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THE
DOCTRINE
OF
GENERAL REDEMPTION
CONSIDERED,
AND
THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST IT
ANSWERED.

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INTRODUCTION.

IT has been a question often put to me, If there be no such thing as absolute, unconditional *Predestination* and *Election*, Why did all the *ancient Writers* teach it? Why does the *Church of England* maintain it? And why is it asserted in the *Holy Scriptures*? To the first branch of this question, I answer, 1. I will venture to say, that not one in a hundred of those that propose and insist upon this question, ever read *one*, much less *all* the ancient Writers. What they mean by ancient Writers is, such as wrote a little before and after the Synod of Dort. But those are rather late than ancient Writers. And their writings have gained the character of antiquity, only because they have been found dusty, worm-eaten, and loose in the binding. 2. All, even of those writers, do not teach such a predestination and election, as is contended for by the rigid Calvinists. 3. None of those that are justly entitled to the character of ancient Writers, and that lived in the three first centuries after our Saviour's days, ever taught any such doctrine. St. Austin, indeed, did teach it afterwards, and his followers; yet not without frequently contradicting himself.

In answer to the second branch of this question, I say, the Church of England, truly scriptural in her doctrine, maintains no *such* predestination and election as these contend for. That in her Liturgy, Articles, and Homilies, she makes mention of election is true; but she no where teaches that some are *personally* and *unconditionally* elected to eternal life from all eternity, who, in consequence of such election, shall, in spite of all misdemeanours whatever, be infallibly brought to heaven. In the Suffrages at Morning and Evening Prayers, there is this Petition, "Make thy chosen people joyful." The Collect for All Saints' Day, be-

gins thus, "O Almighty God, who hast knit together
 " thine Elect in one communion and fellowship in the
 " mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord." But in
 these passages by *chosen* and *elect*, nothing more is
 meant than members of the Christian Church; this
 title, according to the Apostolic use, being given to all
 in general that were baptized into the faith of Christ,
 as it had been given before to all in general that were
 members of the Jewish Church. Accordingly, when
 any one is baptized, our Church prays that such per-
 son "may ever remain in the number of God's faith-
 " ful and elect children." Whence it is evident, tho'
 she files the baptized person *elect*, she does not look
 upon him as elect in such a sense as that it is impos-
 sible for him not to remain in the number of the elect.
 So in the Catechism, the catechized person is taught
 to profess, "I believe in God the Holy Ghost, " who
 " sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God: "
 Yet not to profess himself in such sense elect, that he
 is infallibly sure of going to heaven. Again, in the
 Burial Office, our Church prays, that God would
 " shortly accomplish the number of his elect; " where-
 by she means no more than that God would soon cause
 the *fulnefs of the Gentiles to come in* to the Chris-
 tian Church, Rom. xi. 25; and " the kingdoms of
 this world to become the kingdoms of our Lord and
 of his Christ," Rev. xi. 15. A glorious event, much
 expected and earnestly desired by our pious Reformers.
 In the 17th Article, indeed, the notion of election is
 carried much higher, and the elect there meant are not
 only such persons as are chosen to partake of outward
 Church privileges; but moreover, (as sometimes in
 the Scriptures) such as answer the end of their outward
 election, " continuing in the faith, grounded and
 settled," and are " not moved away from the hope
 of the gospel; " but " give diligence to make their
 calling and election sure." Such, indeed, are chosen
 of God as undoubted heirs of the Kingdom of heaven:
 Yet not as being such and such persons by name; but
 as being in such and such respects qualified, as the
 Article declares.

Our Church also mentions Predestination, (though
 but once, as I remember, in all her standard Writings)

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in her 17th Article of Religion. And it is there spoken of in the most *prudent* and *cautious* manner; so as to give no encouragement to careless sinners to presume groundlessly on God's favour; nor so as to discourage any one that is willing to forsake sin, from so doing, or cause him to despair of mercy. For altho' she does mention Predestination, it is not such a predestination as is contended for by many, viz. That God, barely to shew his *sovereign Will* and *Power* over his creatures, hath from all eternity decreed, that just such a number of persons, and such and such persons by name included in that number, shall once believe, and never fall from the faith, but in spite of all misdemeanours whatever, shall be infallibly brought to heaven: And on the other hand, that a hundred, perhaps a thousand times greater number, shall necessarily sin, never believe, and so perish eternally. All the predestination she teaches is, that God hath decreed to save those whom he hath chosen in Christ, which she declares to be such as thro' grace obey his Spirit's call, are justified, adopted for children of God, conformed to the Image of his Son Jesus Christ, and walk religiously in good works. And who disputes the truth of this? this is, as the Article afterwards speaks, a *godly* consideration of predestination, if we must call God's gracious decree by that *heathenish* name. But on the other hand, to assert that far the greatest part of mankind shall never have saving grace offered them, or if they have, shall, by the absolute decree of God, never have will nor power to accept of it, this is an *ungodly* consideration of predestination, and such as has no countenance at all in any of the standard Writings of our Church; no, not even in the 17th Article; in which it is expressly declared, "that we must receive God's promises in such wise as they be *generally* set forth to us in Holy Scripture. And in our doings, that Will of God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared unto us in the Word of God." Upon which part of the Article, Bishop Overall, who was one of the Translators of the Bible, and who succeeded Dr. Whitaker, the seedman of rigid Calvinism in England, as Regius Professor of Divinity in Cambridge, ob-

serves, "that under the general promise and precept,
 " every one may safely include himself with an un-
 " doubting faith; and may come to the Throne of
 " Grace with sure hope and trust; and may verily
 " know, that if he do not rely upon God in his pro-
 " mises, and obey him in his commands, the fault is
 " his own, and not God's: and that this comes to
 " pass thro' his own negligence, and not thro' any
 " defect of divine grace; lest he come under the
 " sentence of Solomon, Prov. xix. 3, 'The foolish-
 " ness of man perverteth his way, and his heart
 " fretteth against the Lord.'"

In answer to the third branch, I say, the Holy Scriptures do not assert such an absolute, unconditional predestination, as is contended for, (as I hope to make appear in the following Treatise;) I remember but one word in all the Scriptures, which carries in it the notion of *destiny*; and that is *Misopneustos*, Jude 16, rendered *complainers*; which literally means complainers of their *lot, fate, or destiny*. But though millions of such men as are there spoken of should complain of their *fate or destiny*, this would afford no proof that there is any such power necessitating all the actions of all mankind, and so forcing a few to heaven, and all the rest down to hell.

If it be replied, However, the Puritan Writers, as with one voice, maintain the doctrine of Predestination and Election, in the sense contended for.

I answer: The voice of the Puritans was not one in this point, but diverse. Some there were among them, who had *light, honesty, and courage* enough to vote against the stream of the prevailing doctrine. Milton, who lived in the Puritan age, was far from being singular in his opinion. He introduces the Angel speaking thus to Adam before his Fall:

" God made thee perfect; not immutable;
 And good he made thee. But to persevere
 He left it in thy power: Ordain'd thy Will
 By Nature free; not over-rul'd by Fate
 Inextricable, or strict Necessity.
 Our voluntary service he requires,
 Not our necessitated. Such with him

Finis

Finds no acceptance, nor can find. For how
 Can hearts not free be try'd, whether they serve
 Willing or no; who will but what they must
 By Destiny, and can no other choose?"

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And God the Father, speaking thus to the Son concerning his dealings with man, after the Fall:

"Some I have chosen of *peculiar grace*
 Elect above the rest. So is my Will.
 The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd
 Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
 Th' incens'd Deity, while offer'd grace
 Invites. For I will clear their senses dark,
 What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
 To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.
 To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,
 Tho' but endeavour'd with sincere intent,
 Mine Ear shall not be slow, mine Eye not shut:
 And I will place within them as a guide
 My empire, Consolence; whom if they will hear,
 Light after light well us'd, they shall attain,
 And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
 This, my long sufferance and my day of grace
 They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;
 But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more,
 That they may stumble on and deeper fall—
 And none but such from mercy I exclude."

BOOK III.

Against such a kind of Predestination as this, I would not spend a breath, nor lift a finger. But I am bold to affirm, that those that have gone beyond this, have departed far from the ancient Christian doctrine. This is evident from the Writings of St. Clement, who was fellow-labourer with St. Paul; and doubtless knew well in what sense that Apostle held Predestination. He says expressly, "The blood of Christ brings the grace of repentance to the whole world." And if so, it can never be supposed by any reasonable man, that the Father of mercies hath absolutely decreed, that far the greatest part of the world should never have either a *will* or *power* to accept his grace. And I scruple not to affirm, that such an opinion flatly contradicts the assertion of the

Apostle concerning God, 1 Tim. ii. 4, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the Truth." Which text so wrought upon the mind of one of the chief agents at the Synod of Dort, that tho' he went thither a Calvinist, he then "bade John Calvin good night."

It will, no doubt, be enquired farther, How then came the doctrine of absolute predestination and election to be taught in the Christian Church, and to be so generally received in the Church of England? I will tell you. It was begotten by St. Austin, Bishop of Hippo in Africa, about 400 years after our Saviour's days. And was brought into the world a misshapen brat, and so continued for a long course of years; till John Calvin, who was cotemporary with Luther, moulded it into a more uniform shape. But neither did Calvin himself give it the finishing stroke. For he, as well as St. Austin, left it with many protuberances and excrescencies, which had too much the appearance of Lutheranism, and gave great countenance to the doctrine of General Redemption. After this, in the year 1618, the Synod of Dort brought it into the shape we find it in most of the Puritanical Writers after that Assembly. Though, indeed, even among these, there is hardly one, but has here and there a sentence tending much to establish the notion of General Redemption, which they other-while, when they are guided by the Synod's leading-strings, condemn as error and heterodoxy.

But to let the reader see how the opinion of absolute predestination came to prevail so much in the Church of England, tho', as I have already shewn, it never was her established doctrine: You must know that in the reign of Queen Elizabeth there were two men of great note for their learning and parts in the University of Cambridge; the one Dr. Whitaker, who was Regius Professor of Divinity there; and the other Peter Baro, who was Margaret Professor. Whitaker, who had married into a family much attached to the Geneva masters, gave himself entirely up to their opinions; and among other points, which rest chiefly upon the authority of Calvin and Beza, he began to urge the opinion of such absolute predestination, as
entirely

entirely excludes the greater part of mankind from the redemption of Christ and sufficient grace. And he asserted, that reprobation is not a *negative*, but a *positive* act of God, with respect to man considered in the mass not yet corrupted; and that by means of this decree and will of God so many men rush into eternal destruction.

Peter Baro, moved by these strange opinions of Whitaker to enquire more diligently into the whole matter, among the very different opinions that he met with, thought none more probable, than that which Melancthon defended in Germany, Hemmingius in Denmark, and Snecanus in Friesland, viz. that the foreknowledge of faith goes in order before predestination, as the ancient Fathers, before St. Austin, thought and taught; yea, and even Austin himself before he disputed with Pelagius. And in proof of this he produced the testimony of the Fathers and Beza himself, who confesses the same thing.

Two other points of controversy, (if yet they may be called two, seeing the one necessarily draws the other after it,) followed that of Predestination, 1. Concerning the *Amisibility* of grace. 2. Concerning the *Certainty* and *Security* of salvation. Baro maintained that faith and justifying grace might be lost, Whitaker denied it. Baro allowed only of a certainty or full assurance of *hope*. Whitaker maintained a certainty of *faith*, and that *absolute* and *unconditional*.

When the dispute between these two famous Professors had for a good while drawn the Youth of the University into parties, Whitaker, at length, went to London, and going to Dr. Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury, he let him know, that the University was disturbed with the Pelagian opinions, to remedy which he desired, that nine Articles, which he had devised, should be sent to Cambridge with the approbation of some Bishops.

These Theses or Articles were so framed, that they might be approved of even by those who differed not a little from his opinion, and yet might afterwards be used by himself for the confirmation of it. A convention of a few Bishops and other Divines, was held

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in November 1595, in which there was disputing for some time about this perplexed and difficult point. It happened on the last day, that those were absent, who differed the farthest from Whitaker's opinion, so that the rest prevailed. And Whitgift, altho' he approved not of Whitaker's opinions, yet, thro' easiness of temper, and for fear of discord, when he could not establish his own sentence with the others, submitted to theirs. Not that Whitaker's assertions were allowed of in the same words, wherein he had propounded them; for several words and phrases were so altered, that there appeared great marks of a judgment differing from his.

These Articles were transmitted to Cambridge. Whitaker boasts that he had gotten the victory. And meeting with the Chancellor of Cambridge, who was also one of the Queen's Privy Council, he acquainted him with what had been done, and shewed him the Articles. That great man, easily perceiving that it was a dangerous thing to determine in points so much contested, vehemently disapproved of all that was done, saying, that he would make the Authors of this business repent of it. Accordingly he went to the Queen, and pointed out to her, that by the Laws of England, no man may decree any thing in matters pertaining to the State of Religion, but by the authority of the Queen, and with the consent of Parliament. And then informed her what had been decreed by a few Divines about the most weighty questions, in which men of the greatest learning could never agree: adding, that it was plain what those aimed at, who had done this: For they thought and taught, that whatsoever was done in human affairs, whether it were good or bad, it was all necessitated by the ruling force of an *immutable decree*: and that this necessity was laid upon the very wills of men also, that they could not will otherwise than they did will. "Which things, says he, if true, most sovereign Lady, in vain do I, and others your Majesty's faithful servants hold long councils about what is needful to be done in any affairs, and what may be of use to yourself and your Kingdom; seeing that all consultation, about things that necessarily come to pass, is downright folly." The

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The Queen was moved, and ordered Archbishop Whitgift to be sent for. He came; and after some discourse had to bring on the matter, the Queen entered upon the subject of the *Lambeth Articles*. The Archbishop said, that it was not the intention of himself or his colleagues to decree any thing without public authority, or to make canons by themselves alone; but that they had given Counsel of Peace to the Professors, lest their private debates should break out into public mischief. The Queen's Counsellors were present, who pressed very hard upon Whitgift; urging, that the Convention itself was a crime, because it was appointed without consulting the Queen; and that peace might have been much better secured, if the Bishops had kept their judgment entirely to themselves. And, said they, "Why were the assertions of the Bishops sent to Cambridge, but that they might have some appearance of a Canon? Was it so much trouble to wait upon the Queen once about an affair that was debated for so many days? Then they proceeded to the Question concerning *Fate*, and determined that this opinion was opposite to good morals and the commonwealth." The event was, that the Archbishop asked pardon for his rash deed, and promised that he would write to Cambridge, that the *Lambeth Articles* might be suppressed.

Whitaker died in a short time after the *Lambeth Convention*, and was succeeded in the Regius Professorship by Dr. John Overall, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, a man of most excellent learning. He taught in this manner, That sufficient grace is offered to every man; and that Christ died for every man: that grace leads the way in every thing that is good, and free-will, informed by grace, follows after: that grace operates in such ways as cannot be explained, not, however, by determining to every particular act in a natural manner, and that justifying grace cannot consist with mortal sins before they are repented of.

After this King James I. being come to the Throne, a Conference was held at Hamp'ton Court in 1603, where Dr. Reynolds, and they that sided with him against the Bishops, required that the *Lambeth Articles* might be inserted among the Articles of the Church.

Church. But they obtained it not, the King judging that such kind of determinations would avail but little toward making peace.

But altho' King James did not think proper to establish absolute Predestination at this time, he did much in order to establish it afterwards, by countenancing the Proceedings of the Synod of Dort, and causing the Bible to be new translated; which Translation, as well as the former, being made mostly by such as were staunch friends to that doctrine, no wonder that many texts seem to confirm it.

As I am come down to the time of the Synod of Dort, I shall here give the Reader a brief account of that Assembly. The doctrine of General Redemption was generally received and taught in the Belgic Churches, before Arminius either spoke or wrote in its defence; and, as Dr. Heylin has proved, was the national persuasion, before Calvinism. However, in time Calvinism spread much, and just before the Synod of Dort, the Calvinists persecuted the Remonstrants, as those were termed who held General Redemption. The Remonstrants put themselves under the protection of one Barneveldt, a man of great power in the Council of State for the United Provinces: by whose means they obtained an Edict from the States of Holland and West Friesland in 1613, requiring and enjoining a mutual toleration of opinions, as well on the one side, as the other. But this indulgence, tho' at present it was very advantageous to the Remonstrants, yet cost them dear at last. For Barneveldt having some suspicion that Maurice of Nassau, Prince of Orange, Commander General of all the Forces of the United Provinces, had a design to make himself absolute master of those countries, made use of them for the encouraging of such patriots, as durst appear in maintenance of the common liberty. This service they undertook the rather, because they found that the Prince had passionately espoused the quarrel of the Contra-Remonstrants, or Calvinists.

From this time forwards the breach so widened that it could not be closed again, but by weakening the power of the Prince, or the death of Barneveldt. This last was easily compassed. The Prince being spurred on

on by the continued solicitations of the Contra-Remonstrants, suddenly put himself at the head of his army, with which he marched from town to town, altered the Guards, changed the Officers, and displaced the Magistrates, where he found any that he thought disaffected to him. And having got Barneveldt, Grotius, and some other of the heads of the party into his power, he caused them to be condemned, and Barneveldt to be put to death, contrary to the fundamental Laws of the Country, and the Rules of the Union.

This alteration being thus made, the Calvinists thought it a high point of wisdom to keep their adversaries under, and to effect that by a *National Council*, which they could not hope to compass by their *own authority*. To this end, the States General being importuned by the Prince of Orange, a National Synod was appointed to be held at Dort in 1618. To which, besides the Commissioners from the Churches of their several Provinces, all the Calvinist Churches, (those of France excepted) sent their Delegates. And some eminent Divines were commissioned by King James to attend the Synod, for the Realm of Britain. A Synod, says my author, much like that of Trent in the *motives* to it, as also in the *managing* and *conduct* of it. For as neither of them was assembled till the sword was drawn, the terror whereof was able to effect more than all other arguments; so neither of them was concerned to *confute*, but *condemn* their opponents.

The Council of Trent consisted, for the most part, of *Italian* Bishops; some others being added for form's sake, so that of Dort consisted, for the most part, of the delegates of the *Belgic* Churches; the Foreign Divines were an inconsiderable number. The differences were as great at Dort, as they were at Trent, and as much care was taken to work upon the discontented parties, in the one, as in the other.—The *British* Divines, together with one of those who came from Bremen, maintained the universal redemption of mankind by the death of Christ. But this, by no means, would be granted by the rest of the Synod, especially those of North Holland, for
fear -

fear of yielding any thing to the Arminians: as Soto, in the Council of Trent, opposed some moderate opinions, touching the certainty of salvation, because they were too much in favour of the Lutheran doctrines.

The general Body of the Synod not being able to avoid the inconveniences of the Supralapsarian way, were generally intent on the Sublapsarian. But on the other side, the Commissioners of the Churches of South-Holland thought it not necessary to determine, whether man was considered as *fallen* or *not fallen*, while God passed the decrees of Election and Reprobation. But far more positive was Gomarus, one of the four Professors of Leyden, who stood as strongly to the *absolute, irrelative, and irreversible* decree, (exclusive of man's sin and our Saviour's sufferings) as he could have done for the Holy Trinity. And not being able to draw the rest into his opinion, nor willing to conform to theirs, he delivered his own judgment in writing apart by itself, not joining in subscription with the rest of his brethren, for conformity's sake, as is customary in such cases. But Macovius, one of the Professors in Franeker in West-Friesland, went beyond them all, not only maintaining against Sibrandus Lubbertus, his fellow collegiate, that God wills sin; that he ordains sin, as it is sin; and that by no means he would have all men to be saved; but openly declaring, that if these points were not maintained, they must forsake their chief Doctors, who had so great a hand in the Reformation.

Tho' most of the British Divines were brought over to subscribe the *Calvinistical* and *tyrannical* decrees of the Synod, yet not all. Mr. John Hales did not: a man never mentioned without the epithet of the ever-memorable, on account of his very extensive learning and knowledge. He went into Holland, Chaplain to Sir Dudley Carlton, Ambassador from King James I. to the United Provinces, at the time of the Synod of Dort; and became acquainted with the most secret deliberations of that Synod. He was (says Bishop Pearson, who was long and intimately acquainted with him) a man of as great a sharpness, quickness, and subtilty of wit, as ever this, or, perhaps,

haps, any nation bred. His industry did strive, if it were possible, to equal the largeness of his capacity, whereby he became as great a master of polite, various, and universal learning, as ever yet conversed with books. He went to the Synod of Dort a rigid Calvinist. But upon hearing Episcopius's Reasons against those doctrines, he from that time bade adieu to John Calvin.

Dr. Goad was another of those Divines deputed by King James to go to the Synod. He was, says my Author, a person every way eminent in his time, having the repute of a great and general Scholar, exact Critic and Historian, a Poet, Orator, Schoolman, and Divine. He went to the Synod in the room of Dr. Hall, who came back indisposed, where he acquitted himself with applause in defence of Calvin's doctrines. But the force of Truth, and an impartial consideration of the reasons offered in its defence, at length prevailed with him to alter his judgment; and he then stood forth an advocate for the other side of the question.

Whether Dr. Womack, some time Bishop of St. David's, the author of *The Examination of Tilenus*, was a member of the Synod, or not, I am not certain. Be this as it will, he was in his younger days a rigid Calvinist, and his father is said to have been one of the *Triers*, or Commissioners, for examining into the orthodoxy and abilities of such as should be admitted to the ministry. Hence, he became acquainted with the nature of their proceedings. Tilenus, under which name the author concealed himself, is said to have been at the Synod of Dort, and to have been privy to all the cabals and management of it, if he was not a member thereof. But prosecuting the dispute against Arminius, he was at length convinced by his reasons, and changed his side.

But notwithstanding some few deserted the *good old cause* of rigid Calvinism, it was known to be too useful a State-Engine to be given up by the managers of the Synod. Accordingly, by their decree it was established as *orthodoxy*. And had they stopped here, there had been no great harm done. But they decreed moreover, that no one should be admitted to the

ministry, nor suffered to preach, nor teach a school, that was not in their sense orthodox. Nay, to such a length did they proceed in some places, that they would not suffer a man to be a Parish clerk, a sexton, or an organist, that was not approved of by the *Triers* for his orthodoxy. But they went further yet. They imprisoned, banished, confiscated the goods, and ruined all those worthy ministers, whose consciences would not suffer them to subscribe to the *horrible decree*. Thus you see how Calvinism came to be honoured with the name of *orthodoxy*, and how it came to be so prevailing in England!

I shall say no more of the national mischiefs that have arisen in this land by means of Calvinism being pronounced *orthodoxy*; nor how great a hand the Jesuits had in the time of the Civil War, in artfully and secretly pushing on Predestination and the Geneva customs, under a pretence of reforming the doctrine and discipline of the Church, when their grand aim was to destroy both. But I have seen much of the mischief arising from it, with regard to particular persons. I have heard some curse and blaspheme the God of Love, in a manner shocking to think of, on account of his supposed *horrible decree*. I have known other serious Christians, of a timorous disposition, walk for years together on the very brink of despair, always in fear lest they should not be in the number of the elect, and so perish at last. I have known others that, for many years, were happy in the love of God, and walked as became the gospel, who have afterwards fallen; and then rocking themselves in the cradle of *Perseverance*, have vainly fancied they never could fall so as to perish, and therefore have given themselves up to take their full swing in sin. In short, the doctrine of absolute Predestination and Election, as the Pharisees with their *Key of Knowledge*, hinders many from entering into the Kingdom of Heaven, that were entering in, (as also many that were entered in, it turns out again.) For who would *strive* to enter in at the strait gate, if they were verily persuaded that by virtue of an absolute and eternal decree, such and such persons should never be able to enter in; and by virtue of such a decree, such and such

such other persons should be thrust in head and shoulders?

The mischievous consequences of such a doctrine the Bishop of London was well aware of: For at the Hampton-Court Conference, when Dr. Reynolds and others of his party insisted much upon having the Lambeth Articles added to the XXXIX Articles of our Church, the good Bishop, (tho' a Calvinist, but a moderate one) observed to King James I. "that very many in those days neglected holiness of life, presuming too much upon persisting in grace; laying all their religion upon Predestination, saying, *If I shall be saved, I shall be saved;*" which he termed a *desperate doctrine*, and shewed it to be contrary to good divinity and the true doctrine of predestination. By such arguments the King was persuaded, and the *Lambeth Articles* were wisely and justly rejected.

Before I enter upon the consideration of these Arguments and Texts of Scripture, which are pressed into the service of the doctrine of Predestination and Election, I would only desire every one that reads the Scriptures to divest himself of all prejudice, and in his reading take with him the following Rules and Preliminaries, which are absolutely needful to be observed in order to the right interpretation of Scripture. Some of them I have occasionally mentioned elsewhere; but I here lay them down all together:

1. That we must never strive to bring the Scriptures to our system; but take our system from the Scriptures rightly understood.

2. That no interpretation of Scripture can be right, which opposes the *Holiness, Justice, Wisdom, Power, or Mercy* of God, upon the terms proposed in the Gospel.

3. That we must not drag in the *Sovereignty* of God to solve difficulties, so as to confront his other attributes; for this favours more of *anility* and *impiety*, than of *sound Reason* and *Religion*.

4. That one text of Scripture must never be interpreted so as to *contradict* another; nor any one so as to oppose certain *truth*, or *contradict reason*, tho' the

the matter of some texts may exceed the comprehension of reason.

5. That in the Hebrew Language the signs *doth, did, have, had, shall, will, may, can, might, would, should, could, ought, must, let,* are all included in one notation of a verb; many of them also in the Greek; and in many places of our Translation of the Bible, are to be taken one for another: the context, or analogy of faith, so requiring.

6. That Hebrew verbs in the *Hiphil* form, are to be understood, either in a *declarative, causative, or permissive* sense, as the matter in hand, and the analogy of faith require: which form the Greek Writers have expressed by verbs in *ἔω* and *οὖω*; and sometimes by derivative verbs *pure*; and where such are wanting by *oorist* and *perfect* tenses.

7. That Hebrew verbs in the *Pikel* form (which, according to some, is no other than the *Hiphil* contracted; or *Kal* for *Hiphil*) are often used for *Hiphil*; and sometimes also *frequentatively*.

8. That Hebrew verbs in the *Hithpahal* form imply *reciprocation* or *self-agency*, and oftentimes *perseverance* in action: which form in the Greek and English Scriptures, is often expressed by verbs *passive*.

9. That *simple* or *primitive* verbs are sometimes used for *derivatives*.

10. That the *imperative* mood, which has the appearance of a *command, exhortation, or prayer*, is frequently to be understood, as *foretelling, permitting, or supposing* a thing; and is used for the *future* tense.

11. That the *present* tense often implies *continuation of action*; the matter so requiring.

12. That the *perfect* tense is often used for the *imperfect* or *paulo-post-future*; so that a thing is said to be done, which is only now in doing, or soon after to be done.

13. That the third person singular of *active* verbs is often used *impersonally*.

14. That sometimes a thing is positively declared to be done, when the matter ought to have been proposed *interrogatively*.

15. That the Writers of the New Testament frequently use the *Septuagint* words in their sense, and

accommodate *Greek* words to the full notion of the *Hebrew* or *Chaldee* to which they answer; which is often different from the *Attic*.

16. That these particles and phrases, *and, but, if, so, also, therefore, then, when, nor, neither, now, even, or, with, together with, but yet, because, that, to the end that, as, although*, all being signified by the *Hebrew* ו, and for that reason most, if not all of them, by the *Greek* και, are oftentimes put the one for the other.

17. That the *Hebrew* and *Greek* prepositions, being very vague and unfixt in their meaning, have occasioned a wrong construction to be put upon many passages of Scripture.

18. That there are some *interpolations* (printed in *Italic* characters) in our *English* Bibles, which are *useless*, some *absurd*, and some *contrary* to the analogy of faith; and while some *ellipses* are *badly* supplied, others, which ought to be, are not supplied at all.

19. That many promises and threatnings in Scripture are *absolute* in form, which nevertheless are *conditional* as to matter and meaning: the condition is *implied*, tho' not *expressed*.

20. That the sacred Penmen in their Writings frequently allude to customs in use in the Eastern countries, the knowledge of which customs is needful for the right understanding of Scripture.

21. That in expounding the Scriptures we must always consider, whether it be God or man that speaks; if man, whether good or bad. Whether inspired or not. If God, his prophets, or apostles speak, what, to whom, upon what occasion, to what end they speak?

I think I may venture to say, there is no unprejudiced man of understanding but must allow the necessity of observing these grammatical rules, preliminaries, and cautions, in order rightly to expound the Scriptures. If any man, therefore, be incapable of understanding them, or thro' perverseness will not regard them, however he may be a good Exhorter of others, with respect to the plain and essential points of Christian faith and practice, he will be but a bad Expositor of the difficult and controverted passages of Scripture.

Scripture. Not, however, that I imagine the observation of these rules and positions, or any other that man has formed, or can form, will make any one an *infallible* Expositor of the Scriptures. *Infallibility* is only expected in a *Pope*, and those that are *Synodically orthodox*. And as I am neither of those, possibly I may have mistaken the sense of some texts that I have expounded, altho' in doing it, I have had an eye to the rules above. Herein I submit myself to the judgment of the *candid, unbiassed, and understanding* reader. And in the judgment of all such, I have no doubt but I shall stand clear of having *departed from the Analogy of Faith*, whatever mistakes beside I may have made. He that does this does *well*, however others may do *better*. "And if I have done well, it is that which I desired: but if slenderly and meanly, it is that which I could attain unto," 2 Mac. xv. 38.

ILLUMINATED

THE



THE
DOCTRINE

OF

GENERAL REDEMPTION

CONSIDERED; &c.



THE Arguments brought against the doctrine of General Redemption are such as arise from the *perversion* or *misinterpretation* of certain passages of Scripture, or from the *fallacies* and *perverse disputings* of men of *corrupt* minds or *weak* heads.

With regard to the Scriptures, certain it is, that not a single text can be produced, which affirms that Christ died for the elect *only*, for believers *only*, or the like: or denies that he died for *all men* without exception. The particular places, which are commonly managed with great confidence in the speakers, and received with most applause by the hearers, against the doctrine of General Redemption, are these:—

Matt. xx. 28, “The Son of Man came—to give his life a ransom for *MANY*.” The same manner of expression we meet with, Isa. liii. 11, 12;—Matt. xxvi. 28:—Rom. v. 15, 19;—Heb. ix. 28. From which scriptures this argument is raised:

“He that gave his life a ransom for *many*, bare the sin of *many*; shed his blood for *many*, &c. did not give his life a ransom for *all*; did not bear the sin
“ of

“ of *all*; did not shed his blood for *all*. But Christ
 “ gave his life a ransom for many, bare the sin of
 “ many, shed his blood for many: Therefore, he did
 “ not give his life a ransom for all; did not bear the
 “ sin of all; did not shed his blood for all.”

I answer: This argument is as strong against a general resurrection, as against general redemption. It is written, Dan. xii. 2, “ Many of them, that sleep in the dust of the dust of the earth shall awake.” But certain it is from the express words of our Saviour himself, John v. 28, 29, that “ all that are in the graves shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth.” Hence, it is evident that the *many* spoken of by the Angel in Daniel, and the *all* spoken of by Christ, mean the same number; which is all the dead that ever were buried. For “ there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust,” Acts xxiv. 15. As, therefore, the *many*, that shall rise again with their own bodies, mean *all men*; so do the *many*, for whom Christ gave his life a ransom, whose sins he bore, and for whom he shed his blood, mean *all men*. This truth is clearly evinced by St. Paul, who having mentioned the death of *many*, and the gift that abounded to *many*, Rom. v. 15, shews expressly, ver. 18, that by that *many* he meant *all*.

If it be objected, that by *all*, the Apostle only means all believers, or all the elect; this is to affirm, that none are dead, i. e. in sin, but only the elect. For certain it is, that the *all men*, upon whom the free Gift came unto justification of life, ver. 18, are the *many dead*, ver. 15. To say, therefore, that the free Gift came only upon the elect, is to say, that the elect only are by nature dead in sin. But *we thus judge*, says the same Apostle, 2 Cor. v. 14, *that if one died for all, then were all dead*. Hence it is evident, that all are redeemed, or all are not fallen. But certain it is, that all are fallen. No Calvinist denies this. And equally certain it is, that all men are redeemed. For the number of those that were dead or fallen, and of those for whom Christ died, or whom he redeemed, is expressed by one and the same word; *all*.

Those

Those that restrain the meaning of the word, *many*, in the texts above-mentioned, and limit it to only a part, and that too abundantly the smallest part of mankind, were either really or wilfully ignorant, that the Hebrew word מְרִיבִים as well as the Greek πολλοί, translated *many*, signifies, *the multitudes*; and frequently means all the multitudes of the sons of Adam. Pafér in his Lexicon, under the word Πόλυς, renders it *omnes*, ALL, Rom. v. 15; and in this sense it has been understood by many approved Writers, both ancient and modern, in the Christian Church; agreeable to the declaration of St. Paul, 1 Tim. ii. 6,—“who gave himself a ransom for ALL,” and Heb. ii. 9, “That he, by the grace of God, should taste death for EVERY MAN;” and to many other texts of the same import. So that their argument, leaning with all its weight upon the word *many*, falls to the ground.

John x. 11, “The good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep:” ver. 15, “I lay down my life for the sheep.” Acts xx. 28, “Christ purchased the Church with his own blood.” Ephesians v. 25—“Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it.” From these and such like premises this inference is drawn: “Christ gave his life for his sheep, i. e. his elect only. He gave himself for his Church, and purchased his Church only.”

In answer, If Christ laid down his life for his sheep, purchased his Church, i. e. the Elect, and those only; in all that he did and suffered for their redemption, he only performed a solemn nothing; or did and suffered what he had no occasion to do. For if these were chosen from all eternity to be heirs of eternal glory, and so it was impossible for any thing to deprive them of it, the elect were sure of heaven whether Christ had died or not. If it be said, the elect were elected *in* Christ, and never considered *out* of him, and unsprinkled with his blood, I reply, All Calvinists are not of this mind. Gomarus, Macovius, and Whitaker, are not the only writers by many that maintain an *absolute, irrelative, and irreversible* decree, exclusive of *man's sin and our Saviour's sufferings*. But to proceed: You say, Christ gave his life for his sheep, purchased

purchased the Church and gave himself for it, i. e. for the elect: Therefore, for them *only*. I here ask, What hath the conclusion to do with the premises? If it had been asserted here or elsewhere, that Christ laid down his life for his sheep, and gave himself for his Church, i. e. the elect, and for them *only*, exclusive of all mankind beside, the argument had been good. But no such thing is asserted here, nor any where else in the Bible; therefore, it is nothing worth. On the contrary, St. John expressly declares, 1 John ii. 2, Christ "is the Propitiation for our sins," who believe in him, "and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the **WHOLE WORLD**," whether believers or not. So far was St. John from asserting, with the Synod of Dort, that Christ laid down his life, &c. for the elect *only*; i. e. was the Propitiation for their sins *only*, that he expressly declares he was *not* the Propitiation for their sins *only*. So he elsewhere files Christ, "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world," John i. 29. So says Christ, John iii. 16, 17, "For God so loved the **WORLD**, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the **WORLD** through him might be saved," i. e. if they were not wanting to themselves. Accordingly, he upbraids the Jews, John v. 40, "~~Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life.~~" In which words he clearly shews, that he purchased life, or laid down his life for those, that would not come unto him and have life, as well as for his sheep or the elect.

If it be objected, that by the *world*, in the texts above cited, is meant only the *world of believers*, or the elect: I answer, This is such a shameless, pitiful objection, that I am surprised to find any man of sense can propose it. It is talking of such a world as never yet existed since the days of Adam, unless in the days of Noah, when the world was confined in the ark, and reduced to eight persons. Nor even then, if we may take the word of most Calvinists; for they generally set down poor Ham in their black list of reprobates. It is talking of such a world as is no
where

where to be found in the Scripture, and is only created in their own vain imaginations.

Matt. i. 21, "He shall save his people from their sins." This text, likewise, is wont to be seconded with some others, as agreeing with it: as Acts x. 43; Rom. iii. 25, 26.—x. 4; Heb. x. 14. From these and such like passages, this inference is drawn: "Therefore Christ came to save his people only, believers only, sanctified ones only, from their sins."

