which are to precede the setting up of the proper kingdom of Christ."

[3] *The changing of those things that are shaken.*] "σαλευομενων, *shaken*," says Dr. Macknight, "is a metaphor taken from ships which are tossed backwards and forwards by the winds and waves, till they are sunk or beaten to pieces." See also Doddridge on the place.

[4] *Appointed* for a season.] Mr. Peirce observes, that ποιειν signifies *to appoint*, Heb. iii. 12, Mark iii. 14, and in many other places; and that the word πεποιημενων being a participle of the preterperfect tense, ought to be rendered accordingly as of things which had been appointed: i. e. *only for a time*, at the end of which they were to undergo a change. Macknight understands the expression as an ellipsis for things *made with hands*, i. e. inferior and imperfect; and applies it both to the heathen and to the Jewish ritual. Mr. Wakefield, after Bos *Exercit.* p. 259, reads πεπονημενων, *worn to decay*. See Wetstein and Bowyer *in loc.* This is an excellent reading, but unsupported by authority. See Griesbach.

Ch. XII. Ver. 27. shake all nations," &c. Observe here, that the emphatical phrase, *this once*, expresses that this concussion is to take place once only, and no more; and therefore, that whatever be the object intended, it is to be shaken down and demolished like a ship that is tossed and broken to pieces by the waves. And you are to understand, that in prophetic language heaven and earth do not signify natural objects, but civil and moral states of things: and particularly concerning those who are and those who are not in covenant with God, Jews and Gentiles: and the fact predicted is, that the Mosaic economy, as well as the heathen idolatry, is to give way to the Christian religion, which is the last dispensation of God to man, and is intended to spread through all nations, and to endure to the end of time.

3.) The writer concludes this section with urging the believing Hebrews to adhere firmly to the gospel, and solemnly warning them of the danger of neglecting it, ver. 28, 29.

28. *Wherefore, since we receive a kingdom*[1] *which cannot be shaken, let us firmly retain the gift*[2], *by*

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[1] *Receive a kingdom.*] βασιλειαν παραλαμβανοντες. An allusion to Dan. vii. 18: "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever; even for ever and ever." Peirce observes, that in classic authors the phrase is only used concerning such as became kings, and is to be explained by such texts as Rev. i. 6, v. 10, 1 Pet. ii. 9; where Christians are spoken of as kings. "We do not receive a kingdom," says Dr. Sykes, "over which we are to reign as kings, but we are admitted into a kingdom over which Christ is king, and we subjects entitled to the advantages of it."

[2] *Let us retain the gift.*] εχωμεν χαριν. Whitby observes,

which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and pious fear: for even[3] *our God is a consuming fire.* Ch. XII. Ver. 29.

It is our happiness, my Christian friends, to live under the new and perpetual dispensation of the gospel, by the faithful profession of which we are made kings and priests unto God, in a kingdom that shall never come to an end: we are advanced to dignities and privileges of which, if it be not our own fault, we shall never be deprived: and all this is the free unmerited gift of God to us. Let us then prize our privileges, and hold them fast; let us adhere firmly to the gospel, which will instruct us how to serve and worship God in the most acceptable manner, and to maintain upon our minds

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" that εχειν is often put for κατεχειν, to *retain* or *hold fast*, 1 Tim. i. 19; and χαρις throughout the New Testament signifies the favour and grace of God tendered to us in the gospel, 2 Cor. vi. 1; so that the import of the words is, Let us continue stedfast in that faith and dispensation delivered in the gospel, as being that alone which renders our persons and services acceptable to God." So Peirce: " let us be stedfast in embracing and adhering to the gospel." Dr. Harwood: " let us inviolably adhere to the gospel." Archbishop Newcome: " *let us hold fast favour*, the gospel with all its gratuitous benefits." " Εχωμεν χαριν sometimes signifies ' let us be thankful." So Luke xvii. 7, 2 Tim. i. 3, Philem. ver. 7." Sykes. " let us have thankfulness." Wakefield. " The sense of adherence to the gospel," as Peirce observes, best " agrees with the great design of his epistle, and what he is perpetually inculcating, that they should be stedfast in their profession of the gospel."

[3] *For even.*] και γαρ. So Wakefield and Macknight. The allusion is to Deut. iv. 24, where Moses reminds the Israelites of the death of Korah and his party: *q. d.* " Good as he has shown himself in sending his son and admitting us to his everlasting kingdom, yet like severe to those who violate his laws." Sykes.

Ch. XII. Ver. 29. that habitual reverence of him which will induce us to live in the practice of universal virtue.

And let us remember, that if we reject the gospel, we reject it at our peril. The Israelites were warned by their great lawgiver not to forget the covenant of the Lord their God, and to relapse into idolatry, for that the Lord their God was a consuming fire and a jealous God, Deut. iv. 23, 24. And let us not flatter ourselves that, under the milder dispensation of the gospel, we can apostatize and sin with impunity. Our God is indeed a God of love; but he is also a God of immutable and impartial justice: and they who slight and obstinately reject his mercy shall inevitably feel the weight of his indignation.

SECTION IV.

THE EPISTLE concludes with practical exhortations, with salutations, and a suitable benediction. Ch. xiii.

