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FREE GRACE-

A

SERMON

Preach'd at

B R I S T O L.

By JOHN WESLEY, M. A.
Fellow of Lincoln-College, OXFORD.



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To the R E A D E R.

NOthing but the strongest Conviction, not only that what is here advanced, is *the Truth as it is in Jesus*, but also that I am indispensably obliged, To declare this Truth to all the World, could have induced me openly to oppose the Sentiments of those, whom I highly esteem for their Works sake : At whose Feet may I be found, in the Day of the Lord Jesus !

Should any believe it his Duty to reply hereto, I have only one Request to make, Let whatsoever you do be done in Charity, in Love, and in the Spirit of Meekness. Let your very Disputing shew That you have *put on, as the Elect of GOD, Bowels of Mercies, Gentleness, Long-suffering* : That even according to this time, it may be said, “ See, how these Christians love one another.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

WHeras a Pamphlet, intitled, *Free Grace indeed*, has been published against this Sermon, this is to inform the Publisher, that I cannot answer his Tract, till he appears to be more *in Earnest*. For I dare not speak of the deep Things of GOD, in the Spirit of a Prize-fighter or a Stage-player.

ROM,

R O M . 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?

1. **H**OW freely does God love the World ! While we were yet Sinners, Christ died for the Ungodly. While we were Dead in Sin, God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. And how freely with him does he give us all Things ! Verily Free Grace is all in all !

2. The Grace or Love of God, whence cometh our Salvation, is Free in all, and Free for all.

3. First, It is Free in all to whom it is given.. It does not depend on any Power or Merit in Man : No, not in any Degree ; neither in Whole, nor in Part. It does not in any wise depend either on the good Works or Righteousness of the Receiver : Not on any Thing he has done, or any Thing he is.. It does not depend on his Endeavours : It does not depend on his good Tempers, or good Desires, or good Purposes and Intentions. For all these flow from the Free Grace of God : They are the Streams only, not the Fountain. They are the Fruits of Free Grace, and not the Root. They are not the Cause, but the Effects of it.. Whatsoever Good is in Man, or is done by Man, God is the Author and Doer of it.. Thus is his Grace Free in all, that is, no way depending on any Power, or Merit in Man : But on God alone, who freely gave us his own Son, and with him freely giveth us all Things.

4. But is it Free for All, as well as in All ? To this some have answered, " No : It is free only for those whom God hath ordained to Life ; and they

A 3 but

" are but a little Flock. The greater Part of Mankind
 " God hath ordajned to Death ; and it is not Free
 " for them. Them God hateth ; and therefore be-
 " fore they were born, decreed they should die Eter-
 " nally. And this he absolutely decreed ; because
 " so was his good Pleasure : Because it was his
 " sovereign Will. Accordingly, they are born for
 " this, To be destroyed, Body and Soul, in Hell.
 " And they grow up under the irrevocable Curse of
 " God, without any Possibility of Redemption. For
 " what Grace Gon gives, he gives only for this, To
 " increase, not prevent, their Damnation."

5. This is *that Decree of Predestination*. But methinks I hear one say, " This is not the Predesti-
 " nation which I hold. I hold only the Election of
 " Grace. What I believe is no more than this, That
 " God, before the Foundation of the World, did
 " elect a certain Number of Men, to be justified,
 " sanctified and glorified. Now all these will be
 " saved, and none else. For the rest of Mankind
 " God leaves to themselves. So they follow the
 " Imaginations of their own Hearts, which are only
 " Evil continually, and waxing worse and worse,
 " are at length justly punished with everlasting De-
 " struction."

5. Is this All the Predestination which you hold ? Consider, perhaps this is not all. Do not you be-
 " lieve " God ordained them to this very Thing ? " If so, you believe the whole Decree ; you hold Pre-
 destination in the full Sense, which has been above
 described. But it may be you think you do not. Do not you then believe God hardens the Hearts of
 them that perish ? Do not you believe he (literally)
 hardened *Pharaoh's Heart*, and that for this End he
 raised him up (or created him ?) Why this amounts to
 just the same Thing. If you believe *Pharaoh*, or a
 ny one Man upon the Earth, was created for this
 End to be damned, you hold all that has been said
 of Predestination. And there is no need you should
 add, that God seconds his Decree, which is suppo-
 ted Unchangeable and Irrefistible, by hardening the
 Hearts.