To this I answer again, If they were *his people, believers, and sanctified ones*, in the sense the argumentators intend, before Christ came to save them, there was no need of his coming to save them. If they were not his people, believers, and sanctified ones, before Christ came to save them, then he came to save those that were not his people, were not believers, were not sanctified ones, till he had made them such. So that according as it is said, 1 Pet. ii. 10, *They who in time past were not the people, afterwards became the people of God, and they who had not obtained mercy, afterwards obtained mercy.*

But though it be granted, which must be granted, with respect to those that have an opportunity of hearing the gospel, that Jesus saves none from their sins, but those that embrace the gospel and cleave unto him by faith; and brings none to eternal glory, but those that obey him; this is no proof at all, that he did not come to save all others from their sins, and to purchase eternal salvation for those also that will not believe in, nor obey him. That he came to procure these blessings even for such, is undeniably clear from the Scriptures already mentioned, as well as from these words of Paul to the contradicting and blaspheming Jews, Acts xiii. 46, "It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken unto you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, we turn to the Gentiles." Certainly, what they *put from them*, was *offered to them*; and what was offered to them, was *procured for them*, otherwise it would not have been offered to them; much less would it have been *necessary*, that it should be offered; nor would the blame have fallen upon them, that they *judged themselves un-*

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worthy

worthy of everlasting life; but upon God who *designed* they never should accept it. The Jews, therefore, at Antioch had their gracious day, tho' they would not acknowledge it, as well as those at Jerusalem. And Christ came to save both the one and the other from their sins, and to obtain eternal salvation for them, tho' they would not accept of the offered mercy, as well as for the Gentiles that did believe in him. For "he is the Saviour of ALL MEN, especially of those that believe," 1 Tim. iv. 10.

Joha xv. 13, "Greater love than this hath no man, that a man lay down his life for his friend." This is strengthened with these words, 1 John iii. 16, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." This pair of Scriptures afford unto some the joy of this consequence: "Therefore, "Christ did not lay down his life for reprobates, or "for those that are damned in hell, because then he "should have loved them with the greatest love that "could be."

I answer, Christ did lay down his life for those that are reprobates, *αδοξουμοι*, and are now living; yea, and for those reprobates that are in hell and are past all hopes of a better condition. If he died for some reprobates, he died for all. If for the reprobates of one age, for reprobates of every age: unless you will make him a respecter of persons, which the Scriptures repeatedly declare he is not. But that he died for some reprobates of one age, we have abundant proof from the Oracles of Truth. We read, Rom. v. 6, "Christ died for the ungodly." Ver. 8, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Ver. 10, "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." The believing Ephesians were once "without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, frangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God, [*Αθεοι, Atheists,*] in the world," Eph. ii. 12. Concerning the Colossians, St. Paul saith, "You that were some time alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled," Coloss. i. 21. Now, if those that are *sinners, ungodly, without hope, without Christ, alienated from God,*

God, enemies to him, atheists, are not reprobates, while they are in this state; I know not where you will find your reprobates, seeing the devil himself hardly hears greater marks of reprobation. Yet for such reprobates as these Christ laid down his life. He died, the just for the unjust, indefinitely, without limitation or restriction. Either, therefore, it must be affirmed, which none will affirm, that none but the elect were unjust, atheists and enemies to God; or it must be granted, that Christ laid down his life for reprobates. Nay, the latter must be granted, whether the former be affirmed or no; seeing, as I just now proved, the elect themselves were once unjust, atheists and enemies to God, i. e. in a reprobate state.

But though it be asserted, that God's love of *benevolence* was the same to all, in that *he gave his Son to die for all*, and that Christ's love in this respect was the same to all, in that "he gave himself a ransom for all;" yet does it not follow, that God or Christ loved reprobates, or those that are damned in hell, with the "greatest love that could be." I suppose it is universally allowed, that a love of *complacence* is a degree of love beyond a love of *benevolence*. Now, God loves reprobates only with the latter kind of love, and herein *the kindness and Philanthropy, love of God our Saviour toward mankind appeared*, Tit. iii. 4. But he loves the elect; those that do not reject and trample on his love, but believe in and obey him, with the former kind of love. "The Lord taketh PLEASURE in them that fear him, in those that hope in his Mercy," Psal. cxlvii. 11. And "such as are upright in their way are his DELIGHT," Prov. xi. 20. And after all, those that produce the above-mentioned texts, (John xv. 13, and 1 John iii. 16,) to prove the *peculiar* love of God to the elect, or that he loved the elect *only*, so as to give Christ to die for them, are quite beside the mark. For the design of Christ and his Apostle in those texts, is not to shew how God loved one sinner more than another; but to shew that the love of God to sinners *in general* exceeds all human love. For whereas the utmost stretch of human love reaches no farther than this, "that a man lay down his life for

his friend ;” the love of God goes beyond it. For “herein God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were,” not his friends, but “yet sinners,” rebels, enemies against him, “Christ died for us,” Rom. v. 8.

John xvii. 9, “I pray for them: I pray not for the world.” Upon this basis this *Enthymeme* is raised: “Christ refused to pray for the world, i. e. the wicked of the world; therefore, certainly he refused to die for the world.”

Allowing that Christ does not pray for the world here, but for his Apostles only, yet he enlarges his prayer, ver. 20, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also, which shall believe on me through their word.” These were as yet unbelievers, and in all probability, yea, most certainly, far the greatest part of them, *the wicked of the world*, in the strictest sense; yet Christ prayed for them. So ver. 21, “That the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” Again, Luke xxiii. 34. He prays for his murderers, who were *the wicked of the world*; or else Peter brings a false crimination against them, when he tells them with regard to Christ, “Him ye have taken, and with wicked hands have crucified and slain,” Acts ii. 23. Since then Christ did not refuse to *pray for the wicked of the world*, we have no room to suppose, that he refused to *die* for the wicked of the world; yea, verily, if he died not for such, he died for none. For such were all mankind. But as he “came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance,” Matt. ix. 13; “To seek and to save that which was lost,” Matt. xviii. 11, i. e. *the wicked of the world*; so he died for sinners, for the wicked of the world. The truth is, Christ did not pray for the world, as he prayed for his disciples, in the critical circumstances they were in. His charity there, ver. 9, begins with his family, his apostles. It is extended, ver. 20, to his next followers, and at ver. 21 and 23, it grasps all the world. “His not praying for the world,” ver. 9, no more proves that our Lord did not pray for them both before and afterward, than his praying for the apostles alone; (ver. 6—19,) proves that he did not pray for them also which should believe thro’ their word,

word, ver. 20. In short, "the sum of Christ's whole prayer is this. 1. Receive me into thy own and my glory. 2. Let my apostles share therein. 3. And all other believers. 4. And let all the world believe," if they will. So then Christ prayed for all the world, and consequently died for all, even the wicked of the world.

Rom. viii. 32, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" From hence the doctrine of particular redemption is counterranced with this argument: "Unto all those, for whom God spared not, but delivered up his Son, he will freely give all things. But there are many thousands in the world, unto whom God will not give all things. Therefore, for none of these did God deliver up his Son."

I answer: No such argument as this can be fairly drawn from the Apostle's words. All that can be inferred from the Apostle's interrogative is this: That, seeing God hath given his Son for us all, i. e. for all mankind; he will with him, if we receive him, freely give us all things. I presume, it will be objected here, that by *us all*, the Apostle does not mean himself and all the rest of mankind; but only *himself* and the *elect* among mankind. But we have no more proof of this, than we have that, when the Prophet says, "All we like sheep have gone astray,—and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," Isa. liii. 6, he means, that only himself and the elect had gone astray; but certain it is, that the Prophet means that the Lord laid upon Christ the iniquities of all that went astray; and he can be understood in no other sense, without doing the utmost violence to his words. But it was not the Prophet and the elect only that had gone astray, but he and all mankind. God, then, it is evident, laid upon Christ the iniquities, i. e. the punishment due to the iniquities of all mankind; gave up his Son for all mankind. But observe, it is one thing that Christ be *given for us*; another, that he be *received by us*. Now, tho' it be granted that there are many thousands in the world, unto whom God will not give all things, it does not therefore follow, that

for none of these God did deliver up his Son. The reason why God does not give these as well as others, all things, is not because he did not deliver up his Son for them, as well as for others; but because they will not receive the Son, that was so delivered for them. Christ himself clears God of the blame, and charges it upon obstinate finners themselves, "Ye will not come to me," says he, which is just the same as if he had said, ye will not believe in me, will not receive me, "that ye might have life." This text, therefore, no more countenances the doctrine of particular redemption, than it does that of the transmigration of souls.

Section Second.

Besides the recited pleas against the doctrine of General Redemption, drawn immediately from the Scriptures, there are many others drawn more remotely from them. The most considerable are these following.

REASON I.

"If Christ by his death merited for us, i. e. those, for whom he died, the reconciliation of our persons with God, and grace actually to be communicated unto us, (which, if he had not done, he would not have benefited those that are his to such a degree as Adam injured those that are his) then did he not die for all men without exception. But the antecedent is true; therefore the consequent also."

I answer: I grant the antecedent is true; yea, and that Christ by his death merited, not only for those that are in the most peculiar sense *his*, but also for all others that are not in such a sense *his*, the reconciliation of their persons with God, and grace actually to be communicated unto them. So that Christ benefited *all mankind* to as great a degree, yea, and a greater, than Adam injured them. This is clear from the Apostle's words, 2 Cor. v. 19, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." Rom. v. 15. "But not as the offence, so also is the Free Gift," for the gift exceeds it. "For if thro' the offence of one, many," i. e. the multitudes of mankind, "be dead;

dead ; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one Man, Jesus Christ, hath **ABOUNDED** unto those many." To *merit* reconciliation and grace for sinners, is one thing. For sinners to *accept* of what was merited for them, is another. Allowing, therefore, "that there are very many who, "on their parts, are not *truly reconciled* with God, "nor have grace *actually communicated* unto them;" this is no proof that it was not *merited* for them ; nor that Christ did not die for all men without exception.

REASON II.

"If salvation, which is the blessing promised in the covenant, be not promised, but only on condition of believing, and all men do not, will not believe ; then certain it is, that Christ by his death, obtained not salvation for all men, but for believers only."

I answer : Suppose a liberal person purchase bread for all the poor of a parish, upon condition they will come to the Church to receive it, and there are some proud, obstinate persons, that will not accept of their portion ; will any say, that no bread was purchased for them as well as for those that did accept of it ? Again, if the prime minister of a kingdom obtain of his sovereign certain places for certain persons, and offer them to them ; if some, yea, for the greatest part, will not accept of those places, will any man affirm, that such places were not obtained for the refusers, as well as for the accepters ? surely no. So that nothing can be so absurd as to argue, that because salvation is promised only upon condition of believing, and all men do not, will not believe ; therefore, Christ by his death obtained not salvation for all men, but for believers only. Calvin himself, who elsewhere frequently stumbles upon the truth, on Rom. v. 18, teaches, that Christ "suffered for the sins of the *whole world*," "and is, thro' the kindness of God, indifferently offered unto *all* men, yet all men do not receive him."

REASON III.

"If the death of Christ procured restitution unto
B 4 " life

“ life for all men, then were all men restored here-
 unto ; either when Christ from eternity was desti-
 nated unto death, which must needs be false ; be-
 cause then no man would have been born a child
 of wrath, nor would original sin have hurt any
 man ; inasmuch as this, according to such an opi-
 nion, would have been pardoned from eternity :
 nor would infants or others stand in need of the
 laver of regeneration, which is contrary to the as-
 sertion of Christ, John iii. 5 :—Or, else they were
 restored in the person of their first parents, when
 the promise concerning the Seed of the Woman was
 made : which also is false ; because our first parents
 themselves were not restored to an estate of grace,
 but by faith in Christ : therefore, their posterity
 are not, and so not all, whether believers or unbe-
 lievers. Or else they were restored, when Christ
 himself suffered death upon the cross : but this also
 is false. For in that case, none would have been
 restored before that time, which no man holdeth.
 Nor are all men restored since that time ; for, with-
 out doubt, the wrath of God burned at the same
 instant of time and afterwards, against some of the
 accusers, condemners, crucifiers, and mockers of
 Christ.”

In answer to this tedious argument of the Synod, I
 say, they stumble at the very threshold. For it is
 one thing, that a place or preferment be *procured*
 for a person ; another that he *accept* of it, or be *put*
in actual possession of it. So restitution unto life might
 be *procured* for all men, by the death of Christ, tho’
not all men, nor even *any man* should be *actually*
restored unto life. So a man may have been dispos-
 sessed of an estate, and some friend without his know-
 ledge may procure for him a restitution to it : and yet
 this man is not actually restored, till he is again put
 into possession. Yea, notwithstanding such restitution
 procured, this man may refuse to accept of his estate
 again, and so never be actually restored to that, where-
 unto *virtual* restitution was procured for him. This
 might suffice for an answer to those, that hold that
 some only are actually restored unto life. But as I
 maintain that all men are so restored, I shall proceed to
 remove

move the difficulties that are thrown in the way of this position.

But first, let it be observed, that by restitution unto life, I mean unto the first degree of it: whereas the opponents mean thereby, unto a life of grace here and glory hereafter; taking it for granted, that where there is the least degree of the one here, the other will surely follow hereafter; which I deny, as being contrary to many express declarations of scripture. The strongest, and perhaps the only seemingly clear proof, which they can bring for their opinion is; John x. 28,—“They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.” Not to enquire here, of whom, and in what sense, our Saviour spake these words, he himself says concerning the fallen Church of Laodicea, Rev. iii. 16, “So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot,” (which is the case of thousands, who were once *servent in spirit serving the Lord*,) “I will spue thee out of my mouth.” Which, I presume, is as great a punishment as if they were plucked out of his hand. But let Calvin, the great standard-bearer of the doctrine of *absolute, final perseverance*, be heard in the cause. Besides many things of like import elsewhere, he says on 2 Pet. ii. 2, “Scarce every tenth man of those, who have given up their names unto Christ, retain the *purity of faith*,” (whereby he must needs mean, true faith, and not a profession only) “unto the end. All, in a manner, degenerate unto corruptions, and being deluded by teachers of licentiousness, grow profane.” Let this suffice for the present to shew, that restitution unto life may actually be *received*, and yet that life be *lost again*.

Now, to remove the difficulties laid in the way of my assertion, I observe, (with a reference to the last, with which I begin.)

1. All men were not so restored when Christ suffered, as if his death were of no avail till that time. Yet 2. All men were restored when Christ suffered in this respect, that then that sacrifice was actually offered, which before the foundation of the world, was decreed to be a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole

world. Then it was that he actually gave *his flesh for the life of the world*, John vi. 51. So that some were restored before the death of Christ; others since. Yet not all, they say, "For the wrath of God burned at the same time, and afterwards, against some of the accusers, &c. of Christ." I answer, 1. This might be, and yet these very men might once have been restored to a measure of life, tho' they afterwards became "dead in trespasses and sins, and alienated from the life of God." 2. This assertion is a little inconsistent with their argument drawn, as mentioned above, from John xvii. 9. There they tell us, "Christ refused to pray for the world." But it is certain he prayed for his accusers, &c. It is a mere groundless shift to say, he prayed for some of them, the elect among them only; his prayer was at large, "Father, forgive them;" not restrained to any individuals among them. Either, therefore, the wrath of God burned against all of them at the time, or it burned against none of them. But it burned against none of them, if it burned against none for whom Christ prayed, inasmuch as these, according to the Calvinists' notion, were not of the world, but elect, and that from all eternity. So that his wrath never burned against them, but on the contrary he always loved them.

2. "Or (they observe,) they were restored in the person of their first parent, when the promise concerning the Seed of the Woman was made. But this is also false."

I grant they were not restored in the *person* of Adam, and add also, neither were they restored in the *person* of Christ, when the promise was made; tho' then it was that the gospel of restitution was promulged. But all men are then only *actually* restored to life when they have an existence in the world; tho' restitution was *procured* for them *before the foundation of the world*, 2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. i. 2; Rev. xiii. 8; thro' Christ, who is *the Light of life*, John viii. 12; *the true Light, which lighteth every man coming, or as he cometh into the world*, John i. 9. So that all men *once* have life, whether they are afterwards believers or unbelievers; whether they perish or not.

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They do not die because they *never had* life, but because they do not use those means that are afforded them to *preserve* the life they have, or to *recover* it, when lost.

“ Our first Parents, they add, were not restored to “ an estate of grace, but by faith in Christ ; therefore, “ their posterity are not.” I answer, it is true, our first parents were not restored to a blissful enjoyment of a state of grace, after their own actual and wilful transgression, and after they had heard the means of their recovery propounded to them thro’ Christ, but by faith ; no more are any of their posterity under such circumstances so restored, but by faith. Yet it is not true that restitution unto life was not *procured* for Adam, and that he was not in some sense in a state of grace or favour with God, before ever he heard the promise of Christ, consequently before he believed in him. It was thro’ the grace, favour, and love of God toward Adam and his posterity, that he appointed his Son to die for the latter before they were created ; that he spared him after he had sinned, and made him the promise of redemption thro’ Christ, in whom he was to believe, in order to receive the full benefit of that redemption. But to say, that neither his posterity, if they mean thereby *none* of his posterity are restored to a state of grace, but by faith in Christ, is with less than *papistical* charity, to condemn at a stroke, not only all that never heard of the Name of Christ among the heathens, but also the children of all christians that die in their infancy : which is contrary to our Lord’s own word, who says concerning children, “ Of such is the kingdom of God,” Mark x. 14. And that of the Apostle, Rom. ii. 14—16. “ For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves : Who shew the work of the law written in their hearts,” (written there not by the devil, I presume, but God) “ their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean-while accusing or else excusing one another.”

8. “ Or else they were restored, (say they) when “ Christ, from eternity, was destined to death, which “ must needs be false.” I answer

I answer, They were restored from eternity, when Christ was appointed unto death, if by restoration no more be meant, than *providing sufficient means*, and unalterably *fixing the plan* of restoration. But to talk of restoration from eternity, in any other sense, is downright nonsense. *Actually*, as I said before, no man is restored, till he has a being.

But whether they are restored from eternity, or not till they have a being in the world, this objection arises, "Then no man would be born a child of wrath, nor would original sin hurt any man, &c. nor would infants, or others, stand in need of the laver of regeneration." This objection has three parts, which I shall reply to in order.

To the first, "Then no man would be *born a child of wrath*." I reply, I know no foundation, either in Reason or Scripture, for asserting that any man is *born a child of wrath*, though that expression has frequently slipped from the tongues and pens of good men. But even thereby I know some of them mean no more, than that we are *by nature children of wrath*, which I grant. Not that every child that is born into the world is in a state of damnation, for I believe no one is born in such a state: but only that "in every one that is naturally engendered of the offspring of Adam, there is that fault and corruption of nature," which, as the ninth Article of our Church rightly expresses it, *DESERVES God's wrath and damnation*: Yet, at the same time, they are all redeemed from the guilt of this corruption by the precious blood of Christ; so that the damnation it deserves shall not be executed upon any of them, unless they afterwards commit known, wilful sins, and live and die under the guilt thereof. *For the Lamb of God taketh away THE SIN of the world*, John i. 29.

To the second, "Nor would original sin hurt any man, inasmuch as, according to such an opinion, this would have been pardoned from eternity," or as soon as any man had a being. I reply, Let it be pardoned when it will, this sin *alone* hurts no man, in point of *condemnation*. "For as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation: even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon

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ALL MEN unto justification of life," Rom. v. 18. Notwithstanding, however, in point of *malignity*, it hurts every one that becomes subject to it, so as to bring them again under guilt and condemnation. Yea, even good men are hurt by it, in this respect, that it is pain and grief to them to feel the motions thereof, though they do not yield to them.

To the third, "Nor would infants, or others, stand in need of the laver of regeneration, which is contrary to the assertion of Christ," John iii. 5. I reply, If by the laver of regeneration be meant, the outward baptism of water, it is no more *absolutely necessary* to salvation, than the outward partaking of the Lord's Supper. But only, as our Church Catechism says, *generally necessary* thereto. I know of none that hold the absolute necessity of water baptism, any more than of receiving the Eucharist, except the *Papists*. And whoever concur with their opinion, in this point, condemn to hell at once, all *Quakers* in general, that were born in that community, all the children of *Baptists*, and of men of every other persuasion, as well *Christians* as *Heathens*, that die unbaptized. And can any thing be more shocking than such a doctrine as this; or any doctrine more unworthy of the God of Love? I know some say, that elect children are exempt from such necessity, where there is not an opportunity of bringing them to baptism. And with as much authority I say, that all children under the like circumstance, are equally exempt from such necessity. But if by the laver of regeneration be meant, the virtue of the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus; I say, this, by the immediate act of the Spirit of God, passes upon the soul of every one that is born into the world, freeing it from guilt and condemnation, on account of original sin. Nor does this opinion at all supersede the necessity of the outward ordinance of baptism, instituted by Christ in his Church, any more than *Abraham's* being already in the faith superseded the necessity of his being circumcised, according to the command of God. But as "Abraham received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith, which he had being yet uncircumcised," Rom. iv. 11, so children receive baptism, a seal of
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the righteouſneſs, or grace which they receive from God, being yet unbaptized. If it be asked, How can children receive righteouſneſs or grace from God, ſeeing they have not faith, which is the hand, whereby his grace is apprehended? Might it not be asked, with as much reaſon, How can infants receive food for the nourishment of their bodies, ſeeing, though they have hands, they have no ſkill nor power to feed themſelves? Their mothers, or nurſes, find a way to make them receive food for their bodily ſupport; and I am inclined to think, God can as eaſily nourish an infant's ſoul with grace, as his mother can his body with milk. I ſuppoſe John the Baptiſt had no more the hand of faith than other infants, yet he was *filled with the Holy Ghoſt, even from his mother's womb*. And I am of opinion, that *the Lord's hand is not ſhortened*, nor his wiſdom leſſened, and therefore he gives unto every one ſuch a meaſure of his Spirit, as is ſufficient to ſubdue their corruptions, and bring them to heaven, if they would but obey the motions thereof.

It will no doubt be demanded here, How is it then that no children obey the motions of this Holy Spirit? I answer, It is not yet proved, that no children obey his motions. If it were, all children dying before they have actual faith, muſt inevitably go to hell. But this is certain, moſt children, as they increaſe in ſtature, and come to be converſant with things about them, do not obey his motions, but their own corruptions.— And this, in a great degree, is owing to their parents, and thoſe that have charge of them; who conſtantly train them up, not *in the way they ſhould go*, but in *pride, vanity, ſelf-will, and love of the world*, and many other *evil tempers*. This, therefore, is no proof at all, that the Spirit of God did not viſit them, and that children have no grace *before* they are baptized. On the contrary, I fear moſt children have *more* grace *when* they are baptized than they have ſome years *after*. At leaſt, that they have grace is clearly the opinion of our Church, which declares in her 27th Article, “That baptiſm is a ſign of regeneration, or new birth, whereby—the promiſes of forgiveness of ſins, and of our adoption to be the ſons of God by the Holy Ghoſt are viſibly ſigned and ſealed; faith is
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confirmed, and grace encreased by virtue of prayer unto God." And forasmuch as it immediately follows, "The baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ;" it is certain our pious Reformers were of opinion, that even infants had some kind or degree of faith and grace, which was not given in baptism, but then *confirmed and encreased*.

To all this, no doubt, will be objected those words in our Church Catechism,—“Baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.” So that, if those privileges are conferred in baptism, they were not enjoyed before. I answer, By being made a member of Christ, it is certain no more is here meant, than the being admitted into the fellowship of the visible Church, which is stiled, the body of Christ. So the 27th Article explains it, *a being grafted into the Church*, and the baptismal office, *a being grafted into the body of Christ's Church*. By being made the child of God, and an inheritor or heir of the kingdom of heaven, is meant no more than the *being formally adopted* for such; the privileges pertaining to which adoption, were not to be obtained except on condition of dying to sin, and living to righteousness, the thing signified by baptism. But this is no proof at all that none are children of God, and apparent heirs of heaven till they are baptized. *Abraham*, it is certain, was a child of God before he was circumcised, as were the Patriarchs before him. And what hinders but that, through the merits of Christ, infants that have not been guilty of actual sin may be children of God, as well as they; even before they are baptized into his Name, and as it were, in form of law, constituted such?

Another objection will be urged from these words in the Catechism, “being by nature born in sin and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.” I acknowledge that every mere child of man is born in sin by nature, *i. e.* comes into the world with a corrupt nature; and moreover, that in every one that corrupt nature *deserves God's wrath and damnation*; and that, in this sense, all are by nature

nature the children of wrath; yet I cannot allow, that this corruption *alone*, seeing it is atoned for by the blood of Christ, will procure God's wrath, and the damnation of hell, to any child that dies before it commits known, actual sin. And whereas it is declared by our Church, that we are by baptism made the children of grace, I cannot look upon this as true, in such a sense as the *Papists* do; that all children are under the curse of God, and destitute entirely of his grace and favour, till they are baptized; but only in this sense, that then they are constituted children of grace in an outward, formal, covenant way.

“Again, in the baptismal office, our Church directs us to pray for the persons to be baptized, *that God would give unto them his Holy Spirit, remission of sins, &c.* and does not this imply, that they had not these blessings before?” Not at all. Our Saviour taught his disciples to pray, *forgive us our trespasses*. But this did not imply that their sins were not yet forgiven, but only that they had need of the *continuance* of forgiveness, and an *increase* of the *sense* thereof.—No more does our Church's teaching us to pray for those blessings on the persons to be baptized, imply that they have *no measure* of them before; but only that the grant, as the 27th Article says, may be *confirmed* and *increased*.

It will be demanded, perhaps, What advantage then hath the Christian, and what profit is there of baptism? I answer, as St. Paul did to a like question of the Jews, *Much every way: Chiefly because that unto them are committed the Oracles of God*. Rom. iii. 2.—As great an advantage as the Jews once had above the Gentiles; so great an advantage have Christians that are baptized now above both Jews and Gentiles: in that they have not only the *shadowy law*, but the *clear gospel revelation* among them; from whence they may know their *privileges* and their *benefactor*; learn what to *avoid* and what to *practise*, and where to have *wisdom* and *strength* to do both; and wherein they may find enumerated the blessings *purchased* for them, and *freely offered* to them by our Lord Jesus Christ; and to which they have a *covenant right* and *title*, by virtue of baptism, for the greater *strengthening* and *confirmation*

confirmation of their faith ; which latter advantage the unbaptized have not, and the former, both Jews and Gentiles, are destitute of.

REASON IV.

“ IF the impetration and application of the benefits of Christ, be never separated nor disjoined in their subjects, then did he not impetrate or obtain these benefits for all men (and consequently not die for all men) ; because certain it is, that there is not an application of them made unto all men. But the impetration and application of these benefits are never separated the one from the other in their subjects. Therefore these benefits were not impetrated, nor did Christ die for all men.”

I deny that the impetration and application of the benefits of Christ are never separated the one from the other in their subjects. As liberty was impetrated or obtained for the captive Jews in Babylon, to return into their own land, yet all did not apply to themselves, or use the liberty procured for them ; so the benefits of Christ were impetrated or obtained for all men, and the application of the earnest of those benefits is once, in a degree, made unto *all* men ; but *most* men afterwards reject that application. And with regard to those that hear the gospel, Christ commanded his gospel to be preached to every creature. Consequently his benefits were impetrated or obtained for every creature ; otherwise it would be a mere grimace, and mere mockery to preach the gospel to them ; yea, and every Preacher would be guilty of falsehood or folly, that should preach the gospel to all his audience, if the benefits of Christ were not impetrated for all. Yet his benefits (such as the gospel conveys) are not applied to all, seeing all do not embrace the gospel they hear, and of those that do, but very few, as soon as they hear it. Yea, even with regard to those that do at some time embrace the gospel ; after they have once turned aside from the ways of God, there is a time when the benefits of Christ, impetrated for them, are not applied to them. For those benefits were impetrated for them when Christ died ; yet are not applied to such subjects, till they believe again. Yea, farther,

farther, in those subjects, for whom these benefits were impetrated, and to whom they have been applied, the impetration and application may be again separated for ever, if we may credit St. Chrysoftom, who says, "Judas, my beloved, was at first a child of the kingdom, when he heard it (said to him) with the disciples, You shall sit upon twelve thrones; but at last he became a child of hell." Yea, if we may credit Calvin himself, who again and again asserts the possibility of falling from grace. Yea, what is more, if we may credit the Scriptures in this point. If, therefore, the gospel is commanded to be preached to those, who will not embrace it; and if those, who did once cordially embrace it, may again renounce it, 'tis certain the impetration and application of Christ's benefits may be separated in their subjects; and Christ may have obtained benefits for those, to whom they are not sometimes applied; may have died for all men, though all men do not receive or retain the benefits of his death.

REASON V.

"THEY for whom Christ, by his death, actually procured and obtained reconciliation with God, forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and eternal life, are made real partakers of these benefits. The reason is, because nothing can be said to be procured and obtained by Christ for any man, which at one time or another, he doth not partake of, and enjoy. But unbelievers, who perish eternally, never come to be partakers of those benefits.—Therefore Christ by his death did not procure and obtain them for them."

I deny that nothing can be said to be *procured* and *obtained* by Christ for any man, which, at one time or another he doth not *partake of* and *enjoy*. As many privileges and immunities may be *procured* and *obtained* by a kind benefactor for a person, which he will not *accept* of; so many benefits may be obtained by Christ for many sinners, such as reconciliation with God, pardon of sins, &c. which they will never accept of. When the Apostle tells the Corinthians, 2 Cor. v. 19. "God was in Christ reconciling the world

world unto himself," he adds, ver. 20, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God." Intimating, that though God was reconciled on his part to them, yet they were not reconciled unto God; and it is doubtful whether some of them, whom he here means, ever were. God says concerning the Jews of old, "because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged;" or rather, "because I would have purged thee, and thou wouldst not be purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more," Ezek. xxiv. 13. Certain it is, Christ *procured* or *obtained* purgation for this people, which yet they did not *partake* of. So Christ obtained life for the Jews of his day, yet they would *not come unto him that they might have life*, John v. 40. So that this argument in no wise proves, that Christ did not *actually procure* and *obtain* reconciliation with God, pardon, righteousness, &c. even for unbelievers, who perish eternally. The reason why they never come to be partakers of those benefits, is not because they *never were obtained* for them, but because they *would not accept* of them, when obtained and offered to them.

REASON VI.

"THEY who, by the death of Christ, are reconciled unto God, are saved by his life." "This proposition bears upon the authority of Rom. v. 10." "But not all men, but only the elect and believers are saved by the life of Christ. Therefore, only such are reconciled unto God by the death of Christ."

I answer, It is not true that *all* who are reconciled to God by the death of his Son, are saved by his life, nor is any such thing asserted by the Apostle. What he asserts is this, that, by the death of Christ, those were reconciled to God that were his enemies. But the wicked world were his enemies, not the elect and believers *only*. Nay, nor were these, as such, at all his enemies, for he styles them his friends. Then he argues from the greater to the less, If Christ by his death reconciled us (being, like all the rest of the world, his enemies) to God, which is the greater act;

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much more will he save us, now we believe, and are his friends, by his life, which is the lesser act. The most that can be inferred from these words is, that most of those who are reconciled to God, by Christ's death, are saved by his life. But if any man will warp the words, so as to force out this meaning, that, as only believers shall be saved, so Christ died only to reconcile believers. Another may, with as good reason, wrench them the contrary way; and say, Seeing all who were reconciled were enemies, if believers only were reconciled, these only were enemies, and all the rest of mankind friends to God, and so had no need of reconciliation. Which assertion has just as much truth in it as the other. Upon the whole, I affirm again, that *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself*; yet will not all the world be finally saved, but only those, who, on their part, are reconciled unto God.

REASON VII.

“THOSE unto whom Christ was not ordained, or given for a Mediator, He did not reconcile unto his Father by his death, (or obtain reconciliation for them), nor purchase remission of sins, or eternal life for them. But Christ was not ordained or given for a Mediator unto reprobates, persevering in unbelief, &c. Therefore, he did not reconcile them unto his Father by his death, nor purchase remission of sins or eternal life for them.”

The assumption leans on Rom. viii. 32, which text I have already shewn no more countenances the doctrine of particular redemption, than it does that of the transmigration of souls. And also on ver. 34, which proves no more than the former. It was certainly very far from the Apostle's meaning, that God will give all things to all those for whom Christ died; otherwise he would contradict himself in several other passages of his writings. For instance, he tells us, 2 Cor. v. 14. that *Christ died for all*, yet he tells us, 2 Theff. i. 8, 9. that “they who know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.” And supposing it be granted, which
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need not be granted, that in ver. 34, he speaks only of Christ's intercession for believers, this is no proof at all that he does not mediate and intercede for reprobates. I affirm, then, that Christ was given for a Mediator for *reprobates*. Such once was Manassah, Zaccheus, yea Paul himself, unless men are approved of God while they are *persecuting* his people, and *compelling them to blaspheme*. But Christ was a Mediator, and interceded for these. Yea, he was given for a Mediator for reprobates, while persevering in unbelief, as did Manassah and Paul for some time. Yea, farther, he is a Mediator for such reprobates as persevere in unbelief till they die, and drop into hell. If we may credit the Calvinists, such reprobates were all those that had a hand in the murder of St. Stephen, except Paul; yet Stephen interceded for them. Now will any man say that Stephen had more compassion for such poor sinners, than Christ had? Surely no: if they consider that Christ himself not only gave Stephen an heart to pray for his murderers, but set him the example by praying for his own. And yet we do not find that one of those, who had the chief hand, and over-ruled in the affair, were benefited by his prayer. For though a great company of Priests afterwards believed, it is hardly to be supposed they were of the number of those, who had the leading voices against Christ, if they had any share at all in the transaction; for then, one would think, the sacred Historian would have taken particular notice of it.

But that Christ is a Mediator, and intercedes for all mankind, *reprobates* as well as the *elect*, is clear from these Scriptures, Isai. liii. 12. *He made intercession for the transgressors*. Such were all mankind. "There is one Mediator between God and Men, *Ἀνθρώπων*, all mankind, the Man Christ Jesus," 1 Tim. ii. 5. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," 1 John ii. 1, 2. This last text sufficiently proves, that Jesus Christ, by his death, did procure reconciliation for all mankind, remission of sins, and eternal life; and moreover, that he *intercedes* for them; notwithstanding those that die reprobates,

reprobates, persevering in unbelief, *judge themselves unworthy of this life.* But how far, how long, and under *what particular circumstances*, he mediates and intercedes for such, is a secret known only to infinite Wisdom, as he does it so far, so long, and under such circumstances only, as is agreeable to infinite Wisdom. "No man can find out the work that God maketh or doeth, from the beginning to the end." Eccles. iii. 11. This is wisely hid from the children of men; that whereas, on the one hand, there is room for all to *hope*, and all are *encouraged to seek the Lord, while he may be found*; so, on the other hand, there is no room left for any to presume, but all are cautioned *to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. ii. 12.

REASON VIII.

"IF reconciliation with God, remission of sins, and eternal life, be obtained for all men, without exception, by the sufferings and death of Christ, then it will follow, that all those, who have not by actual incredulity rejected the merits of Christ, remain truly reconciled unto God, have their sins remitted, and shall be eternally saved. But this consequent is absurd: Therefore the antecedent also."

I answer, True, this consequent is absurd and false. But it happens that this consequent, the *whole* of it, cannot be drawn from the premises. For though it follows from thence, that all those, who have not by actual incredulity, or rather by impenitence, unbelief, and disobedience, rejected the merits of Christ, remain truly reconciled unto God, and have their sins remitted, yet it follows not that all such shall be eternally saved. For they who *have not yet*, by actual incredulity, rejected the merits of Christ, *may do so*, and so not be eternally saved. Calvin himself, and many writers of the greatest account, that follow his standard, are clear and express to this purpose. But supposing they continue to believe in God, according to the light they have, and fear him, and work righteousness, there is no absurdity at all in the consequence; for it is exactly correspondent with the Word of God,

Acts x. 31, 35. In spite of this argument, therefore, it still remains a standing truth, that reconciliation with God, remission of sins, and eternal life, were obtained for all men, without exception, by the death of Christ; though, perhaps, far the greatest part of men, by their own fault, will not enjoy what was obtained for them.

REASON IX.

“ IF Christ, by his death, made satisfaction for all men, then might all men, upon the performance of the condition of the New Covenant, be saved. And again, upon an universal non-performance of this condition, all men might be damned. But as well the one as the other of these, are and were impossible. Therefore Christ, by his death, did not make satisfaction for all men.”