1. The writer exhorts to brotherly love, to hospitality, to sympathy, and to chastity, ver. 1—4.

Ch XIII. Ver. 1. *Let brotherly kindness continue*[1].

I have heard with great satisfaction of the bene-

[1] *Brotherly kindness.*] Doddridge observes, that there was "a peculiar propriety in addressing this exhortation to the Hebrew Christians, who were ready to entertain an ill opinion of their Gentile brethren."

volent affection which you bear to each other, and of your mutual readiness to perform kind offices. This is the genuine spirit of the gospel. Let this fraternal affection be extended to all who bear the Christian name, whether of our own or of other nations. Let this generous spirit flourish in full vigour in your hearts, and suffer it to produce its genuine effects. Ch. XIII. Ver 1.

Be not forgetful of hospitality[2]; *for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.* 2.

Be, like your pious ancestors, kind and hospitable to strangers: as far as it may be in your power shelter them in your houses, supply their wants, and protect them from injuries. Of such generous treatment Abraham and Lot have given excellent examples; and their munificence received an ample reward. Their history records that the kind offices which were intended for men, were, unknowingly, performed to angels; and that one of these patriarchs was remunerated by the promise of an heir, and the other by the protection of the lives of himself and his family in a scene of general destruction. Live

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[2] *Hospitality.*] The entertainment of strangers was a virtue of great importance in an age and country in which houses for the accommodation of travellers were not in use. When the writer alludes to the examples of Abraham and Lot, Gen. xviii. xix., who were honoured with a visit of angels, he could not mean to insinuate that similar visits might be expected under the new dispensation, but merely that such a conduct was acceptable to God, and would meet with a proper reward; or perhaps, that the guests so protected and entertained, might possibly in some shape or other make ample compensation for the kindness received.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 2. then in the practice of hospitality: nor shall your kindness to strangers remain without its suitable and seasonable reward; and though you cannot now hope to receive visits from angels, you may nevertheless, perhaps, be sometimes requited far beyond your expectation, even by those who have been the objects of your liberality.

3. *Remember those that are in bonds, as if bound with them; and those that suffer cruel treatment, as being yourselves also in the body.*

You have yourselves been sufferers for truth, and therefore you know the heart of a sufferer: cultivate then a spirit of sympathy. Many of your fellow Christians are now in chains for the gospel; and some have even undergone the most cruel tortures. You are liable to the same sufferings. Think what, in those circumstances, you would desire and expect from your brethren: and now, by your friendly visits, by your salutary advice, by your tender attentions, and by your fervent prayers, administer those consolations, of which, in similar circumstances, you yourselves would stand in need.

4. *Let marriage*[1] *be honourable among you all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*

Let not the rigid and unwarrantable notions of

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[1] *Let marriage.*] Hallett and others have observed that this verse, standing among exhortations, ought to be translated as such. There is probably an allusion in it to the austere sect of the Essenes, who discountenanced marriage. The Alexandrine and Clermont read γαρ, *for*, instead of δε, *but*. See Griesbach.

certain sects among you lead you to think lightly of marriage, or persuade you that a single state is either preferable in itself, or peculiarly acceptable to God. Let virtuous wedlock be held in the highest honour, and let the sacred engagement be maintained inviolable: for know that the heavy judgements of God will fall, not upon an institution which he has himself ordained and blest, but upon those who violate the marriage covenant, or who seduce innocence from the path of virtue. Ch. XIII. Ver. 4.

2. He recommends content, and confidence in Divine Providence, ver. 5, 6.

Let your *conduct* be *free from covetousness. Be content with your condition: for* God *himself hath said*[2], *I will never leave thee, I will never utterly forsake thee*[3]. *So that we may say with courage,* *The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man can do unto me.* 5. 6.

The love of money, when carried to excess, is dis-

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[2] God *himself hath said.*] The promise is made to Joshua Deut. xxxi. 8, Josh. i. 5; but the writer assumes it as applicable to all good men: as Hallett says, he "justly argues from the unchangeable perfections of God, that he will do like things in like cases. Since therefore God, when he employed Joshua, promised that he would not leave him, any Christian whom God at any time employs in any work, may for the same reason depend upon it that God will never leave nor forsake him."

[3] *I will never utterly forsake thee.*] ουμη σε ανω, ουδ' ου, μη σε εγκαταλιπω, "I will not, I will not leave thee; I will never, never, never forsake thee." Dr. Doddridge, who notices the emphasis of the original. See also Macknight. "*Est hic in posteriore membro triplex negatio, quæ apud Græcos vehementer negat. Similis sententia* Esa. xli. 13." Grotius.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 6. graceful and mischievous: it is peculiarly so in the professors of the gospel; and especially under circumstances of persecution, or in imminent danger of it. Be not, therefore, infected with this base passion, so as to be induced by it to do any thing unworthy of your character, with a view either to increase or to retain riches. What you can acquire by industry, consistently with honour and integrity, that enjoy, improve, and be content with. And you have reason to be so; for the promise made by God to Joshua (ch. i. 5), that he would never desert him while he continued faithful to his duty, is in a very important sense applicable to all the virtuous, in all ages. And while, conscious of integrity, we rely upon this promise, we may with the Psalmist (Ps. cxviii. 6) triumph in God as our portion, and our protector, and may justly rise above the fear of our enemies, and the dread of distressing want, as long as we persevere in the line of duty.

