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**COMMENTARY**

**CLARKE'S COMMENTARY  
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ROMANS - COLOSSIANS**

*by Adam Clarke*

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THE NEW TESTAMENT  
OF OUR  
LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST  
THE TEXT

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*AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION,*

WITH

A COMMENTARY AND CRITICAL NOTES;

*DESIGNED AS A HELP TO A BETTER  
UNDERSTANDING OF THE SACRED WRITINGS*

BY ADAM CLARKE,

LL.D., F.S.A., etc

FOR WHATSOEVER THINGS WERE WRITTEN AFORETIME FOR OUR  
LEARNING; THAT WE, THROUGH PATIENCE AND COMFORT OF THE  
SCRIPTURES, MIGHT HAVE HOPE. — ROMANS 15:4

*VOLUME VI(A) ROMANS TO COLOSSIANS.*

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

Preparing Clarke's Commentary on the Old and New Testaments for an electronic format has been a task of considerable dimensions. The Digital Library edition is the labor of love of Sulu Kelley of Concord, NC, USA. "Mr. Sulu" converted the original text from the six volume edition (originally published in 8 volumes) authored by Adam Clarke between 1810 and 1826. We thank Mr. Kelley for giving us permission to include this the first electronic edition of a most helpful and inspiring work.

The reader is advised to note the following characteristics of this version:

1. There are no Hebrew vowel pointings nor are there any Greek accents. These were not a part of the published editions of Clarke's Commentary.
2. Most capitalizations and many breathing marks were omitted from the Greek text.
3. Adam Clarke had an exceptional knowledge of Biblical languages and the languages of the earliest (known) Biblical texts. The author provides numerous references to versions in various languages which contain nuances and/or insight into the meaning of a given text. These references frequently contained phrases printed in Arabic and Anglo-Saxon among others. We anticipated few of the Library readers would have an appreciation for these references, particularly since the script and dialects of many of them were outside the scope of almost anyone's experience or education. Since these references are usually transliterated and/or explained by Mr. Clarke, we have omitted these scripts. We have observed the following abbreviation conventions when the associated language/script has been removed from the text: [AS] Anglo-Saxon; [A] Arabic, Arabian; [P], Persic, Persian; [S] Syriac, Syrian; [H] Hindu.
4. The printed version contains material not included in this electronic version: The King James text, from which the author worked, and associated cross references are omitted as each phrase discussed is quoted in the analysis itself. Several tables with obscure material are

omitted as it was felt that archaic data on, for example, the motion of the planets, information long since revised and corrected, would not enhance and may even obscure the timeless portions of the commentary.

5. The printed version contains a number of archaic forms of punctuation and capitalization. These were retained if they did not seem to obscure the meaning of the text.

# PREFACE

## TO THE

## EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

THAT ST. PAUL was the author of this epistle, and that it possesses every evidence of authenticity that any work of the kind can possess, or that even the most fastidious skepticism can require, has been most amply proved by Dr. W. Paley, Archdeacon of Carlisle, in his work entitled “*Horae Paulinae; or, the Truth of the Scripture History of St. Paul evinced, by a comparison of the Epistles which bear his name with the Acts of the Apostles, and with one another.*”

Of this apostle I have spoken at large in the notes on the preceding book, and especially in the observations at the close of the ninth chapter, to which I beg leave to refer the reader. It will be sufficient to state here, that Saul, (afterwards called Paul,) was born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, of Jewish parents, who possessed the right of Roman citizens; (see the note on Acts 22:28;) that, when young, he was sent to Jerusalem for the purpose of receiving a Jewish education; that he was there put under the tuition of the famous Rabbi Gamaliel, and was incorporated with the sect of the Pharisees, of whose system he imbibed all the pride, self-confidence, and intolerance; and distinguished himself as one of the most inveterate enemies of the Christian cause; but, being converted by a most singular interposition of Divine Providence and grace, he became one of the most zealous promoters and successful defenders of the cause which he had before so inveterately persecuted.

Though this epistle is directed to the Romans, yet we are not to suppose that Romans, in the proper sense of the word, are meant; but rather those who dwelt at Rome, and composed the Christian Church in that city: that there were among these Romans, properly such, that is heathens who had

been converted to the Christian faith, there can be no doubt; but the principal part of the Church in that city seems to have been formed from Jews, sojourners at Rome, and from such as were proselytes to the Jewish religion.