“ The reason of the consequence (as to the first branch of it) is, because satisfaction being made for any man’s sin, there remains nothing further necessary to his actual discharge or salvation, but only the performance of the condition, upon which the application of the said satisfaction is suspended.” Application of satisfaction suspended! Does the Synod of *Dort*, that *infallible Conclave*, talk at this rate? How does this agree with the Fourth Reason urged above, where they affirm, that the impetration and application of the benefits of Christ, are never separated the one from the other in their subjects. We see that the wisest of men may be overseen.

“ The Reason of the latter branch of the consequence is, because, if satisfaction were made by Christ upon none other terms for some, than it was for all, it clearly follows, that in case there be a possibility of a non-application of it unto some, there is a like possibility unto all; and consequently a possibility of the non-salvation, or of the damnation, of all.”

By the way, I cannot but take notice here, that there are some, who, by way of eminence, are stiled, *The Gospel Ministers*, who assert, that the New Covenant “scorns to be shackled with conditions.” But the Synod of *Dort* allows of conditions in that Covenant.

Covenant. Either, therefore, the infallible Synod is not orthodox, or such teachers are not orthodox. But in this point, I shall subscribe to the judgment of the Synod; and though *Aspasio*, and ten thousand of his admirers, should assert the contrary, while I acknowledge the Bible to be true, and am capable of reading and thinking, I shall maintain that there are conditions to be performed, on the part of man, in the New Covenant. But to consider the Reasons just now mentioned:

I deny that as well the one as the other of these, is or was impossible. I assert, that it is *possible*, notwithstanding Christ hath made satisfaction for all men, that all men might be saved, or damned; though it be *improbable* and *unlikely* that *all men* should be either the one or the other. But the minor proposition stands, it seems, upon this bottom: "that those, whom God the Father hath given unto Christ to be redeemed and saved by him, of necessity must and shall be redeemed and saved by him. And those whom he hath not given unto him upon such account (which are far the greater part of mankind), must, by a like necessity, perish, or be damned, as not being redeemed by him, nor given unto him to be saved."

The Scripture upon which this point of doctrine is founded is, John vi. 37. the meaning of which shall be enquired into, when I come to consider the 14th Reason. I shall only observe here, 1. that they who argue in this manner, suppose that of necessity those things must be joined together, which are not necessarily joined together. That all who are finally saved, are *such*, and *only such*, as have been redeemed, I grant. But that all who have been redeemed shall be *finally saved*, I cannot allow, without farther proof. I believe that venerable old Martyr, Bishop Latimer, was right, when, in his sermon, preached upon the 23d Sunday after Trinity, he asserts, that "Christ shed as much blood for Judas, as he did for Peter. Peter believed it, (says he), and therefore he was saved. Judas would not believe, and therefore he was condemned, the fault being in him only, and nobody else." That Christ is *the Saviour of all men*, i. e. hath redeemed

redeemed all men, and hath *given himself a Ransom for all*, is undeniably clear from 1 Tim. ii. 6. and iv. 10, and from a great number of other Scriptures. And it is as clear from other passages, that all that are so redeemed, shall not be finally saved. 2. They who argue in this manner, make the salvation and damnation of men to depend altogether upon *fatal necessity*. But if there be a necessity of the one sort being saved, they must of necessity also do such things as are required in those that shall be saved. If there be a necessity of the other sort being damned, they must of necessity also do such things as will procure their damnation. And thus God is at once denied to be a *moral Governor* of the world, and all distinction of *virtue* and *vice* is destroyed. For these can have no place where necessity over-rules, and the wills of men are impelled, so that they have no room left voluntarily to choose one way or the other.

So argues Prosper himself, although a predestinarian, "If the *will* is taken away, where is even the spring "of true virtues?" although as rightly on the other hand, "If *grace* be taken away, where is even the "cause of good deserts?" And his master, St. Austin, had said before him, "If there be no *free will*, how does God judge the world? and if there be no *grace*, how does he save the world?"

To say men are left to choose, but only such things good or evil, as God hath decreed they shall choose; is at once to affirm and deny the same thing; to say they have such a kind of choice in their power, as is tantamount to none at all. And if every man chooses only such ways or things, as God hath absolutely decreed he shall choose, then I say, there is no such thing as *virtue* or *vice* in the world. And that man is as well employed, who is cursing and swearing, as he that is praying or preaching. David was then as well employed when he was taking Bathsheba to his bed, as he was when he was writing the 51st Psa'm. Yea, farther, then all distinction of *rewards* and *punishments* is at an end; seeing the one respects good deeds, and the other bad ones. But if all men alike do what God hath decreed they shall do, (as a wild dreamer asserts, in a volume of sermons lately published, and

as many others before him have asserted) they all alike do the will of God; consequently, according to this opinion, no man is a sinner. And those that are damned, are not damned for *sinning*, but merely by reason of that *capricious humour*, which they represent to be in the Divine Being. Let them believe this who will, I cannot give it a place in my creed.

But to consider what was advanced above: "If satisfaction be made for any man's sins, there remains nothing further necessary to his actual discharge or salvation, but only the performance of the condition upon which the application of the said satisfaction is suspended. So that if Christ, by his death, made satisfaction for all men, then might all men, upon the performance of the condition of the New Covenant, be saved."

This the arguers say is impossible, *viz.* to perform the condition of the New Covenant. The condition or rather conditions of the New Covenant, are *repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*, Acts xx. 21; to which, upon the authority of St. Paul also, I add, *perseverance* in those things. For upon this, it seems, depends our future and final salvation. *If ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel*, Coloss. i. 23. These, I say, are the conditions required of those that hear the gospel preached.—But with regard to those that never heard the outward sound of the gospel, such as *children, ideots, heathens, &c.* no doubt such conditions, and such only, are required of them as it is in their power to perform. For certainly no wise man can suppose, nor any man, without blasphemy, assert, that the infinitely *wise and good* God, would require a man to walk that had no legs, or to see that had no eyes, and that upon pain of endless damnation. No man can, without blasphemy, assert, that God is *a hard Master, reaping where he has not sown, and gathering where he has not sowed*, Matt. xxv. 24; requiring conditions to be performed by man, in order to eternal salvation, and in default, upon pain of eternal damnation, which they either never heard of; or if they have heard, it is *impossible they should perform*. Whether, therefore, repentance

repentance and faith, and perseverance therein, be required of Christians, or whether some other conditions be required of others that never hear the gospel, the performance whereof God, for Christ's sake, will accept, certain it is, God doth not require impossibilities of any of his creatures. All that God requires of them is, that they should follow the light they have, and use the power they have: that whether they have received one, two, or five talents, they make a suitable improvement of them. His way is equal and righteous, however the ways of men are unequal, Ezek. xviii. 25. If, then, God requires impossibilities of no man, it is possible for all mankind to be saved.

Again, "If satisfaction was made by Christ upon none other terms for some, than it was for all, it clearly follows, that in case there be a possibility of a non-application of it unto some, there is a like possibility unto all: and consequently a possibility of the non-salvation, or of the damnation of all."

To this I reply, Whether satisfaction was made by Christ upon the *same* terms for all, or upon *different* terms with different men, still there was a possibility of the *non-application* of that satisfaction to every man. It was possible that all *might*, though not probable that all *would*, be damned. I mean, supposing all men capable of reflection. Otherwise, I suppose it as impossible for *any* man to be damned, as it were, if no man had been created. But supposing *some* men capable of reflection, and *others* not, then there is not a like possibility of the non-application of the satisfaction of Christ unto all, nor of the damnation of all. The possibility of such a non-application would be only unto those who were capable of reflection, and so might, by their own act, *retain* or *reject* the grace of Christ. And it was *possible* that all such might reject it, and be damned, though not *likely* that they all would. This is clear from the *conditional promises and threatenings*, the *exhortations* to obedience, and *cautions* against unbelief and sin, that are set before us throughout the Oracles of God; notwithstanding that necessity, that, it is pretended, is laid upon some to comply with the terms of salvation, and upon others to reject them.

REASON X.

“ IF the will and intention of the Father, the obedience and oblation of the Son, and the saving operation of the Holy Ghost, or effectualness of calling, or sanctification, be of one and the same extent, then Christ did not die for all men: but all the three particulars mentioned are of one and the same extent. Therefore, Christ did not die for all men. The reason of the consequence is evident, *viz.* because the saving operation of the Holy Ghost, or effectualness of calling, is not extended to all men. The minor is built upon this argument: The Father gives only his elect, whom alone he loves, to be redeemed by his Son: the Son redeems those only, that are thus given unto him, as being those whom he alone loves: The Holy Ghost, being the Love of the Father and the Son, sanctifies only the elect of the Father, and the redeemed of the Son.”

To this I reply, The minor proposition is false, for all the three particulars mentioned are not always of one and the same extent. Nor are the propositions in the *sortes*, upon which the minor is built, true. For the Father *loved the world*, John iii. 16, and *gave his Son to be the propitiation for the sins of the whole world*, 1 John ii. 2. Either, therefore, all the world is the Father's elect, or the Father loved more than the elect, and gave them to be redeemed by his Son. The Son, it is true, did redeem only those that were given unto him to be redeemed; but these were *all men*, 1 Tim. ii. 6, and not the elect only; unless all men are elect. And these acts of the Father and the Son were *unconditional*, depending upon no concurrence at all of the will of man. Not so the saving operation of the Holy Ghost, or effectualness of calling, or sanctification.

But in this matter, so much depends upon the concurrence of man's will with the operation of the Holy Ghost, that resisting him to the last, is emphatically called, *the sin unto death*. In order, then, that the operation of the Holy Ghost may become saving, our calling effectual, or that we may be sanctified, we must
be,

be, in this respect, also *labourers and workers together with God*, 1 Cor. iii. 9. 2 Cor. vi. 1. or, as it is in the 10th Article of our Church, the grace of God, by Christ, must work with us, (which implies that we must work with that) when it hath prevented us to will what is good.

Man must believe the gospel, when it is proposed to him, although it is the *Spirit that helps his infirmity*, when he does truly believe: He must "give all diligence to make his calling and his election sure," 2 Pet. i. 10; although it is the Spirit that stirs him up, and enables him so to do: He must "cleanse himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1. although it be by the grace that the Spirit supplies. Now, though it be certain, that the Spirit of God strives with all men, and that "the grace of God, (*ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ*, the *saving grace*), hath appeared to all men:" and, in this respect, the Love of the Holy Ghost is of the *same extent* with the Love of the Father, and of the Son; yet, inasmuch as all men do not comply with the condition of salvation, but many reject that saving grace which is offered unto them, therefore the saving operation of the Holy Ghost is not extended unto all men, as to *effectuality*, though it be so, as to *virtuality* and *sufficiency*. Consequently, the personal acts of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, concerning the salvation of men, are not always, and in every respect, of one and the same extent. This argument, therefore, is insufficient to prove that Christ did not die for all men.

REASON XI.

"IF no man, wittingly and knowingly, payeth a price of redemption for a captive, which he certainly knoweth this miserable man will never be the better for, then Christ died not for all men. But no man, wittingly and knowingly, payeth such a price upon such terms. Therefore, Christ died not for all men. The reason of the sequel, in the major proposition, is, because Christ knew certainly, that the greatest part of men would never receive any benefit by his death, and upon this account it

“ is altogether irrational to suppose that he died for them.”

I answer, This is not a parallel case. The price of Redemption, which Christ paid, was not for a single captive, who he knew would never be the better for it. If so, it might seem *irrational* indeed to suppose he would pay a price for him. But it was for a multitude, the whole race of mankind, many of whom he knew would be the better for his favour. Beside, that which was a sufficient ransom for one, was so for all. One sinner could not have been redeemed but by the death of Christ: *For without shedding of blood is no remission*, Heb. ix. 22, and the Redemption of the whole world required no greater price. Now seeing this price was required for some, which was sufficient for the Redemption of all, where is the *irrationality* of supposing it was paid for all, though it were certainly known that the greatest part of men would refuse the benefit that was obtained for them? Supposing there be an hundred captives, for whose ransom an hundred pounds is required, and without which sum not one of them can be redeemed, and some compassionate friend is willing to redeem them all, and accordingly pays the price of Redemption.— Now, though he should certainly know, that only one man out of the hundred would accept of the Redemption purchased; would such a man, therefore, exempt all the rest, because he knew they would exempt themselves? Or would he not rather say, seeing I must pay the same price for one as for all, I will pay it for all, though only one accept of my favour; the rest shall have no room to blame my generosity and kindness, but only their own perverseness. I say, no truly generous man would refuse to act in this manner, much less would Christ. And though Christ knew that many would not accept the Redemption purchased for them, it is not at all *irrational* to suppose he died to redeem them; but it is both *irrational* and *unscriptural* to suppose he did not. For, though *Israel* would not be gathered, *Isai. xlix. 5*, yet was Christ appointed to restore *נצורי*, the Branches of *Israel*, ver. 6; or, the desolations of *Israel*, as the margin has it.

Besides,

Besides, if Christ had not redeemed all men, it could not be truly said, *the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works*, Ps. cxlv. 9. He could not have shewn, that he is *no respecter of persons*. He could not have shut the mouths of those that perish, who might otherwise have pleaded in hell; that their destruction was occasioned by Adam; and that, though they were sick unto death, as others were, Christ, the Physician, cruelly excepted them from the benefit of the sovereign remedy he prepared for their fellow sinners. Whereas, by redeeming all, "the mouth of wickedness is stopped;" and God "will be justified when he speaks, and clear when he judgeth."

REASON XII.

"IF Christ died for all men, without exception, then now in heaven he intercedeth for all men, without exception. But he intercedeth not for all men. Therefore he died not for all men." "This latter proposition fears no contradiction, and therefore stands by its own strength. The Reason of the major, it seems, is, because it is unreasonable to conceive, that Christ should do the greater and more difficult thing, *viz.* die for those, for whom he was unwilling to do the less, *viz.* intercede for them."

Although the latter proposition fears no contradiction, I shall venture to give it a little correction. For though it be true that Christ does not now intercede for all men, *viz.* for those who are departed this life, and whose doom is fixed for eternal happiness or misery, yet there was a time, when he interceded for these, and for all the rest of mankind. And with regard to all that live at any time upon the earth, he intercedes for them all, while here, in such manner, under such circumstances, and so long as is agreeable to his infinite wisdom. That he did the greater thing, *viz.* die for all, is undeniably clear from many express testimonies of Scripture already produced; and it is unreasonable to suppose he would not do the less, *viz.* intercede for them. But that he intercedes for all men, is undeniably clear, in that he prayed for his

murderers; in the number of whom, not the Jews only are to be reckoned, but every sinner upon earth, for all whom he died. Either, therefore, it must be granted, that only the Jews, who were the immediate actors in the crucifixion of Christ, were his murderers, and came within the compass of his intercession, while all the world beside was free of the crime and the benefit; or it must be granted, that the sins of all mankind had an influence in the death of Christ, and so all mankind are to be justly accounted his murderers, and as such come within the compass of his intercession. Again, *He intercedes for transgressors*, as Isaiah tells us. But all the world are transgressors; therefore he intercedes for all the world. If it be objected, It is enough to justify the Prophet's expression, if Christ intercedes only for *some* transgressors. I grant it. But this is not enough to free God from the imputation of being a respecter of persons. But *with him there is no respect of persons* in this case. Since, then, God is not a respecter of persons, if Christ intercedes for *some* transgressors, some of mankind, he intercedes for *all*.

But farther, St. Paul says, 1 Tim. ii. 1, "I exhort that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." And this he tells us, ver. 3, "is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." And lest any one should imagine, that those supplications, prayers, and intercessions, which he exhorts us to make, do not respect the salvation of all men; he puts in his caveat against such a conceit, ver. 4, "Who will have all men to be saved;" or is willing that all men should be saved. And lest any one should suppose that the Apostle puts Christians upon a duty; which Christ himself never performed, he precludes such a supposition, adding, ver. 5, "For there is one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus." As if he had said, Christ intercedes for all men, so also do ye. Since, then, it appears that Christ *intercedes* for all men, without exception; doubtless, he *died* for all men, without exception; as it is declared immediately after, ver. 6, "Who gave himself a Ransom for all."

REASON

REASON XIII.

“ IF God intends and decrees the salvation of all men by the death of Christ, then it must needs follow, either that all men are saved, or that God’s intentions and decrees become frustrate, and attain not their end. But neither of these is true: for, 1. Certain it is, that all men are not saved. 2. As certain it is, that God’s intentions and decrees never miscarry, or fall short of their ends; and to affirm this is absurd, yea, blasphemous. Therefore, God does not intend and decree the salvation of all men, by the death of Christ.”

In answer to this I say, God’s *intentions* and *decrees* are not to be confounded, or taken the one for the other. *Intentions* are one thing; *decrees* are another. Nor does God always *decree* the effecting of what he *intends* to effect; though he always *intends* to effect what he *decrees*. So that such intentions in God, which are real and cordial, may yet very possibly never take place, or be fulfilled, because not decreed. God did really and cordially intend the salvation of all men, *i. e.* he was willing that all men should be saved by the merits of Christ’s death, as the Apostle declares, 1 Tim. ii. 4, “ Who will have all men to be saved.” Yea himself hath sworn it, Ezek. xxxiii. 11, “ As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live.” Certainly God’s intentions here expressed were *real* and *cordial*; yet will not all the wicked turn from their ways, nor all sinners be saved; seeing God hath decreed only the salvation of those, that having heard the gospel, believe it; or, if they have not heard the gospel, yet follow the best light they have. I say, then, God’s decrees never miscarry, but his intentions often do. Nor is it any *absurdity*, much less *blasphemy* to assert, what the Scriptures so frequently declare. God *really intended* the destruction of *Nineveh*, in case they repented not; but never *decreed*, or *unalterably fixed* its destruction. Christ *really intended* the salvation of the Jews, when he said, “ O Jerusalem!—how often would I have gathered thy children together, &c. and ye would not.” Yet

he never decreed they should be gathered, but that they should be destroyed, if they would not be gathered. Upon the whole, since, though God's decrees never fall short of being accomplished, yet his intentions may; nothing hinders, but that God may have intended, yea, and according to his own word and oath, did intend the salvation of all men, by the death of Christ; though, since he hath not decreed the salvation of all men, it does not, therefore, follow that all men shall be saved.

REASON XIV.

“IF Christ by the counsel, intention, and decree of the Father, died for all men, it will follow, that there is neither an election of any certain persons, nor a reprobation of any. But there is both an election of some certain persons, and a reprobation of some others. Therefore Christ died not for all men.” The reason of the major, it seems, is this: Because it is contrary to reason, that God should intend or decree to give his Son to die for those, whom he decreed to reprobate (*i. e.* to leave in the power of everlasting perdition, without any possibility of being saved from eternity.) And if there be no reprobation, there can be no election, inasmuch as these do *mutuò sese ponere et auferre*. The minor stands upon the authority of the common interpretation of such Scriptures, as are usually insisted on to prove such an election, and consequently a reprobation corresponding with it.”

“It is contrary to reason, say our Opponents, that God should decree to give his Son to die for those whom he decreed to reprobate, or leave in the power of everlasting perdition, without any possibility of being saved.” I answer, True, if God did decree such a reprobation of any persons, it is unreasonable to suppose that he decreed to give his Son to die for such persons. But that God decreed no such reprobation is evident, because, if he had, he would have been a respecter of persons, which the Scriptures declare he is not. Yea, then he would not have been loving to every man, unwilling that any should perish, which the Scriptures declare he is. Such a reprobating God,

God, therefore, is nothing else but the *creature* of vain man's own imagination, an *idol* of his own making. And every Predestinarian that worships such a *reprobating* God, is as much an idolater as any in the Church of Rome.

Such a reprobation, then, is not to be admitted, unless we would render the Scriptures contradictory to themselves, from beginning to end. And as there is no *such* reprobation, neither is there any election of *certain* persons, *merely as persons*, to eternal life.— For such reprobation being destroyed, our very Adversaries grant, such election falls with it. God does not make the *persons* of men, merely and simply as such, the *precise* and *formal* object of his election, but considered as individuals of such a determinate sort. Paul was a *chosen* vessel to God. Yet God did not choose Paul, simply considered as Paul, or as a person consisting of that individual body and soul of which Paul consisted; but as an individual or person of a particular sort of men. “The Lord hath chosen, or set apart to himself, (says David,) the man that is godly,” Ps. iv. 3. Paul, therefore, was not chosen, or set apart for God, as *ungodly Paul*, but as *godly Paul*. If it be objected, God elects the *ungodly*, in order to make them *godly*. I answer, in this sense he elected Judas, and does elect all the world; yet has he elected none to be actual heirs of eternal life, but *such as give diligence to make their calling and election sure*, 2 Pet. i. 10, 11, provided they are in a capacity of giving such diligence.

Election any otherwise considered, and merely as *personal*, not only renders God a respecter of persons, (as does also such a reprobation), but is greatly injurious to the honour of God; inasmuch as it deprives our Saviour of his title of *The Saviour of all Men*; and renders the gospel no longer *good tidings of great joy to all people*, Luke ii. 10; but *bad tidings of great sorrow* to far the greatest part of mankind.— Besides the notion of *personal* and *unconditional* election differs not a hair's-breadth from Socinianism; the Master-Vein of which heresy taught, that Christ did not truly make an atonement for sin, because God freely and of mere grace forgives sins, without any satisfaction..

satisfaction. And this notion of election teaches, that God decreed unto men, in their election, forgiveness of sins, and all the blessings consequent thereon, without any consideration had of Christ's dying for them, or their believing in him.

If the Opponents say, They exclude the satisfaction of Christ from having any thing to do in God's *purpose* of election; but not from having any thing to do in the *execution* of his purpose; this will not help them at all. For if God might *purpose* salvation unto men, without the consideration of the death of Christ; certainly he may as well actually *confer* and give this salvation, without any respect had thereunto. To this I shall add, If *Paul*, merely as *Paul*, was elected from all eternity to be an heir of heaven, he was always in the favour of God; and there was no need that Christ should die to atone for his sins, and reconcile him to the favour of God, who was never out of his favour. If it be replied, "It was needful that Christ should die, in order to keep *Paul* in the favour of God." I answer, There was no necessity at all of Christ's death for this end. It might have been as well accomplished, if *Paul* was such an eternal favourite of Heaven, without any such extraordinary means. No doubt you will say, "Shall the creature pretend "to teach God how to act?" I say, no. Yet a creature of common understanding may easily conceive in this matter how he would act. No man of common sense would give a thousand pounds for a medicine to keep his child in health, when he could have it for the worth of a pin. It is evident, then, that the notion of personal and unconditional election, sets aside the necessity of Christ's death, in order to satisfy for the sins of the elect, and to keep them in the favour of God. Upon the whole, while I have power to think, and the Scriptures to direct me to think aright, however some men may worship an *imaginary* God, that is *hated* to most men, I must declare that I can worship none other but the *true* God, who is *loving* to every man: However they may believe in a Saviour, that gave himself a Ransom but for a few men; I can believe in no other Saviour, but that Jesus, "who gave himself a Ransom for all men:" However they may

may embrace that fable of their kind of predestination, which was spun out of the fertile brain of St. Austin, and twisted still harder by others after him, especially by the Synod of Dort, I can embrace and teach no other gospel, than that glorious gospel of the blessed God, which is "good tidings of great joy to all people."

REASON XV.

"IF Christ, according to the intention and counsel of the Father, hath suffered death for all men, then God would stand equally or indifferently affected towards all men, yea, and saving grace would be universal: But God doth not stand equally affected towards all men, nor is saving grace universal: Therefore Christ, according to the intention and counsel of the Father, hath not suffered death for all men." The consequence is supposed authentic, without proof. The minor is argued, 1. From the gratuitous election of some. 2. From the like gratuitous vocation of some, as of the Israelites, Deut. iv. 7. Psal. lxxvi. 1. cxlvii. 20. 3. From the covenant made with Abraham, and not with others. 4. From the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles. 5. From that special favour, love, and grace, wherewith God profecuteth his elect.

In answer to this I say, That God, when he purposed to give his only begotten Son to die for the sin of the world, did love all mankind with a love of *benevolence*; and when Christ gave himself a Ransom for all men, he put all mankind into a salvable state. In this respect God did stand *equally* or *indifferently affected* towards *all* men. But as the terms of salvation required, on man's part, are repentance and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, with regard to those that have the benefit of the gospel; and with regard to others that have not the gospel, that they follow the light and use the power that God affords them; and many there are that do not comply with these terms; so, in this respect, God does *not* stand equally affected to all. "For the Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy," Psal. cxlvii. 11. Such he loves with a love of complacence. And
though

though "God is angry with the wicked every day," Pſal. vii. 11. Yet "is he not willing that they ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance," 2 Pet. iii. 9. He loves even thoſe with a love of *benevolence* ſtill; ſo that he would be merciful to them; if they would comply with the terms that his wiſdom, and juſtice, and mercy, have propoſed.

I anſwer farther, Saving grace is *universal*. This truth is expreſſly declared, Titus ii. 11. "For the grace of God," (*ἡ χάρις*, the *ſaving* grace), "hath appeared to all men." This glorious truth is backed by Titus iii. 4. "But after that the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour toward mankind (*φιλανθρωπία*) appeared." Now, if Chriſt did not die *intentionally* for all, and the ſaving grace of God is not ſo offered to all, that all may be partakers of it that will; but God, from all eternity, hated, with a *hatred of reprobation*, abundantly the greater part of mankind, the Apoſtle could, with no degree of reaſon or common ſenſe, attribute *philanthropy* to him. God would then more properly be ſtiled *the hater*, than *the lover of mankind*. However, though ſaving grace be *purchased* for all, and is *offered* to all, it does not thence follow that all muſt *neceſſarily receive* it; or, though all ſhould *receive* it, that therefore all muſt *neceſſarily retain* it.

The arguments urged in ſupport of the minor propoſition do not at all overthrow what I have advanced. For, 1. The *gratuitous election* of ſome, is not of *particular perſons*, as *John, Peter, or Paul*, merely *as ſuch*, to eternal life; but of *John, Peter, and Paul*, properly *qualified*, as *believing the Truth*, and *ſanctified by the Spirit*, 2 Theſs. ii. 13. "God hath choſen the poor of this world, that are rich in faith, to be (alſo) heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promiſed (obſerve) to them that love him," James ii. 5. And this choice is as *free* as if no qualification at all had been required in the elect; for God was not compelled, unleſs by his own boundleſs love, to chooſe even theſe, after man was fallen; or, if you had rather have it ſo, when he knew man would fall. 2. The *gratuitous vocation* of ſome is for certain purpoſes, as that of the Iſraelites to be the peculiar people of God; and that of others,

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to some office and ministration in the church; but this vocation does not imply that all that are so called, shall *infallibly* answer the end of their calling, and obtain eternal life. For *Judas* was called and chosen to the Apostleship, as well as the rest of the Twelve, yet he is siled by our Lord, *a devil, and a son of perdition*. And doubtless many of the Israelites were *such*, as well as he. Much less is it to be inferred, from such vocation, that all the world beside is excluded from all hope or possibility of attaining eternal life.— A Porter at the King's Gate is his servant, though not a *Lord of the Bedchamber*, nor a *Privy Counsellor*, and may be as happy in the favour of his Prince, as those higher officers. And although he that is *the servant* of sin *abideth not in the house for ever*, John viii. 35, yet he that is a “good and faithful servant,” whatever his rank and condition be, shall “enter into the joy of his Lord,” Matt. xxv. 23.

3. The covenant, though made with *Abraham*, and not with others, was not so made with him, as to *exclude* all others from the benefit of it; nor so as to *confine* the benefit to his posterity only. But the promise was, that *in his Seed*, i. e. Christ, “all the nations of the earth should be blessed.” Which is absolutely false, if Christ did not die for *all*, and his grace was not free for all; yea, if a measure of his grace, though but one talent, was not *given to all*: whether they use it to their salvation, or abuse it to their condemnation, is another point.

4. The *mystery of the calling of the Gentiles* is the same kind of argument with that mentioned in the second place, and requires no other answer. Only I shall add, this proves, that those who were once *called and elected* may afterwards be *rejected*, if they act like the *foolish virgins*, Matt. xxv. And, 5. That *special favour, love, and grace*, wherewith God prosecuteth his elect, is no proof at all that God bestows *no favour, love, and grace*, upon the rest of mankind. Nor is there any need, or reason to expect, that he should shew the *same degree of favour to all* the elect. But there is need and reason to expect, that he should shew the same love of *benevolence*, though not of *complacence*, which springs from another motive, to all mankind

mankind alike, otherwise he would be a respecter of persons. I conclude, then, that this reason also is too weak to overthrow that blessed gospel-truth, that Christ "gave himself a Ransom for all."

REASON XVI.

"IF Christ died for all men, and all men be not saved, then is God not Omnipotent. But certain it is, 1. That all men are not saved; and, 2. That God is Omnipotent. Therefore, Christ did not die for all men."

"The minor needs no proof, as to either part of it. The reason of the consequence in the major is, because if Christ died for all men, it would follow, that God is willing that such a benefit should be procured for men, which he could not apply unto them."

I answer, This would not follow. I suppose there is some difference between *could not* and *would not*; *power* and *will*. The reason why God does not apply the benefit to all, that is procured for all, is not for want of *power*, but of *will*; because he *will have mercy only on those on whom he ought to have mercy*, according to the terms proposed in the gospel by his infinite wisdom. The Evangelist tells us, Jesus *could do no mighty work* in his own country, Mark vi. 5: Why? Because of any *deficiency of power* in himself? No. But because of the *unbelief* of the people, and it was contrary, on that account, to the rule of action which his infinite wisdom had laid down for himself. So then, though some men are *not saved*, on account of their unbelief, faith being the condition upon which, or the mean whereby the benefit procured for them by the death of Christ is to be applied; and though God be *Omnipotent*, this is no argument that Christ did not die for all.

REASON XVII.

"IF Christ died for all men, and all men come not to be saved, then is the wisdom of God defective, or imperfect. But certain it is, 1. That all men are not saved. 2. That the wisdom of God is not
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“ at all defective, but absolutely perfect. Therefore,
 “ Christ died not for all men.”

“ The minor here also is presumed, as well it may.
 “ The consequence stands upon this supposition, that
 “ to fall short in compassing what a man intends,
 “ argues a deficiency in point of wisdom.”

I answer, The intention of God was not this, that Christ should so die for all men, that all should be saved *unconditionally*; but that all should be saved, if they would comply with such terms, as his wisdom proposed. If, therefore, all men are not saved, because all do not comply with those terms, this is no proof at all that Christ did not die for all; nor does it argue any *deficiency of wisdom* in God that all are not saved, since Christ died for all; but just the contrary, it being a point of the highest wisdom not to shew favours *at random*, but upon *prudential grounds*.

REASON XVIII.

“ IF Christ died, and made satisfaction for all men,
 “ and yet all men are not saved, God would be unjust
 “ in receiving a full satisfaction for men, and yet
 “ refusing to receive them into favour, or to forgive
 “ them. But certain it is, 1. That all men are not
 “ saved; and, 2. That God is not unjust. There-
 “ fore Christ died not for all men.”

I answer, There is just the same kind of *fallacy* in this, as in the two preceding reasons. It is supposed in all three, that the death of Christ is so available for those that shall be finally saved, that they shall be infallibly saved, without any condition at all to be performed on their part. Whereas Christ, by his death, hath no otherwise made satisfaction for the sins of mankind, than that they shall receive the benefit of that satisfaction, upon condition that they *repent* and *believe the gospel*, supposing they have the benefit of the light of the gospel; or, supposing they have not this benefit, that they perform such conditions, as God requires of them that are deprived of that light.—
 “ He that believeth, and is baptized,” says our Lord,
 “ shall be saved.” Again, “ God so loved the world,
 that he gave his only begotten Son, to this end, that
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all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." If, therefore, some men do not comply with the conditions required of God on their part, then is not God *unjust* in refusing to receive them into favour, or to forgive their sins, or to save such men eternally, although Christ hath died, and made satisfaction upon these terms for all men.

REASON XIX.

"IF Christ died for all men, and all men come not to be saved, then doth that great love, out of which God gave his Son unto men, vanish into unprofitableness, in respect of men. For to what purpose, or of what use, is the love of God, in the gift of his Son unto men, if he doth not withal give them faith in his Son? But certain it is, 1. That all men come not to be saved. 2. That the great love of God, in the gift of his Son, doth not vanish into unprofitableness. Therefore, Christ died not for all men."

I answer, Though all men are not saved, yet doth not the love of God, in the gift of his Son unto men, vanish into unprofitableness in respect of men. For if only one sinner in the world were saved, this would be *some use*, some profit arising from the death of Christ. Yea, though no sinner should be saved, and so the love of God, in the gift of his Son, should be unprofitable with regard to men, yet would not his love vanish altogether into unprofitableness. For, doubtless the love of God, though it should be slighted by every sinner, would be matter of endless wonder, adoration, and praise, to the holy angels. And this universal love of God to mankind, in giving his Son for them, will have this farther use, that it will redound to his glory in shutting the mouths of the damned; so that they shall justly have nothing to blame, but their own wretched folly and perverseness. Consider farther, one sinner could not have been saved without the shedding of the blood of Jesus. And what was required and given for the salvation of one, was equally sufficient for the salvation of all. There is, therefore, just as much reason to attribute unprofitableness to the love of God, because only *some few* are

are saved, when all men, with the *same pains*, and as *much ease*, might have been saved; as to account it unprofitable, because all men are not saved, when Christ hath died for all.

But it is enquired, "To what purpose, or of what use is the love of God, in the gift of his Son unto men, if he doth not withal give them faith in his Son?" I answer, With regard even to the *heathen*, that have not the gospel, it is of some use. These, through Christ, who is "the true light, that lighteth every man coming into the world;" have such a degree and measure of light, as duly improved, would, through his grace, bring them to that glory, to that seat among the *many mansions* of his Father's house, which his wisdom and goodness have allotted for them.— And with regard to *Christians*, or those that have the benefit of the gospel, I say, the love of God, in the gift of his Son, is of this use, that to such *the door of faith is opened*; Acts xiv. 27, *i. e.* there is a way made for it, through the preaching of the gospel; Rom. x. 17. God then hath done every thing that is sufficient, in order to men's believing, so far as his wisdom sees meet, without their own endeavours.— Therefore, though it be true, that *all men have not faith*, the fault is not in God, but in such men as set up their own wisdom against God's truth, and choose their sins before his ways; that "love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." And even these hindrances God would enable them to remove, if they would but sincerely implore his grace, and strenuously use their own endeavours so to do. I conclude, then, that Christ died for all men, though all men are not saved. Nor does the love of God, in the gift of his Son, upon that account, become *useless*, or *unprofitable*.

A like argument is framed upon the account of the great love of the Son himself towards those for whom he died. "Christ, (saith the argument), so loved us, that whilst we were his enemies, he died for us. Is it now credible that he should not apply a benefit, merited or procured with such precious blood, unto those for whom he merited it?"

I reply,

I reply, Is it *credible* that any, for whom this benefit was *merited* or *procured*, and to whom it is *freely offered*, should not *apply* it to themselves? Certainly it is. For our Lord says, "Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life," John v. 40. So then, those Jews that rejected Christ, might have had life through him, if they would have *come* unto him.—The benefit was *merited* for them, and *offered* to them, yet they had it not. It was not *applied* to them, either by God or themselves. I read of some *denying the Lord that bought them*, and so *bringing upon themselves swift destruction*, 2 Pet. ii. 1, and find that *one may be destroyed*, and a *weak brother perish for whom Christ died*, Rom. xiv. 15. 1 Cor. viii. 11.—Now certainly, if Christ *bought* these, *died* for these, he *procured* a benefit for *them*, as well as for others; and yet it is as certain, if they perished, that the benefit was not *applied* to them. This argument, therefore, any more than its fellow, cannot overthrow the doctrine of *General Redemption*.

REASON XX.

"FOR whomsoever Christ died, and obtained remission of sins, and reconciliation with God, for those also he obtained, by his death, deliverance from the bondage of sin, and the spirit of regeneration for newness of life. But Christ did not obtain deliverance from the bondage of sin, or the spirit of regeneration for all men. Therefore, Christ did not die for all men."

This argument, with the two next that follow, are recited from the Collocutors of the *Contra-remonstrants* at the Conference at the *Hague*, ann. 1613. This is indeed, the same in effect with the First and Fifth, used by the Synod of Dort. However, as it is urged by the *Collocutors*, I shall vouchsafe it an answer. I deny the minor. Christ did obtain, by his death, deliverance from the bondage of sin, and the spirit of regeneration for all men. But, as I observed before, in my answer to the fifth Reason, that a friend's *obtaining* a benefit for a person, is one thing; and that it be *accepted* by that person, is another. Therefore,

fore, if no sinner upon earth should ever accept deliverance from the bondage of sin, or the spirit of regeneration, this would be no proof at all, that these benefits were not obtained for all sinners; or that Christ did not die for them.