3. They are exhorted to recollect and to follow the good examples of their eminent departed teachers, ver. 7.

7. *Remember those who presided over you*[1], *who*

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[1] *Remember those*, &c.] The writer here perhaps principally refers to the apostle James, called the Less, a brother or very near relation of our Lord; who, having resided chiefly at Jerusalem, is regarded as the first bishop of that church, and is described as a man of exemplary piety, prudence and goodness. He suffered martyrdom at Jerusalem, probably a short time before this epistle was written. "Bishop Lloyd, in his funeral sermon for Bishop Wilkins, thinks that this may refer to James

spake to you the word of God; whose faith imitate, considering the issue of their course of life[2]. Ch. XIII. Ver. 7.

You, believing Hebrews, have been eminently distinguished by the rank and character of your instructors. Jesus himself laboured and suffered among you, and all his apostles have commenced, and some of them have terminated their labours in your service. The first martyr among the apostles suffered at Jerusalem, Acts xii. 1; and in that devoted city, another who long presided over your assemblies, while the rest of the apostles were commissioned to carry the gospel into distant countries, and who conducted himself with unexampled prudence, and meekness, and zeal, has lately undergone a violent death. Remember such with veneration and affection. Call to mind their pure and salutary doctrine, their unwavering faith, their honourable profession, their undaunted courage, their active zeal, their Christian charity, their suffering fortitude, and, above all, their glorious and triumphant death, in which, so far from renouncing their prin-

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the apostle, and to James, commonly called the first bishop of Jerusalem; both of whom had been put to death there before this epistle was written." Doddridge. "Here," says Dr. Sykes, "St. Paul speaks of those who had ruled over them; whose behaviour and whose personal care of them they were to keep up in their minds. They were men who had spoken the word of God to them, and were now no more." Dr. Lardner reports, that "the apostle James suffered martyrdom in a tumult at Jerusalem A.D. 62." Lardner's *Works*, vol. vi. p. 502.

[2] *The issue of their course of life.*] την εκβασιν της αναστροφης. See Wakefield. "Follow their faithfulness: consider the final consequence of their conversation and behaviour among you." Sykes.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 7. ciples and their profession, they esteemed it an honour to be accounted worthy of suffering in so good a cause. Animated by their example, adhere stedfastly to the same profession, and you shall assuredly in due time be admitted to the same reward.

4. The writer urges a stedfast adherence to the simplicity of the gospel doctrine, ver. 8, 9.

Ver. 8. 9. *Jesus Christ*[1] is *the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever: be not carried aside*[2] *by a variety of foreign doctrines*[3]; *for it is better that the heart should be established in grace*[4] *than in meats*[5], *in*

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[1] *Jesus Christ.*] "The evangelical doctrine, as delivered by Christ and his apostles." Newcome. That this is the true meaning of the author is evident from the inference which he draws from it: Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. *Christ* frequently signifies the doctrine of Christ. See Acts v. 42, 1 Cor. i. 24, 2 Cor. iv. 5. The writer could not here intend to assert the immutability of the person of Christ, for that would not have been true. "By Jesus Christ," says Dr. Priestley, "in this place, as in some others, is meant not the person of Christ, but his gospel, which the apostle says is the same, and does not vary with the opinions of men; alluding to the novel doctrines of the Gnostics in the next verse."

[2] *Carried aside.*] παραφερεσθε, *carried aside*, not περιφερεσθε, *carried about*, is the true reading. See Griesbach. "This verse is connected with the foregoing: *q. d.* Be not *therefore*," &c. Newcome.

[3] *A variety of foreign doctrines.*] Gr. "by various and foreign;" *i. e.* by insisting upon Jewish ceremonies as necessary to salvation." See Newcome, and Hallett.

[4] *In grace.*] χαριτι. Newcome explains it, "by complying with the rules of the gracious gospel covenant." That *grace* signifies the gospel, see ch. xii. 28, and the note there; also John i. 17, Rom. vi. 14, Gal. iv. 4. *the heart be established:* i. e. that your courage be established. See Macknight. "To be established in grace is to be so convinced of the truth of the gospel, as to persevere steadily in the profession of it." Sykes.

which they who have walked[6] *have not been bene-* Ch. XIII. Ver. 9.
fited by them.

I cannot, my brethren, conclude this epistle without entering an earnest caution against your being misled by those early inveterate prejudices in which you were educated, and by which the pure spiritual religion of our great master is so much in danger of being corrupted. The doctrine of Christ is simple, uniform, and unalterable. What it was in the beginning, that it now is, and such it will continue to be, to the end of time. Adhere, therefore, with unshaken firmness, to those important principles which you have learned from the eminent teachers to whom I have just alluded; and be not deluded into the admission of a mass of notions and practices which are quite foreign to the spirit of the Christian religion, and which are taught by men who have no authority for it. You have many severe trials in prospect; and let me assure you, that you will find that vigour which you will derive from a firm adherence to the genuine principles of that merciful dispensation which has been revealed by Christ, of far greater benefit than any support which you can draw from the strictest observation of Pha-

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[5] *Meats:*] *i. e.* "distinctions about their kind. Col. ii. 21, Heb. ix. 10." Newcome. *q. d.* it is better to fortify the mind by adhering to the moral precepts of the gospel, than by practising the ceremonies of the law.