Hearts of those Vessels of Wrath, whom that Decree had before fitted for Destruction.

6. Well ; but it may be you do not believe ever this. You do not hold any Decree of Reprobation. You do not think God decrees any Man to be damned, nor hardens, irresistibly fits him for Damnation. You only say, "God eternally decreed, That All being dead in Sin, he w^{ould} say to some of the dry Bones, *Live*, and to others, he would not. That consequently these should be made alive, and those abide in Death : These should glorify God by their Salvation, and those by their Destruction."

7. Is not this what you mean by *the Election of Grace*? If it be, I would ask one or two Questions. Are any who are not thus elected, saved? Or were any from the Foundation of the World? Is it possible any Man should be saved, unless he be thus Elected? If you say No, you are but where you was. You are not got one Hair's Breadth further. You still believe, that in Consequence of an unchangeable, irresistible Decree of God, the greater Part of Mankind abide in Death, without any Possibility of Redemption: Inasmuch, as none *can* save them but God: And he *will not* save them. You believe *he hath absolutely decreed not to save them*; and what is this, but decreeing to damn them? It is, in Effect, neither more nor less : It comes to the same Thing. For if you are dead, and altogether unable to make yourself alive; then if God has absolutely decreed, He will make others only alive, and not you; He hath absolutely decreed your everlasting Death; you are absolutely consigned to Damnation. So then, tho' you use softer Words than some, you mean the self-same Thing. And God's Decree concerning the Election of Grace, according to your own Account of it, amounts to neither more nor less, than what others call, "God's Decree of Reprobation."

8. Call it therefore by whatever Name you please, "Election, Preterition, Predestination, or Reprobation," it comes in the End to the same Thing.

The

The Sense of all is plainly this. " By virtue of an
 " Eternal, Unchangeable, Irresistible Decree of GOD,
 " one Part of Mankind are infallibly saved, and the
 " rest infallibly damned ; it being impossible that any
 " of the former should be damned, or that any of
 " the latter should be saved †.

9. But if this be so, then is All Preaching Vain. It is needless to them that are Elected. For they, whether with Preaching or without, will infallibly be saved. Therefore the End of Preaching, " To save Souls," is void with regard to them. And it is useless to them that are not Elected. For they cannot possibly be saved. They, whether with Preaching or without, will infallibly be damned. The End of Preaching is therefore void with regard to them likewise. So that in either Case, our Preaching is vain, as your Hearing is also vain.

10. This then is a plain Proof, that the Doctrine of Predestination is not a Doctrine of GOD, because it makes void the Ordinance of GOD : And GOD is not divided against himself. A second is, That it directly tends to destroy that Holiness, which is the End of all the Ordinances of GOD. I do not say, " None who hold it are holy." (For GOD is of tender Mercy to those who are unavoidably intangled in Errors of any kind.) But that the Doctrine itself, " That every Man is either Elected or not Elected from Eternity, and that the one must inevitably be

+ That this is the true State of the Question, the anonymous Author of a Pamphlet lately published, acknowledges (p. 4.) in the following Words, " You have been at some Pains, Section 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, to put the Calvinistical Notion of Election in a clear Light." You might have said all in less Bounds, viz. " They hold an Eternal, Absolute, Personal Election, of a certain Number of Adam's Seed to Salvation ; without an antecedent Respect to any Qualification in them, and they leave you to Conjecture, How GOD shall deal with the rest."

" be saved, and the other inevitably damned," has a manifest Tendency to destroy Holiness in general. For it wholly takes away those first Motives to follow after it, so frequently proposed in Scripture, the Hope of Future Reward and Fear of Punishment, the Hope of Heaven and Fear of Hell. That *these shall go away into everlasting Punishment, and those into Life Eternal*: Is no Motive to Him to struggle for Life, who believes his. Let it cast already c It is not reasonable for him so to do, if he thinks he is unalterably adjudged either to Life or Death. You will say, " But he knows not whether it is Life or Death." What then? This helps not the Matter. For if a sick Man knows that he must unavoidably die, or unavoidably recover, tho' he knows not which, it is not reasonable for him to take any Physick at all. He might justly say, (and so I have heard some speak) both in Bodily Sickness and in Spiritual) " If I am " ordained to Life, I shall live; If to Death, I " shall die. So I need not trouble myself about it." So directly does this Doctrine tend to shut the very Gate of Holiness in general, to hinder unholy Men from ever approaching thereto, or striving to enter in thereat.