When, or by whom, the Gospel was first preached at Rome cannot be ascertained. Those who assert that St. Peter was its founder, can produce no solid reason for the support of their opinion. Had this apostle first preached the Gospel in that city, it is not likely that such an event would have been unnoticed in the Acts of the Apostles, where the labors of St. Peter are particularly detailed with those of St. Paul, which indeed form the chief subject of this book. Nor is it likely that the author of this epistle should have made no reference to this circumstance, had it been true. Those who say that this Church was founded by these two apostles conjointly, have still less reason on their side; for it is evident, from Romans 1:8, etc., that St. Paul had never been at Rome previously to his writing this epistle. It is most likely that no apostle was employed in this important work, and that the Gospel was first preached there by some of those persons who were converted at Jerusalem on the day of pentecost; for we find, from Acts 2:10, that there were at Jerusalem strangers of Rome, Jews, and proselytes; and these, on their return, would naturally declare the wonders they had witnessed, and proclaim that truth by which they themselves had received salvation. Of ROME itself, then the metropolis of the world, a particular account has been given in the note on Acts 28:16; to which the reader is requested to refer.

The occasion of writing this epistle may be easily collected from the epistle itself. It appears that St. Paul had been made acquainted with all the circumstances of the Christians at Rome, by Aquila and Priscilla, (see Romans 16:3,) and by other Jews who had been expelled from Rome by the decree of Claudius, (mentioned Acts 18:2;) and, finding that they consisted partly of heathens converted to Christianity, and partly of Jews who had, with many remaining prejudices, believed in Jesus as the true Messiah, and that many contentions arose from the claims of the Gentile converts to equal privileges with the Jews, and from the absolute refusal of the Jews to admit these claims unless the Gentile converts became circumcised, he wrote to adjust and settle these differences.

Dr. Paley, with his usual perspicuity, has shown that the principal object of the argumentative part of the epistle is “to to place the Gentile convert upon a parity of situation with the Jewish, in respect of his religious condition, and his rank in the Divine favor.” The epistle supports this point by a variety of arguments; such as, that no man of either description was justified by the works of the law-or this plain reason, that no man had performed them; that it became therefore necessary to appoint another medium, or condition of justification, in which new medium the Jewish peculiarity was merged and lost; that Abraham’s own justification was antecedent to the law, and independent of it; that the Jewish converts were to consider the law as now dead, and themselves as married to another; that what the law in truth could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God had done by sending his Son; that God had rejected the unbelieving Jews, and had substituted in their place a society of believers in Christ, collected indifferently from Jews and Gentiles. Therefore, in an epistle directed to Roman believers, the point to be endeavored after by St. Paul was to reconcile tho Jewish converts to the opinion that the Gentiles were admitted by God to a parity of religious situation with themselves, and that without their being obliged to keep the law of Moses. In this epistle, though directed to the Roman Church in general, it is, in truth, a Jew writing to Jews. Accordingly, as often as his argument leads him to say any thing derogatory from the Jewish institution, he constantly follows it by a softening clause. Having, Romans 2:28, 29, pronounced “that he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor that circumcision which is outward in the flesh,” he adds immediately, “What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there in circumcision? Much every way.” Having in Romans 3:28, brought his argument to this formal conclusion, “that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law,” he presently subjoins, Romans 3:31, “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid! Yea, we establish the law.” In the seventh chapter, when in Romans 7:6 he had advanced the bold assertion, “that now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held;” in the next verse he comes in with this healing question, “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid! Nay, I had not known sin but by the law.” Having, in the following words, more than insinuated the inefficacy of the Jewish law, Romans 8:3: “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned

sin in the flesh;” after a digression indeed, but that sort of a digression which he could never resist, a rapturous contemplation of his Christian hope, and which occupies the latter part of this chapter; we find him in the next, as if sensible that he had said something which would give offense, returning to his Jewish brethren in terms of the warmest affection and respect: “I say the truth in Christ Jesus, I lie not; my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart; for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers; and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came.” When, in the 31st and 32nd verses of the ninth chapter, he represented to the Jews the error of even the best of their nation, by telling them that “Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, had not attained to the law of righteousness, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone;” he takes care to annex to this declaration these conciliating expressions: “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved; for I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.” Lastly, having, Romans 10:20, 21, by the application of a passage in Isaiah, insinuated the most ungrateful of all propositions to a Jewish ear, the rejection of the Jewish nation as God’s peculiar people; he hastens, as it were, to qualify the intelligence of their fall by this interesting exposition: “I say then, hath God cast away his people, (i.e. wholly and entirely?) God forbid! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew;” and follows this throughout the whole of the eleventh chapter, in a series of reflections calculated to soothe the Jewish converts, as well as to procure from their Gentile brethren respect to the Jewish institution. Dr. Paley, drawing an argument from this manner of writing, in behalf of the genuineness of this epistle, adds, “Now all this is perfectly natural. In a real St. Paul writing to real converts, it is what anxiety to bring them over to his persuasion would naturally produce; but there is an earnestness and a personality, if I may so call it, in the manner, which a cold forgery, I apprehend, would neither have conceived nor supported.” *Horae Paulinae*, p. 49, etc.



From a proper consideration of the design of the apostle in writing this epistle, and from the nature and circumstances of the persons to whom it was directed, much light may be derived for a proper understanding of the epistle itself. When the reader considers that the Church at Rome was composed of heathens and Jews, that the latter were taught to consider themselves the only people on earth to whom the Divine favor extended; that these alone had a right to all the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom; that the giving them the law and the prophets, which had not been given to any other people, was the fullest proof that these privileges did not extend to the nations of the earth; and that, though it was possible for the Gentiles to be saved, yet it must be in consequence of their becoming circumcised, and taking on them the yoke of the law:-when, on the other hand, the reader considers the Roman Gentiles, who formed the other part of the Church at Rome, as educated in the most perfect contempt of Judaism and of the Jews, who were deemed to be haters of all mankind, and degraded with the silliest superstitions, and now evidently rejected and abandoned by that God in whom they professed to trust; it is no wonder if, from these causes, many contentions and scandals arose, especially at a time when the spirit of Christianity was but little understood, and among a people, too, who do not appear to have had any apostolic authority established among them to compose feuds and settle religious differences.

That the apostle had these things particularly in his eye is evident from the epistle itself. His first object is to confound the pride of the Jews and the Gentiles; and this he does by showing the former that they had broken their own law, and, consequently, forfeited all the privileges which the obedient had a right to expect. He shows the latter that, however they might boast of eminent men, who had been an honor to their country, nevertheless, the Gentiles, as a people, were degraded by the basest of crimes, and the lowest idolatry; that, in a word, the Gentiles had as little cause to boast in their philosophers as the Jews had to boast in the faith and piety of their ancestors; "for all had sinned and come short of the glory of God." This subject is particularly handled in the five first chapters, and often referred to in other places.

Concerning the time in which this epistle was written, there is not much difference of opinion: it is most likely that it was written about A. D. 58,

when Paul was at Corinth: see Romans 16:23, conferred with 1 Corinthians 1:14; and Romans 16:1, conferred with 2 Timothy 4:20. It appears, from Romans 16:22, that Paul did not write this epistle with his own hand, but used a person called Tertius as his amanuensis; and that it was sent by the hands of Phoebe, a deaconess, (**δια φοιβης της διακονου.**) of the Church of Cenchrea, which was the eastern port on the Isthmus of Corinth.

From internal evidence Dr. Paley has demonstrated the authenticity of this epistle; and its existence in the ancient Antehieronymian versions and the Syriac, as well as its being mentioned by the Apostolic Fathers, Barnabas, chap. xii. 13; Clemens Romanus, Ep. i. c. i. 30, 32, 35, 46; Ignatius, Epist. ad Ephes. 20, ad Smyrn. 1, ad Trall. 8; and Polycarp, 3 and 6, and by all succeeding writers, puts it beyond all dispute.

Of the fourteen epistles attributed to St. Paul, (thirteen only of which bear his name,) this has been reckoned the first in importance, though certainly not in order of time; for there is every reason to believe that both the epistles to the Thessalonians, that to the Galatians, those to the Corinthians, the first to Timothy, and that to Titus, were all written before the epistle to the Romans. See the dates of the books of the New Testament at the end of the introduction to the Gospels, etc.