[6] *They who have walked.*] "The meaning of *walking* is, frequent or constant use of, the spending life in such things. They who constantly used or observed such kind of ordinances, cannot by them make themselves acceptable to God." Sykes.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 9. risaic ceremonies, which, as they have no moral value in themselves, so they have never been found to be of much practical use to the strictest observers of them, either as a security from suffering, or as a support in the season of calamity.

5. In figurative language, borrowed from the Jewish ritual, he represents the superior privileges of the Christian church, ver. 10—12.

10. *We have an altar, of which they have no right to eat*[1] *who perform divine service at the tabernacle.*

11. *For the bodies of those animals*[2], *whose blood being*

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[1] *We have an altar, of which they have no right to eat.*] "To eat of the altar is the same thing as to be admitted to terms of friendship with God. If the question be asked, What is that altar which Christians have? I answer, Not the cross on which Christ suffered; for that can in no good sense be deemed an altar. Nor is it the Lord's table, nor any such thing: it is a figurative way of expressing the thing or manner by which we are made friends with God. It is to be understood from the nature and design of sacrifices. We have the true means of engaging in friendship with God, and of being reconciled to him by Christ, and having our sins passed over, just as the altar was the means of reconciliation and forgiveness under the law. But the Jews, continuing in obedience to the law, cannot have the advantages that we have." Sykes.

[2] *The bodies of those animals*, &c.] See Lev. xvi. 27. 'The bullock for the sin-offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall one carry forth without the camp, and they shall burn in the fire.' "He assigns the reason why those who serve the tabernacle could not eat of the Christian altar. For they had no right to eat of any sacrifice but such as was expressly allowed them to eat of, and in consequence they could not eat of the sacrifice on the great day of expiation, which was all to be burned without the camp: now, as to eat of the sacrifice was the sign of being in actual friendship with God, to eat of the Christian sacrifice was to be in friendship with God upon the terms laid down by Christ. And

offered for sin, is brought by the high-priest into the most holy place, are burned[3] *without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify*[4] *the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.* Ch. XIII. Ver. 12.

The priests and Levites, who are employed in the service of the temple, esteem it a great privilege to be fed from the altar, and regard it as a pledge of communion with Jehovah, as a token of his favour, and as a symbol of devotedness to his service. I have shown at large, that we who believe in Christ are priests in a nobler temple, and are carrying on a nobler service, and are consecrated with the blood

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And as it is impossible to partake of the Lord's table and the table of demons, so, in like manner and for the same reason, it is not possible to eat of the sacrifices offered to God in the temple according to the law, and to partake of the Christian altar." Sykes.

The plain meaning of the writer is, that those who persist in relying upon the works of the law for acceptance with God, exclude themselves from the privileges and hopes of the gospel. They cannot be at once both Jews and Christians: this he expresses in sacrifical terms, well understood by the Hebrews to whom he wrote, though not always equally intelligible to modern readers.

[3] *Is brought—are burned.*] These expressions are thought to indicate that the epistle was written while the Jewish temple was yet standing, and divine worship was carried on in it.

[4] *Sanctify,*] ἁγιασῃ, the people with his own blood. "If it be inquired," says Dr. Sykes, "how Christ sanctified the people with his own blood, it was by his blood that the covenant of God was ratified, and the world sanctified through the truth. Such as came into the belief of him as the Christ, were separated from the world to the service of God. They were made a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." "There is no reason to doubt," says Mr. Hallett, "but that the author had here a particular regard to the believing Gentiles, who were to become the people of God as well as the Jews."

Ch. XIII. Ver. 12. of a nobler victim. We also feast upon the sacrifice as a token of our communion and acceptance with God. And in this particular likewise we excel the ministers of the Mosaic tabernacle. They are restrained from feasting on the piacular sacrifice: the victim which is offered on the day of atonement, the blood of which is sprinkled in the most holy place to atone for the sins of ignorance, is carried to the outside of the camp, and totally consumed by fire as the law appoints. But we who serve in the celestial temple are permitted to feast upon our glorious victim, by whose blood, offered once for all, we are sanctified; to eat that flesh which is meat indeed, and to taste of that blood which is drink indeed: and thus to express our fellowship and communion with God, and our devotedness to him.

By which figurative language you will easily see that what I mean to say is this, that while our unhappy countrymen obstinately persist in their adherence to the Mosaic ritual, seeking to please God by ceremonial observances, and wilfully rejecting the offers of the gospel, they never can attain that peace with God, and those blessings and privileges which the gospel of Jesus offers to all who believe in and obey him.

Christ, as I have before stated, is the sacred victim, by the shedding of whose blood the new covenant is ratified and confirmed, and by the sprinkling of which all who believe are consecrated to God: and, in correspondence with other piacular

victims, he suffered without the gate, becoming thus a curse for us. Ch. XIII. Ver. 12.

In other words, he was exposed to the ignominy of crucifixion, and was treated as an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, that all, of all nations, who believe and obey the gospel may be admitted into the holy community of which Christ is the head.