11. As directly does this Doctrine tend to destroy several Particular Branches of Holiness. Such are Meekness and Love: Love I mean of our Enemies, of the Evil and Unthankful. I say not, That none who hold it, have Meekness and Love: (For as is the Power of God, so is his Mercy.) But that it naturally tends to inspire or increase a Sharpnes or Eargerness of Temper, which is quite contrary to the Meekness of Christ: As then especially appears, when they are opposed on this Head. And it as naturally inspires Contempt or Coldness toward those, whom we suppose Outcasts from God. " O, (but " you say) I suppose no particular Man a Repro- " bate." You mean, you wou'd not, if you could help it. You can't help sometimes applying your General Doctrine to Particular Persons. The Enemy of Souls will apply it for you. You know how often

he

he has done so. " But you rejected the Thought " with Abhorrence." True; as soon as you could. But how did it sour and sharpen your Spirit in the mean Time? You well know, it was not the Spirit of Love which you then felt towards that poor Sinner, whom you supposed or suspected, whether you would or no, to have been hated of God from Eternity.

Thirdly, This Doctrine tends to destroy the Comfort of Religion, the Happiness of Christianity: This is evident as to all those who believe themselves to be reprobated, or who only suspect or fear it. All the great and precious Promises are lost to them. They afford them no Ray of Comfort. " For they " are not the Elect of God. Therefore they have " neither Lot nor Portion in them." This is an effectual Bar to their finding any Comfort or Happiness even in that Religion, " whose Ways were designed " to be *Ways of Pleasantness, and all her Paths Peace.*"

13. And as to you who believe yourselves the Elect of God, what is your Happiness? I hope, not a Notion, a Speculative Belief; a bare Opinion, of any Kind: But a feeling Possession of God in your Heart, wrought in you by the Holy Ghost; or, *The Witness of God's Spirit with your Spirit, that you are a Child of God.* This, otherwise termed *the full Assurance of Faith*, is the true Ground of a Christian's Happiness. And it does indeed imply a full Assurance that all your past Sins are forgiven, and that you are now a Child of God. But it does not necessarily imply a full Assurance of our Future Perseverance. I do not say, This is never joined to it: But that it is not necessarily implied therein; for many have the one, who have not the other.

14. Now this Witness of the Spirit Experience shews to be much obstructed by this Doctrine: And not only in those who believing themselves Reprobated, by this Belief thrust it far from them: But even in them that have *tasted of that good Gift,* who yet have

have soon lost it again, and fallen back into Doubts, and Fears, and Darkness, *Horrible Darkness that might be felt.* And I appeal to any of you who hold this Doctrine, to say between God and your own Hearts, Whether you have not often a Return of Doubts and Fears concerning your Election or Perseverance ? If you ask, Who has not ? I answer, Very Few of those that hold this Doctrine. But many, very many of those that hold it not, in all Parts of the Earth : Many of those who know and feel, they are in Christ to Day, and *take no Thought for the Morrow ; who abide in him by Faith from Hour to Hour, or rather from Moment to Moment.* Many of these have enjoyed the uninterrupted Witness of his Spirit, the continual Light of his Countenance, from the Moment wherein they first believed, for many Months or Years to this Day.

15. That Assurance of Faith which these enjoy, excludes all Doubt and Fear. It excludes all kind of Doubt and Fear, concerning their Future Perseverance : Tho' it is not properly (as was said before) an Assurance of what is Future ; but only of what *now* is. And this needs not for its Support a Speculative Belief. That whoever is once ordained to live, must live. For it is wrought from Hour to Hour, by the mighty Power of God, *by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them.* And therefore that Doctrine is not of God, because it tends to obstruct, if not destroy, this Great Work of the Holy Ghost, whence flows the chief Comfort of Religion, the Happiness of Christianity.