In the arrangement of the epistles nothing seems to have been consulted besides the length of the epistle, the character of the writer, and the importance of the place to which it was sent. ROME, being the mistress of the world, the epistle to that city was placed first. Those to the Corinthians, because of the great importance of their city, next. Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, and Thessalonica, follow in graduated order. Timothy, Titus, and Philemon succeed in the same way: and the epistle to the Hebrews, because the author of it was long in dispute, was placed at the end of the epistles of Paul, as being probably written by him. James, as Bp. of Jerusalem, precedes Peter, Peter precedes John, as the supposed chief of the apostles; and John the beloved disciple, Jude. The book of the Revelation, as being long disputed in the Christian Church, was thrown to the conclusion of the New Testament Scriptures. The surats or chapters of the Koran were disposed in the same sort of order; the longest being put

first, and all the short ones thrown to the end, without any regard to the times in which it was pretended they were revealed.

There have been some doubts concerning the language in which this epistle was written. John Adrian Bolten endeavored to prove that St. Paul wrote it in Syriac, and that it was translated into Greek by Tertius: but this supposition has been amply refuted by Griesbach. Others think that it must have been written originally in Latin, the language of the people to whom it was addressed; “for although the Greek tongue was well known in Rome, yet it was the language of the great and the learned; and it is more natural to suppose that the apostle would write in the language of the common people, as those were most likely to be his chief readers, than that of the great and the learned.” This argument is more specious than solid. — 1. It is certain that at this time the Greek language was very generally cultivated in Rome, as it was in most parts of the Roman empire. Cicer., pro Arch. 10, says *Graeca leguntur in omnibus fere gentibus: Latina, suis finibus, exiguis sane continentur.* “The Greek writings are read in almost all nations: those of the Latin within their own narrow limits.” Tacitus, Orator. 29, observes, *Nunc natus infans delegatur Graeculae alicui ancillae.* “Now the new-born child is put under the care of some Greek maid;” and this undoubtedly for the purpose of its learning to speak the Greek tongue. And Juvenal, Sat. vi. ver. 184, ridicules this affectation of his countrymen, which in his time appears to have been carried to a most extravagant excess.

*Nam quid rancidius, quam quod se non putat ulla  
Formosam, nisi quae de Tusca Graecula facta est?  
De Sulmonensi mera Cecropis? OMNIA GRAECE,  
Cum sit turpe magis nostris nescire Latine.  
Hoc sermone pavent, hoc Iram, Gaudia, Curas,  
Hoc cuncta effundunt animi secreta. Quid ultrae*

*“For what so nauseous and affected too,  
As those that think they due perfection want  
Who have not learned to lisp the Grecian cant?  
In Greece their whole accomplishments they seek:  
Their fashion, breeding, language must be Greek,  
But raw in all that does to Rome belong,  
They scorn to cultivate their mother-tongue,  
In Greek they flatter, all their fears they speak,  
Tell all their secrets, nay they scold in Greek.”*

From these testimonies it is evident that the Greek was a common language in Rome in the days of the apostle; and that in writing in this language, which he probably understood better than he did Latin, he consulted the taste and propensity of the Romans, as well as the probability of his epistle being more extensively read in consequence of its being written in Greek.

2. But were these arguments wanting, there are others of great weight that evince the propriety of choosing this language in preference to any other. The sacred writings of the Old Testament were, at that time, confined to two languages, the Hebrew and the Greek. The former was known only within the confines of Palestine; the latter over the whole Roman empire: and the Latin tongue appears to have been as much confined to Italy as the Hebrew was to Judea. The epistle, therefore, being designed by the Spirit of God to be of general use to the Christian Churches, not only in Italy, but through Greece and all Asia Minor, where the Greek language was spoken and understood, it was requisite that the instructions to be conveyed by it should be put in a language the most generally known; and a language too which was then in high and in daily increasing credit.

3. As the Jews were the principal objects of the epistle, and they must be convinced of the truth of Christianity from the evidence of their own Scriptures; and as the Greek version of the Septuagint was then their universal text-book, in all their dispersions, it was absolutely requisite that the epistle should be written in a tongue with which they were best acquainted, and in which their acknowledged Scriptures were contained. These arguments seem conclusive for a Greek and not a Latin original of this epistle.