6. Upon this ground he urges the believing Hebrews to be ready to forsake all their former prejudices and connexions, and to follow Christ, ver. 13, 14.

Let us therefore go forth[1] *unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach*[2]. *For here we have not a continuing city*[3], *but are seeking earnestly one to come.* 13. 14.

Jesus our master suffered on Mount Calvary: he was disowned by his countrymen as a blasphemer, he was delivered over to the Romans to be executed

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[1] *Go forth:*] *i. e.* let us willingly quit our dependence upon, and our connexion with, the ritual and ceremonial dispensation; or let us contentedly bear to be cast out of communion by our ignorant and misguided brethren. See Hallett. "In imitation of him, let us not hesitate to suffer as he did, however reproachful as well as painful such sufferings may be." Priestley.

[2] *His reproach:*] *i. e.* bearing that which he was reproached for bearing and for having suffered upon, that is, the cross; which, however, the writer does not expressly mention, that he may not offend the feelings of his readers. See Newcome.

[3] *Not a continuing city.*] Some think there is an allusion here to the approaching destruction of Jerusalem: an event which happened about eight years after this epistle is supposed to have been written. "We that believe in Christ are but strangers here, travelling to the heavenly Jerusalem." Sykes.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 14. as a traitor, and was put to an ignominious and accursed death without the walls of the city, as a miserable and abandoned outcast. But let us not desert him in his unmerited disgrace, nor let us be ashamed or afraid of professing ourselves his followers. For his sake, who hath done and suffered all this for us, let us willingly forsake all, let us give up our possessions, our friends, our country, our most deeply rooted and dearly cherished prejudices, and, if it be the will of God, even life itself, in order to secure the blessings of his gospel. Expelled from the communion of our deluded brethren, let us willingly go forth, bearing that cross, which our lord and master is so bitterly reproached for having borne; and let us cheerfully suffer with him, that so we may be glorified together. And be these sufferings what they may, their duration is momentary, and will soon be over: for in this state our residence will be but short. Here we have no resting-place, no quiet peaceable permanent home: banished from the earthly, we are securing to ourselves a habitation in the heavenly Jerusalem, where we hope to enjoy a tranquil, a holy, and an immortal life.

7. As priests of the new dispensation, he exhorts them to present the acceptable sacrifices of thanksgiving and benevolence, ver. 15, 16.

15. *Through him, therefore*[1], *let us offer up* the *sa-*

[1] *Through him, therefore.*] Archbishop Newcome connects ver. 15, 16, with ver. 12, including ver. 13, 14, in a parenthesis. *through him*, δι' αυτου that is, as we have been instructed

crifice of praise unto God continually[2], *that is, the* Ch. XIII.
fruit of our *lips*[3] *which render thanks*[4] *to his name.*
But to do good and to distribute forget not; for Ver. 16.
with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Being admitted to feast upon the rich provisions of a spiritual altar, it is our duty, as priests of this new profession, to offer the sacrifices which our great lawgiver hath enjoined: and these are not either animal victims or the fruits of the earth. The sacrifices of the Christian temple are gratitude to God and benevolence to man. Let us then, as instructed by Jesus, offer to God the daily sacrifice of a warm and a grateful spirit: and to the forms of devotion let us uniformly join the practice of benevolence; contributing, to the utmost of our ability, to the relief and happiness of all around us. These are sacrifices which, if they are presented with a pure heart, will be far more acceptable to God than the fragrance of the daily burnt-offering.

8. The writer recommends becoming respect and deference to their spiritual guides, ver. 17.

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by him; not in any mystical dependence upon a supposed atonement and intercession.

[2] *Continually.*] Probably an allusion to the daily burnt-offering.

[3] *The fruit of* our *lips.*] A citation from Hos. xiv. 2, from the LXX. In the Hebrew, "the *calves* of our lips."

[4] *Which render thanks.*] ὁμολογεντων· "this may either signify giving thanks to God, or, confessing his name, that is, Christ's; owning ourselves to be his disciples." Sykes, who gives the preference to the latter sense.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 17. *Obey those who preside over*[1] *you, and submit*[2] to them, *for they watch for you*[3] *as those who must render an account; that they may perform this* their office *with joy*[4], *and not with mourning, for that* would be *unprofitable*[5] *for you.*

[1] *Who preside,* &c.] These were probably persons of wisdom and experience, who had been chosen to superintend the concerns of the Hebrew church, and to instruct and exhort the people after the death of the apostle James. It is evident from the character which this writer gives of them, and from the respect which he requires to be paid to them, and which indeed he himself shows them, ver. 24, that they were persons of great probity and worth, and well qualified for their office.

[2] *Submit:*] *i. e.* to all their just precepts and admonitions. He could not mean to represent these teachers and guides as possessing unlimited authority over the faith and practice of the Hebrew Christians. This was more than the apostles themselves claimed. 2 Cor. i. 24.—The Pharisees were rigidly exact in external services, but very lax in their morals and in the government of the mind: perhaps some of the Hebrew Christians might think their pastors too severe in requiring a stricter subjection of the affections and thoughts to the rule of duty than the Pharisees did, and to this the writer may possibly allude. See Matt. v. 20, xvi. 6, and Hallett's note upon the text.