16. Again, How uncomfortable a Thought is This, That Thousands and Millions of Men, without any preceding Offence or Fault of theirs, were unchangeably doomed to Everlasting Burnings ? How peculiarly uncomfortable must it be, to those who have put on Christ ! To those who being filled with *Bowels of Mercy, Tenderness and Compassion,* could even *wish themselves accurst for their Brethrens Sake.*

17. Fourthly, This uncomfortable Doctrine directly tends to destroy our Zeal for Good Works. And this it does first, as it naturally tends (according to what

what was observed before) to destroy our Love to the greater Part of Mankind, namely the Evil and Unthankful. For whatever lessens our Love, must so far lessen our Desire to do them good. This it does. Secondly, as it cuts off one of the strongest Motives to all Acts of Bodily Mercy, such as feeding the Hungry, cloathing the Naked, and the like, *viz.* The Hope of saving their Souls from Death. For what avails it to relieve their Temporal Wants, who are just dropping into Eternal Fire? " Well ; but run " and snatch them as Brands out of the Fire." Nay, this you suppose impossible. They were appointed thereunto, you say, from Eternity, before they had done either Good or Evil. You believe, it is the Will of God they should die. And *who bathe resisted his Will?* But you say, " you do not know whether " these are elected or not." What then? If you know they are one or the other, that they are either Elected or not Elected, all your Labour is void and vain. In either Case, your Advice, Reproof or Exhortation, is as needless and useleſs as our Preaching. It is needless to them that are Elected ; for they will infallibly be saved without it. It is useleſs to them that are not Elected ; for with or without it they will infallibly be damned. Therefore you cannot, consistently with your Principles, take any Pains about their Salvation. Consequently those Principles directly tend to destroy your Zeal for good Works : For all good Works, but particularly for the Greatest of all, The saving of Souls from Death.

18. But, fifthly, This Doctrine not only tends to destroy Christian Holiness, Happiness, and Good Works, but hath also a direct and manifest Tendency to overthrow the whole Christian Revelation. The Point which the wisest of the modern Unbelievers most industriously labour to prove, is, That the Christian Revelation is not necessary. They well know, could they once shew this, the Conclusion would be too plain to be denied, " If it be not Necessary, it is " not True." Now this Fundamental Point you give up. For supposing That Eternal, Unchangeable Decree

tree, one Part of Mankind must be saved, tho' the Christian Revelation were not in Being : And the other Part of Mankind must be damned, notwithstanding that Revelation. And what would an Infidel desire more ? You allow him all he asks. In making the Gospel thus unnecessary to all Sorts of Men, you give up the whole Christian Cause. *O tell it not in Gath ! Publish it not in the Streets of Askelon ! Let the Daughters of the Uncircumcised rejoice, let the Sons of Unbelief triumph !*

19. And as this Doctrine manifestly and directly tends to overthrow the whole Christian Revelation, so it does the same Thing, by plain Consequence, in making that Revelation contradict itself. For it is grounded on such an Interpretation of some Texts (more or fewer it matters not) as flatly contradicts all the other Texts, and indeed the whole Scope and Tenor of Scripture. For Instance ; The Asserters of this Doctrine, interpret that Text of Scripture, "*Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated,*" as implying that God in a literal Sense hated Esau and all the Reprobated from Eternity. Now what can possibly be a more flat Contradiction than this, not only to the whole Scope and Tenor of Scripture, but also to all those particular Texts, which expressly declare, "*God is Love?*" Again, they infer from that Text, "*I will have Mercy on whom I will have Mercy,*" (Rom. ix. 15.) That God is Love only to some Men, viz. The Elect, and that he hath Mercy for those only : Flatly contrary to which is the whole Tenor of Scripture, as is that express Declaration in particular, "*The Lord is loving unto every Man, and his Mercy is over ALL his Works,*" (Psl. cxlv. 9.) Again, They infer from that and the like Texts, "*It is not of him that willeth, neither of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy,*" that he sheweth Mercy only to those to whom he had Respect from all Eternity. Nay, but who replieth against God now ? You now contradict the whole Oracles of God, which declare throughout, "*God is no Respecter of Persons,*" (Acts x. 34.) "There is

" no Respect of Persons with him," (Rom. ii. 11.) Again from that Text, " The Children being not yet born, neither having done 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 (unto Rebecca) The Elder shall serve the Younger :" You infer, that our being Predestinated or Elect, no Way depends on the Fore-knowledge of God: Flatly contrary to this are all the Scriptures; and those in particular, " Elect according to the Fore-knowledge of God," (1 Pet. i. 2.) " Whom he did foreknow, he also did Predestinate," (Rom. viii. 29.)