From the manner in which this epistle has been interpreted and applied, various most discordant and conflicting opinions have originated. Many commentators, forgetting the scope and design of it, have applied that to men in general which most obviously belongs to the Jews, as distinguished from the Gentiles, and to them only. From this one mistake the principal controversies that have agitated and divided the Church of Christ concerning the doctrines of unconditional reprobation and election have arisen. Men, eminent for their talents, learning, and piety, have interpreted

and applied the whole on this mistaken ground. They have been opposed by others, not at all their inferiors either in religion or learning, who, not attending properly to the scope of the apostle, have rather argued from the perfections of the Divine nature, and the general concurrent sense of Scripture, and thus proved that such doctrines cannot comport with those perfections, nor with the analogy of faith; and that the apostle is to be interpreted according to these, and not according to the apparent grammatical import of the phraseology which he employs. On both sides the disputes have run high; the cause of truth has gained little, and Christian charity and candour have been nearly lost. Dispassionate men, on seeing this, have been obliged to exclaim:—

— *tantaene animis coelestibus irae!*

*Can such fierce zeal in heavenly bosoms dwell!*

To compose these differences, and do justice to the apostle, and set an important portion of the word of God in its true and genuine light, Dr. John Taylor of Norwich, a divine who yielded to few in command of temper, benevolent feeling, and deep acquaintance with the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, undertook the elucidation of this much-controverted epistle. The result of his labors was a paraphrase and notes on the whole book, to which is prefixed “A KEY to the Apostolic Writings; or, an essay to explain the Gospel scheme, and the principal words and phrases the apostles have used in describing it.” 4to. 1769, fourth edition. This KEY, in the main, is a most invaluable work, and has done great justice to the subject. Christians, whether advocates for general or particular redemption, might have derived great service from this work, in explaining the Epistle to the Romans; but the author’s creed, who was an Arian, (for he certainly cannot be ranked with modern Unitarians,) has prevented many from consulting his book.

To bring the subject of this epistle before the reader, into the fairest and most luminous point of view in my power, I think it right to make a large extract from this Key, steering as clear as possible of those points in which my own creed is certainly at variance with that of my author; especially in the articles of Original Sin, the Atonement, and Deity of Christ; but as these points are seldom directly touched in this introductory

key, the reader need be under no apprehension that he shall meet with any thing in hostility to the orthodoxy of his own creed.

A KEY TO THE APOSTOLIC WRITINGS; or, an Essay to explain the Gospel Scheme, and the principal words and phrases which the apostles have used in describing it.

**1. *On the Original and Nature of the Jewish Constitution of Religion.***

1. God, the Father of the universe, who has exercised his boundless wisdom, power, and goodness, in producing various beings of different capacities; who created the earth, and appointed divers climates, soils, and situations in it; hath, from the beginning of the world, introduced several schemes and dispensations for promoting the virtue and happiness of his rational creatures, for curing their corruption, and preserving among them the knowledge and worship of himself, the true God, the possessor of all being, and the fountain of all good.

2. In pursuance of this grand and gracious design, when, about four hundred years after the flood, the generality of mankind were fallen into idolatry, (a vice which in those times made its first appearance in the world,) and served other gods, thereby renouncing allegiance to the one God, the maker and governor of heaven and earth, He, to counteract this new and prevailing corruption, was pleased, in his infinite wisdom, to select one family of the earth to be a repository of true knowledge and the pattern of obedience and reward among the nations; that, as mankind were propagated, and idolatry took its rise and was dispersed from one part of the world into various countries, so also the knowledge, worship, and obedience of the true God might be propagated and spread from nearly the same quarter; or, however, from those parts which then were most famous and distinguished. To this family he particularly revealed himself, visited them with several public and remarkable dispensations of providence, and at last formed them into a nation under his special protection, and governed them by laws delivered from himself; placing them in the open view of the world, first in Egypt, and afterwards in the land of Canaan.