[3] *Watch for you.*] In the original, "for your souls:" a hebraism. "*In behalf of your souls* is equivalent to, in your behalf." Newcome.

[4] *With joy:*] *i. e.* perform their office, not give up their account; for the negligence and undutifulness of the hearers could not abate the joy of the faithful minister, whose fidelity and zeal are a fragrant odour to God in them that perish, equally as in those that believe. See Doddridge. So Wakefield: "that they may preside over you with joy."

Nevertheless, Archbishop Newcome and many others interpret the author differently: *q. d.* that they may give up their account with joy, and not with grief. For as in accommodation to our present conceptions the apostle speaks of meeting his converts with joy at the day of Christ; so it is impossible, according to our present mode of thinking and feeling, that a faithful minister should not feel deep regret, if any of those over whom he has watched, and for whom he has laboured, should

Though the Hebrew church can no longer boast of being under the personal superintendence of apostles, and of being instructed by men who were the immediate ambassadors of Jesus, yet they still enjoy the privilege of being directed and taught by wise and faithful men, the successors of those eminent instructors. Let then such persons be treated with the respect and reverence which they deserve. Obey the precepts which they deliver, which, though more pure and strict than those which your most ostentatious sects inculcate, extending even to the affections and the thoughts, are nevertheless positively enjoined by the Christian law, and essential to your

Ch. XIII. Ver. 17.

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be missing on that day, and if it should then be his painful duty to bear his testimony against them. See Newcome and Macknight.

[5] *Unprofitable for you:*] "*i. e.* dangerous." Newcome. Mr. Hallett, after a judicious explanation of the nature and limitations of the advice here given, adds, "From hence we may form this general rule, suited to all ages, viz.—that where pastors in all respects behave themselves as Christians, and so are meet for Christian communion; where they are qualified with sufficient gifts, and faithfully perform the duties of the pastoral office; where they do not lord it over God's heritage, but are examples of all virtue to the flock, and heartily labour to promote the salvation of their people, under a lively apprehension that they must hereafter give up a strict account of their management to the great shepherd, who will either reward or punish them accordingly, as they promote or hinder the salvation of those souls for which he died: where pastors, I say, act in this manner, the people are bound to obey them; that is, to hearken to their good advice, to submit to their just reproofs, as to men who, like their parents, have a right to exhort and reprove them. And no one can think it any manner of evil, or hardship, to submit to pastors of such a character, in attending to their good and friendly admonitions, and in doing the things which are necessary to their own eternal salvation."

Ch. XIII. Ver. 17. acceptance with God. Yield, therefore, to their friendly admonitions; for you know the character of the men. They act not from the love of power, but from a sense of duty. They are accountable to God for the fidelity with which they discharge their trust; and therefore they exercise a vigilant inspection over you, and sometimes, perhaps, impose restraints which you may think burdensome. But place confidence in their superior wisdom, and submit cheerfully to their salutary admonitions: this will refresh and animate their spirits, and they will discharge their laborious and hazardous office with delight. But if you are refractory, their hearts will be discouraged, and their spirits will be oppressed with sorrow. This, however, will be more upon your account than their own. Their faithful labours will be accepted and approved; but wretched will be the lot of those upon whom such labours have been lost, and against whom it will be their painful duty to bear their final testimony.

9. He requests an interest in their prayers, ver. 18, 19.

18. *Pray for us; for we are confident*[1] *that we have*

[1] *Confident.*] πεποίθαμεν. "For though ye may dislike my doctrine, set forth in this letter, I am certain, in teaching it, I have maintained a good conscience." Macknight. It is evident that the Hebrews to whom the epistle was written knew the writer, though we do not, and, as Hallett observes, "his design in not setting his name could not be to conceal himself from them." He was now at liberty, and desired them to pray for his success, that he might the sooner finish his mission among

a good conscience, determined in all things to be- Ch. XIII.
have well: and I the more earnestly intreat you *to* Ver. 19.
do this, that I may be shortly restored to you.

Before I conclude, I request an interest in your prayers, that, like your faithful and vigilant instructors, I also may be diligent in the duties of my office, and may meet with comfort and success in it. You may perhaps be in some measure prepossessed against me, for what you may imagine to be a deficiency of zeal for the institutions of the law: but I assure you that these prejudices are without foundation. I have examined myself thoroughly upon the subject; and I am conscious that it is my earnest endeavour and steady resolution to act upon every occasion in conformity to the strictest fidelity and integrity: and that I have never advanced any thing which I was not well convinced that I was fully authorized to teach and to inculcate. Pray then for my success in the Gentile churches: and I am the more earnest in this request, because it is my intention, when I have finished the object of my ministry here, to make a visit to Judea, and I am anxious to be with you as soon as possible.

10. He solemnly commends the Hebrew Christians to the blessing of God, for the improvement of their character, ver. 20, 21.

Now may the God of peace[2], *who restored from* 20.

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the Gentiles, and be at leisure to make them a visit. See Hallett and Newcome.