20. And, " The same Lord over all is rich in Mercy to all that call upon him," (Rom. x. 12.) But you say, " No, He is such only to those for whom Christ died. And those are not All, but only a Few, Whom God hath chosen out of the World :" For he died not for All, but only for those who were chosen in him before the Foundation of the World," (Eph. i. 2.) Flatly contrary to your Interpretation of these Scriptures also is the whole Tenor of the New Testament; as are in particular those Texts, " Destroy not him with thy Meath, for whom Christ died," (Rom. xiv. 15.) A clear Proof that Christ died, not only for those that are saved, but also for them that perish. He is " the Saviour of the World," (John iv. 42.) He is " the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sins of the World," (John i. 29.) He is the Propitiation, not for our Sins only, but also for the Sins of the whole World," (1 John ii. 2.) " He (the living God) is the Saviour of all Men," (1 Tim. iv. 10.) " He gave himself a Ransom for All," (1 Tim. ii. 6.) " He tasted Death for every Man," (Heb. ii. 9.)

21. If you ask, " Why then are not all Men saved?" The whole Law and the Testimony answer, first, not because of any Decree of God, not because it is his Pleasure they should die. For, " as I live, saith the Lord God, I have no Pleasure in the Death of him that dieth," (Ezek. xviii. 32.)

What-

Whatever be the Cause of their perishing, it cannot be his Will, if the Oracles of God are true; for they declare, “*He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance,*” (2 Pet. iii. 9.) *He willeth that all Men should be saved.* And they, secondly, declare, What is the Cause why all Men are not saved; namely, that they will not be saved: So our Lord expressly, “*They will not come unto me that they may have Life,*” (John v. 40.) “*The Power of the Lord is present to heal them.*” But they will not be healed. “*They reject the Counsel,*” the merciful Counsel of God against themselves, as did their stiff-necked Fore-fathers. And therefore are they without Excuse, because God would save them, but they will not be saved: This is the Condemnation, “*How often would I have gathered you together, and ye would not,*” (Matth. xxiii. 37.)

22. Thus manifestly does this Doctrine tend to overthrow the whole Christian Revelation, by making it contradict itself; by giving such an Interpretation of some Texts, as flatly contradicts all the other Texts; and indeed the whole Scope and Tenor of Scripture. An abundant Proof that it is not of God. But neither is this all. For, seventhly, It is a Doctrine full of Blasphemy; of such Blasphemy as I should dread to mention, but that the Honour of our gracious God, and the Cause of his Truth, will not suffer me to be silent. In the Cause of God then, and from a sincere Concern for the Glory of his Great Name, I will mention a few of the Horrible Blasphemies, contained in this Horrible Doctrine. But first, I must warn every one of you that hears, as ye will answer it at the Great Day, not to charge me (as some have done) with blaspheming, because I mention the Blasphemy of others. And the more you are grieved with them that do thus blaspheme, see that ye *confirm your Love towards them the more, and that your Heart's Desire, and continual Prayer to God be, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”*

23. This premised, let it be observed, That this

Doctrine represents our Blessed Lord, *Jesus Christ the Righteous, the only begotten Son of the Father, full of Grace and Truth*, as an Hypocrite, a Deceiver of the People, a Man void of common Sincerity. For it cannot be denied, that he every where speaks, *as if he was willing that all Men should be saved.* Therefore to say, *He was not willing that all Men should be saved*, is to represent him as a mere Hypocrite and Dissembler. It can't be denied that the gracious Words which came out of his Mouth, are full of Invitations to all Sinners. To say then, He did not intend to save all Sinners, is to represent him as a gross Deceiver of the People. You cannot deny, that he says, "*Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden.*" If then you say He calls those that cannot come, those whom he knows to be unable to come, those whom he can make able to come but will not, how is it possible to describe greater Insincerity? You represent him as mocking his helpless Creatures, by offering what he never intends to give. You describe him as saying one Thing, and meaning another: As pretending the Love which he had not: *Him in whose Mouth was no Guile*, you make full of Deceit, void of common Sincerity: Then especially, when drawing nigh the City, *He wept over it, and said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto Thee; How often wou'd I have gathered thy Children together--and Ye wou'd not."* (*πολεῖς τὰς καὶ σκότωσας*) Now if you say, *They wou'd, but He wou'd not*, you represent him, (which who could hear?) as weeping Crocodile's Tears, weeping over the Prey which himself had doomed to Destruction.