REASON XXI.

“ALL they, for whom Christ died, can freely say, *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died for us, Rom. viii. 34.* But they are only believers and the elect, that can speak thus, ver. 33, not unbelievers, Mark xvi. 16. Therefore, Christ died not for unbelievers.” I grant the minor. None but *believers*, and the *elect* (which I presume are not different from believers) can *freely*, if you thereby mean *experimentally*, say, *Who is he that condemneth, &c.* But the major I deny. All they, for whom Christ died, cannot *freely* say this. Many who are at present *weak in faith*, cannot *freely* say it. Many who are at present *unbelievers*, but will be believers before they die, cannot *freely* say it; yet you will acknowledge Christ died for them. And there are many who never will believe aright unto salvation, that will not scruple to say it with great confidence, who yet will never be justified by his death. But not to insist upon this. I say, the number of those for whom Christ died, is not exactly the same with the number of those that can *freely* or *experimentally* use that triumphant language of the Apostle. For certain it is, there are some that *deny the Lord that bought them*; who are doubtless *unbelievers*. And as certain it is, that Christ *gave himself a Ransom for all*.—Consequently, he died for *unbelievers*, as well as for *believers*. And the reason why they cannot join in that holy triumph, as well as believers, is not because Christ hath not died for them, but because they do not believe in him, and so deprive themselves of the benefit of his death.

But the minor, it seems, is further strengthened by this consideration: “The consolation raised from the consideration of the death of Christ, which the Apostle here, (Rom. viii. 32, 33, &c.) administers unto the saints or believers, would have little solidity

“ or

“ or worth in it, in case reprobates and unbelievers
 “ could as truly say that Christ died for them also.”
 I am persuaded, the consolation here administered
 would have as *much solidity* and *worth* in it, in the
 account of all Christians, except *Calvinists*, upon the
 consideration that Christ hath died for *all*, as that he
 had died only for a *few* among the children of men ;
 yea, and *much more* ; inasmuch as they, having the
mind that was in Christ, who is *loving to every man*,
 could not but so much the more rejoice to think, that
 it was *possible* for *all* to be partakers of their consolati-
 on. But I would ask, What kind of *saints* and
believers must those be, who could have but little solid
 or valuable consolation from the consideration of the
 death of Christ, unless they were sure that an *hundred*
 or a *thousand* men should have no benefit by it, for
one that shall ? What kind of *saints* and *believers* are
 those, whose consolation would be *shaken* and *spoiled*
 upon the consideration that *reprobates* and *unbelievers*
 (who are at present reprobates) should become *be-*
lievers, and be *saved* ? Whose *eye is evil*, because *God's*
is good ? Just of the same stamp with those Jews, who
 were offended because *to the Gentiles also God had*
granted repentance unto life. Behold here the *genuine*
 spirit of *Calvinism* ! Such as hold this opinion, it
 seems, can have but little solid or valuable consolation
 in the prospect of their own eternal happiness, unless
 they have, at the same time, a *comfortable hope* of
 seeing hundreds of thousands of poor reprobates
 damned !

REASON XXII.

“ IF reconciliation with God and remission of sins
 “ be obtained for all and every man, none excepted,
 “ then ought the word of this reconciliation, *i. e.*
 “ the gospel, to be preached, and this continually,
 “ to all and every man. But the word of reconciliation
 “ is not thus preached to all and every man. There-
 “ fore reconciliation with God, and remission of sins
 “ is not obtained for every man.” “ The reason of
 “ the consequence is, because they, for whom recon-
 “ ciliation is obtained, not being capable of enjoying
 “ it but by faith, and faith not being to be obtained,
 “ but

“but by hearing (the word of their reconciliation)
 “it seems contrary to all reason, that they should be
 “deprived of the means of believing.”

I deny the consequence in the major, that the gospel ought to be preached, so as to be heard outwardly, as the argument intends, and that continually to every man, or that it would be so preached to them, if reconciliation with God, and remission of sins, were obtained for every man. No such consequence follows from the premises. The gospel, as a word delivered by man, cannot be preached to *infants, idiots, and deaf persons*, so that they can understand it. But will any man of reason or common sense dare to affirm, that all such shall be damned, because they are deprived of the ordinary means of believing? The *children of the Hebrews*, that were drowned at the command of *Pharaoh*, and those that were slain at the command of *Herod*, were deprived of the outward means of believing; but dares any one, therefore, pronounce that they are all gone to the Devil? Not without charging God with being a hard Master, “reaping where he has not sown, and gathering where he has not sowed;” requiring an *impossibility*, that persons should believe a report they never heard.

Our Saviour himself expressly declares concerning *little children*, of such is the kingdom of God, Mark x. 14. And again tells his disciples, “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,” Matt. xviii. 3. Now we must conclude such children to be in a *state of grace*, and *favour* with God, through the merits of Christ, notwithstanding the corruption of their nature, otherwise we must make our Saviour say in effect, unless ye become like these, that are in a *state of damnation*, ye cannot be saved. If *children* then be subjects of the kingdom of God, no doubt so are *idiots*, that are born so, and have not by their own vices deprived themselves of the use of reason. And such, no doubt, are those that are born *deaf*, that follow the light they have. I remember a remarkable instance of such a person, who lived a most exemplary, pious life, that when she had knelt down with others to prayers, would afterwards by smiles, clapping her hands,

hands, laying them on her breast, and pointing upwards, give testimony of her inward, heart-felt, holy joy; though she had never heard the sound of a human voice. And if God be thus gracious to those, who never hear the gospel, why not to sincere *honest heathens*; who, though they are deprived of that *richer outward* mean of grace and salvation which we enjoy, yet are not left destitute of *sufficient* means to bring them to heaven. "These having not the law, are a law unto themselves," Rom. ii. 14. And if these, *by nature*, (assisted by that *grace of God, which bringeth salvation to all men*), do the things contained in the law, so far as the common notices of right and wrong are afforded them, no doubt but, for the sake of Christ, they also shall have a reward in heaven.

If, as the Collocutors say, it seem *contrary to all reason* that they, for whom reconciliation and remission of sins is obtained, should be deprived of the means of believing; is it not much more *unreasonable*, that *infants* and *ideots* should be required to believe what they cannot possibly *understand*, or even *attend* to; and *deaf persons* and *heathens*, what they never *heard*? Certainly it is. But farther, God certainly has deprived *infants, ideots, deaf persons, and heathens* of the means of believing, or hearing the word of their reconciliation; yet it is certain, from the word of God, and the confession of sober Christians in all ages, that Christ obtained reconciliation with God, and remission of sins, at least for *some* of these.—Those, therefore, are guilty of blasphemy, who dare to say that God has acted *unreasonably* in depriving them of the means of believing. Upon the whole, I will venture to affirm, that the *wise and merciful* God requires faith in no man, beyond the means of believing afforded him. Though, therefore, the gospel be not preached to every man, this is no proof that reconciliation with God, and remission of sins, is not obtained for every man.

But I shall observe farther, though the gospel be not preached to every man, so that the sound thereof reaches the outward ears of all; yet there are some who strenuously insist upon it, that the gospel is preached *in* every man; and quote, as their authority for such

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an assertion, Coloss. i. 23. *The gospel—which was preached, (not to; but ἐν παντι κησιν) in every creature: (so mankind is called here and elsewhere.)* So that though every creature, or every man, is not made acquainted with the riches of the gospel mystery; every one is favoured with such a measure of light and grace, as, duly improved, is sufficient to bring them to glory. And much to the same purpose speaks Bishop Latimer, Sermon. 23d Sunday after Trinity:—

“ Even so it is with Popery and false doctrine. The nature of it is to bring to everlasting sorrow. Yet let us hope that our forefathers were not damned: for God had many ways to preserve them from perishing. Yea, in the last hour of death, God can work with his Holy Ghost, and teach men to know Christ his Son for their Saviour. Though they were taught otherwise before, yet God could preserve them from the poison of the false doctrine. As in the great dearth, when all things were so dear, when the rich Franklings would not sell their corn in the markets,—God could preserve the poor with their children;—so he could preserve our forefathers from everlasting perdition. Though they lacked the food of their souls, yet he could feed them inwardly with the Holy Ghost.” And the same holds good with regard to infants, idiots, deaf persons, and heathens. God, who is infinite in wisdom, as well as mercy, hath many ways to preserve them from perishing, without their hearing the outward gospel. So that still we have no reason but to conclude, that Christ hath died for all men.

REASON XXIII.

“ TO all those for whom Christ truly died, the death of Christ is profitable. But this death of his is not profitable unto all men. Therefore he died not for all men.”

This argument is advanced by the learned Chamier, the strength whereof the Reader will find lodged in the XIXth Reason, and already destroyed. However, if this be thought to yield any support to the good old cause, I shall not refuse to try how much. The major he endeavours to prove, “ 1. From the

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“ proper import of the particle *for*, which (says he),
 “ always notes some benefit accruing to him, for whom
 “ something is said to be done.” But this argument
 is nothing worth. For certain it is, the particle *for*,
 does not always note a benefit *accruing* to a person,
 but sometimes only *intended* for him, or *offered* to
 him. A salutary medicine may be *prepared, intended*
for, and *offered* to a sick man, that will not take it,
 and so no benefit *accrues* to him from it. “ 2. From
 “ the state of the controversy.” If he hereby mean
 the arguments produced on the *Calvinists’* part, I
 trust those have been all found invalid. “ 3. From
 “ the Scriptures, as where it is said, ‘ He gave himself
 “ for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity,
 “ &c.’” But this is no proof that all for whom Christ
 gave himself *intentionally* to redeem them from all
 iniquity, *are* or *shall be actually* so redeemed. Christ
 says, “ God sent not his Son into the world to con-
 demn the world, but that the world through him
 might be saved,” John iii. 17; yet, I suppose, no
Calvinist will allow that all the world shall be saved
 through Christ. So again, from Matt. xxvi. 28, the
many mentioned in this text, I have already proved
 in the beginning of this tract to mean, the *multitudes*
 of the sons of *Adam*, Rom. v. 18, 19. Those texts
 afford no proof that all for whom Christ died shall be
 “ actually justified by his blood, and saved from wrath
 through him;” but only, if those for whom he died
 do believe in him, and so are justified by his blood, and
 continue by faith in a justified state, they shall “ be
 saved from wrath through him.”

The minor he endeavours to prove, “ 1. From the
 “ concession of his adversaries themselves (the Papists)
 “ concerning infants who die unbaptized; all which
 “ they exclude from salvation, and consequently from
 “ all benefit by the death of Christ.” Is this a proof
 that all infants that die unbaptized shall be damned,
 because the Papists say so? I suppose no Protestant
 will admit this as sufficient proof. And those that do,
 may with as much reason admit that every Protestant
 shall be damned, because the Papists affirm, that there
 is no salvation out of the Romish Church. “ 2. From
 “ the concession of (almost) all, concerning persons
 of

“ of years of maturity, *viz.* that very many of those
 “ perish everlastingly, and so never come to receive
 “ any benefit by the death of Christ.” In answer to
 this, I say, 1. If all men, without exception, were
 to make this concession, it is no proof that Christ hath
 not died for all men. 2. Though it be granted that
 many persons of years of maturity perish everlastingly,
 this is no proof that Christ hath not died for all men.
 For the reason why they perish is, not because Christ
 hath not died for them; but because they do not close
 with the offers of mercy. 3. It is not truly said, that
 even such persons receive *no* benefit by the death of
 Christ. They receive many, not only *temporal*, but
spiritual benefits; many *convictions*, *awakenings*, and
alarms; yea, it may be, a considerable measure of
faith and *love*. And if they slight these benefits, if
 their *faith fails*, and their *love waxes cold*, the reason
 is not because Christ hath not died for them, but be-
 cause they were not *watchful*; therefore their benefits
 were not *lasting*.

REASON XXIV.

“ IF Christ died for all men, then all men are or
 “ shall be saved. But this is not so. Therefore Christ
 “ died not for all men.” This argument, the same
 in substance with the former, is likewise produced by
Chamier. The minor, which needs no proof, he proves
 from John iii. 36. Rom. ii. 8. For the consequence
 in the major proposition he cites the Apostle’s dis-
 course, Rom. v. 8, 9, 10. under the notion of an
 express probation of it, *But God commendeth his love
 towards us, &c. en argumentum!* What proof is here
 that all are or shall be saved for whom Christ died?
 No more than there is, that all shall be damned that
 sprang from Adam. But if this passage be insisted on
 as a proof that all shall be saved for whom Christ
 died, it must prove, that all mankind shall be saved;
 which is denied in the minor, and that truly. For
 certain it is, that Christ died for all, and upon this
 ground commends his love to all sinners. This argu-
 ment, therefore, either proves more than the adver-
 saries themselves will allow, or it proves nothing to
 their purpose. So that, in spite of this, and a thousand

such arguments, the doctrine of *General Redemption* must be acknowledged to be a rational, scriptural, and gloriously comfortable truth.

Before I conclude, it may not be amiss to obviate some more objections which have been started by some against the doctrine of General Redemption.—
 “If Christ died for *all* sins, and of *all* mankind, he died for the sin of *final obstinacy* and *wilful rejecting of Christ*: But he died not for such sin, as appears “Matt. xii. 31, 32. Heb. vi. 6.—x. 26. 1 John v. 16. And some there are that die in such sin: “Therefore Christ died not for all the sins of all mankind.” I answer, This is an idle objection. For Christ died for no sins, in such sort, that the sinner shall be saved by his death, unless he repent and believe the gospel, when proposed to him. But it is impossible that a sinner should believe, that persists in unbelief to the last, and dies therein. And though such sinner die in his unbelief, this is no proof that Christ did not die for him, as well as for others; nor that he might not have been saved as well as others, if he would have believed Christ, who, as Bishop Latimer says, shed as much of his blood for Judas (who died in final impenitence and unbelief,) as he did for Peter. Peter believed it, and therefore he was saved. Judas would not believe, and therefore he was condemned; the fault being in him only, and no one else.

Again it is objected, “How could Christ die for “all men, when thousands were in hell at the very “time of his death.” This objection is as trifling as the former. Christ is the *Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, Rev. xiii. 8. The merits of his death, therefore, were not available only since the time that he *boxed his head* and died upon the cross, but from the foundation of the world, even before there was a sinner upon earth. And to make this an objection against the General Redemption, that is in, or through his blood, because thousands of sinners were in hell at the time of his death, is neither more nor less than to say, that all sinners are in hell, that died before the time of his death. But if some sinners, by virtue of his death, were saved before he actually died; all other sinners might have been saved also,

also, if they had also made a proper use of the means afforded for their salvation.

It is objected farther, that "to maintain the doctrine of General Redemption, is to deny the doctrine of *free grace.*" I would ask such objectors, what do you mean by *free grace*? If you mean any thing more thereby, than that sinners are *justified freely by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, Rom. iii. 24, you mean by it something which the Scripture does not mean. Yea, if you mean that only a few among the multitudes of sinners upon earth, have a right to lay claim to such free grace, while the rest of mankind, by virtue of an absolute decree of God, are excluded from having any share therein, as if it were not as free for them to accept, as for others; you mean such a kind of free grace as the Scripture knows nothing of. For certain it is, those that are said to be justified freely by his grace, ver. 24. are such as are said to have sinned, ver. 23; and there is nothing wanting to make them all equally partakers of that justification, which is obtained for them, but faith in Jesus Christ, ver. 22. The free grace you mean, is such grace as God, considered as a respecter of persons, is represented as freely bestowing on some particular persons, and cruelly denying to others. The doctrine of such free grace I deny. And I deny that grace, so considered, can be in all respects truly and properly called *free grace*. For though, with respect to the giver, and for those that are suffered to receive it, it be free; yet for those that are not suffered to receive it, it is not free. If any, therefore, deny the doctrine of free grace, they are the Predestinarians, rather than those that maintain the doctrine of General Redemption; seeing that these latter maintain, that the grace of God was purchased for all, and is as free for all that will receive it, as the beams of the Sun that shines on their bodies, or the air that blows upon them; acknowledging with the Scriptures, that "the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life," Rom. v. 18, while the former affirm, contrary to God's Word, it came only on a few.

D. 3.

Again,

Again, "To deny the doctrine of absolute pre-destination, is to deny the comfortable doctrine of *absolute, final perseverance.*" I answer, doctrines are not to be received as true, merely because they are *comfortable*: If so, we must receive that doctrine for truth, which appears in the face, though it is not in the bosom of that text, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel," Num. xxiii. 21. Nor do I see how the doctrine of final perseverance can afford a man any comfort at all; seeing it is acknowledged by all, that it is proper only to the elect to persevere; and no man can be sure that he is elect, without some extraordinary manifestation from God, till he has persevered to the end. But if I err in holding that justified persons may fall away from grace, and perish, I err with Bishop Latimer, and with our Church in her Homily on the danger of falling from God; yea, with the whole Christian Church for above a thousand years after Christ. "Certainly," says Bishop Overall, "that opinion concerning the certain perseverance of all those who have once believed, and have been regenerate, about which there is so great contention, was never approved of by any of the Fathers of the ancient Church, but was rejected by all antiquity, and too much confuted by the continual experience of all times, and sprang not up but in this last age; and was introduced into the Church, through the dispute that happened between *Quinglius* and his party with *Luther.*" The testimony of this great man, renowned for his profound learning and solid judgment, is thus seconded by Mr. Baxter: "Except Hierome truly accuse Jovinian with it, there is not (that I know of) any Father, Christian, or heretic, that hath written that no truly justified persons fall finally away from grace, and perish, for above a thousand years after Christ." And it is commonly granted, that generally they held the contrary; even Augustine, Prosper, and Fulgentius not excepted. And I add, not excepting Calvin himself.

"But to deny absolute predestination is to set up man's *free will.*" And does not every Calvinist unless

unless he is in one of his raving fits, set up man's free will, as much as those that hold General Redemption? Even Dr. Twisse, one of the most rigid predestinarians, it may be, that ever wrote, commonly cites Anstius with approbation, as saying, *Possè credere est omnium, credere verò fidelium*: The power to believe is common to all men, but actually to believe belongs only to the faithful. "What men," says Baxter, "that write in Greek or Latin deny free will? Did not all the ancient Fathers and Churches hold it till Augustine's time, of whom we have any notice? Did not Augustine, Prosper, and Fulgentius, (the three great champions for predestination) hold it? Who denied it for above a thousand or thirteen hundred years after Christ?— Is it not then a horrid shame, to hear honest people so seduced into *love-killing, factious sidings* by their teachers, as that *boys and women* speak of wiser and better persons with disaffection and reproach, saying, *Oh! he is a free-willier, or he holdeth free-will*, when they know not what they talk of; but are made to believe, that it is some monstrous impious opinion, making a man almost an heretic?" And does not our own Church, in her Xth Article, maintain free-will, as much as those who are branded and reviled with the name of *Arminians*? For though she asserts, "the condition of man, after the fall of Adam, is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God," (which who denies?) Yet does she not allow that, under the aids of preventing grace, he *may*? And this grace, I have already proved, is free for all. And so is co-operating grace likewise; which is never denied to any, but those that reject the other: *For whosoever hath*, says our Lord, *to him shall be given*, Matt. xiii. 12. and to the same purpose is James iv. 6. And is not all the free-will to do good, that we contend for, taught in this very chapter? *Submit yourselves therefore to God*, ver. 7. *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord*, ver. 10. But it is beyond all contradiction taught plainly, Gen. vi. 9. Noah (not simply *הלך walked*, but *הלך עם God set himself* (i. e. under the aids of grace) *to walk with God*.

D 4

I know

I know some will reply, "And so you make yourself, in part, your own Saviour." I answer, No more than the Translators of the Bible do, Acts ii. 40. *Save yourselves* (Σωθήτε) *from this untoward generation.* And how were the Jews, to whom St. Peter spake those words, to save themselves? Was it not by *repenting and being baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, that they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost?* ver. 38. And I would ask, Must not these men *set themselves*, under the aids of grace, to repent and be baptized, in order to be saved, as well as Noah to walk with God? And could this be done without their own free-will assisted? Certainly not. What then? Must they not do what the Apostle taught them, for fear of becoming *Self-Saviours*, and so robbing Christ of his honour? I suppose no man in his wits will assert this. Is it not easy to see then, that those *over-doers* in the gospel, are *undoers* of it? How much wiser than such *Gospel-Ministers* and *Orthodox-Teachers*, as they are styled, was Dr. Overall, who has thus given his opinion in this case: "We must neither attribute *nothing*, nor *too much* to free-will." On the one part, with the defenders of irresistible grace, free-will, not only before grace, but even under it, is not to be denied and set aside; nor, on the other part, is the saving efficacy of grace to be swallowed up by the power and liberty of the will: But allowing to Divine Grace the principal place, the human will must be admitted as its handmaid; yet as a free attendant, and freely obedient to grace. So that by this free-will, excited by the admonitions of preventing grace, and prepared by proper affections, and strengthened and assisted with needful powers, man may be both *freely* and *willingly* a *worker together with God*, lest he *receive the grace of God in vain*.

But, say some, "To deny the doctrine of absolute predestination, and so of absolute final perseverance, is to make God *changeable*." If such as make this objection know what they mean, they know not what they *ought* to mean, when they speak of God as *unchangeable*. They mean, I suppose, what some say, that whom God once loves, he always did and always will

will love; and so that the man who is once in grace, is always in grace. Whereas they ought to mean only, that God's nature, essence, and attributes are always the same; and so, the "Lord alloweth (or as Leigh, *chooseth*) the righteous, but the ungodly, and him that delighteth in wickedness, doth his soul abhor," Psal. xi. 6. Of his own *unchangeableness*, thus rightly understood, (which some ignorantly or wilfully mistake for *changeableness*) hear himself speak, Lev. xxvi. "If ye walk in my statutes, &c. ver. 3. My soul shall not abhor you, ver. 11. But if ye will not hearken unto me, ver. 14, My soul shall abhor you," ver. 30. Here God shews the *unchangeableness* of his love to those that obey him, and of his *abhorrence* of those that disobey him. The Jews, the same people, shall be the object both of his *love* and *hatred*, or *abhorrence*, according as they demean themselves; and that for this very reason, because the mind of God is *unchangeably* the same, loving *holiness* and hating *sin*. But for a while you shall have your saying; once *in* grace and always *in* grace. On the other hand, you shall allow me mine; once *out* of grace and always *out* of grace. Now John the Baptist tells us, "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 36. So then, in consequence of God's *unchangeableness*, as you understand it, all that ever were, or ever shall be, unbelievers, shall have the wrath of God abiding on them to all eternity. Nay, you say, they may believe that do not believe now, and then the wrath of God will be removed from them. What? And may those be the objects of God's love, who are now the objects of his wrath? Why you make God as changeable, as if you were an *Arminian*. Allow me this, and you shall allow me, that those may be the objects of God's wrath, who are now the objects of his love. For I am sure you have no better reason for your assertion, than I have for mine. If you tell me, Christ hath promised, the believer *shall not come into condemnation*: I grant it, while he continues to believe. But if a believer turns apostate, Heb. x. 38, God's soul *shall have no pleasure in him*; while he is such, *he shall not see life, but the*

the wrath of God abideth on him. Upon the whole, then, the asserters of General Redemption make God: changeable no more than every Predestinarian does, that pays an honest regard to the Scriptures.

But the grand objection is still behind, To deny the doctrines of absolute and unconditional predestination and election, is to rob God of his *sovereignty*.—Sovereignty! Pray what is that? I do not find such a word in all the Bible. I suppose you mean a *power*, joined with his *will*, to bring some few, in comparison of the whole, out of mankind to heaven, and to send all the rest to hell, barely to shew that he had such a will and power. I do not find in the Scripture that the all-wise, all-just, and all-merciful God, claims any such sovereignty; nor is it reasonable to suppose it in him, and therefore I cannot attribute it to him. We are not to speak of God's sovereignty, without considering him as the *natural* and *moral* Governor of the world. As a *natural* Governor, he *cannot look upon sin with allowance, neither can any evil dwell with him.* As a *moral* Governor, he will deal with his rational creatures according to the strictest rules of *wisdom*, *mercy*, and *justice*, and will neither save nor condemn any man to the violation of any of those attributes. But, as Tilenus rightly observes, “You set up his *sovereignty* to confront his other attributes, *viz.* his *justice* and *mercy*, (I add, and *wisdom*) and think you much honour him in assigning him a power to command *perjury*, *lying*, *blasphemy*, and a prerogative to cast *poor innocent babes* into hell-torments. A piece of doctrine which the great Patriarch certainly never dreamt of, when he expostulated with his Maker, and said, *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* Gen. xviii. 25.—Nay, you think you cannot sufficiently extol, as to some persons, that *special grace*, which is God's *free gift*, unless you extinguish, as to others (as far as your opinions can reach) that *universal justice*, which is his *very nature*; to the dignity whereof, it is not only disagreeable, but inconsistent, that he should (as you would have him) procure himself glory out of the everlasting misery of his own poor innocent creatures, or take pleasure in
“it.”

“it.” I shall say no more upon this point here, as I purpose, God willing, in another treatise to enlarge upon the subject of God's *Sovereignty*.

I shall conclude this with an antient testimony against the doctrine of *absolute predestination*, and for *free-will* in man, as far as I contend for it; which testimony, I presume, is agreeable to the doctrine of the church of England; not only because it is appointed to be read ordinarily in the service of the church; but especially because the Compilers of our Liturgy have fixt upon it to be read as part of the proper Lesson for St. Peter's Day. And though it be *apocryphal*, and therefore not applied by the church to establish any doctrine, yet, I presume, the church did not judge it to be contrary to truth and sound doctrine; for then, no doubt, they would have rejected it, as well as some other parts of the Apocrypha, *Ecclus. xv. 11, 17.* “Say not thou, It is through the Lord that I fell away: for thou oughtest not to do the things that he hateth. Say not thou, He hath caused me to err: for he hath no need of the sinful man. The Lord hateth all abomination, and they that fear God love it not. He himself made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his counsel: If thou wilt, to keep the commandments, and to perform acceptable faithfulness. He hath set fire and water before thee: stretch forth thy hand unto whether thou wilt. Before man is life and death, and whether him liketh shall be given him. *Ver. 20.* He hath commanded no man to do wickedly, neither hath he given any man licence to sin.”

SECTION III.

I come now to consider those passages of Scripture, which are commonly insisted on to prove particular election and reprobation, and upon which the minor proposition, in the 14th reason, stands. These I shall take notice of generally, in the order they stand in the Bible, except where the same, or similar passages, are mentioned in different places.

Gen. iv. 4, 5. “And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering; but unto Cain, and to his offering,

offering he had not respect." And why was this? not because Abel was unconditionally *elected* from eternity, and Cain *reprobated*; but because, "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain," Heb. xi. 4. "If thou dost well," i. e. for the future, saith God, "shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou dost not well, sin lieth at the door." Or, as the words might be rendered, "if thou hadst done well, shouldst not thou have been accepted? but though thou hast not done well, a sacrifice for sin is at the door," i. e. is near at hand, ver. 7. Taking the words in either sense, it is evident there was yet room for Cain to obtain mercy; so that he was not yet reprobated, in the Calvinists' sense, if ever he was.

Gen. vi. 8; *But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.* "But so did none of the rest of mankind, except his family." What grace or favour did Noah, at this time, find in the eyes of the Lord? That he and his house were saved from perishing by the flood. And why found he this favour? Because he "was a just man, and perfect in his generations, and walked with God," ver. 9. The original, observe, is not simply *הלך*, walked; but *הלך*, made himself, or set himself to walk with God: which he did through the aid of grace offered and accepted, as much as the people of Israel "sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord," by rejecting offered grace. If this had not been the case, doubtless he would have perished as well as the rest. But because the bodies of the rest of mankind, beside Noah and his house, perished in the water, will any one, therefore, dare to assert that their souls perished in hell? Till I have clearer proof, I say, though the most might, yet all did not. For I read that "the Spirit of Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison;" i. e. the souls in distress; for so the expression of *being in prison*, frequently means in Scripture; *which sometime were disobedient*, 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20. but not *all* of them *always*, for it appears that when they saw no way to escape, the convincing Spirit wrought upon them, and "they cried unto the Lord in their distress, and he heard them." "For, for this cause was the gospel preached also" to them that were dead," i. e. to the hearts of those perishing people; "that

“that they might be judged,” promised, “according to man in the flesh; but live according to God in the Spirit,” chap. iv. 6. And no doubt but God, who is willing to save all, upon his own terms, by his Spirit strove with them all, if they would but have obeyed his motions. Yea, it is plain he did; for he says, with respect to all that perished in the flood, *my Spirit shall not always strive with man*, ver. 3; which plainly implies, that it had striven with them. But if they had been reprobated from all eternity, it is absurd to suppose that God would have striven with them. To what end? To make them repent, which he had decreed they never should? This is to represent the infinitely wise and merciful God as tantalizing his creatures, and acting the most unreasonable kind of cruelty that can be imagined. Again, with regard to the children that perished in the deluge, some Predestinarians themselves have had charity enough to allow a possibility of the salvation of *some* of them at least. This passage then gives no countenance at all to the doctrine of particular election and reprobation. This might suffice for an answer to all similar cases that may be produced.

Gen. vii. 16. *And the Lord shut him in.* This text I have heard strongly insisted upon to prove Noah one of the elect, and the absolute certainty of his final perseverance in a state of grace; because the Lord shut him into the ark, and he was preserved from perishing by the flood, with the rest of mankind. But those that insist upon this, seem to have forgotten that the Lord shut Ham in, as well as Noah. Yet I suppose there is no Calvinist but what pronounces Ham a reprobate, with as much confidence as if he had been in hell, and seen him there. *Cursed Ham* is the character bestowed upon him by most of that kind of Writers, that I have seen. Behold then *cursed Ham* in the ark of the elect! This would be almost enough to make one doubt of the safety of Noah's state, if we had no better proof of it; at least of some of the rest that were in the ark. I presume then this text no more proves the certainty of *Noah's election* to eternal life and *final perseverance*, than it does the certainty of *Ham's*.

Much.

Much less does it prove the certainty of the *election* and *perseverance* of any other persons.

Gen. ix. 25, *Curſed be Canaan; a ſervant of ſervants ſhall he be unto his brethren.* Because of this prophetic ſpeech of Noah, Ham is generally branded with the character of *curſed Ham*. Though by the way *Hum*'s name is not mentioned, but only that of his ſon *Canaan* (if *Canaan* there means a perſon). But ſuppoſe it had, is that any proof that *Ham* is gone to the devil, any more than it is, that that man is damned who brought Jeremiah's father the news of his birth, becauſe Jeremiah pronounced him curſed for ſo doing. I ſuppoſe, not. It is hardly credible that either Jeremiah or Noah had any thoughts of dooming thoſe to hell, on whom they pronounced their curſe. That expreſſion is not always to be taken in the largeſt ſenſe. Nor is it here. All that Noah means is, that the Canaanites, the poſterity of Canaan, the ſon of Ham, ſhould be ſubdued by the poſterity of his brethren. Not a word is here mentioned of the eternal ſtates of Ham or Canaan, or their poſterity; or of the eternal ſtates of his brethren, or their poſterity, in their bleſſings. Nor are their eternal ſtates one way or other, ſo much as implied, with regard to all their poſterity. No doubt ſome of Ham's poſterity were ſaved; *Rahab*, for inſtance, and many of the *Gibeonites*. And there is too great reaſon to believe many of the poſterity of Shem and Japhet periſhed eternally. The moſt that can be inferred from the paſſage is, that the poſterity of Ham, in time to come, ſhould have leſs outward proſperity than that of his brethren, and ſhould not have the favour of ſuch great outward Church privileges as they. And, after all, it muſt be obſerved, that the curſe upon Ham's poſterity, and the bleſſing upon his brethren, were not pronounced, becauſe the one was *reprobated* from and the other *elected* to eternal life from all eternity; but only that God revealed to Noah what would be their different temporal lots in time to come, and moved him to declare it to his ſons; that Ham might be, by ſuch a proſpect, puniſhed for his undutiſulneſs; and, on the other hand, Shem and Japhet, by a more agreeable proſpect.

prospect, rewarded for their dutifulness: that the one might be, on his part, deterred from sinning again; the others, on their part, encouraged to go on in the way of duty. So that neither is there here any the least foundation for the doctrine of *particular, personal, and unconditional election* to eternal life, or *reprobation* to damnation.

Gen. xii. 2, 3, God says to Abraham, "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great;—And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Here God chooses Abraham out of all the rest of mankind. True, to be the founder of that people, whom he was pleased to call his *chosen* and his *peculiar people*, and to be the progenitor of Christ. But did he choose him, without any respect to his disposition of mind? Abraham, merely because he was Abraham? Nay, but says God, "Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him; for I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him; and they shall," or rather that "they may, keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him," Gen. xviii. 18, 19. Or did he choose Abraham and his posterity to be heirs of *Heaven*, as well as *Canaan*, to the exclusion of all the rest of mankind? Not so. Righteous Lot, though of Abraham's kindred, was not of his posterity, nor Jethro, nor Rahab, nor any of the Gentiles which were afterwards *his people*, who had *not been his people*. And, besides those Gentiles, who became the people of God in gospel-times, many no doubt were such before and after the promulgation of the law. Doubtless such was Job; and such, we have reason to conclude, were his three friends, though not so much enlightened as Job was, Job xlii. 8, 9, 10. Was not the Queen of Sheba in that number? 1 Kings x. 9. Matt. xii. 42. Was not Naaman the Syrian? Yea, and probably Nebuchadnezzar (though he is dignified by a certain Writer, with the character of "one of the Devil's head Generals") Dan. iv. 37. And were not thousands, and tens of thousands besides, whose names and nations we never heard of? It must be

be granted; otherwise we should make God himself declare an untruth, when he tells Abraham, that in him all the *nations*, yea all the *families*, in the earth should be blessed. Certainly, therefore, *all* mankind receive some spiritual blessing (for such is here intended) through Christ, the *Seed of Abraham*; however many part with it, for some present earthly enjoyment, as Esau did with his birthright. Downright to this purpose is the note on this text in the margin of the Bishops' Bible, though written by a Predestinarian. "The world shall recover by thy Seed, which is Christ, the blessing which they lost in Adam." Upon the whole, then, God's choosing Abraham upon such grounds and for such purposes, is no reason whereon to build the doctrine of *particular election* to eternal life, much less of *reprobation*; any more than his choosing the Virgin Mary to be the mother of Christ, is a sufficient reason to conclude that all the women in the world besides her are reprobates.

Gen. xix. 16. "And while he, Lot, lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand—the Lord being merciful unto him, and brought him forth, and set him without the city." What! Because he was unconditionally elected to eternal life from all eternity? There is not the least hint of any such matter here, or elsewhere. All that is any where declared, is, that God *delivered Lot out of the overthrow of Sodom*, not merely because he was *Lot*, or *Lot elect*, in the Opponent's sense; But, 1. Because he was *just Lot*, 2. Pet. ii. 7. and, 2. In consequence of Abraham's intercession, ver. 29. *God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow.* And all that is denoted by it is, that God, for the sake of Christ's intercession, will save the righteous from the fire of hell. But was not Lot's wife brought forth, as well as he? And what became of her? *Remember Lot's wife,* Luke xvii. 32.