[2] *The God of peace:*] *i. e.* "the God that maketh and giveth

Ch. XIII. *the dead the shepherd of the sheep, great by the*
blood[1] *of the everlasting covenant, our Lord Jesus,*
Ver. 21. *make you complete in every good work, that ye may*
perform his will; working in you that which is
acceptable in his sight through Jesus Christ[2]*: to*
him[3] *be glory for ever*[4]*. Amen.*

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peace." Hallett; who observes that, "in styling God the God of Peace he seems to have had a view particularly to the peace which God made between the Jewish and Gentile believers, and his reconciling them both to himself through Jesus Christ." Eph. ii. 14—17.

[1] *Great by the blood,* &c.] Moses, Aaron, Joshua, &c. were inferior shepherds: the covenant which they ratified with the blood of animal victims was a mutable and transitory engagement; but that which Jesus ratified with his own blood was a universal and everlasting covenant, ch. viii. 13. He, therefore, is the great shepherd who superintends the whole flock to the end of time. "The meaning is, that Christ became the great shepherd of the sheep, by means of his voluntary offering of himself as a sacrifice for them, and by giving his blood to confirm the new covenant. It was by the shedding of his blood that he purchased for himself the authority of a shepherd, a governor, or leader, to all believers." Hallett. See Newcome and Wakefield. "That Shepherd of the sheep, great by the blood of the everlasting covenant." Sykes. *Our Lord Jesus:* some copies add Christ. See Griesbach.

[2] *Working in you through Jesus Christ:*] *i. e.* May the principles of the gospel, which is the gift of God, produce these happy moral effects. "God in his good providence so ordering and disposing things, that you may do what is well-pleasing in his sight. See Eph. iii. 16, 17, Phil. ii. 13, Col. i. 11." Sykes. ποιων εν ὑμιν, "doing what is pleasing in his own sight, through Jesus Christ." Wakefield.

Sykes adds, "They had the opportunity, through the gospel of Christ, to work out their own salvation: and the wish is, that God would so direct and govern things as to let them always have opportunity of doing what was acceptable in his sight."

[3] *To him be glory.*] The expression is grammatically ambiguous. Christ is the nearest antecedent: but doxologies to Christ are not usual. To the Hebrews they would be peculiarly offensive. Mr. Hallett justly observes, that God is the principal

And now, my brethren, to draw to a close, may the God of love and peace, who sent his son into the world upon a message of grace, to reconcile sinners to himself, and all the tribes of mankind to each other, by breaking down the wall of separation,—may He who has borne his public testimony to the mission of Jesus our revered master, by raising him from the dead, after he had dearly purchased the honourable title of the great shepherd of the sheep, the prince and leader of the new dispensation, by voluntary submission to an ignominious death, in order to ratify that covenant of peace of which he was the honoured messenger, and to consecrate that holy and merciful dispensation which supersedes all that preceded it, and is to be superseded by none, but is to endure with all its privileges and blessings to the end of time,—may this God of truth, and peace, and love, dispose and enable you to subdue every prejudice, to adhere firmly to the doctrine of the gospel, and to secure the divine favour and approbation, by living in the constant practice of universal virtue, as you have been instructed by Jesus Christ! —And now, to the supreme and only God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the author of peace and reconciliation, the lover of concord, let all of all nations, and of all parties, who are saved

Ch. XIII. Ver. 21.

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person mentioned, and to him probably the doxology belongs.

[4] *For ever.*] τους αιωνας. This is the reading of the Clermont manuscript, and of some others. The common reading is τους αιωνας των αιωνων, *for ever and ever.*

Ch. XIII. Ver. 21. and reconciled by him, harmoniously unite in ascribing blessing, and honour, and everlasting praise. Amen.

11. The epistle concludes with a promise of an early visit, in company with Timothy, and with a brief salutation and blessing, ver. 22—25.

22. *Now I intreat you, brethren, suffer this word of exhortation, for indeed I have written a letter to you in few words*[1].

Before I conclude, I must earnestly request that you will take in good part the freedom of my exhortations and admonitions, which I can assure you were dictated by a sense of duty, and a real concern for your improvement and happiness. I could have added much more, but I was unwilling to trouble you with too long an epistle at once.

23. *Know that* our *brother Timothy is set at liberty*[2], *with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.*

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[1] *I have written a letter to you in few words.*] διὰ βραχέων ἐπεστειλα. "contracting my epistle as much as I could, not enlarging as I might." Newcome; and so Hallett and Sykes. "I have given you but few commands." Wakefield, limiting the clause to the preceptive part of the epistle. "*Larga se dabat materia, sed ego, quo minus gravis vobis essem, quæ multis dici poterunt, in pauca contraxi.*" Rosenmuller. It cannot be doubted that the writer might have enlarged indefinitely, as long as he pleased, in the same style.

[2] Our *brother Timothy is set at liberty.*] Le Clerc thinks that Timothy was not a prisoner during the life of Paul, otherwise the apostle would not have failed to have mentioned it in his second epistle: and Lardner allows that ἀπολελυμενος may signify *sent abroad on an errand.* Macknight adopts this suggestion, see Matth. xiv. 15, and supposes Timothy to have been sent into Macedonia agreeably to the apostle's expressed inten-

Timothy, my beloved associate, who has been for a short time in confinement for his profession of Christianity, is now at large. This intelligence will, I know, be grateful to you all. He proposes to join me soon, in which case we shall travel together to Judea; but if he does not come speedily, such is my eager desire to see you that I shall not wait for him. Ch. XIII. Ver. 23.