24: Such Blasphemy this, as one would think might make the Ears of a Christian to tingle. But there is yet more behind; for just as it honours the Son, so doth this Doctrine honour the Father. It destroys all his Attributes at once. It overturns both his Justice, Mercy and Truth. Yea, it represents the most Holy God as worse than the Devil; as both
more

more false, more cruel and more unjust. More False : because the Devil, Liar as he is, hath never said, "*He willeth all Men to be saved.*" More unjust, because the Devil cannot, if he wou'd, be guilty of such Injustice as you ascribe to God, when you say, That God condemned Millions of Souls to everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels for continuing in Sin, which for want of that Grace *He will not give them*, they cannot avoid : And more Cruel; because that unhappy Spirit *seeketh Rest and findeth none*; so that his own restless Misery is a Kind of Temptation to him to tempt others. But God *resteth in his high and Holy Place*: So that to suppose Him of his own mere Motion, of his pure Will and Pleasure, happy as he is, to doom his Creatures whether they will or no, to endless Misery ; is to impute such Cruelty to Him, as we cannot impute even to the great Enemy of God and Man. It is to represent the most High God (He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear !) as more Cruel, False, and Unjust than the Devil.

25. This is the Blasphemy clearly contained in the *Horrible Decree* of Predestination. And here I fix my Foot. On this I join Issue with every Afferter of it. You represent God as worse than the Devil : More False, more Cruel, more Unjust. "But you say you "will prove it by Scripture." Hold ! What will "you prove by Scripture ? That God is worse than the Devil ? It cannot be. Whatever that Scripture proves, it can never prove this. Whatever its true Meaning be, this cannot be its true Meaning. Do you ask, "What is its true Meaning then ?" If I say, "I "know not," you have gain'd nothing. For there are many Scriptures, the true Sense whereof neither you nor I shall know, till Death is swallowed up in Victory. But this I know, Better were it to say, It had no Sense at all, than to say it had such a Sense as this. It cannot mean, whatever it mean besides, that the God of Truth is a Liar. Let it mean what it will, it cannot mean that the Judge of all the World is unjust. No Scripture can mean, that God is not

Love, or that his Mercy is not over all his Works : That is, Whatever it prove beside, no Scripture can prove Predestination.

26. This is the Blasphemy for which, (however I love the Persons who assert it) I abhor the Doctrine of Predestination : A Doctrine upon the Supposition of which, if one could possibly suppose it for a Moment, (call it Election, Reprobation, or what, you please, for all comes to the same Thing) one might say to our Adversary the Devil, " Thou Fool, why dost Thou roar about any longer ? Thy lying in Wait for Souls is as needless and useless as our Preaching. " Hearest thou not, That God hath taken Thy Work out of Thy Hands ? And that he doth it much more effectually ! Thou, with all thy Principalities and Powers, canst only so assault that we may resist Thee. But He can irresistibly destroy both Body and Soul in Hell ! Thou canst only infect. But his unchangeable Decree, to leave Thousands of Souls in Death, compels them to continue in Sin, till they drop into everlasting Burnings. " Thou temptest : He forceth us to be damned. For we cannot resist his Will. Thou Fool, why goest thou about any longer, seeking whom Thou mayst devour ? Hearest thou not that God is the devouring Lion, the Destroyer of Souls, the Murderer of Men ? Moloch caused only Children to pass thro' the Fire ; And that Fire was soon quenched : Or the corruptible Body being consumed, its Torment was at an End. But God, Thou are told, by his Eternal Decree, fixed before they had done Good or Evil, causes not only Children of a Span long, but the Parents also to pass thro' the Fire of Hell : That Fire which never shall be quenched ; and the Body which is cast thereinto, being now incorruptible and immortal, will be ever consuming, and never consumed : But the Smoke of their Torment, because it is God's good Pleasure, ascendeth up for ever and ever."

27. O how wou'd the Enemy of God and Man rejoice to hear these Things were so ! How wou'd he cry aloud and spare not ! How wou'd he lift up his Voice

Voice and say, “ To your Tents, O *Israel!* Flee
 “ from the Face of this God, or ye shall utterly pe-
 “ rish. But whither will ye flee? Into Heaven? He-
 “ is there. Down to Hell? He is there also. Ye
 “ cannot flee from an omnipresent, almighty Tyrant.
 “ And whether ye flee or stay, I call Heaven his
 “ Throne, and Earth his Footstool to witness against
 “ you, ye shall perish, ye shall die eternally. Sing, O
 “ Hell, and rejoice ye that are under the Earth! For
 “ God, even the mighty God, hath spoken, and
 “ devoted to Death Thousands of Souls, from the
 “ rising up of the Sun, unto the going down thereof.
 “ Here, O Death, is thy Sting! They shall not, cannot
 “ Escape: For the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken
 “ it. Here, O Grave, is thy Victory! Nations yet
 “ unborn, or ever they have done Good or Evil, are
 “ doom'd never to see the Light of Life, but thou
 “ shalt gnaw upon them for ever and ever. Let all
 “ those Morning-stars sing together, who fell with
 “ Lucifer, Son of the Morning. Let all the Sons of
 “ Hell shout for Joy! For the Decree is past, and
 “ who shall disannul it?”