Gen. xxi. 10. *Cast out this bond-woman and her son; for the son of this bond-woman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.* So Gal. iv. 30. From these texts it is argued, "*Isaac* was a type of the *elect*, of the spiritual seed and children of God, and *heirs of the promise*; therefore was such himself.
" *Ishmael,*

" *Ishmael*, on the contrary, was a type of *reprobates*,
 " children of the flesh, which are not children of God,
 " nor heirs of the promise; consequently was such
 " himself." Rom. ix. 8. I answer, *types* are not
instances of the things they typify. The Paschal Lamb
 was a type of Christ, *the Lamb of God, that taketh*
away the sin of the world, but was not such itself.
 So Ishmael, though an outcast from Abraham's family,
 was no more a reprobate from the favour of God,
 than Isaac was. And Isaac, though peculiarly favoured
 of God, with regard to the covenant of promise made
 to Abraham, yet was not favoured *alone*. When
 Abraham prayed, *Oh that Ishmael might live before*
thee, Gen. xvii. 18, God said unto him, "As for
 Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed
 him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him
 exceedingly," ver. 20. And when he was cast out,
 God says, *I will make him a great nation*, chap. xxi. 18.
 and afterwards we read, *God was with the lad*, ver. 20.
 a phrase that implies God's *special favour and pro-*
tection. Moreover, we have reason to suppose, from
 Gen. xxv. 6, that Ishmael had a portion, though he
 was not the heir of the family. Therefore, though
 Ishmael be a type of those that are under a spirit of
 bondage, and not within the pale of the outward
 covenant; yea, allowing that he was such himself, and
 so neither he nor they could, nor can claim any
 covenant-right to the promised inheritance; yet it
 follows not, that neither he nor they have any portion
 at all. That he had a portion of his father's substance,
 I have already shewn, though not of the inheritance
 entailed upon the children of promise. Now, if he
 was a type of the children of bondage in one case,
 why not in another? If in their rejection from the
 nobler inheritance, why not in their allotment to some,
 though a lesser portion of good things? *In my Father's*
house, says our Lord, *are many mansions*, John xiv. 2.
 For whom, but for sincere and upright persons among
 those that have not the gospel, that follow the light
 they have, and use the power they have, as well as
 for the several ranks and classes of Christians? Yea,
 verily, I conclude so from Rom. ii. 14, 15, as well as
 from these words of our Lord, Matt. viii. 11, "Many
 shall

shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." I conceive, then, that those texts concerning Isaac and Ishmael can, by no fair construction, be forced into the service of the doctrine of *reprobation*. The highest end they serve for, and all that the Apostle quotes them for, is to shew that God bestows his peculiar favours when he will, and on whom he pleases, according as his *Wisdom* directs, his *Mercy* inclines, and his *Justice* permits.

Gen. xxv. 23, *The elder shall serve the younger.* This passage is quoted by St. Paul, Rom. ix. 11—13. he says, "For the children, (Esau and Jacob), being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, Rebekah, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written (Mal. i. 2, 3.) Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." These texts are much insisted upon as some of the main pillars of predestination, election, and reprobation; which yet in support of such doctrines, are but as straw and rotten wood. The purpose of God, according to election, I shall consider hereafter: the other passages here.

We read, Gen. xxv. 22, 23, that when "Rebekah had conceived, the children struggled together within her." And she said, (not, "if it be so, why am I thus?" but כִּי-אֵסָא, "if it be right," if all is as it should be, "why am I thus! And she went to enquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels: and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Now it is certain, if servitude be taken here in the commonly received sense, for a state of outward subjection and slavery, that in such a sense the elder, Esau, never did serve the younger, Jacob. Nay, nor did the *posterity* of Esau, ever so serve the *posterity* of Jacob. For however some have strained hard to find out the time when this prediction was so accomplished, they have failed in the attempt: for at most they tell us but of a *partial* servitude.

servitude. I take it for granted; then, that servitude here, as well as in divers other places, is to be taken in a comparative sense, and means no more than a state of inferiority. And that under the name of Jacob, or the *younger*, is signified the *Jewish Church and State*, which was more renowned and flourishing, and, for the time it lasted, was more favoured of God in many respects than that of the *Gentiles*, which was prefigured by Esau, or the *elder*. And for this reason only it is, that God says "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." For neither is *hatred* here to be taken in its *extensive*, but only in a *comparative* sense, as Gen. xxix. 31. Luke xiv. 26, for a less degree of love, or the shewing fewer marks of favour. And even the *Geneva* note applies this love and hatred to the temporal condition of the *Jews* and *Edomites*, agreeable to the context in Malachi. I presume, then, that God no more hated the *person* of Esau, than he did that of Jacob. For though he is called a *profane person*, Heb. xii. 16, for selling his birthright, and though he *found no place of repentance* in Isaac, his father, after he had conferred the blessing on Jacob; and though, on these accounts, he is a proper *type* of those that slight the mercies of God, and forfeit his favour; this is no proof that he was an *instance* of it, or that he never repented. Not the least hint is here given of the eternal states of Jacob and Esau, of the *election* of the one, and *reprobation* of the other; but only of God's choosing Jacob, as he had done Abraham and Isaac before, to be, in his generation, the Founder of the Jewish Church, and the Progenitor of Christ. Jacob and Esau could not both be chosen to this end. God preferred Jacob. And this he had as great a right to do, when his wisdom saw fit it should be done, as to cut off an elder brother by death, that the second might succeed to the inheritance.

Let it be observed farther, that when Esau so earnestly requested a blessing of his father, his father, though not in the form of a blessing, yet to as much purpose, in the spirit of prophecy, pronounced as great blessings concerning him, as concerning Jacob; except what relates to the Messiah, that was to descend from him. "Behold," says he, "thy dwelling shall be of
the

the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above. And (or) but by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother," i. e. be *inferior* to him for a while: "But it shall come to pass, when thou shalt have the dominion, thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck," Gen. xxvii. 39, 40. And when this came to pass, as it did when the Jews were rejected, and the Gentiles called, God might as truly say, Esau have I loved, and Jacob have I hated, (as he is sometime said to *abhor his own inheritance*, (Psal. cvi. 40.) as he once said, *Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated*. If any man, therefore, will drag in the prophecy concerning Jacob's superiority to establish the *election* of Jacob, and the *reprobation* of Esau; another may, with as good reason, produce the prophecy concerning Esau's superiority, to establish the *election* of Esau, and the *reprobation* of Jacob.—But the truth is, neither the one prophecy nor the other, concerns their eternal happiness or misery; but relates only to the outward state of the church, as it existed first under the Jewish dispensation, and afterwards under the Christian; which, from the Gentiles being the greater part thereof, is therefore called the Gentile church. If then these prophecies do not relate to the particular election or reprobation of Jacob or Esau, much less do they relate to the election or reprobation of any others. Nor does St. Paul quote those passages with any such view, but only to shew, that as God, for ends known only to his infinite wisdom, without any respect to Jacob's or Esau's previous works, chose Jacob's posterity to be his *peculiar* people, and not Esau's; so now, seeing Jacob's race rejected the promised Messiah, God, in his wisdom, without any respect to the Gentiles' previous works, chose the Gentiles to be his *peculiar* people.

Exod. ix. 16. "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my Name may be declared throughout all the earth." So again, God is represented as speaking to Pharaoh, Rom. ix. 17. which words are brought to prove, that God raised up Pharaoh, and hardened his heart, on purpose that he might send him to hell.

To.

To which I answer, The Scriptures teach no such blasphemy. For besides that the account of the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, is in many places shamefully misrepresented by our Translators; I say, moreover, that there is no such text as this in Exodus. Instead of the words, *raised thee up*, the Translators themselves have set in the margin, as the Hebrew reading, *made thee stand*. And that this, or some such expression, ought to be used, is evident from the verse foregoing; which in our translation is thus:—
 “For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth.” But this is a manifest falsehood. Pharaoh was *not then cut off* from the earth, nor even *smitten* with pestilence. 'Tis certain he was *drowned* in the Red Sea. The words then, 'tis evident, should be read thus, “For now I would stretch out my hand, that I might smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shouldst be cut off from the earth.” And then it follows very appositely, “But in very deed for this cause, or purpose, have I made thee stand, or remain, for to shew in thee my power,” &c. otherwise I would cut thee off immediately, as thou hast deserved. St. Paul, indeed, uses the word, *ἐξήγειρα*, which in the most common acceptation is, *I have raised up*. It is a word used in the sense of *raising from the dead*, as the simple verb *ἐγειρω* frequently is; and seems purposely chosen by the Apostle (inasmuch as he varies from the Septuagint, which is, *διελθόντος*, *Thou hast been preserved*) to express in one word, not only the sense of the Hebrew *הקמתי*, but that of the whole verse following, *q. d.* “I have raised thee from that death which thou hast deserved, and which I would inflict upon thee, were it not that I will now reserve thee, and make thee a more remarkable monument of my vengeance against stubborn and impenitent sinners.” In all this there is no proof then of God's having reprobated Pharaoh, and predestinated him to damnation from all eternity. If he be damned, it was for his own wickedness, and not by reason of God's irrelative, eternal hatred to him.

But

But does not God declare, Exod. iv. 21. vii. 3. xiv. 4, *I will harden Pharaoh's heart?* And chap. xiv. 17, *I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians?* I suppose not. I presume God declares he will do nothing more than just what he did. No doubt you will reply, Well, and is it not expressly said, chap. vii. 13, *He hardened Pharaoh's heart?* So it stands in our translation. But in the former translation it is thus: *So Pharaoh's heart was hardened;* which is more agreeable to the truth, and a little better sense, than as we read it now. For what is the antecedent to *He*? It must be either *Aaron*, or his rod, or the miracle and enchantments performed before Pharaoh. But *Aaron* did not harden Pharaoh's heart. It must be then either *Aaron's rod*, or the wonders. And to call either of these *He* is nonsense. But it was not *Aaron's rod* that did it any more than *Aaron* himself. Pharaoh, then, seeing what was done, hardened his own heart; took occasion so to do from what he had seen. So that the words may be as properly rendered, *It hardened Pharaoh's heart;* agreeable to chap. viii. 15, "When Pharaoh saw there was a respite, he hardened his heart." And chap. ix. 34, "When Pharaoh saw that the rain, and the hail, and the thunder were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart." But does not God say, chap. vii. 4, *Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you?* &c. Neither is that clear. *Will* is a sign of the future tense as well as *Shall*. So that this verse may be read, more agreeably to truth and reason, thus: "For Pharaoh will not hearken unto you, therefore I will lay my hand upon Egypt," &c. So again, chap. xi. 9, However, it is plainly said, chap. ix. 12. x. 20, 27. xiv. 8, *that the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart.* And chap. x. 1, the Lord himself says, *I have hardened his heart.* The word הכבדתי in this verse, and מרוק, chap. xiv. 17, clears up the whole matter; shews what God threatened, by what he did. That he only suffered Pharaoh's heart to be hardened, in just judgment: Gave him up to his own wilful stubbornness; God did not harden his heart by any positive act; much less had he absolutely determined that his heart should be so hardened by any irrelative decree from all eternity.

Exod.

Exod. xxxiii. 17, *I know thee by Name.* These are the words of God to Moses. From whence some would squeeze out the doctrine of election of *particular persons* that bear such and such *names*, rather than such and such *qualities*, to eternal life. But those that insist upon this, grant me at the same time, what I have elsewhere contended for, that even heathens may be saved, who never embraced either the Jewish, or the Christian religion. For concerning the heathen Cyrus, God saith, Isai. xlv. 4, *I have even called thee by thy name.* Some, aware of the consequence, that must follow from taking this phrase in such a sense, have evaded it, by saying, "It cannot rightly be concluded, from hence, that Cyrus pleased God; for God often accomplishes his will by means of bad men; even when such men think of quite another thing."—Allowing this; if it cannot be rightly concluded, that Cyrus pleased God, much less was elected to eternal life from all eternity, although God calls him his *Shepherd* and his *Anointed*, and *called him by his Name*; no more can it be proved that Moses was so elect, merely because God says to him, *I know thee by Name.* If the difference between the terms, *knowing* and *calling*, be objected, and that the former implies much more than the latter; still the opponents are brought into this dilemma, either to own that Cyrus was as high in the Divine Favour, as the Jews were; the same thing being said to him, as to them; unless they can shew good reason for the distinction; or else to acknowledge, that neither Cyrus nor the Jews were in God's favour at all. In short, all that can fairly be inferred from this phrase, or that used to Moses, is only this: that Moses, *as a servant, was faithful in all his house*, and God approved of him as a fit person, to conduct his people; that Cyrus was a person approved, and appointed of God to deliver his people out of captivity; and that the Jews were the people, whom God in his wisdom chose to be his peculiar people, till the Messiah should come, who was to break down the *middle wall of partition* that was between Jew and Gentile. However, the doctrine of particular election to eternal life can no more be drawn from these

these phrases, than from Christ's calling *Judas* to preach the gospel.

Exod. xxxiii. 19, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious; and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." Words of the same import we meet with, Rom. ix. 15, which, it is there asserted, according to our translation, God said to Moses; but I assert, God said no such words to Moses; nor is there any such text in all the Old or New Testament. The words in *Exodus* are thus: רַחֵם, (supposing the preceding ; converse), *I will be gracious to whom*, אֶרְחַם, *I should or ought to be gracious*; and רַחֵם (supposing again ; converse), *I will shew mercy on whom*, אֶרְחַם, *I should or ought to shew mercy*; i. e. upon such sinners as my *Wisdom, Justice, and Truth* permit.— Again, in *Romans*, the words are as quoted from the Septuagint, ἐλεησώ, *I will have mercy on whom*, ἐλεώ, *I should or ought to have mercy*; and ὀφειλάω, *I will have compassion, on whom*, ὀφειλάω, *I should or ought to have compassion*. Now any ordinary Reader, that knows not a letter in the original, may easily perceive, that there is a remarkable difference between the two *Hebrew* words, as well as between the two *Greek* words. And every honest Reader that knows any thing at all of the original, must acknowledge a change of *tense* in the *Hebrew*, and of both *mood* and *tense* in the *Greek*; consequently our Translators have shamefully departed from the word of God, and handled it deceitfully, in translating both words in the *future tense* of the *indicative mood*, instead of translating the latter words in each member of the sentence, in the *imperfect tense* of the *subjunctive mood*: or, to make the matter plain to every one, in putting, *I will have mercy and compassion*, instead of, *I should or ought to have mercy and compassion*.

And that the interpretation I contend for is right, will appear more plainly still, by considering the occasion of the Apostle's quoting these words. In the preceding verse he mentions this objection, *What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid*, he replies. And then to prove that there is not, he urges these words of God to Moses. But if those words are to be taken in the sense we have them

in our translation, what a gross absurdity must the Apostle be guilty of in citing words in defence of God's justice, which represent him as an arbitrary, self-willed tyrant, that spares or punishes merely by *humour* and *caprice*, without any regard to *Wisdom*, *Mercy*, *Justice*, or *Truth*? Whereas, if they be taken in the sense I have given, and, as it is evident they ought, they then suit the Apostle's purpose, and do prove that there is no unrighteousness, no injustice in God. The doctrine of *absolute, unconditional predestination* and *election*, therefore, I presume, cannot rest upon these texts.

Numb. xiv. 30, "Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun." Hence, it is inferred, that Caleb and Joshua only were *elect*, and all the rest above twenty years old were *reprobates*. But never was there so false an inference. For notwithstanding they were not suffered, on account of their sins, to enter into the promised land, (tho' yet not forced to keep out by virtue of any absolute decree of God) it follows not that they all were shut out of heaven, who mutinied against Moses and Aaron, but Caleb and Joshua. At ver. 19, we find Moses interceding for them; ver. 20, and the Lord said, "I have pardoned, according to thy word." Now, I suppose, it will be easily granted, that no pardoned sinner, continuing such to the end, shall go to hell; and that none of these did persevere in a pardoned state, is no where said in Scripture. So that from thence, no man has authority to pronounce them all *reprobates*; much less appointed to be such from all eternity. But if our adversaries in the dispute will have those mutineers to be *reprobates*, because they did not enter into the promised land; for the same reason they must number Moses, and Aaron, and Hur among *reprobates*. That these were types of such as *fall from grace* here, and so miss of glory hereafter, is certain from Heb. iii. but that they were *instances* of it cannot be proved. Much less can it be proved that they, as *such* and *such* persons *by name*, were from all eternity doomed to *disbelieve* and *be damned*, without

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any possibility of doing otherwise. Nor can any such doctrine as this be fairly drawn from the passages of Scripture under consideration.

Deut. ii. 30, "But Sihon; King of Heshbon, would not let us pass by him: for the Lord thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand." So again, Josh. xi. 20. The two first verbs in Deuteronomy are in Hiphil. And if our translators had rendered the last of them in the *permissive* sense, instead of the *causative*, as they have done the first, thus: "The Lord thy God *let* or *suffered* his spirit to be hard, and his heart to be obstinate;" this verse would only have shewn God's justice on self-hardened sinners, and not have charged him with cruelty in hardening them on purpose to destroy them for their hardness.

I cannot help observing that our Translators, in conformity to the system of the Synod, have shewn themselves openly here, in thus using two different measures; imitating some crafty dealers, who use one measure when they buy, and another when they sell a thing; in that they have, in the same verse, so diversified the sense of the *Hiphil* conjugation, or mood, when there was no reason for it, but only to answer their own end.

Deut. xiv. 2, "The Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth." Hence the doctrine of particular election is inferred. If nothing more be meant, than *election to outward church privileges*, I contend not. But if *election to inward grace and eternal glory* be meant, I deny that such an election is intended in, or is to be inferred from these words; much less to the exclusion of all the world besides. Nor indeed is the election here spoken of *unconditional and irrevocable*; for we find a condition required to be performed in order to make this election *sure*, Exod. xix. 5, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine." However, that this peculiarity and election did not exclude all the rest of mankind from having
any

any part or share in God's spiritual mercies, is evident from divers instances already produced; nor was this mentioned by Moses to establish any such notion; but only to shew, that God of his free-grace had distinguished the Jews above all other people; not to the *rejecting* of them; for he adds, "All the earth is mine." And of this opinion was the learned Mr. Joseph Mede, in his Remarks upon כְּנָהּ עַם rendered λαός περιεσσιτός, which our Translation calls a *peculiar people*; he calls the same, "a *supernumerary people*: a people wherein God had a superlative property and interest, above and beside his common interest in all the nations of the world. For so he saith, Exod. xix.—As if he should say, But "you shall be mine in a degree *above* the rest." How different is this from the modern doctrine of predestination, which mistaken men are for cramming down our throats as *orthodoxy*.

Nor was this *outward election* of the Jews to be God's *peculiar* or *special people*, as they are elsewhere stiled, to last always, but only till the coming of the Messiah, when all that would believe in him, were to stand in the same degree of relation to God. Accordingly, it is said, concerning believers in Christ, whether they had been Jews or Gentiles before they believed, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people;" 1 Pet. ii. 9, and these, and many more passages to the same purpose, are applied to the Jews before, and to Christians, since the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, in general. Not that *all* of either sort shall be *infallibly saved*, because they are stiled a *chosen* and a *peculiar* people; but only those that "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called," and that "give diligence to make their calling and their election sure." For if they do not this they will be so far from reaping any benefit by having been numbered among God's peculiar people, that it will greatly enhance their condemnation. "For he that knew his Lord's will and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. And unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required," Luke xii. 47, 48.

Ruth i. 14, "And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clave unto her." So then, it is presumed, Ruth was elect, but Orpah a reprobate, because she took the advice of her mother-in-law, *and returned to her mother's house*, ver. 8. But if this was a crime in Orpah, Naomi may as well be deemed a reprobate for urging her to it. But if Naomi was a true believer, (as we have sufficient reason to think she was) and the Lord hears the prayers of his people (as we are assured he does, when they pray according to his will; and we have no reason to think Naomi did otherwise,) then have we equal reason to conclude that Orpah, with regard to her eternal state, was as much favoured of God as Ruth was. For Naomi prayed for her, as well as for Ruth, "the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant that ye may find rest each of you in the house of her husband," ver. 8, 9. We know this prayer was heard for Ruth, and so have reason to conclude it was heard for Orpah also. Nor have we any more reason to doubt of the one's happiness, than of the other's. Nor does this text in the least favour the doctrine of *particular election and reprobation*. It shews us God's *Providence*, with regard to the disposal of sublunary events; but nothing of his *predestination*, with regard to the eternal states of mankind.

1 Sam. ii. 25, "Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them." The particle ו signifies, *therefore*, as well as *because*. This verse then ought to be rendered in this sense: *Notwithstanding, &c. therefore the Lord would slay them*, in other words, because they would not hearken unto the voice of their father, *it was the Lord's will to suffer them to die, or be slain*. Eli's sons, then, did not sin because God had decreed they should; but God determined they should die because they sinned. "For them that honour me," saith he, "I will honour; and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed," ver. 30.

1 Kings xii. 15, "Wherefore the King hearkened not unto the people: for the cause was from the Lord, that he might perform his saying—unto Jeroboam."

To

To the same purpose is Judges xiv. 4, and divers others passages. And what is implied in them all more than this, that "God is King of all the earth," and that he "putteth down one and setteth up another?" and yet that not without some wise, just, and sufficient reason, tho' it be not always express: However it generally is, as 2 Chron. xxii. 7, "And the destruction," or treading down, (so the margin rightly) "of Ahaziah was of God, by or for, coming to Joram;" and so chap. xxv. 20, "But Amaziah would not hear, for it came of God, that he might deliver them into the hand of their enemies." What, without any just reason? No, but "because they fought after the gods of Edom." And what has all this to do with the doctrine of election and reprobation? No more than with that of transubstantiation. All that can be inferred from such passages is, that God is the *moral Governor* of the world; not that he is an *unreasonable* and *cruel tyrant*.

Ezra i. 5, "Then rose up—all them, whose spirit God had raised to go up, to build the house of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem." I find this text urged by some writers in favour of predestination and election, which they apply in this manner: None went up to build the house of God, but those whose spirit God raised up; the rest remained contented in Chaldaea. So none rise up to build the spiritual house of God, but those whose spirit God raises up; the rest are suffered to continue in their sins and perish. Grotius upon this text observes, that those who did not go up to build, (as, no doubt, some could not for age, and others, perhaps, were not willing) made a free-will offering for the house of God. So that those contributed to the building of the house, as well as those that went up. And, doubtless, it was God that moved their spirit to this; and, I will add also, to continue in the land of their captivity, that their posterity in time to come, might carry the gospel to every nation under heaven, Acts ii. 5, James i. 1. 1 Pet. i. 1. All that can be gathered from this text, then, is, that we have need of God's preventing grace before we can do his will. And who denies this, that pays any regard to the Scriptures? Or, if

it must be pressed into the service of predestination and election, it will only hurt the cause it is taken to serve! for it makes much more for general redemption. At least this is certain, it will prove the number of the elect to be abundantly more than that of reprobates; that the flock of Christ is not a little flock, in comparison of the rest of mankind, but a very *great* one; for it is generally allowed that abundantly more Jews went up to Judea than stayed behind.

Prov. xvi. 4, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Hence it is argued, that God made wicked men on purpose to *damn* them. Let it be observed here, that the word *things* is not in the Hebrew. And that some render כל, *all men*, instead of *all things*; which plainly appears to have been Solomon's meaning, from his mentioning the *wicked*, in the latter part of the verse. But our Translators here, as in many places besides, have shewn their attachment to *synodical orthodoxy*, by putting in the word *things*, instead of *men*, lest the Scripture should seem to countenance what they supposed to be an error, viz. that God made *all men* for himself; as well as to avoid saying, what might seem to contradict the words following. But this helps them not at all. For if God made all *things* for himself, he made all *men* for the same end. Beside that it is certain our Saviour several times uses the term *all things*, to signify *all men*. Certain it is, then, that God made *all men* for himself, even in this sense, that they might be happy in and with himself: *to be*, as the wise man says, *an image of his own immortality*. However, *the wicked is for the day of evil*; not by force on God's part, but choice on their own.

The Septuagint have rendered the whole verse thus; "All the works of the Lord are with, or according to righteousness: but the wicked is reserved to an evil day." So that those Interpreters did not once imagine that God, *who is loving to every man*, made the wicked on purpose to *damn* them. An assertion which implies two *blasphemous falsehoods*, 1. That God made the wicked, as *such*; 2. That he made them *such* on purpose to *destroy* them. But God did
not

not make the wicked, as wicked: for he "created man in his own image." Nor did he make any man on purpose to destroy him, for he hath declared, that he "wills not the death of any sinner." Although, therefore, "the wicked is reserved for the day of evil," it is not by any decree of God that he is wicked; tho' it be decreed, that "the wicked shall be turned into hell," Psalm ix. 17, if they live and die impenitent. This text, therefore, is far from giving the cast countenance to the doctrine of Predestination.

Isai. vi. 10, "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed." This passage is quoted, Matt. xiii. 14, Mark iv. 12, Luke viii. 10, John xii. 40, Acts xxviii. 26, Rom. xi. 8, but with a wonderful difference; and sometimes in one place so as to contradict another, in appearance at least; in that sometimes this hardness, blindness, and stupidity of heart is attributed to God, as the Cause, as some will have it; sometimes to the ministers of his word; and at other times to the people themselves.

The words in Isaiah, which in our Translation are rendered *imperatively*, "Make the heart of this people fat or gross," &c. may be rendered *indicatively*, "This people's heart is waxed gross," as it is quoted in Matthew by our Saviour, who doubtless knew well the meaning of the Prophet's words. And in the very same manner they are quoted by St. Paul, Acts xxviii. 26. So that the hardness, blindness, and stupidity of the Jews, in the days of Isaiah, Christ, and the Apostle, are not to be attributed to God, as the *efficient* Cause, nor to the ministers of his word, nor his word itself, as the *instrumental* causes, but to their own *perverse*ness; in that, as our Lord says, "Seeing they saw not, and hearing they heard not, neither understood," not being willing so to do. This people were in these days, as they were in Ezekiel's, concerning whom God says, "Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and

hear not; for they are a rebellious house," Ezek. xii. 2.

But taking the words of the prophet imperatively, this will not at all oppose the meaning I have assigned to them: For the *imperative mood* does not always imply a *command*, but only a *permission*, as when God permitted the lying Spirit to influence Ahab's Prophets, he said, "Go forth and do so:" in which words, it is impious to suppose that the God of Truth, who hates lying, would lay his command upon the evil spirit to lie; so that he only suffers him to do what of his own mind he was inclined to. Again, the three Verbs used by the Prophet are in the conjugation Hiphil, which is not always *causative*, but often *permissive*, and also *declarative*; as Isai. lxiii. 17, "O Lord, why hast thou SUFFERED us to err from thy ways, and SUFFERED our heart to be hardened from thy fear?" which our Translators, with too great an air of impiety, either thro' oscitancy, or in favour of their system, have rendered, "O Lord, why hast thou MADE us to err from thy ways, and HARDENED our hearts from thy fear?" However, they did not forget to render it in the *permissive* sense, Ezek. xxxix. 7, "I will not LET them pollute my holy Name?" because there, their system required it. So again, Exod. iv. 21, "I will LET his (Pharaoh's) heart be hardened, because (it being there, as frequently elsewhere, ætiological) he will not let the people go." In the *declarative* sense we find this conjugation used, Isai. v. 23, which justify the wicked for reward; i. e. declare or pronounce the wicked righteous. So chap. xliii. 28, "Therefore, I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary," i. e. declared or pronounced them profane. Whether, therefore, the Prophet's words are taken as the *imperative mood*, used *permissively* or *declaratively*; or as the *preter tense Hiphil*, (in which they may be taken) used *assertively*, it comes to the same end. For God would never *assert*, or command the prophet to *declare*, what was not true; or bid him *permit* that people's heart to be fat or gross in a way of judgment, if they themselves had not first made it so thro' their own obstinacy and perverseness. So that the same thing is
still

still implied, which our Lord declares, viz. that "the heart of that people was waxed gross," &c. and that not thro' God's fault, but their own.

I am aware that those who take upon them to charge all the sins of all mankind upon the God of *Holiness* and *Love*, will object these words, Mark iv. 11, 12, "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them." So again to the same purpose, Luke viii. 10. From whence they infer, that our Saviour delivered his doctrine obscurely in parables, on purpose that the people might not understand him. But can it be supposed that Christ, who declares, John viii. 12, "I am the Light of the world;" and again, chap. xii. 46, "I am come a Light into the world;" should designedly speak in such a manner as to leave the world still in darkness and ignorance? By no means. In order, then, to clear up this matter concerning *giving* and *not giving*, let it be considered, that a thing offered with a real intention of giving, may be said *to be given*, with regard to the intention of him that offers it, whether it be received or not. So Christ is said to "give himself a ransom for all," tho' all do not receive him;" and the sin-offering is said to be given, tho' not eaten, Lev. x. 17. And again, with regard to those that will not receive what is offered, it may be said *not to be given*. Thus Moses tells the Jews, Deut. xxix. 4, "The Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day." Not that the Lord never *offered* them his grace, for it is certain he did; and in this sense he did *give* it them, if they would have accepted it: But as they were stubborn and perverse, and would not accept the offered grace; therefore, it is truly said, God did *not give* it. So in our common way of speaking, concerning a gift offered by one to another that refuses it, the offerer may indifferently say, *I gave* it you, but you would not accept it; or, *I did not give* it you, because you would not accept it.

it. In this manner our blessed Saviour himself explains his own meaning, Matt. xiii. 14, "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." I suppose all Expositors are agreed in this, that by *having* here is to be understood *receiving*, because what we have, we first receive; and so receiving as to *improve* what we receive. So it evidently means, chap. xxv. 29. And in this sense the Jews used the word *have*, in this sentence here quoted by our Lord, which was a proverb in common use among them. The doctrine then that our Saviour teaches us here, is, that whosoever *receives* the grace offered, and *improves* the same, to him shall be given, he shall have an increase of grace; but whosoever does not receive and improve it, from him shall be taken away, in just judgment, the power of receiving grace offered (as was the case of Pharaoh and the obstinate Jews) and even the offer of grace, which they once had. From these words of our Saviour, then, no man can fairly lay the blame of men's want of grace upon God. "He took off the yoke on their jaws, and laid meat unto them," Hosea xi. 4. That they did not eat when they might, was their own fault; that the meat was afterwards taken from them, was the punishment they had justly deserved.

With regard to the design of our Saviour in speaking in parables, certainly it was directly contrary to what some men pretend, viz. that he spake thus on purpose that the people might *not understand* him. For the very end and design of his so speaking was, that he might be the better understood, and that his words might make a more lively and lasting impression upon the minds of his hearers, than they would have done if he had only spoken plain naked truths, without the illustration of *parables* and *comparisons*; which are of far greater force than *simple document*. The end of Christ's coming into the world and teaching, was to *instruct* mankind, not to *keep them in ignorance*. For if that had been his design, he would not have come a *light*, but *darkness* into the world. If he spake in an unintelligible manner, it were the same as if he had spoken in an unknown tongue; a
practice

practice censured by St. Paul, and which all Protestants condemn in Papists. Certain it is, that the common method of instruction among the Jews was by parables, as appears by the rabbinical writings. Our Lord's method of teaching, then, was such as the Jews had been accustomed to. Now the manner of teaching in this way was various. Sometimes the Teacher delivered his doctrine first, and then illustrated and inculcated it upon the minds of his hearers by a simile or parable, as Luke xxi. 25—29. Sometimes he delivered his parable first, and then explained the meaning thereof, as Matt. xiii. 47—50. Sometimes he only gave out his parable without an exposition, to try the disposition and whet the industry of his hearers, as our Lord did when he uttered divers parables recorded in this chapter. In such case, those who were desirous of farther instruction, applied to their Teacher for it, as did the disciples to our Lord, to know the meaning of the parable of the tares, and of the sower. Whereupon our Lord says, "To you," i. e. who are desirous to learn and diligent to enquire, "it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but to others," that are careless about the matter, "it is not given;" they are not favoured with such knowledge: They have it not, because they ask not; but all these things are done in parables, and no farther. There they are content to let the matter rest; even in the bare hearing of parables, without any concern about their meaning.

But still it may be objected, Our Lord's words in Mark make it evident, that the very end for which he spake in parables was, that the people *might not* perceive, nor understand his meaning, lest they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them. And to this agree his words in Luke. In answer to this I say, it is not an evident matter. For I suppose, it is universally granted, that our Lord spake in the Hierosolymitan, which is a dialect of the Hebrew Language. The words, therefore, that we have in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are not the *identical* words which our Lord spake, but only a *Translation* of them into the Greek Language. And that this is so, is evident, because certain it is, he did not use the

very words recorded in all the Evangelists; because they differ widely in sound, however they agree in sense. What that sense is, is to be enquired. Matthew uses the word $\alpha\iota$, *because*, denoting the reason, which, with regard to the disposition our Lord saw in the Jews, had induced him so to speak, viz. their inattention, which he was desirous to remove. Mark and Luke use the word, $\omega\alpha$, *that*, which might seem to denote the final cause of our Lord's so speaking, viz. that the people might still remain in ignorance, and so *perish for lack of knowledge*. Now it is certain these two particles are often used the one for the other, and must be so in the present case, in order to reconcile the Evangelists together. The $\alpha\iota$, *because*, of Matthew must be explained by the $\omega\alpha$ of Mark and Luke, or *vice versa*. But if we explain $\alpha\iota$ by $\omega\alpha$, it will render Matthew's words nonsense; since they must then mean, (the verbs being in the *Indicative* mood) *that*, or *to the end that, seeing they do not see*. It is evident, therefore, that $\omega\alpha$ must be explained by $\alpha\iota$, and then the words of Mark and Luke, without any forced construction, will perfectly agree with Matthew's, "Because seeing, they see not."

With regard to the word $\mu\pi\omega\delta\iota\varsigma$, rendered, *left at any time*, which is used by the Evangelists instead of the Hebrew נָס , the sense of the Greek word must be fixt by the Hebrew. Now the meaning of נָס sometimes is, *that not*, or *so that not*. "Now the Scripture," says Mr. Mede in his Letter to Dr. Twiss, "is wont to extend the Greek words it useth, unto the full notion of the Hebrew or Chaldee, to which they answer (as may be proved by many examples) tho' in the Greek use they signified not so. This dialect is called *Lingua Hellenistica* (spoken by the Hellenists or Greek Jews, who lived dispersed under the Greek Empire) whose property is to accommodate *Verba Græca notioni Orientis*, Greek words to the Eastern notion or sense." A very just observation, and which ought to be much more considered than it has been in the interpretation of the Scriptures. Agreeable to this rule, then, we may accommodate the sense of $\mu\pi\omega\delta\iota\varsigma$ to that of נָס , which is, *so that*

that not. Far from charging our Saviour then with cruelty and folly in darkening his doctrine and frustrating one great end and design for which he came into the world, the Evangelists, when they are suffered to tell their own story, do no more than declare the disregard that the Jews had to the plainest doctrines delivered by our Saviour, and the way he took to make it have a deeper impresson upon their minds, viz. as Hosea says, by *using similitudes*; and that in them, as our Lord says, was fulfilled again (*αναπαύσει*) as it had been before, *the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, Hearing ye hear, but will not understand, and seeing ye see, but will not perceive.* (So the original means, or rather, as the verbs are in Hiphil, more emphatically, ye will not cause, set or suffer yourselves to understand and perceive, i. e. will not do your part, will not take care to understand and perceive.) “For this people’s heart,” says our Lord, “is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, so that they cannot see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and therefore I cannot heal them,” Mark vi. 5. Matt. xiii. 58. or as Mark interprets it, “their sins cannot be forgiven them.”

In some such sense as this, God’s attributes of *Wisdom, Justice, and Mercy* so requiring, we must understand those Scriptures; and not have recourse in this matter, as Calvin would have us, “to the Predestination of God;” which is neither more nor less than to have recourse to a HORRIBLE DECREE of *Reprobation*, unworthy of that God, who is LOVE. God here is not charged with the sinner’s destruction, but the sinners themselves.

But farther let it be considered, that the Evangelist tells us, Mark iv. 33, 34, that our Saviour *spake many parables unto the people, as they were able to hear*; adapting his word to the capacity of the hearers. “But without a parable spake he not unto them: And in private he expounded all things to his disciples. And he said to them, ver. 21, 22, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed, and not to be set on a candlestick? For there

is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested, neither was any thing kept secret, but that it might come abroad." As if he had said, "I explain these things to you, I give you this Light, not to conceal, but to impart it to others." Accordingly he says to his disciples elsewhere, "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops," Matt. x. 27. So that it is plain from hence, it was far from our Saviour's intention to speak in parables that he might never be understood; and that if any perish thro' ignorance, the fault is their own and not God's; seeing they wilfully shut their eyes against the light.

Nay but, it is replied, St. John expressly charges the matter upon God, saying, "Therefore, they could not believe, because that Esaias saith again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them." So does St. Paul, Rom. xi. 8, "God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this day;" as it is written, Isa. xxix. 10, "The Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep." Calvin's own note upon this passage might be a sufficient answer to this objection. "The Jews are senseless to divine things, both by their own sin and the just judgment of God, who often denies his gifts to those, that blind themselves." God, in Scripture, according to the manner of speaking in use among the Jews, is often said to *do* or *give* a thing; which he *suffers* to be done or had. All this hardening and blinding then was no otherwise the act of God, than that he gave them up judicially to that hardness and blindness, which they had brought upon themselves by their own obstinacy. They once had their gracious day, and might have "seen the things belonging to their peace," however, these things were afterwards "hid from their eyes." Which yet was not occasioned by Isaiah's prophecy: That was no cause at all of their unbelief. Nor was it any more *absolutely impossible* for them to believe, than it was for Christ to do miracles in his own country, Mark vi.

vi. 5, or for Joseph to lie with his mistress, Gen. xxxix. 9, or for the *man in bed*, to rise and lend his friend three loaves, Luke xi. 7. The impossibility arose only from their will. They could not, because they would not. Christ would not, because it was not agreeable to the rule of his infinite Wisdom so to work. Joseph would not, because it was disagreeable to his sanctified will. The others would not, because it was not agreeable to their perverse humour, so to believe and do. Upon the whole, then, we readily grant, God is *just* whenever he gives up stubborn sinners to their own stubbornness, when they will not be reclaimed; but we cannot suppose him cruel to decree they shall be stubborn, in order to be given up to their stubbornness, and so perish for what they could not help.