3. The head or root of this family was Abraham, the son of Terah, who lived in Ur of the Chaldees, beyond Euphrates. His family was infected with the common contagion of idolatry, as appears from Joshua, Joshua

24:2, 3: “And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood (or river Euphrates) in old time; even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, etc.” And the Apostle Paul intimates as much, Romans 4:3-5: “For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Abraham is the person he is discoursing about; and he plainly hints, though he did not care to speak out, that even Abraham was chargeable with not paying due reverence and worship to God; as the word **ασεβης**, which we render ungodly, properly imports.

4. But, though Abraham had been an idolater, God was pleased, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, to single him out to be the head or root of that family or nation which he intended to separate to himself from the rest of mankind for the forementioned purposes. Accordingly he appeared to him in his native country, and ordered him to leave it and his idolatrous kindred, and to remove into a distant land to which he would direct and conduct him, declaring at the same time his covenant or grant of mercy to him, in these words, Genesis 12:1-3: “I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” So certainly did God make himself known to Abraham, that he was satisfied this was a revelation from the one true God, and that it was his duty to pay an implicit obedience to it. Accordingly, upon the foot of this faith, he went out, though he did not know whither he was to go. The same covenant, or promise of blessings, God afterwards at sundry times repeated to him; particularly when it is said, Genesis 15:5: “And the Lord brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now towards heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, so shall thy seed be.” Here again he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness. Also, Genesis 17:1-8, he repeats and establishes the same covenant, to be a God unto him and his seed after him; promising him the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and appointing circumcision

as a perpetual token of the certainty and perpetuity of this covenant. Thus Abraham was taken into God's covenant, and became entitled to the blessings it conveyed; not because he was not chargeable before God with impiety, irreligion, and idolatry; but because God, on his part, freely forgave his prior transgressions, and because Abraham, on his part, believed in the power and goodness of God; without which belief or persuasion that God was both true and able to perform what he had promised, he could have paid no regard to the Divine manifestations; and consequently must have been rejected as a person altogether improper to be the head of that family which God intended to set apart to himself.

5. And as Abraham, so likewise his seed or posterity, were at the same time, and before they had a being, taken into God's covenant, and entitled to the blessings of it. Genesis 17:7: "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy SEED AFTER thee, etc." Not all his posterity, but only those whom God intended in the promise; namely, first, the nation of the Jews, who hereby became particularly related to God, and invested in sundry invaluable privileges; and, after them, the believing Gentiles, who were reckoned the children of Abraham, as they should believe in God as Abraham did.

6. For about two hundred and fifteen years from the time God ordered Abraham to leave his native country, he, and his son Isaac and grandson Jacob, sojourned in the land of Canaan, under the special protection of Heaven, till infinite wisdom thought fit to send the family into Egypt, the then head-quarters of idolatry, with a design they should there increase into a nation; and there, notwithstanding the cruel oppression they long groaned under, they multiplied to a surprising number. At length God delivered them from the servitude of Egypt, by the most dreadful displays of his almighty power; whereby he demonstrated himself to be the one true God, in a signal and complete triumph over idols, even in their metropolis, and in a country of fame and eminence among all the nations round about. Thus freed from the vilest bondage, God formed them into a kingdom, of which he himself was king; gave them a revelation of his nature and will; instituted sundry ordinances of worship; taught them the way of truth and life; set before them various motives to duty, promising singular blessings to their obedience and fidelity, and threatening disobedience and apostasy, or revolt from his government, with very



heavy judgments, especially that of being expelled from the land of Canaan and “scattered among all people from one end of the earth unto the other,” in a wretched, persecuted state; Deuteronomy 28:63-68; Leviticus 26:3, 4, etc. Having settled their constitution, he led them through the wilderness, where he disciplined them for forty years together, made all opposition fall before them, and at last brought them to the promised land.

7. Here I may observe that God did not choose the Israelites out of any partial regard to that nation, nor because they were better than other people, (Deuteronomy 9:4, 5,) and would always observe his laws. It is plain he knew the contrary, (Deuteronomy 31:29; 32:5, 6, 15.) It was indeed with great propriety that, among other advantages, he gave them also that of being descended from progenitors illustrious for piety and virtue and that he grounded the extraordinary favors they enjoyed upon Abraham’s faith and obedience; Genesis 22:16-18. But it was not out of regard to the moral character of the Jewish nation that God chose them; any other nation would have served as well on that account; but, as he thought fit to select one nation of the world, he selected them out of respect to the piety and virtue of their ancestors; Exodus 3:15; 6:3-5, Deuteronomy 4:37.