28. Yea, the Decree is past. And so it was be-
 fore the Foundation of the World. But what Decree?
 Even this: “ *I will set before the Sons of Men, Life*
 “ *and Death, Blessing and Curse*. And the Soul
 “ that chuseth Life shall live, as the Soul that chuseth
 “ Death shall die.” This Decree, whereby “ *whom*
 “ *God did foreknow, he did predestinate*,” was indeed
 from everlasting: This, whereby all who suffer Christ
 to make them alive, are “ *Elect, according to the Fore-*
 “ *knowledge of God*,” now standeth fast, even as the
 Moon, and as the faithful Witness in Heaven: And
 when Heaven and Earth shall pass away, yet this shall
 not pass away; for it is as Unchangeable and Eternal,
 as is the Being of God that gave it. This Decree
 yields the strongest Encouragement, to abound in all
 good Works, and in all Holiness: And it is a Well-
 spring of Joy, of Happiness also, to our great and
 endless Comfort. This is worthy of God. It is
 every Way consistent with all the Perfections of his
 Nature. It gives us the noblest View both of his Justice,
 Mercy,

Mercy, and Truth. To this agrees the whole Scope of the Christian Revelation, as well as all the Parts thereof. To this Moses and all the Prophets bear Witness, and our Blessed Lord and all his Apostles. Thus Moses, in the Name of his Lord, "I call Heaven and Earth to record against you this Day, that I have set before you Life and Death, Blessing and Curseing; therefore chuse Life that thou and thy Seed may live." Thus Ezekiel (to cite one Prophet for all) "The Soul that sinneth it shall die: The Son shall not bear (eternally) the Iniquity of the Father, (xviii. 20.) The Righteousness of the Righteous shall be upon him, and the Wickedness of the Wicked shall be upon him." Thus our Blessed Lord, "If any Man thirst, let him come to me and drink," (John vii. 37.) Thus his great Apostle St. Paul, (Acts xvii. 30.) "God commandeth all Men, every where to repent. All Men, every where:" Every Man in every Place, without any Exception, either of Place or Person. Thus St. James, "If any of you lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all Men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him," (James i. 5.) Thus St. Peter, (2 Pet. iii. 9.) "The Lord is---not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance:" And thus St. John, "If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father,---and he is the Propitiation for our Sins: And not for ours only, but for the Sins of the whole World," (1 John ii. 1, 2.)

29. O hear ye this, ye that forget God! Ye cannot charge your Death upon him. Have I any Pleasure at all, that the Wicked should die, saith the Lord God? (Ezek. xviii. 23, &c.) Repent and turn from all your Transgressions: So Iniquity shall not be your Ruin. Cast away from you all your Transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed,--for why will ye die, O House of Israel? for I have no Pleasure in the Death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God. Wherefore turn yourselves and live ye. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no Pleasure in the Death of the Wicked.--Turn ye, turn ye from your evil Ways: For why will ye die, O House of Israel?" (Ezek. xxxiii. 11.)

Universal Redemption.

HEAR, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord,
Father of All Mankind,
Spirit of Love, Eternal Word,
In Mystic Union join'd.

Hear, and inspire my stammering Tongue,
Exalt my abject Thought,
Speak from my Mouth a Sacred Song,
Who spak'st the World from Nought.

Thy Darling Attribute I praise
Which All alike may prove,
The Glory of thy boundless Grace,
Thy universal Love.

Mercy I sing, transporting Sound,
The Joy of Earth and Heaven !

Mercy by every Sinner found,
Who takes what GOD hath given.
Mercy for All thy Hands have made,
Immense, and Unconfin'd,
Throughout thy every Work display'd,
Embracing all Mankind.

Thine Eye survey'd the fallen Race
When sunk in Sin they lay,
Their Misery call'd for all thy Grace,
But Justice stopp'd the Way.