Upon the whole, the doctrine of reprobation, which, it is pretended, is undeniably held forth in these texts, has not the least claim or interest in them: But is founded only upon a *particle* or two mistaken, the *mood* of some verbs not attended to, and a disregard of a *mode of speech* usual in the Scriptures; and all this in spite of, and direct opposition to the parallel passages, which entirely solve the difficulty.

Jerem. i. 5, "Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a Prophet unto the nations." So Gal. i. 15, 16, "It pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen." Again, concerning John the Baptist, it was said by the Angel, Luke i. 15, "He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb." These texts are produced to prove the election of particular persons to endless happiness from all eternity. But for what reason I see not. For there is not the least breathing in any of these texts, either concerning election from eternity, or to eternal happiness. The date of election goes no farther back than their mother's womb; and the election itself is confined wholly to *office* here, and not extended to glory hereafter. All that can be inferred from hence is, that God fore-

saw

law, that Jeremiah, Paul, and John, would be fit persons to be employed in his service, and therefore determined to employ them at a proper season. But all that are chosen by Christ himself to an *office* or *employment* in his church, are not chosen infallibly to eternal happiness. At least, those will not assert they are, who assert that Judas is gone to hell.

If it be objected, Their *fitness* for office must be the gift of God. I answer, True. His grace first prevented, and then followed them: but followed them only because they closed in with and used that which prevented them. "For this is the grand rule of God's dealings with the children of men. The key to all his providential dispensations;" "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even what he hath."

Jerem. iii. 14, "And I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion." Two of a family, i. e. of a tribe, which is often in Scripture called a family. To this passage some have given this interpretation, I will choose some of you: signifying that God had elected only a few to return out of Babylon, or to Christ. Yea, according to the charitable computation of some, who dwell much upon the number, two of a family or tribe, only four souls are to be saved out of near fifty thousand, even of those that are called Christians. But such persons might easily imagine there must be some mistake in their account, if they would only consider, that there were but *two* families or tribes carried into Babylon; in the whole, few more than *ten thousand persons*; so that *only four* persons, according to their reckoning, must have returned again; whereas, we find near *fifty thousand* returned: almost five times as many as were carried away. Or if *families* be taken for the inhabitants of cities, or for persons of the same stock or kindred, according to Ezra, still not only *two*, but *many hundreds* of a family, were brought out of captivity. So that this text gives no aid to the cause, which it is brought to serve. Men of cooler thought and wiser heads look upon this text as parallel to Isaiah xxvii. 12, "Ye shall

shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel." Be scattered where ye may, or in ever so small numbers among the heathen, I will find you out, and bring you back to Zion.

Jerem. xx. 7, "O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived." This impious speech, put into the mouth of Jeremiah by our Translators, has emboldened many to charge all their sins upon God, as what he had decreed. Whereas, the words of the Prophet admit of a quite different meaning. The word פתה, here rendered to *deceive*, signifies to *persuade* or *entice*, as it is in the margin. The words, then, ought to be read thus, *O Lord, thou hast persuaded me*, i. e. to speak in thy name; and *I was persuaded*. And that this is their true meaning appears from what follows, ver. 9, *I said within myself* (so אמרת means) i. e. when the word of the Lord was made a reproach to me, *I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his Name. But* (literally) *there, or it was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, neither could I*, i. e. forbear speaking any longer.

This Exposition is confirmed by the marginal note in the former Translation of the Bible, which is thus: "He sheweth that he did his office, in that he re- proved the people for their vices, and threatened them with God's judgments; but because he was derided and persecuted for this, he was discouraged and thought to have ceased to preach, save that God's Spirit did force him thereunto." The Annotator, but that he was a *Calvinist* too, should have said *persuaded* or *enticed*, as our marginal reading is: for פתה never signifies to *force*. So that this impious notion of God's deceiving mankind has not the least countenance from this text.

However, if it have no countenance here, say they, it has elsewhere. As Jer. iv. 10, "Then, said I, ah, Lord God, surely thou hast greatly deceived this people, and Jerusalem." And Ezek. xiv. 9, "And if the Prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that Prophet, and I will

I will stretch out my hand upon him, and I will destroy him." 2 Theff. ii. 11, "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." For what cause? Merely to shew his *sovereignty*, as some say? Nay, but "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." Which certainly must have been offered to them; otherwise, it is not to be supposed they should be damned for not receiving it. And if sinners will not receive grace when it is offered, it is but just in God to send them such *strong delusion*, or *energy of error*. But how does the God of Truth send this? By *inspiring* men with error? Not so; but only by *permitting* them to be led away with the spirit of error, as Ahab was by his false prophets; and as he is supposed, in the Lord's Prayer to *lead men into temptation*; which is not by *actually leading* them in such a way; but only by *suffering* them to be led into it, who take no care to seek to him for direction. For certain it is, "God cannot be tempted with evil; neither tempteth he any man," Jam. i. 13.

And that the Author of the *Voxel points* understood the *deceiving* in Ezekiel only in a *permissive* sense, is plain, because פתית is there pointed as in *Piel*, which, as well as *Hiphil*, is *permissive*. So the word השטת in Jeremiah is in *Hiphil*, and may be understood *permissively*. But if understood *causatively*, and the word, *saying*, be referred to the *people* themselves and not to God, (which must be done, unless we would make God a liar) the meaning will be found and good, though it be granted God is there said to deceive the people, who said peace, and yet continued in their sins. For in this sense, if it be *deceiving*, God will deceive every finally impenitent and obstinate sinner upon earth. Though, by the way, even this kind of deceit is not to be charged as a fault upon God, seeing he hath declared, *There is no peace to the wicked*; but the blame must fall on the sinner's own head, who would not believe and beware. These texts, then, make nothing for election and reprobation.

Nay, but he says, "Jerem. xxxi. 3, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Therefore, those

those whom he *once loves*, and to whom he will give the kingdom, he *always did* and *always will* love. That does not appear from this text. The Jewish nation is introduced by the Prophet, saying, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me;" q. d. But what does that profit me now? He has, at length, forsaken me. God replies, *Eodem te amore prosequor, quo olim*. Yea, I love thee with the old love. That love which I bare to thee in the wilderness, I bear to thee still; look upon you as my peculiar people still: *Therefore*, (as the marginal reading is,) *have I extended loving-kindness unto thee*. This, according to the opinion of divers, famous for learning and piety in the Church of God, is the genuine sense of this text.

Lamentations ii. 20, "Shall the women eat their fruit, and children of a span long?" Hence, some have inferred that there are in hell children of a span long. Might they not have inferred it just as well, from *Abraham begat Isaac*? Here is no word either of hell or heaven; but of the miseries endured at the siege of Jerusalem: During which some mothers were reduced to such extremity, as even to devour their own children.

However, God says, Hof. ii. 19, 20, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord." God, according to our Translations, does say this. But, let it be considered, that *to know*, or *acknowledge the Lord*, was a condition necessary to be observed on the part of the people, in order to their being entitled to the blessings promised on God's part. For the last clause may be rendered, *When thou shalt*, or, *If thou wilt know the Lord*. And that this promise was not *absolute* and *unconditional*, is certain from chap. vii. 13, where God says to that very people, to whom this promise is made, "Woe unto them, for they have fled from me; destruction (or devastation) unto them, for they have transgressed against me." Again, chap. ix. 15, "All their wickedness

edness is in Gilgal: for there I hated them: for the wickedness of their doings I will drive them out of my house, I will love them no more." Now, it is certain, God would never denounce threatenings so diametrically opposite to his promise, had not there been a condition in the promises, which *had not been*, or which he *forefaw would not be performed*. If it be objected, that the condition required on man's part is a promised blessing, as well as all the other particulars mentioned, it must be asked, To whom is it promised? To a *certain number* of persons, fixed on *by name* from all eternity? Certainly not. No good reason for this can be given, and Scripture does not declare it. Only to such then, I am persuaded, as *believe the report* of the gospel, and endeavour to frame their lives accordingly, is the promise made. For to such only shall *the Arm of the Lord be revealed*. Such only will the Lord betroth to himself for ever, and give to them his kingdom.

Matt. xi. 25, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." So Luke x. 21. From these texts some pretend to squeeze out the doctrine of election and reprobation; whereas, they yield no such juice. For if the etymology of Εξομολογημαί be considered; that word will be found to mean, as Pafor observes, to *assent or agree to*; or as others, *entirely to acquiesce in*, as well as to *think*. So that, taking the word in this sense, our Saviour does no more than profess his *entire acquiescence* in the wise counsel of his heavenly Father, who in the dispensations of grace had taken such methods, as confounded the wisdom of this world; counteracting the ways of men.

And indeed this is the sense in which this passage is understood by the Annotator on the old Translation used in Queen Elizabeth's time. For on the word *so* in the next verse (which is a confirmation of what our Lord had said just before) he has this note, "This word sheweth, that he contented himself in his Father's counsel."

But

But taking the word as we have it, *I thank*. What does our Lord thank his heavenly Father for? For the *reprobation* of poor sinners? No, no more than St. Paul *thanks God*, Rom. vi. 17, that the *Romans had been the servants of sin*; or 1 Tim. i. 12, 13, that himself had been *a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious*. It is only an Hebrew form of speech, wherein two opposites are mentioned. The one *bad*, mentioned not as *matter of thankfulness*, but only as a *motive of more gratitude* for the other, which is *good*. The meaning of our Lord's words, then, is no more than this: I thank thee, O Father, that seeing in thy wise counsel thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, thou hast revealed them unto babes. Nor does the *hiding* imply an impossibility of a *future revelation* of those things to those from whom they are hid at present. Seeing that a gainsayer of truth, that is as wise as Paul of Tarsus, may be converted and become as a little child. So that here is no ground for that horrid notion, that Jesus Christ, the adorable Friend of sinners, while executing his mediatorial office, thanks God for *damning* them.

Matt. xv. 24, "I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Hence, some have wildly inferred, that all that are not in a covenant relation with God shall perish. But how false this inference is, appears, not only from the case of Naaman, the Syrian, and others, but even from the case of this Syrophenician before us. Say, "but such were elected." True, they followed the light they had, and, therefore, according to St. Peter's word, Acts x. 34, were accepted of God for Christ's sake. And so, no doubt, were and will be thousands and millions that never heard the name of a crucified Jesus, much less stood in any outward covenant-relation to God. Absolute, unconditional election, then, receives no support from this text.

Matt. xx. 16, "Many be called, but few chosen." The word, *called*, was the common title given of God to all professors in the Jewish Church. Isaiah xlvi. 12, "Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel, my *Called*." The word *Chosen* or *Elect* was the same. Isai.

xliv. 1, 2. "Israel, whom I have chosen. Jeshurun, whom I have chosen." And the same titles are given to all professors in common in the Christian church, Rom. i. 7. Coloff. iii. 12. Jude 1. So that those expressions in general make nothing for the doctrine in dispute. Sometimes they seem to be used the one for the other, or however the one to imply the other. And they may be understood sometimes, not only as differing one from another, but also so, that one may be in that subject where the other is not. Many may be chosen to eternal salvation, who never were called outwardly to the knowledge of the truth, as *infants, idiots, and conscientious heathens*. And on the other hand, many may be called to the *outward* knowledge of the truth, who yet are not elected to eternal salvation, because they do not "give diligence to make their calling and election sure." So our Lord intimates in the text before us. Where he uses the word *chosen* in a peculiar sense, and distinct from *called*, he means thereby not only those that are called, but those that answer the end of their calling, which is to be holy and to adorn their profession; such diligent christians as excel the common and careless herd of professors. And this notion of *excellence* the word carries in it, wherever it is used emphatically and by way of distinction. God's chosen then, in a peculiar sense, are not persons capriciously pickt out from among mankind, in order to be brought infallibly to heaven; but such as *receive and improve* his Grace, by whatever means, and so become "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Coloff. i. 12. Accordingly it is said, Psal. iv. 3. "The Lord hath set apart, or chosen to himself, the Man that is godly." And such are said, 1 Pet. i. 2. to be "elect according to the Fore-knowledge, or fore-approbation, of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." And it is upon Condition only of *putting on* this Wedding-Garment, which God will *force* upon no man, that he hath chosen any to eternal life; however he calls, invites, and intreats them to accept of it. This is plain from this parable, as well as from that of the marriage. For, however the parables

parables are spoken with different views, this is certain, had not the labourers, when called thereto, laboured in the vineyard, they had never been rewarded; and had the rejected person taken care to have come to the marriage in a wedding-garment, which he might have done, and knew it was his duty to do, he had never been rejected. So that however God calls *many* to hear his Gospel, that will not believe and obey it; he hath elected *none* to eternal Life but such as do believe and obey it. Here then is no foundation for the doctrine of unconditional election.

Matt. xx. 23. "To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." This text, it is said, strongly proves, that the kingdom of heaven, and the several degrees of glory therein, were prepared of God for particular persons before the foundation of the world. For persons of particular degrees of grace, I grant they were; but not that particular persons were unconditionally predestinated to enjoy those particular degrees of grace and glory. No such thing is intimated here, nor elsewhere. Our Lord indeed tells his Apostles, Luke xxii. 29, 30, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me: that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." In which words he promises his Apostles great advancement both in the kingdom of grace and of glory. But why? He tells us, ver. 28, because they had continued with him in his temptations; and, as it is said, Matt. xix. 28, "followed him in the regeneration." And even here it is implied, that they should believe in him, follow and obey him to their lives end; as may be gathered from Matt. xxiv. 45—50, Rev. iii. 21, and especially from hence; that *Judas* was one of the twelve to whom this promise was made, yet because he endured not to the end, his throne was appointed to another. Accordingly St. Chrysostom writes, "Judas, my beloved, was at first a child of the kingdom, and he heard it said with the disciples, Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones. But at last he became a child of hell." So then neither does this text, with its fellows, prove that *certain*

tain persons, by name, are appointed to the highest degrees of glory, but only that they shall "be rewarded according to their works." Much less does it prove an *arbitrary Election* of such persons to such degrees of Glory from all eternity.

I cannot help remarking here, that if a set of *Arians* or *Socinians* had translated this text, they could not have done it better for their purpose than our translators have done. They make our Saviour expressly say, that it is not *his*, i. e. his prerogative, to give the highest advancements in his kingdom: thereby declaring himself *inferior* to his Father. Whereas he says no such thing. His words are these: "To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but to those for whom it is prepared of my Father." The words, *it shall be given*, are foisted in, and quite pervert our Saviour's meaning, which was not to declare that he had no *authority* to give what Zebedee's wife requested; but only that in this matter, as in all others, he should entirely acquiesce in the will of his heavenly Father, to reward every one according to his works. "What is prepared of the Father," says St. Austin, "is also prepared of the Son; because the Father and the Son are one." Accordingly our Lord says, "I appoint unto you a kingdom," Luke xxii. 29; "and to him that overcometh I will grant to sit with me in my throne;" Rev. iii. 21; flatly contradicting what our translation implies, that he has not *authority* to give and appoint these things, as well as his Father.

Matt. xxiv. 5. "Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." Ver. 11, 12, "and many false Prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Hence it is inferred that God hath decreed, many *shall* be deceived, and the love of many *shall* wax cold, and consequently that such *shall* perish. By the way let me observe, the love that was never warm, can never wax cold; and that which waxes cold was once warm. But how does this consist with that opinion, 'Once in grace, and always in grace?' But to let that pass. I here observe once for all, that the promiscuous use of the words,

words *shall* and *will*, hath given a false turn to many passages of Scripture. For though these words in the original languages are both alike signified under one notation of a verb; yet in our language they often convey quite different ideas. Yea oftentimes, where we meet with *shall* or *will* in our Translation, there should be written instead thereof, *do*, *did*, *have*, *had*, *but*, *may*, *can*, *might*, *would*, *should*, *could* or *ought*: seeing that these *Auxiliaries*, in the *Hebrew*, are all implied in the same word; and many of them also in the *Greek*. And for want of due attention to this matter, and a proper choice of the auxiliary word, many passages in our Translation contain hardly good sense, as Ezek. xxiv. 13, and some are absolutely false, and flatly contradictory to other passages, as Exod. ix. 15. compared with Exod. xiv. 28, Psal. cxxxvi. 15.

It is a common saying, What *must* be *shall* be; and what *shall* be *will* be. If those that speak thus mean no more, than that such events, as God hath, in his infinite wisdom, absolutely determined by the exertion of his wisdom and power to bring to pass, shall most certainly be brought to pass, and that in spite of all opposition; I object not. But if they thereby mean, that God hath absolutely decreed and determined, that every thing that is done, should be *so* done; or to speak in the language of some wild authors, that God hath invariably determined every action of every individual; i. e. that he hath invariably determined all the sins of all the sinners upon earth; I abhor the blasphemy. To suppose that a holy God should determine that man should sin, and then forbid him to sin on pain of endless damnation, is such a notion as it is the highest folly, not to say wickedness, to entertain.

But to consider the use of *shall* and *will*. *Shall*, in the first person, signifies sometimes *simple intention* only; sometimes *prediction*. In the second and third persons, or applied to others, it implies sometimes *bare permission* only; sometimes *precept*, sometimes *compulsion*. *Will* in the first person, or spoken of ones self, means *bare intention* also; sometimes *fixt resolution*, and sometimes *prediction*. In the second and third persons, or spoken of others, it means sometimes only

a simple declaration of probable events; sometimes prediction of certainties. The not considering this, but promiscuously using the words *shall* and *will*, hath caused many places of Scripture to be greatly misunderstood. So in the places above-mentioned, where we read *shall come, shall rise, shall deceive, shall abound, shall wax cold*; one might suppose from hence that God had absolutely decreed those things; and was determined to exert himself in causing that wickedness to be, which he hath forbidden. Whereas no such thing is intended by our blessed Saviour. His intention was only to declare what God would permit, in just judgment, for the sins of an obstinate people, and not to charge God, as the author of their sins; nor any otherwise as the author of their punishment, than by choosing their own delusions for it; *Isai. lxi. 4,—2 Theff. ii. 11,* and overruling in the matter, as his wisdom sees meet. And this is the meaning of that word, *Amos iii. 6,* “Shall there be evil in a city,” (any punishment inflicted on it, as appears, ver. 2,) “and the Lord hath not done it?” or, as it is in the margin, “Shall not the Lord do somewhat;” have the direction and disposal thereof, so as to ‘order all things in number, weight and measure;’ according to the strictest rules of wisdom and justice? Our Lord’s words then do not import an eternal decree of things that should come to pass, without any possibility of their being otherwise; but they are a prediction of such events as would be, upon a foresight of circumstances concurring thereto; and should be read thus: “Many will come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and will deceive many. And many false prophets will arise, and will deceive many. And because iniquity will abound, the love of many will wax cold.” From these words then, no such predestination, or election and reprobation, as is contended for, can be proved.

Mark iii. 13. “And calleth unto him whom he would.” These words I find much insisted on to prove the doctrine of unconditional election of particular persons to eternal life, which absolutely have no more to do with any such matter, than the calling of *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab* for the work of the tabernacle.

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The call here meant is only to the apostleship, to which office the traitor Judas was called, as well as the rest of the twelve. Those that deny this, must maintain that "the Son of Perdition" is gone to Heaven.

Luke iv. 25—27. "Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elifeus the prophet, and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian." This passage is forced into the service of absolute, unconditional election and reprobation, which, when duly considered, will be found to afford that doctrine no support at all. For the case was this: Our Saviour had been teaching in the synagogue at Nazareth. The Nazarenes, though astonished at his doctrine, were offended at his person, occupation, and family, with which they reproached him; and in a scornful manner demanded that he would work miracles among them, as it was reported he had done at Capernaum. Our Lord gives them to understand, that miracles were not to be wrought at Random, nor thrown away upon those on whom they would have no effect, merely to satisfy their curiosity: and that the case was now with them, as it was with Israel in the days of the prophets Elijah and Elisha. As the perverse idolators in Israel were perishing for want of food, while the wants of a heathen widow, that believed Elijah's word, were supplied; and many lepers among them remained leprous still, while a heathen that sought to Elisha was cured; so, by reason of their perverseness and incredulity, they were deprived of those blessings and benefits, which others at Capernaum, who had believed in him, enjoyed. So it follows, Matt. xiii. 58, "He did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief:" not because of any absolute decree of God, that they should not believe on him, and so have no benefit from him; for if that had been the case, he could not have " marvelled because of their unbelief," as we find he did, Mark vi. 6.

I am well aware it will be objected, "that he marvelled as *Main*." True, for as he was God, it is

certain, nothing was strange to him. But considered only as man, it is my humble opinion, that he was as wise a man as any Calvinist that ever lived, and knew as much of God's decrees, as any of them. If, therefore, as a mere man, he had had the least notion of any absolute decree of God, that they should not believe, he would not have marvelled at their unbelief; but his wondering would have been prevented by the consideration of such a decree.

Luke xii. 32, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." Hence, it is concluded that the flock of Christ is a little flock, chosen out from among the rest of mankind from all eternity, and who shall, at all adventures, inherit the kingdom; while all others, by a fatal decree, are absolutely excluded from it. That the flock of Christ, or number of those that truly believe in him, was at the time when he spake this, little in comparison of the multitudes that did not believe, is granted; and that there may be as great a disproportion in the numbers of the one sort and the others still. But that this small number was singled out for believers from all eternity, to the absolute exclusion of all others, no man can believe, that believes "the Lord is loving to every man," and "no respecter of persons," unless he take upon him to maintain both sides of a contradiction. No man can believe it, that believes the Acts of the Apostles: for there we find that this little flock was increased by the addition of many thousands of believers; and it has been increasing ever since. And I suppose no Christian will deny, that it is God's good pleasure to give the kingdom to this *great flock*; this "great multitude, which no man can number," Rev. vii. 9, as well as to the *little flock* that then was. It cannot be denied, that "those were formerly made his people, which had not been his people;" and those "beloved which had not been beloved" with a love of *complacency*. And so it will be still. Consequently the kingdom is given, not to *such and such persons by name*, by virtue of an eternal decree; but to persons *so and so qualified*. "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy," Psalm cxlvii. 11. And such, and
no

no others, provided they have an opportunity of hearing the gospel, can have any claim to the kingdom of heaven by virtue of this promise, or declaration of Christ. For tho' he "gave himself a ransom for all," yet is he "the Author of eternal salvation [only] to those that obey him," Heb. v. 9. And to *such*, and *no others*, it is God's good pleasure to give the kingdom.

Luke xii. 47, 48, "And that servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." Some rejoice, supposing they find here the *sovereignty* of God asserted, in that he hath decreed to damn men for not doing his will, whether they knew it or not. But such a horrid opinion has no foundation in this passage. All that our Lord means here is, that those that act contrary to their clear knowledge of God's will shall be sorely punished; nor shall those escape punishment, tho' it be not so grievous, who venture upon actions that are wrong, while they doubt whether they are so or not, Rom. xiv. 23. Our Saviour, then, by no means here represents his heavenly Father as an *arbitrary tyrant*, but only as a *just judge*; as appears plainly from his next words, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."

Luke xxiii. 43, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." This word of Christ to the penitent thief on the cross, has a near affinity to Matt. xxiv. 40, 41, "Then shall two be in the field, the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken, and the other left." To which Luke adds, "There shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left." Hence the doctrine of particular election is presumed to be undeniably established. That such as repent and believe in Jesus Christ are chosen to eternal life, I grant, and that this doctrine is hereby established. But that this thief, or any other person is chosen to believe, so that sooner or later they shall

be *forced* to believe and be saved, I believe is a point will never be proved. Supposing this penitent thief did at first revile our Saviour, as well as the other; but being convinced of the evil of so doing, his revilings were changed into confession and prayer; is it to be supposed that the other thief had not as *sufficient* means of conviction as he had? No doubt but he had. Yea, moreover, with the addition of his fellow's reproof, confession and testimony concerning Christ. Now, if the one were saved, and the other lost, shall we make God such a respecter of persons, as to resolve this into his *electing love* and *reprobating hatred*? God forbid. Nay, but the one closed in with the conviction, and "gave diligence to make his calling and election sure;" hoping for no life, but that of glory hereafter. The other, perhaps in opposition to all means used for his conviction, kept railing on; in hopes, it may be, of doing the Jews a pleasure, and thereby of being taken down from the cross, and saving his life here. Tho' after all we have no assurance that he was not convinced by his fellow's reproof and example, and so saved as well as he. Of this, indeed, the Scripture is silent, so that nothing is to be determined one way or other. The silence of Scripture in this point, however, militates as much against as for the doctrine of election. All that we learn from this passage then is this, that seeing the one is certainly happy, and the state of the other uncertain, none need to despair; yet it is dangerous for any to presume.

John iv. 4, "And he must needs go through Samaria." And why must Christ of *necessity* go that way? We are confidently told, because there was an elect sinner there that *must needs* be saved. That there was a sinner there is true, and that she was elect I shall not pretend to deny, because I find she believed in Christ, and I do not read that she ever turned apostate. But that she *must needs* be saved, I require proof; as well as, that Christ *must needs* go that way to save her, when he could have found out a hundred ways to bring about her salvation, without going thro' Samaria on purpose. Well; then, the true reason why Christ *must needs* go thro' Samaria,
I will

I will tell you. Upon looking into the map of Judea, I find that his ready and nearest way from Galilee to Jerusalem lay thro' Samaria. And, as it seems, he intended to take the nearest way, "he must needs go through Samaria." As well then may the Papists establish the Pope's Supremacy, because Christ got into Peter's boat; as the Calvinists establish their doctrine of Election, from our Saviour's going through Samaria. This puts me in mind of a passage in Bishop Latimer's sixth sermon before King Edward the Sixth. "Christ comes," says the Bishop, "to Simon's boat. And why rather to Simon's boat, than any other? I will answer by my own experience. I came hither to-day from Lambeth in a wherry. And when I came to take boat, the watermen came about me, as the manner is, and one would have me, and another would have me. I took one of them. Now will ye ask me; Why I came in that boat, rather than in another? Because I would go into that, which I saw stood next me. It stood more commodiously for me. And so did Christ, by Simon's boat. It stood nearer for him; or he saw a better seat in it. A good natural reason. Now come to the Papists and they make a mystery of it. They will pick out the Supremacy of the Bishop of Rome from Peter's boat. We may make allegories enough of every place of Scripture. But surely it must be a simple matter that standeth on so weak a ground." And just such a simple matter is *election*, built upon Christ's going thro' Samaria.

John v. 21, "Even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." Hence it is argued, that Christ quickens only the elect. Not to insist that divers modern and ancient Expositors understand this quickening of the *resurrection of the body*; but taking it, as respecting a *spiritual resurrection* from the death of sin; our Lord himself plainly declares, whom it is that he will quicken, ver. 24, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and" so long as he hears and believes, "shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." It is his will then to quicken those that *hear and believe*. So ver. 25, "They that hear;

shall live." If it be replied, a man must be quickened before he can hear and believe, as well as Lazarus was, before he could hear the voice of Christ and come forth out of his grave. I answer, True. And that *kind* or *degree* of quickening necessary to this end, thro' the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, does pass upon every soul that is born into the world. There is implanted in all men an aversion to misery, and a desire after happiness. These affections are a degree of life. But what is much more, Elihu tells us,— "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding," Job xxxii. 8. Upon which words Vatablus remarks, "There is no man that is not a partaker of the Spirit and his gifts." Which doubtless is true, till men grieve that Holy Spirit and cause him to depart from them. Upon the same passage Munster observes, "Knowledge is the gift of God, and He, without respect of persons, divides his Spirit, as he will, to every man." But we have a more infallible judge in this matter, than either Vatablus or Munster. Solomon, an inspired Writer, says, "The spirit of Man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly," Prov. xx. 27. The spirit of man is here called the candle of the Lord, as Mercer well observes, on account of the light infused into it from heaven; or as others, because it is lighted up by the Lord. But we have farther and clearer testimony still. St. John tells us, "Christ is the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," John i. 9, and ver. 4, "In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind." From which passages nothing can be plainer than that Jesus Christ is the Fountain of life; and that whatever degree of light there is in any rational soul, the same is such a degree of life derived from Jesus Christ. And our Lord himself says, John viii. 12, "I am the Light of the world: he that followeth me" the light that I afford him, "shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life," (continued and increased to him, if he has not by sin put it out, Prov. xx. 20, or imparted to him again, if he has put it out.) If, then, these affections have been rendered sickly and weak, and

this light of life dimmed and quenched, by known, wilful sins, there is a farther degree of divine power needful to rekindle and revive that light, and to restore those affections to a proper vigour; and this power is never denied, but always offered, so long as God, in his infinite Wisdom, sees fit that his Spirit should strive with man. So that the reason why some are not more quickened, is not because they are not elected; or by virtue of any decree of their non-election, which prevents them; but their own will, because they will not use such means for their farther quickening, and having *more abundant* life, John x. 10, as are afforded them. Our Lord himself resolves it into this, John v. 40, "Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life." So ver. 44, "*How can ye believe, or have the light of life, which receive, i. e. desire and labour to receive*" Honour one of another; and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" q. d. it is impossible: Not on account of any decree of God; but in the very nature of things; seeing *no man can serve two masters*, and expect favours from both, whose interests are so opposite, as those of God and the world.

John vi. 37, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me." Hence, some suppose, that such as are elected to eternal life shall sooner or later be *compelled* to come to Christ. This opinion is strengthened by ver. 39, "And this is the Father's will, which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Ver. 44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." Ver. 65, "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father." Instead of the *compulsory* sense, given to ver. 37, which has no foundation in reason, or elsewhere in Scripture, except in appearance, I can allow it no more than a *declarative*, or *predictive* sense. Our Saviour does not say here, that any shall be *compelled* to come to him; any otherwise than those were compelled to come in to the supper, mentioned Luke xiv. 23, which certainly was with no other kind of force than the

two disciples used, when they *constrained* our Lord to abide with them at Emmaus, Luke xxiv. 29. So the guests were *compelled* to come to the wedding, Matt. xxii. one of whom was cast into outer darkness, after he came. Our Lord here then only declares, or foretels, that though the Jews would not become members of his Church, the Gentiles *would*; according to the promise, Psal. ii. 8, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." And moreover he tacitly upbraids the Jews with their obstinacy and ingratitude: q. d. Though YE will not come unto me, "all that the Father giveth me, WILL come unto me. Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord—for he hath said—I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth," Isaiah xlix. 5, 6.

But let us consider more particularly, who they are that the Father giveth to the Son, that shall not be lost, but obtain eternal life. Our Lord tells us, ver. 40, "Every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him." Which words do not imply a *transient sight* only; but a *continuation* of seeing and believing. For verbs in the *present tense* frequently imply *continuation of action*; especially when the nature of things so requires. By this expression then is meant, not a single act of faith once in a man's life, as if that would entitle him to heaven, because he had once believed, however he should apostatize afterwards; but a *constant looking to Jesus, that he may run with patience*, or (as *υπομονη* is rendered, Rom. ii. 7.) *patient continuance*, i. e. with perseverance, *the race set before him*, Heb. xii. 1, 2.

Again, Those are given to the Son, whom the Father *draws*, ver. 41, and who do not *resist*, but *follow* his drawing. For this drawing does not imply an *irresistible power*, as some affirm. This is plain from Acts vii. 51, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." All the drawing here meant, is such as is mentioned, Hof. xi. 4, "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love, and I was unto them, as they that take

take off the yoke," the head-stall or muzzle, "on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them;" which drawing the Israelites resisted. So that tho' it be true, that *no man can come to the Son, except the Father draw him*; yet it is as true, that many, yea, perhaps far the greater part of mankind, that are drawn by the Father, resist his drawing, and do not come savingly to the Son. If it be objected, Christ attributes this drawing to himself, and makes it universal, John xii. 32, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me," it must be observed, he means no more than that, according to his Father's appointment, he would do that which was sufficient to draw all men unto him: yea, and would actually, in concurrence with his Father, draw all men, so that they *might* come unto him, whether they did come or no. Nothing should be wanting on his and his Father's part, if men would but do theirs.

Our Lord goes on further to shew who they are that are given unto him, viz. "All that are taught of God," ver. 45, "It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Not those only that *hear* their lesson, but moreover *learn* it. Which implies a willingness in the learner, as well as in the teacher. But this willingness, it is objected, none can have, unless it be given him of God; for it is written, Psal. cx. 3, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." So that none but God's elect can be willing to be taught of him; nor those, but when his power makes them so.

I answer, 1. It is not clear to me that this text ought to be so translated. It is one of the most difficult passages in all the Bible, and about the meaning of it interpreters are greatly divided. The Geneva doctors indeed give it the sense in which we have it. But to go to Geneva to learn the meaning of it, is like going to Rome to learn the meaning of, *This is my body*. In one of the former Translations it is thus rendered, "Thy people shall come willingly, at the time of assembling thine army."—In another, viz. that used in our Church Service, it stands thus, "In

the day of thy power shall the people offer thee free-will offerings." Others understand it thus, "Thy people shall be glorious;" and others, 'exceeding large or numerous, in the day of thy power.' Some take *et* for a noun, others for a preposition. I do not undertake *tantus componere lites*. It is past my skill to fix the precise meaning of this text. And I am inclined to think the wisest man upon earth cannot rise a hair's breadth above conjecture in the matter. So that no fires at all can be laid upon this text, as to the establishing of the point, in behalf of which it is so frequently urged.

2. Tho' it be true, that none can be willing but those whom God's power or preventing grace makes so, and when it works with them; yet does this power or preventing grace work or strive with many who resist it. And many yield to it for awhile, and are willing to be taught of God, who afterwards refuse instruction. So that it is not true that none but God's elect, in the sense intended, are willing to be taught of him. Nor are the *perseveringly willing*, so *merely passive* in being made so, as *clay in the hands of the potter*, as some say. Those that stretch this metaphor to this sense, stretch it beyond what God designed. For by calling us *clay*, God does not mean, that mankind have neither *sense* nor *reason*; but only that he has power over us to deal with us as he pleases. God then deals with us as *rational* creatures. He offers to all his *preventing* grace, "that they may have a good will;" which, if they reject not, but close in with, he gives them moreover his *co-operating* grace; "working with them, when they have a good will." And thus are they *taught of God*. More and more light shines in upon them, as they follow what they have. "So the path of the just shineth more and more unto the perfect day," Prov. iv. 18. Such, then, as are *teachable* and *tractable* will come to Christ; and such are *given* unto him.

But who is it that makes finners *teachable* and *tractable*? He that opened the heart of "Lydia to attend to those things that were spoken of by Paul." This opening, however, does not imply an *irresistible* force or *constraint* laid upon the faculties of man; but

but only *assistance offered*, which sinners may refuse; as appears from Rev. iii. 20, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock. If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me." The Jews did *hear* the voice of Christ; the Spirit of God *strove* with them, but they would not *open* to the one, nor *submit* to be *taught* and *drawn* by the other. *They believed not*, as Christ declares, ver. 64. They wilfully shut their eyes against the light, and refused instruction. And for this reason it was, that it was not given them of the Father to come to Christ, ver. 65. Not because he had decreed from all eternity to deny them the power of coming, without any fault of their own. So that in all these scriptures there is no ground for the doctrine of absolute, unconditional election and reprobation.

Had it been our Saviour's intention to teach any such doctrine as this, he could not reasonably have upbraided the Jews with their unbelief. Yea, he had furnished them with an argument against himself, and taught them how to excuse their infidelity, by saying, "Wherefore, then, dost thou complain of our not doing that, which thou declarest is not in our power to do?" This one consideration is sufficient to evince that our Saviour here was far from teaching any such doctrine.

John viii. 43, "Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word." The *impossibility* here meant was not forced upon the Jews by any eternal decree of God, but procured by their own obstinacy. They wanted neither *natural power* nor *assistance necessary* on God's part, to hear the word of Christ, i. e. to give proper attention to his doctrine; but only a *moral power*, or a mind disposed to do it. They *could not*, because they *would not*. They "loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. Neither would they come to the light, lest their deeds should be reprov'd," chap. iii. 19, 20, which our Lord declares to be the cause of men's condemnation. But they can never be justly condemned for *neecessitated crimes*, any more than rewarded for *neecessitated virtues*.