Salute all those who preside over you, and all the saints[3]. *They of Italy salute you. Grace*[4] *be with you all. Amen.*[5] 24. 25.

In the mean time greet affectionately and respectfully, in my name, those reverend persons who, with so much credit to themselves and advantage to you, preside over your spiritual concerns, and present my

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tion, Phil. ii. 19—24, whence he was expected shortly to return. Macknight cites Euthalius among the ancients, and Mill and Lardner among the moderns, as taking the word in that sense. But Dr. Lardner, vol. vi. p. 370, says, "it is not improbable that Timothy might be imprisoned and soon set at liberty again, as divers of Paul's fellow-labourers were:" and he obviates Le Clerc's objection, by the supposition that the Second Epistle to Timothy was written early in the apostle's first imprisonment.

It is remarked by Sykes that Paul often mentions Timothy, sometimes as a brother, Col. i. 1, 2 Cor. i. 1, 1 Thess. iii. 2, at other times as a fellow-labourer; that his name occurs in every epistle except to the Galatians and Titus, and that Timothy is not noticed by any other apostle; which he thinks a presumption that Paul was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

[3] *Saints:*] holy by profession, Christians in general.

[4] *Grace:*] *i. e.* the gospel in its purity and power, the free gift of God to a sinful world.

[5] The postscripts are various, and of no authority: in the most ancient copies they are wanting. They date the epistle from Italy, from Athens, from Rome, from Italy by Timothy, which is contradictory to ver. 23; and one copy adds, that it was written in Hebrew. See Griesbach.

Ch. XIII. Ver. 25. kind salutations to all the members of the Hebrew church. The believers in Italy, who know of my writing, likewise send their fraternal salutations. And now, my brethren, the best wish that I can form for you, and with the cordial expression of which I take my leave of you for the present, is this: May the doctrine of the gospel, the choicest gift of God to man, be diffused among you, and abide with you, in its truth, in its purity, and in its power! Amen.

THE END.

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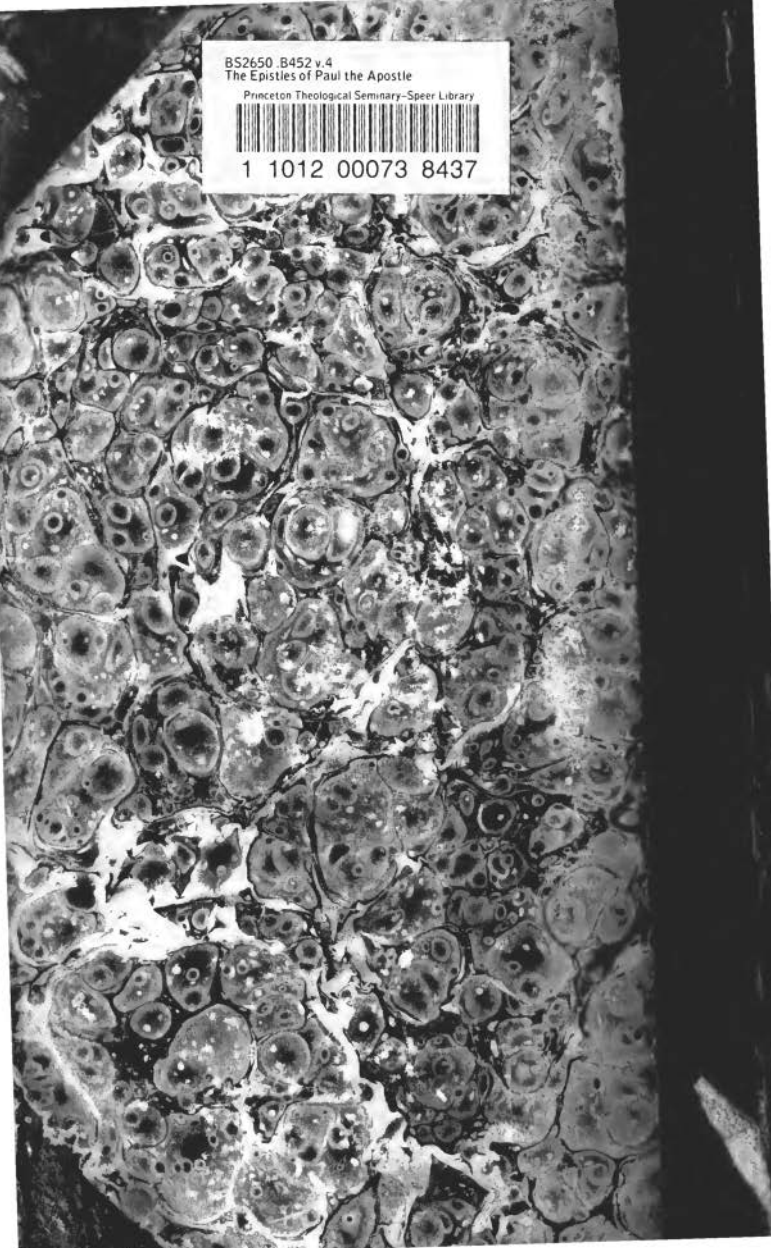
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