Mercy the fatal Bar remov'd,
Thy only Son it gave, —
To save a World so dearly lov'd,
A sinful World to save.

For every Man He tasted Death,
He suffered once for All,
He calls as many Souls as breathe,
And all *may* hear the Call.

A Power to chuse, a Will t' obey,
Freely his Grace *restores* ;
We all *may* find the living Way,
And call the Saviour ours.

Whom

Whom his Eternal Mind foreknew,
 That they the Power would use,
 Ascribe to God the Glory due,
 And not his Grace refuse ;

Them, only them, his Will decreed,
 Them did He chuse alone,
 Ordain'd in Jesu's Steps to tread,
 And to be like his Son.

Them, the Elect, consenting few,
 Who yield to proffer'd Love,
 Justify'd here he forms anew,
 And glorifies Above.

For as in Adam All have dy'd,
 So All in Christ may live,
 May (for the World is justify'd)
 His Righteousness receive.

Whoe'er to God for Pardon fly,
 In Christ may be forgiven,
 He speaks to All, " Why will ye die,
 And not accept my Heaven ! "

No ! in the Death of him that dies,
 (God by his Life hath sworn)
 He is not pleas'd; but ever cries,
 Turn, O ye Sinners, turn.

He would that All his Truths should own,
 His Gospel All embrace,
 Be justify'd by Faith alone,
 And freely fav'd by Grace.

And shall I, Lord, confine thy Love,
 As not to others free ?
 And may not every Sinner prove,
 The Grace that found out me ?

Doubtless thro' one Eternal Now
 Thou ever art the same,
 The Universal Saviour Thou,
 And Jesus is thy Name.

Ho ! every one that thirsteth come !
 Chuse Life ; obey the Word ;
 Open your Hearts to make him Room,
 And Banquet with your Lord.

When

When God invites, shall Man repel ?
 Shall Man th' Exception make ?
 " Come, freely come, WHOEVER WILL,
 And Living Water Take ! "

Thou bid'st ; and would'st Thou bid us chuse,
 When purpos'd not to save ?
 Command us all a Power to use
 Thy Mercy never gave ?

Thou canst not mock the Sons of Men,
 Invite us to draw nigh,
 Offer thy Grace to All, and then,
 Thy Grace to Most deny !

Horror to think that GOD is Hate !
 Fury in GOD can dwell !
 GOD could an helpless World create,
 To thrust them into Hell !

Doom them an endless Death to die,
 From which they could not flee !
 No, Lord ! thine Inmost Bowels cry,
 Against the Dire Decree !

Believe who will that Human Pain
 Pleasing to GOD can prove :
 Let Molock feast him with the Slain,
 Our GOD, we know, is Love.

Lord, if indeed, without a Bound,
 Infinite Love Thou art,
 The HORRIBLE DECREE confound,
 Enlarge thy People's Heart !

Ah ! Who is as thy Servants blind,
 So to misjudge their GOD !
 Scatter the Darkness of their Mind,
 And shed thy Love abroad.

Give them Conceptions worthy Thee,
 Give them, in JESU's Face,
 Thy merciful Design to see,
 Thy all-redeeming Grace.

tir up thy Strength, and help us, Lord,
 The Preachers multiply,
 send forth thy Light, and give the Word,
 And let the Shadows fly.

Oh !

Oh ! if thy Spirit send forth me,
 The meanest of the Throng,
 I'll sing thy Grace divinely free,
 And teach Mankind the Song.

Grace will I sing, thro' *Jesus*' Name,
 On All Mankind beitow'd ;
 The everlasting Truth proclaim,
 And seal that Truth with Blood.

Come then, thou all-embracing Love,
 Our frozen Bosoms warm ;
 Dilating Fire, within us move,
 With Truth and Meekness arm.

Let us triumphantly ride on,
 And more than Conquerors prove.
 With Meekness bear th' Opposers down,
 And bind with Cords of Love.

Shine in our Hearts, Father of Light ;
Jesus, thy Beams impart,
 Spirit of Truth, our Minds unite,
 And keep us one in Heart.

Then, only then our Eyes shall see
 Thy promis'd Kingdom come ;
 And every Heart by Grace set free,
 Shall make the Saviour Room.

Thee every Tongue shall then confess,
 And every Knee shall bow ;
 Come quickly, Lord, we wait thy Grace,
 We long to meet Thee now.

T H E E N D.