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For how can that immortal power be just
 To damn mankind, who sin because they must?
 Or how can He reward a virtuous deed,
 Which is not done, but as 'tis first decreed?

John ix. 39, "For judgment I am come into this world; that they which see not, might see; and that they which see might be made blind." Hence, it is presumed, that our blessed Saviour came into the world on purpose to accomplish a supposed decree concerning the elect and reprobates; and so our Lord's words here are made flatly to contradict what he had said John iii. 17, "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world thro' him might be saved." As also that, chap. xii. 46, "I am come a Light into the world." For certainly if Christ came into the world on purpose to make men blind, he came to be *darkness*, and not *light*; and to *condemn* the world, or cause it to be condemned, if men are to be condemned for not having the light, which it was impossible for them to have. Certainly, therefore, those words carry no such sense. All that our Lord means is this, that he came into the world for this end, among others, that he might manifest the wise dispensation of divine Providence (so *Κερα* frequently means) which, contrary to the opinions of men, appears in this, that they which see not, i. e. who are ignorant, and sensible of their ignorance, and desirous to have it removed, may see; be made wise; and that they which see, i. e. who vainly imagine they are wise enough, may be made blind; i. e. either be convinced of their ignorance; or, if they will not, but still wilfully shut their eyes against the light, be left in that darkness and ignorance which they choose.

John x. 3, "He calleth his own sheep by name." Agreeable to this is ver. 14, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." And 2 Tim. ii. 19, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Hence it is inferred, that God from all eternity fixt upon particular persons by name, and chose them as heirs of salvation, and reprobated all the rest of mankind. That God from all eternity knew *who* would believe in his

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SON Jesus Christ, when he should be preached unto them, is certain; as also that he knew *what* would be the *names* of such believers, whereby they would be distinguished among men. And that he, "who calleth things that are not, as tho' they were," even then, speaking after the manner of men, might call John a believer, and one of Christ's sheep, is equally certain; as also Judas an apostate. But that he chose John, merely *as* John, and decreed that he should believe; and reprobated Judas, merely *as* Judas, and decreed that he should apostatize, and perish; no man can believe, without denying that scriptural truth, "the Lord is not willing that any should perish." He no more chose John, merely *as* John, than he did Judas: nor any more reprobated Judas, merely *as* Judas, than he did John. But he chose John, as a *believer* in Christ, and that without forcing him to believe; and reprobated Judas, as *apostatizing*, without forcing him to *apostatize*. *Life and death were set before them both, and they were bidden to choose life, that they might live, Deut. xxx. 19.* But if they were *constrained* to choose or refuse, the choice was no longer properly theirs. In short, they did not *choose* at all, but their lot was *forced* upon them. Christ's calling his sheep *by name* then does not imply that he calls them by *such* names as they bear among men, and that because they bear such names he takes them for his sheep; but because they are his sheep, he calls them by such names as express their *quality*, or *character*; as *saints*, the *faithful*, &c. even as he called Abram, Abraham; and Jacob, Israel. In one word; Christ calls his sheep, whatever they are called among men, *sons of God*, 1 John iii. 1. And his voice to them, when he goes before them as their Shepherd, is, "Be ye followers of me, as dear children," Ephes. v. 1. Nor has he any special regard for them on account of any other name they bear, but that only which expresses their *quality*, which is his *delight*.

Nor is any thing to be gathered from ver. 14, that makes for unconditional election. "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." As shepherds know their sheep by the *mark* set upon them, so does Christ know *his*

his sheep by the marks they bear, viz. "They hear his voice, and follow him," ver. 27. Such are chosen to eternal life, and *none shall pluck them out of his, or his Father's hand*, while they thus hear and obey. But if these *leave off to hear and obey*, they shall not only be *lost out of his hand*, but if they were even *in his mouth*, which implies a closer connexion still, he declares he will *spue them out of it*, Rev. iii. 16. Nor are we to strain this simile so far, as to suppose that Christ will *force* his mark upon any persons against their wills, as shepherds do upon their sheep; or that he will maintain it *indelibly* upon them, when they have it. We have no promise of either kind, in all the Scriptures, rightly understood. "What God hath promised, he, for his part, will most assuredly keep and perform." But if we wilfully and rebelliously fail on our part, as the Jews did, we must expect to be given up as they were. "Thou standest by faith," says St. Paul, "be not high-minded, but fear. For, if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but towards thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off," Rom. xi. 20—22.

As little to the purpose is that text in Timothy, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." But who are his? It is there intimated, such professors of the Name of Christ as *depart from iniquity*. Such and such only does Christ *know, acknowledge, and approve of*; as his. To what purpose, then, do many urge the *sure standing of the foundation*, by way of consolation to themselves and others, if they have not departed from iniquity? And what has the foundation here mentioned to do with the doctrine of absolute, unconditional election, when the text itself holds forth a condition in it? I should suppose that doctrine might as easily be struck out of a flint-stone, as out of this text; for instead of confirming, it quite confutes it.

John x. 26, "But ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep;" i. e. say some, because ye are not *elect*, and therefore ye cannot believe. But if this were the case, the unbelief of the Jews was their *misfortune,*

misfortune, not their *fault*; and our Saviour here furnishes them with an *excuse* for their unbelief: whereas surely he meant to *charge* it upon them as their *crime*, and an *inexcusable* one too. Our Saviour's meaning, as appears plainly from the next verse, is not, "Ye are not my sheep," and therefore, "ye cannot believe;" but, "ye do not believe," and therefore (so *γὰρ* sometimes signifies, as Pafor shews) "ye are not of my sheep. For my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Whoever do this are Christ's sheep; tho' there are many such, that *fear* they are not. But whoever does not this, are not his sheep; tho' there are great numbers of such, that *vainly boast* they are. Here, then, is not the least breathing about such an election as is contended for.

John xi. 52, "That also he should gather together in one, the children of God that were scattered abroad." Hence it is presumed, that Christ died only for the children of God, or for that certain number which he had chosen to be heirs of heaven from all eternity. Have those who conclude this from these words read the context? Certainly they pay no regard to it. For St. John tells us, in the verse foregoing, that "Caiaphas being High Priest that year, prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation of the Jews." But was *all* that nation so elect? Were *all the whole* people of the Jews children of God? Surely not in that peculiar sense here meant. Yet he died for them; and for the Gentiles also. For he "reconciled both unto God, in one body, by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby," - or, as the margin, *in himself*, Ephes. ii. 16. Christ died then that he might draw *all men* unto himself by the virtue of his death, whether all follow his drawing or no; as well as to gather in one *the children of God*, or such as do follow his drawing and believe in him. For *we are children of God* in a gospel sense, and supposing we hear the gospel, only *by faith in Christ Jesus*. This gathering together of believers is, therefore, no proof of an *eternal, personal, unconditional* election.

John xiii. 1, "Having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." These words

words are alleged to prove, that Christ loves none but the elect, or such as are predestinated to eternal life, and that those he always *did* and always *will* love. Whereas, they prove no such thing; nor are they spoken by the Evangelist in any such sense. For nothing can be plainer, than that by *his own* here, St. John does not mean the heirs of salvation in general, but only those whom he had chosen out of the world to be his Apostles. And by *the end*, he evidently means nothing more than the end of his life; however his love continued the same after his death. For by *the end* it is absurd to suppose that eternity is meant, which has *no* end. Beside that it is downright nonsense to say *he loved them to eternity*; for it is saying he had already done that, which, in the nature of the thing, must be for ever in act.

John xiii. 18, "I know whom I have chosen." The election here meant is not an election to eternal salvation, as is clear from the words immediately going before; but only to the apostleship. "If ye know these things, says our Lord, happy are ye if ye do them," ver. 17. He then adds, "I speak not of you all," i. e. I say not this of you all. I do not say that ye all do those things. "I know whom I have chosen;" what they are; what is the disposition of every one. *But*, q. d. for this reason I chose one of you twelve, that is *a devil*, a traitor, as chap. vi. 70, *that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me, hath lift up his heel against me.* The objection that may be brought against this interpretation, because the word is not *οὗτος*, but *οὗ*, must vanish before every school-boy that has ever read that speech, *Senties qui xir sum.* For as *qui* is used for *qualis* among the Latins, so is *οὗ* for *οὗτος* frequently among the Greeks: i. e. *who*, for *what*, or *of what sort*.

John xv. 16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Nor is the election here spoken of any other than to the Apostleship, as is plain from the context. All that our Lord means here is, "Ye have not chosen me" for your Master, as disciples among the Jews chose a master for themselves; for ye came not to me till I called you; "but I have chosen you," from the rest of the Jews and of my

disciples, to be Apostles; "and ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain," i. e. that you should go forth into the world, and preach the gospel, and by your preaching establish a church, which shall continue to the end of the world. This text, then, as also Mark iii. 13, "and calleth unto him whom he would," has nothing to do with predestination and election to eternal life.

John xvii. 2, "That he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." All the predestination that can be fairly squeezed out of this text, is no more than that signified, Mark xvi. 16, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not," supposing that he heareth the gospel preached, "shall be damned." For who are they that are given to the Son by the Father? Are they not those that believe in him? Yes surely, and none else of those that have had an opportunity of believing. For so it immediately follows, ver. 3, "And this is life eternal," i. e. the way to obtain eternal life; "that they might know;" i. e. to know "thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." To know God, and Christ the Mediator between God and man, is to believe in them. But if to believe be the way to obtain eternal life; and Christ gives eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him; then it follows that believers are given of God to Christ; such are "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise," Gal. iii. 29. From this text, then, we can only gather this decree, that none but believers under the gospel shall be saved; but not the least hint of any such decree, that only such and such particular persons shall believe.

John xix. 36, "A bone of him shall not be broken." Hence this argument is drawn out, that there are a certain number of particular persons, that are the *members, joints, and bones* of Christ's mystical body, and which were predestinated to be such from all eternity; and that all such shall infallibly be saved; because, if one of those bones be broken, or should perish, it would make Christ a monster. Those that have written, and that speak in this manner, are monsters in folly. They maintain that none are *members*
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of Christ, *bones* in his body, but by faith in him. According to their whimsical ideas then, what must Christ be till he has received his last member? And how many are there that are quite secure of not being broken, upon presumption that they are in the number of his *bones*, who are not yet come to the confidence of a *cartilage* or *gristle*? The *bones* of Christ, his *members*, and his *branches*, I suppose mean one and the same thing. Now, our Lord expressly declares, "Every branch in me, that beareth not fruit, He, the Husbandman, taketh away," John xv. 2. And I suppose, if a bone or a branch be *broken off* from him, the consequence is as bad, as if it were *broken in two*. For it is declared, ver. 6, such shall be *burned*. I presume, therefore, that electing love will never bring a man to heaven that *hears* the gospel, unless he *believes* and *obeys* it, and *perseveres* so to do. Nor can I credit, without better proof than a bare assertion, what an eminent minister of the gospel asserts in his sermon, on 1 Cor. i. 30, viz. that *perseverance* is *imputed* to us as well as *righteousness*, while I find the Scriptures abounding with exhortations to *watchfulness* and *diligence*; which would be altogether needless if the sinner's salvation be infallibly secured without it; or if such virtues are to be *imputed* to us, whether we *have them* or *no*.

But after all, I want proof that these words, "A bone of him shall not be broken," are to be understood in any other than a literal sense. In a literal sense they were to be understood with regard to the Paschal Lamb, the type. In the same sense they are manifestly applied by St. John to Christ, the Antitype.

Acts i. 16, "This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas." Hence it is inferred, that God from all eternity decreed that Judas should betray Christ, in despair hang himself, and go to hell. Now it is certain that for God absolutely to *decree* an action and to *command* it, is in effect all one. For tho' every command of God does not imply a decree that every one to whom the command comes shall unavoidably do the thing commanded;

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yet every absolute decree of God concerning actions to be done by particular persons, hath in it the force of a command. But if God absolutely *decreed*, and so virtually *commanded* Judas to betray Christ, despair, and hang himself; that *treason*, *desperation*, and *self murder*, being done according to his *decree*, or *command*, must be as acceptable to God, as Paul's *preaching*, or David's *praying*.

We read, John xiii. 2, That "the devil put it into the heart of Judas to betray Christ." And his own *covetous disposition*, for the sake of the reward, made him readily yield to the temptation. All this God *forefaw*, and by the mouth of David *foretold*; yet neither did God's *foreknowledge*, nor the *prediction* of this event, occasion it to come to pass. When, therefore, St. Peter says, the Scripture *must needs* have been fulfilled concerning Judas, it is far from his mind to charge God with *predestinating* or *necessitating* the *crimes* of Judas, or his *destruction*; and by parity of reason, the *crimes* and *destruction* of any other sinners.

Acts ii. 47, "And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." Hence it is concluded, that there is a *determinate* number of persons unconditionally appointed to salvation, and that the residue, which are much the greater part of mankind, are, by a *peremptory* decree of God, appointed to everlasting destruction. But let it be observed, the word *σωζομεν*, might as well be rendered, *such as might be saved*, as *such as should be saved*. But as the word is not a participle of the *future*, but the *present* and *imperfect* tense, it might also be rendered, *such as were saved*; such as did for the present believe. But it does not, therefore, follow, that because those believed and were added to the Church, that therefore they should be *finally saved*. Ananias and Sapphira were *added to the Church*, and so was Simon Magus, but I suppose no Predestinarian will affirm, those were "such as should be saved." However, if being *added to the Church* be a sure note of salvation, such, whose names are in the *Parish Register*, or have been otherwise entered as Church members, may rest satisfied, that they are also "writ-
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ten in the Book of Life :” Since it is of God’s Providence, as well as the Priest’s or Elder’s act, that they are added to the Church. But as we have no grounds from hence to conclude that such a determinate number as is there written or so entered, shall be certainly saved, no more can we fairly conclude from this text that such a determinate number of persons, arbitrarily and unconditionally chosen, and no others, shall, by the peremptory decree of God, be saved. More especially since Peter declared, ver. 39, that “the promise was to them and their children, and to all that were afar off.” Nor do the following words, “Even to as many as the Lord our God shall call,” limit at all the number of those that shall be saved, to a certain number which it is absolutely impossible should be increased; seeing the same Apostle, chap. iii. 26, says, “God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” For though Christ was sent for this end, we do not find, nor have we reason to believe, that all that heard this word, were so blessed. Yea, and many that were called that day, came not *then*, and it is very probable, *never* came.

Acts iv. 27, 28, “For of a truth, against thy holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together; for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.” Now, it was as necessary that Herod and Pontius Pilate should do what they did against Christ, as that Judas should do what he did; because God, by the mouth of David, had said, “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the Rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.” It must needs be that this Scripture also must have been fulfilled. But whence arises this necessity? Had the predictions of Scripture any influence on the actions of those sinners? Or were their actions *necessitated* by any positive act of God? Not at all. Judas, Herod, Pilate, and the rest, excited by the instigations of the devil, and following their own wicked inclinations and dispositions, only did what God foresaw
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and foretold they would do; and what he, in his infinite Wisdom and Providence, determined to *permit*, not to *enforce*; his *Providence over-ruled*, in the affair, but his *Power did not impede*. As a clock will strike at a certain hour by virtue of the weight, springs, and movements about it, without any one's forcing it; so did this great event, timed by the God of Wisdom, come to pass, by means of the devil and man's own wickedness, the only springs that occasioned it, without any *compulsion* from God. Accordingly the Apostle tells the Jews, they *slaw Christ with wicked hands*. The necessity here meant then; is not *physical* or *absolute*; but what is called, of *condition* and *consequence*; the *depravity* of Judas, Herod, Pilate, and the rest, and the *craft* and *malignity* of the devil being pre-supposed, and not restrained.

Acts xiii. 48, "And as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." Hence it is pretended that God, by his ordination or decree, hath fixt the number of those that shall believe, and whom he will finally save. But if so, consequently he has fixt the number of those that shall not believe, and so shall be damned. And if the reason why those men believed, be only this, that they were men ordained to believe, and so to obtain eternal life; then the reason why the rest believed not, can be this only, that they were not ordained by God to believe, and so obtain eternal life. And if so, what *necessity* could there be, "that the Word of God should be first preached unto them?" ver. 46. Was it only to aggravate their damnation? What could even the malicious enemy of souls do more? What is it the very devil aims at, but the aggravation of the future punishment of sinners? Therefore, to assert, that God had determined that his Word should be spoken to those Jews for this very end, (which assertion must follow from the *Calvinistical* interpretation of the text) is to make God more instrumental to the ruin of souls than the very devil himself. This text then, in order to free the Scriptures from self-contradiction, must be rendered thus; *As many as were disposed, or put in order* (το *ταγματος* means) *for eternal life, believed*. The Jews judged

judged themselves unworthy of eternal life; declared themselves indisposed thereto, by contradicting and blaspheming, ver. 45, 46, the Gentiles judged themselves worthy of it, declared themselves disposed to it, by assenting and submitting to the Apostle's doctrine. If it be demanded, who disposed the Gentiles and indisposed the Jews? I answer, the Gentiles by using the offered grace of God disposed themselves; the Jews by not using his grace offered, indisposed themselves. For the same means were afforded them, which were afforded the Gentiles; but they obstinately and perversely trampled on and rejected them.

The word *ordained*, observe, is in the passive voice, which very frequently, not only by the Septuagint, but also by the Writers of the New Testament, is used reciprocally, as the Hebrew form Hithpahel is. So Rom. vi. 17, "Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine," not, *which was delivered you*, as the text is, but, as the margin rightly tells us, as the Greek is, *whereto ye were delivered, i. e. unto which ye delivered, or gave up yourselves: a text exactly of the same construction with that under consideration. The Translators themselves have rendered the passive voice twice in the reciprocal sense in the fourth chapter of James: υποταγῆτε, submit yourselves, ver. 7, and Ταπεινωθητε, humble yourselves, ver. 10, and in many places besides; and so, I make no doubt, is this text to be understood, As many as disposed themselves, or set themselves in order for eternal life, believed. For certain it is, they disposed or set themselves in order to this end, thro' the assistance of divine grace, as Noah set himself to walk with God; and the rest might have done the same, if they would. Life and death were set before them, and they were bid to choose life. If they did not, they themselves, and not God, were to blame.*

Agreeable to this is the interpretation of B. Franzius, quoted by Stockius in his Lexicon under the word *ταπεινω*. Those are said to be ordained to eternal life, who keep, walk in, and follow the order prescribed by God; just like soldiers, who observe their own station, and the order prescribed by their commander, and contain themselves within it. The doctrine

doctrine of absolute predestination, then, has no support from this text, rightly understood.

Acts xvi. 14, "The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended unto the things that were spoken of Paul." Hence it is argued, None can believe to salvation, but those whose hearts the Lord opens, as he did Lydia's. But he so opens the hearts of none but his elect. That none can believe to salvation, but those whose hearts the Lord opens, is true. But if the opponents mean, that the Lord opens the hearts of none but his elect, so that they *might* believe to salvation if they would, is not true. "Behold," says he, "I stand at the door, and knock: If any man," without exception, "hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me," Rev. iii. 20. And I am bold to affirm, there is not a sinner upon earth, at whose heart Christ does not stand, and knock. And wherever he does so, he *conveys light*, and *offers power sufficient* for all to open to him, as Lydia. So that if they are not saved, they themselves are to blame, and not God.

The Lord used no more violence or compulsory means to open Lydia's heart, than he used with those whose hearts were not opened. Lydia followed the light she had, and used the reason God had given her, for God, and so became a *worker together with him*, as it is the duty of every one to be. But many there are, that wilfully shut their eyes against the light, and use their reason *against* God, and refuse to be workers with him; otherwise their hearts would be opened, as well as Lydia's. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil," John iii. 19. No sinner, then, is damned because *he had not grace offered him*, or because *God had decreed, that he should not accept of grace* when it was offered; but because he *wilfully refused* the offered grace.

Rom. viii. 28—30, "And we know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

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For

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born," i. e. the chief, "among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Nearly allied to this passage is, Ephes. i. 5, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will:" and ver. 11, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

These passages are supposed to make strongly and expressly for the doctrine of absolute predestination. But I have not found yet that the word *ὄρος*, from whence *προορίζω*, rendered to predestinate in these three places, is ever used for *fate* or *destiny*, by any author. And there is but one word in all the Scriptures, as I have observed before, which can bear any such meaning; and that is *Μεμψιμοιροί*, Jude 16, rendered *complainers*, which literally means, *complainers of their lot* or *portion*; or, if you will have it so, of their *fate* or *destiny*. Yet this, by no means, establishes the notion of such a thing as *destiny*; but, at most, only that some held it. And what is this *fate* or *destiny*? An imaginary power, which the heathens supposed bound the hands of God himself, so that he could do nothing but as *fate* or *destiny* permitted him. So we find from Virgil. For when Jupiter was entreated of Venus to interpose in favour of Æneas against Turnus, he could give no answer; nor do any thing, till he had weighed the *fates* of the combatants in a pair of scales, and found what was ordered by *destiny*. But is it not monstrous to suppose that such a thing as *destiny* should be admitted into the Christian scheme? or that he who is God over all, and orders all things *according to the Counsel of his Will*, should have his hands tied up by *destiny*? Away with such a heathenish notion!

The solution then of this passage may serve also to solve those others that resemble it. And that it may be

be understood in a conditional sense will appear, if we consider the proper import of the word ὀρίζω , which has nothing like *destiny* in it. It is used, Rom. i. 4, concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, (ὁρισθῆναι) *declared*, or as in the margin, *determined to be the Son of God*. I hope no one that is called a christian will presume to say, that our Lord was *destinated*, or *predestinated to be the Son of God, by the resurrection from the dead*; not only on account of the absurdity of the expression; but because he himself tells us, that he was raised from the dead by his own power, which utterly cuts off all notion of destiny in the case. The truth is, ὀρίσθαι , (*finitio, definitio*, Heder.) strictly taken, signifies the exact description of things, as a field is described by its length and breadth, its bounds and limits. And in this sense προορίζω may very well be taken both in Romans and Ephesians, to mean, to *define*, or *describe beforehand*. Thus, "whom God foreknew," i. e. as repenting and believing, "he also fore-described, to be such as should be conformed to the image of his Son." Moreover, in order to bring those to the image of his Son, whom he so describes, he *calls* them; and they answering to his *call*, he *justifies* them; and they retaining their justification, he *brings them to glory*.

So Stockius: Προορίζω generally, and according to the force of its origin, signifies to fore-define and pre-destinate, according to certain constituted bounds and limits, &c. Referred to persons, it signifies a decree of predestination, (retaining St. Austin's term,) and election of those that finally believe, to eternal glory: so that it imports a destination or appointment of such unto a state of glory, upon a view of their *foreseen final* faith in Christ.

The true Scriptural *Predestination* then, if we must use the *heathenish* term, comes at last to comport with the Hebrew כן and כִּי־כֵן, which the Septuagint renders καταρθωσις , a right and just disposition of things, for the display of the Divine Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness; not a tyrannical disposition and capricious humour, which the Calvinists call his *sovereignty*. The Scriptures maintain no such sovereignty as belonging

to the *all-wise, just, and merciful* God. For though "he does whatsoever pleases him in heaven and in earth," yet nothing pleases him, but what is *right and reasonable*. Accordingly the Apostle tells us, when he mentions the "Predestination of the saints unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself," that it was "according to (*Ευδοκίας*) the good pleasure of his Will;" that which appeared right to him," Eph. i. 5. And again, ver. 11, that he "worketh all things after (*Βουλῆς*) the counsel of his own will." Not saving and damning men capriciously; not acting rashly and precipitately in a matter of such moment; but, speaking after the manner of men, upon the most *wise, just, well-consulted, and reasonable* grounds.

There is yet another way of clearing the Justice of God from the reproach cast upon it by the Calvinistical interpretation of these passages. It is to be considered (which I do not remember, at present, to have seen done by any Expositor) that the Apostle in Rom. viii. as well as before and after, is addressing himself to such Jews as were converted to the faith of Christ, among whom we may presume were many pharisees, who, perhaps, might still retain their notion of *fate or destiny*. Again, it is likely that his converts at Ephesus, both Jews and Gentiles, were, many of them, *fatalists*. This being the case, it is natural to suppose that the Apostle would take occasion to rectify their mistake in this matter. It is, then, as if he had said, "The Pharisees suppose, as I myself once did, that all of their sect shall be saved, and the Gentiles that *fate or destiny* over-rules in the affairs of men, leading some to happiness, and hurrying others on to misery; but they are mistaken. God hath appointed none to salvation, that have the advantage of the gospel, but those only that comply with the terms thereof; that are conformed to the image of his Son; that are renewed in the spirit of their mind." These passages thus understood, and I see as yet no reason why they should not, they are so far from establishing the modern doctrine of predestination, that they rather oppose it.

We

We read, 2 Pet. iii. 16, that there are in Paul's Epistles, "some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned," i. e. unskilful in the word of righteousness, "and unstable," wavering from one opinion to another, "wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction." One of those *δυσωρήα*, or things hard to be understood, no doubt, is the doctrine of predestination so called, at least, if predestination mean what the Calvinists teach it does. But this no man can affirm, without blasphemy and reproach of the known attributes of God, and contradicting many passages of the Bible, which declare that "God is no respecter of persons," and that "his ways are equal" or upright. However, let St. Paul mean what he may in these passages, he does not mean that God is worse than the devil. The devil, we know, can only *tempt* men, but God, according to this rigid scheme, *forces*, as he has doomed them from all eternity, to sin and perish. But this, I say, can never be the Apostle's meaning. And this I say, farther, whoever cannot find out such a meaning for this and every other text of Scripture, as leaves the Attributes of God uninjured, cannot find out the right meaning of them. Whether, therefore, I am right or no in what I have offered on these texts, the Calvinists are wrong in what they affirm.

Rem. ix. 11, "That the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Nothing can be more evident to any one that considers the beginning and end of this chapter, than that the Apostle is not speaking of the election of particular persons to eternal life, but of particular nations to outward Church privileges, which duly used, thro' Christ, should be the means of bringing men to eternal life, and to higher degrees of glory therein, than others should enjoy, who were not favoured with these privileges. Nor is God, the great Governor of the world, on this account any more to be deemed a respecter of persons, than an earthly king, who takes some of his subjects for lords of his bed-chamber, and others for lower employments; seeing he will make them all, that behave well in

their station, completely happy. It plainly appears from ver. 30—33, which passage is a key to the whole chapter, that the Apostle's intent was to shew, that as God before chose Jacob, who represented the Jews, and admitted him and his posterity to peculiar privileges above the Gentiles, without any merit in him or them to deserve it; so now (the Jews thro' their unbelief, having rejected the Messiah, and being justly therefore themselves rejected of God) he had chosen the Gentiles, represented by Esau, to be his peculiar people; according to the prediction of Isaac, Gen. xxvii. 40, "Thou shalt have the dominion, and thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck;" And that prophecy in Hosea, cited ver. 25, "I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved;" and that without any thing on their part to deserve this favour. It was entirely free with respect to both parties; God's mercy and goodness preventing not the *endeavour* only, but even the *will* of both. Before either Jacob or Esau willed or run for it, the blessing was designed of God for Jacob. So before ever the Gentiles sought after God, the blessings of Christ's kingdom were designed for them. Yet it follows not that all that are called Christians, and enjoy outward Church privileges, shall be finally saved, any more than it is to be concluded that all the Jews were saved before Christ came in the flesh, on account of their privileges.

Rom. ix. 18, "Therefore, hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth." Most shockingly blasphemous are the notes of some Calvinists on this, and the preceding verses. Such as those concerning Pharaoh, which one of them puts into the mouth of God: "I *permitted, moved, and provoked* thee to rise up against my people, and more stubbornly to resist my command." Again, "the meritorious Cause of this hardening seems not to be on the part of man, but ought to be referred to the *good pleasure* of God alone." So zealous are those Casuists of the honour of God, that for fear of attributing any merit

to

to man, they ascribe to God the honour of man's sin and damnation. But let us see whether this text will bear them out; "Therefore, on whom he will he hath mercy;" i. e. on every one on whom, according to the strictest rules of Wisdom, Justice, Equity, and Goodness, (which are the invariable rules of his will) he ought to have mercy: as was observed above. For he can will nothing contrary to his nature.— "And whom he will, he hardeneth," i. e. suffers to be hardened: and these are such as his infinite Wisdom, Justice, and Truth pronounce ought to be given up to hardness of heart, for rejecting and despising offered grace and mercy.

Exactly agreeable to this are the words of Irenæus: "God is both good, and merciful, and patient, and saves whom he *ought*; neither is there wanting to him the good effect of a just judge, nor is his wisdom diminished: for he saves whom he *ought* to save, and judges those who are *worthy* of judgment." Which suffrage of Irenæus confirms what I have said before on Exod. xxxiii. 19. So that predestination has no place here.

The destruction of Pharaoh in the Red Sea was a remarkable type of God's destroying obstinate sinners in the sea of his eternal wrath. And his *example* is set before the Jews to warn them, that they should not bring ruin and destruction upon themselves by their obstinacy and unbelief, as Pharaoh had upon himself. The Apostle gives not the least hint that they were *predestinated* to ruin and destruction, so that they must needs continue in sin and be destroyed. For if this had been the case, it would have been rash *hypocrisy* in him to say, he could "with that himself were accursed from Christ," or rather, *made a curse*, after the example of Christ, "for his brethren, his kinsmen after the flesh," ver. 3, and great *wickedness* to have desired their repentance and salvation contrary to God's will; if God had absolutely decreed, they never should repent and be saved. On the other hand, upon a supposition of the possibility of their being saved, who had not yet sinned away their day of grace, it was great kindness in the Apostle to warn

them of their danger by Pharaoh's example, and to let them know, that God had still mercy in store for proper objects; though he would in justice give up those to hardness of heart, who would not take warning.

Rom. ix. 21, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" Yes, surely. But what does this imply? That because God hath a right and power to bestow greater favours upon one nation than another; yea, to give to one man more gifts, more wisdom and knowledge, nay, and more grace, than to another, therefore, he has a will, that only two out of six hundred thousand shall be saved, as Rabbi Sinai affirms? By no means. Leave such a *rabbinical* doctrine to Jews and Turks. The Christian system contains it not. Yet downright horrible are the marginal notes in the former Translation of the Bible on this and some preceding verses. "Now he, Paul (says the Annotator) answereth concerning the reprobate, or them, whom God *hateth*, being *not yet born*, and hath appointed to destruction, *without any respect of unworthiness*. "There is no injustice in the everlasting counsel of God touching the destruction of them, whom he listeth to destroy: for that *he hardeneth* before he destroyeth. God made and doth daily make, according *as he purposed* from everlasting, both such as should be elect, and such as should be reprobate." But if such a reprobating will were in God, St. Peter was miserably mistaken, when he told the Jews, Acts iii. 26, "God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."

Rom. ix. 22, 23, "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." In these words, some rejoice to think they find the doctrines of election to eternal life and reprobation to eternal misery, undeniably

niably established. I shall take the liberty to transcribe here a page from a late well-known writer.

“ Some good Christian pastors will not scruple to tell you (nor will many of their people scruple it) they could find no joy in their own state, no strength or comfort in their labours of love towards their flocks, but because they know, and are assured from St. Paul, that God never *had*, nor ever *will have*, mercy on *all* men; but that an unknown multitude of them, are, thro’ all ages, inevitably decreed by God to an eternal fire and damnation of hell, and an unknown number of others, to an irresistible salvation.—Every barbarity, that must have an end, is mere mercy, if compared with this doctrine.—And to be in love with it, to draw *sweet comfort* from it, and wish it God speed, is a love that absolutely *forbids* the loving our neighbour as ourselves, and makes the wish, that all men might be saved (tho’ it is encouraged by God by himself) no less than rebellion against God.—It is a love, which the cursed hater of all men would willingly unite and take comfort in. For could he know from St. Paul, that millions and millions of mankind are created and doomed to be his eternal slaves, he might be as content with this doctrine, as some good preachers (and people) are; and cease ‘going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour;’ as knowing that his kingdom was sufficiently provided for, without any labour of his own.”

“ Oh the *sweetness* of God’s *election*!” cries out the ravished preacher; “ Oh the *sweetness* of God’s *reprobation*! might the hellish Satan well say; could he believe that God had made him a free gift of *such myriads and myriads* of men, of all nations, tongues, and languages, from the beginning to the end of the world, and reserved so *small* a number for himself. What a complaint and condemnation are there made in Scripture of those who ‘sacrificed their sons and daughters unto devils?’ And yet this reprobating doctrine represents God as sacrificing myriads of his own crea-

“*tures, made in his own image, to an everlasting*
 “*hell. There is not an absurdity of heathenish faith*
 “*and religion, but what is less shocking than this*
 “*doctrine. And yet so blindly are some zealous*
 “*doctors of the gospel bigotted to it, as to set it*
 “*forth, as the glorious manifestation of the supreme*
 “*sovereignty of God. My friends, let any old*
 “*woman preach to you, rather than such doctors.”*
 Thus writes Mr. Law.

But to consider the texts in hand. In order to come at the meaning of them we must consider what the Apostle means by *wrath, mercy, and glory*: which is not, as the Calvinists suppose, *eternal wrath, happiness, and glory* in a future state; but are all of them things existing in the present life. By *wrath*, he means *present judgments*, as Psalm lxxviii. 31, and many places besides, where that word is so used; particularly, 1 Theff. ii. 16, “Wrath is come upon them to the uttermost:” from which very text it is easy to gather in what sense the Apostle calls the obstinate Jews, “Vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction.” And so fitted by themselves, not by God, for we have here again the passive voice in a reciprocal sense. And altho’ it be true, that, if they repented not, they would be fitted for *eternal* destruction, yet is not their obstinacy and impenitence to be charged on any decree of God, forcing them to it, but on themselves. By *mercy*, St. Paul means here, as in some other places, the *favour of God* shewn to men in giving them the gospel. Particularly, Rom. xi. 20, 31, “For as ye, [Gentiles,] in time past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy, [the blessing of the gospel] through their [the Jews’] unbelief: Even so have these [the Jews] also now not believed, that through your mercy [the favour conferred upon you Gentiles] they [the Jews] also may obtain mercy,” [the like favour from God.] The plain and obvious meaning, then, of the Apostle in this passage is this: “What if God, willing to shew his wrath [to punish] and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, [such as Pharaoh and the Jews whom

whom he was determined to punish and reject for their obstinacy] fitted [by that obstinacy of their own] for destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory," that is, his glorious riches, "on the vessels of mercy," the Gentiles, whom he intended to receive to favour and make his people "which he had afore prepared [in his purpose, and by his preventing grace] unto glory, [unto the glorious privilege of being his peculiar people and partakers of the gospel.] These texts, then, breathe nothing about election and reprobation, in the sense understood by our opponents: But chap. xi. ver. 25 and 26, are sufficient to overthrow all such absurd opinions.

Rom. ix. 27 and 29, "Tho' the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.—Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha." The number of those that shall be saved, say the opponents, is but a *remnant*, and a *seed*, or as the words are in Isaiah, a *very small remnant*, which the Lord saves by his *free grace*.—What then? Does this imply that the Lord damns all the rest by his *free wrath*, without ever allowing them any opportunity or means of being saved? Was not his grace as free for the latter as the former? Most certainly, if "God is no respecter of persons." And, allowing that the Apostle is speaking here of final salvation and destruction, which remains to be proved, as the contrary seems to appear, ch. xi. 14, 15; who are they that shall be destroyed? Are they such as God hath arbitrarily decreed shall sin, and therefore be destroyed? Nay, but such, as like the Pharisees and Lawyers, Luke vii. 30, *reject the counsel*, the gracious purpose of God, *toward themselves*. A tender of mercy is made to them, as well as others, with power to close in with it. But they wilfully refuse it, and *fit themselves* for destruction by their own obstinacy. And who are they that shall be saved? Such as embrace the offer of mercy, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace; who are not *forced* thereto, any more than the others to reject it. In a word, the one sort are "a disobedient and gainsaying people."

people," chap. x. 21, the other, such as "call upon the Lord, who is rich unto all that call upon him," ver. 12.

Rom. xi. 5, "There is a remnant according to the election of grace." This text, it is presumed, establishes the doctrine of particular election; that God hath chosen those, whom he foreknew from all eternity, and that freely of grace. He must be an entire stranger to the language of the Holy Ghost, that does not know, that *foreknowledge* in the sacred pages signifies *fore-approbation*. God, then, did not choose persons to inherit eternal life merely *at random*, or out of *whim* and *caprice*, as the Calvinists' notion supposes; but "according to the counsel of his will." Not such and such persons by name, but such persons as are *so and so qualified*. When his Justice might have doomed all mankind that sinned to endless perdition, his *free grace* and *mercy*, chose to bring all those to eternal life, for the sake of what Christ hath done and suffered, that having heard the gospel, believe in him; or supposing they have not heard the gospel, that use, what is by some styled, the *common grace* of God that is afforded them. This is all the election the Scriptures maintain with respect to eternal life. And no election but this can be maintained without violating the Attributes of God. Nor does this election rob God of his glory, or ascribe salvation any more to man, than God himself does. For that he should accept the satisfaction that Christ made for the sin of man, is of grace. That man can will or do aright, is of grace. And that God should choose those to his favour, and regard any thing they do right in any measure, after they have done wrong, is merely of grace. And as he of grace "reserved to himself seven thousand men that had not bowed the knee to Baal;" so does he still *reserve, separate, choose to himself*, of grace, *the man that is godly*, Psal. iv. 3, for Christ's sake; when even these were, by nature, children of wrath, even as others. And although he "justifies the ungodly," those that are such till the moment they are justified; yet he chooses none as heirs

heirs of eternal life, but those that are "conformed to the image of his Son."

Rom. xi. 7, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election," i. e. the elect people, "hath obtained it, and the rest are blinded," or rather *hardened*. What then? This is no proof at all that God, from all eternity, decreed that some particular persons should believe and be saved, and an infinitely greater number should sin and be damned. The utmost that can be gathered from this text is, that such as repent and believe the gospel, who are stiled the *elect*, shall be justified; but such as will not comply with these terms, however they seek after justification by the works of the Law, shall not obtain it; but if they persist in their infidelity, shall be given up to hardness of heart. Nor does what follows at all oppose this interpretation: "God hath given them the spirit of slumber" or *stupidity*, &c. For the *giving* of a thing here, as in many other places of Scripture, means no more than the *permitting* it to be. And that God permitted the Jews, at this time, to be thus hardened, was not out of a capricious humour, but for infinitely wise ends, viz. as a punishment for their own wilful perverseness, and that "thro' their fall salvation might come to the Gentiles, for to provoke them [the Jews] to jealousy," ver. 11, and cause them to return, as we find great numbers of them did. Nor does that prophecy of David, Rom. xi. ver. 9, 10, concerning the rejection of the Jews, oppose this interpretation. For tho' he foretels what *would* be, it does not follow that God had arbitrarily and tyrannically decreed that so it *should* be, without some just and equitable reason for it. And the reason of God's dealing so with the Jews we may plainly learn from Dent. xxviii. where God, so long ago, as the time of Moses, and by his mouth, declares, that he would reject the Jews, if they persisted in disobedience. So that their rejection was not a *capricious act* in God, merely to shew his *Sovereignty*; but an *awful display* of his *Wisdom, Power, and Justice*.

Nor did this prophecy in the least influence the behaviour

haviour of the Jews, or occasion their infidelity. I call it a *prophecy*, for so it is to be understood, according to Arius Montanus and others; and not as a *prayer*. For if such expressions are really *imprecations*, as they appear to be in our Translation, the Deists have too just reason to conclude, "That David was rather inspired by the spirit of the devil, than the Spirit of God, when he wrote them." The truth is, those that are skilled in the Hebrew Language know, that those words may as well be rendered in the *future tense*, which is *predictive*, as in the *imperative mood*; which yet, by the way, is not always *precatory*; but is often used in a predictive sense.

2 Cor. iv. 3; "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." But does God hide it from such, and that *designedly*, as some would have us believe? Nay surely, God "is not willing that any should perish," 2 Pet. iii. 9, "but that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge (or acknowledgment) of the Truth," 1 Tim. ii. 4, so far as it is revealed unto them. The Assembly themselves have freed God from any such charge, when they tell us, "The fault is not in the preachers, (I add, nor in God) but in themselves, whose eyes Satan (not God, observe) hath plucked out or blinded, so that they can see nothing, tho' it be ever so clear and evident in itself." And to warrant them in this interpretation, they have the following words, ver. 4, "In whom the God of this world," i. e. Satan so called, "hath blinded the minds of them which believe not."

2 Cor. vi. 16, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." The like promise we have, Lev. xxvi. 12, Jer. xxxi. 33, Ezek. xi. 20, xxxvi. 28, xxxvii. 27, Zech. viii. 8, Heb. viii. 10. From whence some would draw *absolute, unconditional election*. Amazing as it is, the learned and pious Bishop Beveridge, in his *Thoughts on Religion*, hath suffered himself to be so much biased by his system, that he lays as much stress upon the auxiliaries *shall and will*, in our Translation, as if they were in the original Hebrew or Greek! "For the Covenant, he tells us, is
"not

“ not that *he will* be our God, if *we will* be his people; but *he will* be our God, and *we shall* be his people. And some zealous Calvinist, I suppose, who imagined that good Prelate's authority would tend much to establish the doctrine he maintained, hath in a small extract from the work above-mentioned, caused SHALL and WILL to be printed in capitals. But if these capitals had been as long as the page, though they would have been so much the more conspicuous, they would have afforded no more proof of the doctrine meant to be forced upon us. They would only have afforded larger proofs of the good Prelate's *inattention* here to the Original, and of the warm Editor's *deep ignorance* or *strong attachment* to a wretched system. It is undeniable that the Hebrew particle ׀, and the Greek καί, signify often in the Scripture, *when, but, that, and if*, as well as *and*. And that, however the Septuagint have rendered the Verbs, in the texts above, in the *future tense*, yet there is no more necessity of using *shall* in the clause respecting the people, than *will*; yea, the Hebrew will bear to be rendered *may*. So that, without doing any violence to the text, or opposing the *Analogy* of Faith, the words may be fairly rendered, *I will be their God, when they shall, or that they may, or if they will, be my people*. However, that this promise is conditional, and so that no such stress is to be laid upon *shall* and *will*, is plain from the first mention of it in Lev. xxvi. where the condition is expressly set down, ver. 3, “ If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them.” ver. 12, “ Then I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.” And tho' the Covenant in Jeremiah, that is quoted in Hebrews, be called *new*; it is not because it was never made before, but because it was not made with that gracious promise of assistance to the Jews of old, as it was to their posterity. Again, it is plain from this very passage in Corinthians; where, after the promise is recited, the Apostle immediately adds, “ Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you,” q. d. but upon no other condition.

tion. Accordingly, Mr. Burkitt comments upon this passage thus, "While ye are pure, and cleave to God, "He will own you for his sons and daughters." And that this promise is conditional, and so no support to the doctrine of absolute predestination, appears more plainly still from that parallel text, Heb. iii. 6, "Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

Eph. i. 4, "According as he hath chosen us in him," i. e. Christ, "before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." 2 Theff. ii. 13, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, thro' sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the Truth." 1 Pet. i. 2, "Elect according to the foreknowledge," i. e. fore-approbation "of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Allowing that all these passages respect election to eternal salvation, yet they are no proof of an *absolute, unconditional* election, but directly the contrary; seeing none that have the benefit of the gospel, shall be eternally saved but upon the conditions here specified, of *believing*, being *obedient*, and *holy*. If you say these things are *blessings* of the covenant of grace and not *conditions* : I say they are *both* . And are all *freely offered to all* in the gospel, but *forced* upon no man.

But who were *chosen* in Christ from the beginning, or before the foundation of the world? Only such as, having heard the gospel, (for in the present case, we have no concern with any others) truly believe in Christ, and adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour. And with regard to the rest of mankind, only those that follow the light and use the power that God gives them by his Spirit, a *manifestation* whereof is given to every man to profit withal, or as *αρεος το συμφερον* rather means, *as to what is expedient for, or conducive to,* the good of the church, or every man's own salvation. God, I apprehend, could choose no others consistently with his *Nature* and *Attributes* .

If he had chosen *any* without satisfaction made to his Justice, his Justice must have been violated,

If

If he had chosen *all* as heirs of salvation, whether godly or ungodly, it must have impeached his *Wisdom*, as the moral Governor of the world. If he had chosen *none*, it would not have been consistent with his *Mercy*. If he had chosen *some* unconditionally and not all, it would have argued him a *respector of persons*, which he declares he is not. To admit any soul into heaven that is unholy, his *Holiness* forbids. God, then, foreseeing that the man he intended to create in his own image, would, by sin, deface that image, determined in his Wisdom and Mercy to give his own eternal Son, made man, to die in the fulness of time, to make satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. And (because without holiness none can enter into the gates of the heavenly city, and holiness is not attainable but by the Spirit of God) he determined moreover to give his Holy Spirit to purify the hearts of the children of men. And all that, having heard the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, believe in him; or, having never heard the gospel, that conscientiously follow the light of his Holy Spirit that is afforded them, John i. 9, Rom. ii. 15, 16;—all such, and such only, he chose in Christ Jesus, *before the foundation of the world*.

I know it is objected, This is making the election of God's chosen *conditional*, and so *uncertain*; whereas all the mercies and blessings of the gospel covenant are *sure* mercies, Isa. lv. 3. And he made with David "an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure," 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. What is all this to the purpose? The mercies of David are *sure*. But to whom? The context in Isaiah shews, only to those that *incline their ear* and come unto Christ. And allowing that the *everlasting Covenant*, as our Translators call it, means the gospel covenant, which remains to be proved; how is this "ordered in all things and sure?" No otherwise than other covenants are that are made between party and party. The several articles therein are *particularly* set down, and what the *contracting parties* engage, on their respective parts, to perform. Now, if either party fail in the performance of the articles to be kept on his part,

part, the covenant is broken, and the other party is no longer bound by such covenant to perform his part. All the engagements on God's part, as our baptismal office declares, "He will most surely keep and perform;" for "all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to such as keep his covenant and his testimonies." But if men neglect their part of the covenant, God is no longer bound by any word or promise to bring them to heaven; nor hath he chosen any careless, obstinate sinners to be heirs of his kingdom. For by the very tenor of the covenant all such sinners are as sure to fail of the heavenly inheritance, as those that *repent* and *believe* aright in the Lord Jesus Christ are sure to obtain it. Accordingly the Apostle exhorts the Hebrews, chap. iv. 1, "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left of entering into his rest, any of you should" not seem, as our Translation has it, but *be seen* or *found to come short of it*. For if sinners only seemed to come short of it, when it was not really so, where would be the harm, and what need of this caution? If any one, overlooking this form of speech frequent in the Scriptures, will lay any stress upon the change of persons in this text, he will only render the Apostle's caution egregious nonsense. But taken as it ought to be, it entirely overthrows the doctrine of *absolute, unconditional predestination* and *election* to eternal life.

But to consider more closely the words of David, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5, "He hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure;" which, as it is one of the main pillars of absolute final perseverance, so also of predestination, upon which such perseverance depends. The covenant here referred to, as it is agreed on all hands, is that mentioned, 2 Sam. vii. 12—16. Now in this covenant it is stipulated, 1. That David's house and kingdom should be established for ever, i. e. till the coming of *the Messiah*, as the phrase *for ever* often means; provided his posterity carried themselves as they ought. 2. That if his children committed iniquity, they should be chastened for it, ver. 14. Psal. lxxxix. 32. Yet, 3. That God's

mercy,

mercy should not depart away from him, as he took it away from Saul, who was put away before him, ver. 15. For the house of Saul was destroyed, and the Kingdom transferred into David's hands, and in his family the government was to continue, till Christ the eternal King should come; who was to be born of his race, and who should set up his spiritual kingdom in the world, (typified by Solomon's) which should have no end. Such is the tenor of the covenant made with David; so was it *ordered* and *made sure*. Now, if any man will pretend from this covenant to establish the Calvinistical doctrine of *predestination* and *final perseverance*, he must first prove that all David's successors in the line of Solomon, even Ahaz, Jehoa-haz, Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah, are certainly gone to heaven, notwithstanding they all *did evil*, in the general course of their lives, *in the fight of the Lord*. But if this cannot be proved from the tenor of this covenant, no more can such doctrines. All that can fairly be inferred from it is, that the Messiah should certainly spring from David's loins, let his children behave how they would. But this is no proof that such and such persons shall once believe in Christ, and, having once believed, shall certainly be saved eternally, let them behave afterwards how they will. On the contrary, David expressly tells us, ver. 6, 7, that "the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away—and they shall be utterly burnt with fire." And both God and man know, that there have been, and that there are still, too many sons of Belial, who, because they have once believed, rest upon the *stability* of this covenant; and confidently expect the blessings thereof, as being treasured up in Christ for them: and though, at present, they have no part or lot in him, yet fancy themselves quite secure.

If it be objected, that as the temporal kingdom, by virtue of this covenant, was secured to David's posterity, how wickedly soever they should behave; so in like manner the Kingdom of heaven is secured to the elect, however they commit iniquity. I answer, 1. Altho' a *Lawgiver* or *Governor*, did not *depart from between David's feet*, any more than Judah's, until

until Shiloh came, yet it is evident the kingdom *failed*. For the Jews had nothing after Zedekiah, till the time of Herod, in whom the government departed both from Judah and David. Accordingly the Psalmist complains, "Thou hast made void the Covenant of thy servant; thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground," Psal. lxxxix. 39. So that this consideration affords the *Perseverists* but little comfort. 2. God's elect, who shall inherit his kingdom, are such as "persevere in well-doing," Rom. ii. 7, "and bring forth fruit, *ἡ ἀποδομὴ*, with perseverance:" not such as "turn aside after Satan," 1 Tim. v. 15, and yet vainly persuade themselves they must needs persevere in grace. In short, all the consolation the *Perseverists* can draw from this, and some other such passages of Scripture, is grounded only on such a mystical interpretation thereof, as is not warranted by any plain word of God; but, on the contrary, is, by many plain texts, expressly confuted.

Coloff. iii. 12, "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God—bowels of mercy," &c. Hence it is inferred, that God has *absolutely elected* some particular persons to eternal life; because the Colossians were so elected. What, was *every* member of the Church at Colosse so elected? Was *any one* of them? One would apprehend not, upon considering the Apostle's words, chap. i. 23, where he gives them to understand, that the blessings of Christianity would be theirs, only upon condition, that "they continued in the faith, grounded and settled, and were not moved away from the hope of the gospel." And expresses his care and fear, chap. ii. lest they should *be deceived, and beguiled of their reward,*" ver. iv. 18. That they were elected out of the heathen world to *be his peculiar people,* is true; but that they were elected to *continue* so, and *all* of them *infallibly* and *eternally* saved, can never be proved.

1 Theff. i. 4, "Knowing, Brethren beloved, your election of God." Nor is any such election, as is contended for, to be proved from these words, because we find the Apostle writing to those very Thessalonians, chap. iii. 5, "For this cause, when I could

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no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter should have tempted you, and our labour be in vain."

1 Theff. v. 9, "For God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." Hence it is argued, God hath appointed his elect to salvation, and *none* others. Well, supposing you are a Calvinist, what joy does this inference afford you? Why, you say, "I hope I am one of the happy number." So do thousands of gross, notorious sinners. I know many such that, like the seraphic Asaph, will clap their hands as enraptured, and cry, "O the everlasting love of Jesus! O the sweetness of God's election! O! that unchangeable love of God!"—But you say, "I have better ground of hope concerning my election, than such persons; for I am a believer." So are they, if they are to be believed; for they are confident they had faith once, and that true faith can never be quite lost. You reply, "If they had true faith, they will be restored again." Still in your account it is a doubtful matter, whether they ever had true faith or not. And how do you know that your faith is any better than theirs? Why, you say, "I have been enlightened, have tasted of the heavenly gift, have been made a partaker of the Holy Ghost, have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come." So did those poor sinners suppose, and affirm that they did. But, you say, "It is plain they were mistaken, because they fell away, unless they recover again." And how do you know that you are not mistaken? That your faith will not fail as well as theirs? You say, "Christ hath prayed for me, that my faith fail not." He prayed so for Peter, I own. But it does not follow from hence, upon your principles, that he hath prayed so for you, unless you are one of the elect. But he hath said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." This is nothing to you, unless you are one of the elect. Upon your principles, you cannot, upon any sufficient grounds, lay claim to any one promise in the Scriptures. Because the promises you say belong only to the elect, and no
man

man upon earth can be sure that he is elect, upon your principles, till he dies, and is found to continue in the faith. But you say, "I have the marks of my election, a holy life and conscientious regard to the duties of religion." So had those once, who are now committing iniquity with greediness. And you are not sure this will not be your case, unless you are elect. But you say, "I have had an inward testimony of my election to my soul." So had those poor fallen sinners, if we may take their word, which, I presume, is as credible as yours. "If it were so, (you say,) then they will certainly be restored." Still we are but just where we were. And after a thousand years dispute, upon your principles, you can never be sure of your election, and so can lay no claim to, take no comfort in, any one promise of the gospel. For this reason, if I had no other, I reject your doctrine of election, as unworthy of the God of Love; and maintain that God hath absolutely and unconditionally appointed no man to wrath, but hath conditionally appointed all to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Tim. ii. 10, "I endure all things for the elect's sakes." The notes of some I have conversed with, are exactly the same upon these words with those of Esthius, a Calvinistical Papist. 1. That God hath infallibly chosen *some* particular persons to salvation; which is false, unless they mean such as persevere in faith and good works, as appears from Coloss. i. 23; Heb. iii. 6, 2 Pet. i. 10. 2. That as Paul suffered those things *only* for the elect, so Christ died *only* for them. But this is false also, as appears from Heb. ii. 9, 1 Tim. ii. 6, 1 John ii. 2. 3. That neither Christ *did*, nor *ought we to do* any thing, that the reprobates may obtain salvation; which is *horribly* false, as appears John iii. 17, and v. 34, 40, and xii. 47, Rom. ix. 3, and x. 1. But that no such election, as is contended for, can be inferred from these words, is plain from ver. 4, 5, of this chapter, yea, from this very text under consideration, in which the Apostle declares he "endured all things for the elect's sakes," that they might also obtain the salvation which is in

Jesus Christ." But if they were so elected from all eternity, as to be *infallibly sure* of salvation, there was no need at all that the Apostle should *endure* any thing for their sakes, nor indeed that Christ should *die* for them, as I have already made appear.

2 Tim. ii. 13, "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself." Hence some infer, that whether the elect believe or no, they are sure of heaven; their salvation is secured by virtue of their election. But is it possible for any man, that is not *wilfully blind*, or *egregiously ignorant*, to put such a construction upon those words, that considers what immediately goes before: "If we deny him, he will also deny us." Mr. Burkitt, tho' he is, (and most Calvinistical Writers are no more) a *predestinarian* by fits, will help us to a better interpretation: "If we be *unfaithful* and *forsake* him, yet he abideth *faithful*; he will be *true* to his word. He will not *forsake his own cause*, but *make good his threatnings*. His own *veracity* stands firm, and is as much engaged to execute the *threatening*, as to fulfil the *promise*."

2 Tim. ii. 19, "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the Name of Christ, depart from iniquity." What is meant by the *foundation* here has never yet been agreed upon among interpreters, no less than eight meanings having been found out for the word. It is almost as far from being agreed upon what is to be understood by the *seal*. Yet the text rolls from the tongue of every Calvinistical old woman, in defence of *predestination* and its correlates, *election* and *perseverance*, though the wisest man upon earth is no more able to give the certain meaning of it, than of the Revelation by St. John. However, the most probable meaning, as appears to me, of the *foundation*, is, the Covenant made between God and man. In which sense it has been taken by divers learned and godly interpreters. By the *seal*, the *impression* may be meant, in which is contained the sum and substance of the Articles of the Covenant on both sides. On the part of God this article is confirmed, "He knoweth, i. e. approveth,
and

and will acknowledge and reward them that are his." On the part of man this article is confirmed, and must be performed, if he expect any benefit from the Covenant, that "he must depart from iniquity," as well as take upon him the profession of Christ. Whether this interpretation be admitted or not, nothing can be more certain, than that this text is so far from countenancing the doctrine of *unconditional* predestination, election, and perseverance, that it proves the direct contrary, as it wears a *condition* openly upon its breast. As does more plainly still what follows.

2 Tim. ii. 20, 21, "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour: If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." The Apostle, it is to be observed, in the preceding verse, as well as in these, is answering an objection that some might make on account of the errors and apostacy of Hymeneus, Philetus, and others. In the former verse he shews that God is faithful and true to his word, and that, however some apostatized, and deprived themselves of the blessings of the Covenant, yet God will fulfil his promises to all, that, according to the tenor of the Covenant, depart from iniquity. In these verses he shews, that it is no wonder to find in the Church, which is God's great house, some that are wicked, as well as those that are good; any more than it is to find vessels of costly metal, and of viler matter, in the great house of some rich man. However, he adds, *if a man*, (the original is, *εαν τις*, *if any man*, whatever, tho' he be at present one of those viler utensils) *cleanse himself from those*, from the errors and vices of such men, however he hath been infected with them in time past, *he shall be a vessel unto honour*, &c. Hence then it appears, that tho' there are *τα ουκ εφ ημιν*, as Epictetus speaks, some things that are not in our power, yet there are also *τα εφ ημιν*, some that are in our power, by virtue of that *general aid*, which God, by his Spirit, affords to the children of men. And that it is *possible*, (tho' perhaps

perhaps at present not *morally* so with regard to many) for *all* to be saved, is plain from the Apostle's supposition, that *any man* may purge *himself*; and that where there is at present a *moral impossibility*, even that may be removed. Otherwise, we must suppose, when the Apostle says, "If any man purge himself," that he uses such an *irony* as that of our English proverb, "If the sky fall, we shall catch larks." But no man in his senses can suppose an inspired Apostle would make use of *irony* in such a case as this. I presume then that predestination cannot rest so much as one foot upon this text.

2 Tim. iii. 1—5, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of themselves," &c. ver. 13, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived," chap. iv. 3, 4, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." What, because God hath *absolutely decreed* all this? Predestinated man to do these things? If so, those that do them, will be as *guiltless* before God, as those that do just the contrary, being predestinated thereto. All men then are virtuous or vicious alike; and all men will be saved or damned alike. But I suppose no man in his senses will assert this. And if not, he cannot charge these men's crimes upon God's predestination. Paul charges Titus, chap. i. 13, to "rebuke vain talkers and deceivers sharply, that they may be found in the faith." To what end, if they are predestinated "to wax worse and worse?" to "deceive and be deceived?"

Heb. vi. 17, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it," or *interposed himself*, "by an oath." Hence it is inferred, that God hath by an *immutable decree*, and that confirmed by an oath, chosen certain persons to be heirs of his promised blessings. True: But who are the *heirs of promise*, or *children of promise*? as they are styled,

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Rom. ix. 8, Gal. iv. 28, or those that shall inherit the blessings promised in the gospel? Are they described by their *names*, or by their *qualities*? By their *qualities* only. "So then, they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham," Gal. iii. 9. Believers, then, are chosen heirs of the promised blessings; "If they continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel," Coloss. i. 23. But there is not the least intimation here, nor elsewhere in Scripture, of any eternal decree that myriads and myriads of men shall never believe, and be damned for their unbelief.

But some perhaps will reply, "We say nothing of *reprobates*: We only say, God hath by an *immutable decree*, secured the eternal salvation of the elect." If by the *elect*, such persons mean *persevering believers*, I say the same. But if they add, that he hath secured the perseverance of believers, without their own endeavours to do his will, and a due use of the means of grace, I say he hath secured it in no such manner. Hear Bishop Latimer speak: "If Joseph had not resisted the temptations of his master's wife, but had followed her,—this act had been a deadly sin.—And that man or woman, that committeth such an act, *loseth the Holy Ghost and the remission of sins*, and so becometh the *child of the devil*, being before the child of God. For a regenerate man or woman that believeth, ought to have dominion over sin; but as soon as sin hath rule over him, he is gone.—He that is led so with sin is in a state of damnation, and sinneth damnably." And I know of no promise in all the Bible, that every one who hath once believed, and afterwards sins *damnably*, shall certainly be recovered from his damnable state. If so, it had been folly for the Apostle in this very chapter to exhort the Hebrews to be "followers of those who thro' faith and patience," i. e. *perseverance*, "inherit the promises," ver. 12. Or to press it upon them by the example of Abraham, who, "after he had patiently endured," i. e. *persevered* in faith and obedience, "obtained the promise," ver. 15. In a word, the *immutable decree* of God concerning the
salvation

salvation and *damnation* of such as hear the gospel, is this, "He that believeth (and continues to believe; for that is implied) and is baptized, shall be saved: and he that believeth not, (and continues in unbelief; for that is implied also) shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16. And if any will pretend to say, It is decreed, that he who *once believes* shall *always* believe: I say, upon as good ground and with equal authority, He that *once disbelieves* shall *always* disbelieve. But I shall venture to affirm, till I have clear proof to the contrary, that the Scripture teaches no such immutable decree on either hand.

Heb. xiii. 5, "I will never leave thee; nor forsake thee." This text more immediately concerns the point of *perseverance*. But as that is indissolubly connected with the Calvinistic doctrines of absolute predestination and election, so that they must all stand or fall together; it is not impertinent to the matter in hand to take it into consideration. Here, say the opponents, are five negatives in the Original, the more emphatically and fully to shew, that God will never forsake his *elect*. True: and if there had been but one, the promise had been as certain to those to whom it belongs, as if there had been five hundred negatives. And if there had been five hundred, what consolation would this afford to a poor sinner, who has forsaken the ways of God and is wallowing in his sins? Because God had so strongly promised his gracious presence to Joshua, and hath promised it to such as are faithful as he was, shall one that has "made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, (therefore) bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst?" Nay, "for the Lord will not spare him, but the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in his Book shall be upon him," except he repent, Deut. xxix. 19, 20. The doctrine of absolute predestination then, or any of its correlates, has no support here.

1 Pet. ii. 8, "And a stone of stumbling and rock of offence; even to them who stumble at the word;

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being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed." This text is produced to prove that some are appointed to *stumble* at the word, and be *disobedient* and *perish* for so doing. I cannot help here charging our Translators with great *negligence* or unpardonable *prejudice*; that they have miserably perverted the text in order to cast the blame of sinners' destruction upon God. But in order to free the *Father of Mercies* from such an unjust charge, let it be observed,

1. That the words, *even to them*, are not in the original.
2. The verb *τιθημι*, ver. 6, is translated *lay*, but at ver. 8, *appointed*; and their thus having divers measures, a great and a small, was no doubt to serve a purpose. In the Original, after the word *σκανδαλα*, *offence*, there is a *colon*, which our Translators have changed for a *comma*. If the change of a *colon* into a *comma* be no crime in them, when it is to serve their purpose; the omission or shifting of a *comma* surely can be no crime in me, when it is to save the Justice and Mercy of God inviolate. An *anomaly* of gender is admitted, when relation is had rather to the *thing* meant, than the *word* expressed. So Homer uses *φιλα* for *φιλον τεκνον*. And John xvi. 13, 14, we read *σκεινος* for *σκεινο πνευμα*. The like *anomaly* is found in many places beside. So here *εις ο* may be put for *εις ον*. Once more, the Greeks from *verbs active* which govern a *dative case* of the *person*, often form *passives*, and put after them an *accusative case* of the *thing*. So Rom. vi. 17, *εις ον παρεδοθητε*, for *ος υμιν παρεδοθη*, which was delivered to you. By the like form of speech, *εις ο ληθησαν* may be put for *ο* or *ος*, according to the preceding observation, *σκεινοις ληθη*, which was put to them. These preliminaries admitted, this passage may be fairly rendered one of these ways.

1. "For [supplied, instead of, *even to them*] they tremble at the Word, being disobedient, unto which [word] they were also put," i. e. that they might believe it, as well as those that did believe it. Or,
2. "They stumble at the Word (being disobedient) which was offered unto them;" as the Author of 'An Essay for a New Translation of the Scriptures,' observes it is in the Syriac Version. Or,
3. "They stumble, being

being disobedient to the Word, unto which they were put, or which was put or offered unto them," as well as to others. Or, 4. *Unto which thing, viz. the being disobedient, they also set themselves;* (taking the passive verb, *ἐπινοῶν*, in the reciprocal sense, as is common in the sacred Writings.) Which last interpretation is by much the most easy and natural, and seems, therefore, to be the genuine meaning of the words.* The doctrine of absolute predestination, then, cannot shelter itself under the shadow of this text.

1 Pet. ii. 9, "But ye are a chosen generation—a peculiar people." That Christians are God's *peculiar people* now, as the Jews were of old, no man will deny: nor that some Christians are more peculiarly his than others, as walking more closely with him, and having a more abundant measure of his Spirit. Nor will it be doubted that they are a *chosen generation*; chosen for this purpose, that they may "shew forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light." But at the same time it is notorious, that the eminent titles given to Christians in this verse, do not certainly declare what every one of them *was* even in the Apostolic ages, but only what they *ought* to have been. The truth is, St. Peter gives the same titles now to the whole body of the Christian Church, which, in former ages, had been given to the whole body of the Jewish Church. Not only the *righteous* and *obedient* among them, but the *whole nation* of the Jews, were filled the *elect of God*, throughout the

* To what Mr. Sellon has advanced here, I beg leave to add, that the original words, without any alteration of points, or supposition of any anomaly of gender, are literally rendered, *Who, disobeying the Word, stumble, unto which also they were disposed.* Now, surely all who *disobey the word*, which no man is necessitated or predestinated to disobey, are *disposed to stumble and fall*; yea, are *placed or appointed thereunto*, and also to be *broken, and snared, and taken*, Isaiah viii. 14, 15; God having decreed, that he who believeth not shall be damned. Thus the Jews, who *voluntarily and without necessity, disobeyed the word* spoken by John the Baptist, by Christ and his Apostles, calling them to repentance, therefore stumbled at the doctrine of *Christ crucified*, and of salvation thro' faith in him, and especially at that cross of his, which all his genuine disciples are called to bear.

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Old Testament. So in the New, all that were converted to Christianity are stiled *God's elect* or his *chosen people*, whether they had been before Jews or Gentiles. But then, by this expression the sacred Penmen are far from meaning that all whom they stile *elect* shall be infallible heirs of glory. If so, St. Peter had no occasion at all to exhort them thus: "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." But the very end and design of his writing his Epistles was, that, as he had found many of these, whom he had once reckoned among the elect, as well as those to whom he wrote, subverted by Gnostic or Antinomian teachers, he might warn those that he still calls elect, to "beware, lest they also being led away with the error of the wicked, should fall from their own steadfastness," 2 Pet. iii. 17. So that from the Christians in general being stiled a *chosen generation*, the doctrine of absolute, particular election can receive no countenance.

2 Pet. ii. 12, "But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed." The generality of Calvinistic Writers and Interpreters infer from these words, that God made these and such like men *on purpose* to be destroyed. But surely never were words more miserably perverted! Ω ; here is a note of *comparison*, used to shew how these men *acted*, not what they *really were*, nor what they were *made for*. He that will stretch the comparison to this length, may as well prove from Rev. iii. 3, that Christ is a *thief*. Again, $\gamma\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\sigma\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\alpha$ *made*, agrees not with $\alpha\iota\omicron\iota$, *these men*, but with $\zeta\omega\alpha$, *beasts*. He, therefore, that will prove from this verse that men are *made to be destroyed*, may just as well prove that they are really *natural brute beasts*. All that the Apostle asserts here is, that these men act *as if* they were void of reason, and debase themselves to a level with beasts, that "are made to be taken and destroyed;" for, he adds, "they speak evil of the things that they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;" i. e. *in their own destruction*. So Piscator himself interprets the words. Tho' because he will not rob God

God of his *sovereignty*, as the Calvinistic cant phrase is, but will give him all the honour of *destroying sinners* without hope or remedy, as well as of *decreeing their sins*, he adds "*their own*, i. e. which is destined to them of God." But I say, their *own destruction*, made so by their *own obstinacy* and *perverse-ness*; and I have God himself for my authority. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself," Hof. xiii. 9. But further, there is no need that we should take the words, *εις αλωσιν και φθοραν*, in a *passive* sense, "to be taken and destroyed," but in an *active*, for *taking* and *destroying*; which is the genuine sense, and is more agreeable to the Apostle's scope here, and especially to what follows, ver. 18, "They allure, thro' the lusts of the flesh, thro' much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error." In this sense, then, all that the Apostle means is, that this sort of men, "like brute beasts made for taking and destroying, allure," and so *take* and *destroy* such as are not upon their guard against them. In which sense soever you take the words, predestination has no footing here.

Jude 1, "Jude—to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." This text also is prest into the service of *predestination*, *election*, and *perseverance*. But a very little consideration will be sufficient to discharge it therefrom. By the way, I shall take notice of the mistake made by our Translators in this verse. The word, *called*, which is here put *substantively*, and denotes the *persons* to whom the Epistle is directed, and should have been read first, (as it rightly is in the former Translation) they have placed last and used as an *adjective*, with the conjunction, *and*, before it, which is not in the Original. Again, they have inserted the preposition *in*, before Jesus Christ, which has no business there. The words should doubtless be rendered thus: "To the called, that are sanctified by God the Father, and have been preserved for or to Jesus Christ," vid. 2 Sam. vii. 23, 24. As the *elect*, so also the *called*, is a title given to God's peculiar people both in the Old and New Testament.

God

God files the Jews in general, his *called*, Isa. xlviii. 12. So Paul files the Christians at Rome, Rom. i. 7, and at Corinth, 1 Cor. i. 2. And so St. Jude here files all Christians in general. But tho' he files them, *the called*, this is no proof that all, to whom he wrote, were, in the Calvinists' sense, *effectually called*, or such as were predestinated to eternal life. Nor, tho' they had been hitherto "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved to Jesus Christ," is this any proof that they were infallibly certain, however they should demean themselves afterwards, that they should be always so kept. For if this had been the case, there had been no need of his writing to them, and exhorting them "to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," ver. 3, much less to put them in remembrance of God's judgments upon apostates, as he does, ver. 5, 6. Nor that he should exhort them "to keep themselves in the love of God," ver. 22. All which plainly shews that they were not *absolutely*, and however they might behave, predestinated to eternal life.

Jude 4, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation." It is observable that our Translators have rendered *προειρησμεναι*, *fore-knoen*, i. e. *fore-approved*, 1 Pet. i. 20, *fore-ordained*. So here *προειρησμενοι*, *fore-described*, they have rendered *before-ordained*. One would almost wonder, that they had not rendered *προειρησμεναι* and *προειρηστω* *fore-ordained*, their heads seem to have been so full of *fore-ordaining*. Παλαι, which they here render, *of old*, does not always signify, *a long time ago*, much less *from eternity*. It is used by Pilate, Mark xv. 44, concerning Christ's death, so that there it can only mean at most but the space of an hour or two. It is used by St. Peter, where he mentions some that had "forgotten that they were purged from their old sins," 2 Pet. i. 9, consequently, can mean there only the space of a few years at most. In a word then, *παλαι* means *a while ago*, and that a longer or shorter while, as the matter in hand requires. It is not agreed among commentators what time the Apostle refers to, when he says, *these*

men were before-described, or written of some time ago. Some take that fore-description to be in the writings of Peter, others of Paul, others of the Evangelists, and others of the Prophets. But be that as it will, if Jude saw what was written before of them, supposing it was in the prophecy of Enoch, mentioned ver. 14, it was not written from all eternity. Say, that God decreed from all eternity to condemn such men as these, I contend not; only add, except they should repent. But I defy any man to produce a decree of God that such men shall so sin, and never repent, and so be damned for their sin and impenitence.

As far as I can remember I have considered every text of Scripture, which is usually urged in defence of the doctrine of absolute, unconditional predestination and election, except some few, which are in meaning the same with others taken notice of; and such as are brought to support the doctrine of absolute, unconditional perseverance. And some of these I have occasionally considered and shewn that they are no friends to the cause they are forced to engage in. And it were as easy to shew the same of all of them, only this would be enlarging my book far beyond its intended size. But this I will venture to affirm, If the *promises* of eternal life are *Absolute* and *Unconditional*, so also are the *threatenings* of eternal death. And if any one can prove from the Scriptures, that God will save any sinner contrary to his *natural* government, which requires *personal* holiness in every one that is saved; or contrary to his *moral* government, which requires that he be *no respecter of persons*; I will equally prove that no sinner ever *was*, or ever *will be saved*. But neither of these can be proved from Scripture; and consequently none of these doctrines in dispute.

ILMAGL