8. It should also be carefully observed that God selected the Israelitish nation, and manifested himself to them by various displays of his power and goodness, not principally for their own sakes, to make them a happy and flourishing people, but to be subservient to his own high and great designs with regard to all mankind. And we shall entertain a very wrong, low, and narrow idea of this select nation, and of the dispensations of God towards it, if we do not consider it as a beacon, or a light set upon a hill, as raised up to be a public voucher of the being and providence of God, and of the truth of the revelation delivered to them in all ages and in all parts of the world; and, consequently, that the Divine scheme, in relation to the Jewish polity, had reference to other people, and even to us at this day, as well as to the Jews themselves. The situation of this nation, lying upon the borders of Asia, Europe, and Africa, was very convenient for such a general purpose.

9. It is farther observable that this scheme was wisely calculated to answer great ends under all events. If this nation continued obedient, their visible

prosperity, under the guardianship of an extraordinary Providence, would be a very proper and extensive instruction to the nations of the earth; and no doubt was so; for, as they were obedient, and favored with the signal interpositions of the Divine power, their case was very useful to their neighbors. On the other hand, if they were disobedient, then their calamities, and especially their dispersions, would nearly answer the same purpose, by spreading the knowledge of the true God and of revelation in the countries where before they were not known. And so wisely was this scheme laid at first, with regard to the laws of the nation, both civil and religious, and so carefully has it all along been conducted by the Divine providence, that it still holds good, even at this day, full 3600 years from the time when it first took place, and is still of public use for confirming the truth of revelation. I mean, not only as the Christian profession spread over a great part of the world has grown out of this scheme, but as the Jews themselves, in virtue thereof, after a dispersion of about 1700 years over all the face of the earth, every where in a state of ignominy and contempt, have, notwithstanding, subsisted in great numbers, distinct and separate from all other nations. This seems to me a standing miracle; nor can I assign it to any other cause but the will and the extraordinary interposal of Heaven, when I consider that, of all the famous nations of the world who might have been distinguished from others with great advantage, and the most illustrious marks of honor and renown, as the Assyrians, Persians, Macedonians, Romans, who all, in their turns, held the empire of the world, and were, with great ambition, the lords of mankind, yet these, even in their own countries, the seat of their ancient glory, are quite dissolved and sunk into the body of mankind; nor is there a person upon earth can boast he is descended from those renowned and imperial ancestors. Whereas a small nation, generally despised, and which was, both by Pagans and pretended Christians, for many ages harassed, persecuted, butchered, and distressed, as the most detestable of all people upon the face of the earth, (according to the prophecy of Moses, Deuteronomy 28:63, etc.; see Dr. Patrick's commentary upon that place,) and which, therefore, one would imagine, every soul that belonged to it should have gladly disowned, and have been willing the odious name should be entirely extinguished; yet, I say, this hated nation has continued in a body quite distinct and separate from all other people, even in a state of dispersion and grievous persecution, for about 1700 years; agreeably to

the prediction, Jeremiah 46:28: "I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee." This demonstrates that the wisdom which so formed them into a peculiar body, and the providence which has so preserved them that they have almost ever since the deluge subsisted in a state divided from the rest of mankind, and are still likely to do so, is not human but Divine. For, no human wisdom nor power could form, or, however, could execute such a vast, extensive design. Thus the very being of the Jews, in their present circumstances, is a standing public proof of the truth of revelation.

***II. The peculiar Honours and Privileges of the Jewish Nation, while they were the peculiar People of God, and the Terms signifying those Honours explained.***

10. The nature and dignity of the foregoing scheme, and the state and privileges of the Jewish nation will be better understood if we carefully observe the particular phrases by which their relation to God and his favors to them are expressed in Scripture.

11. As God, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, was pleased to prefer them before any other nation, and to single them out for the purposes of revelation, and preserving the knowledge, worship, and obedience of the true God, he is said to choose them, and they are represented as his chosen or elect people. Deuteronomy 4:37; 7:6; 10:15: "The Lord had a delight in thy fathers-and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people." 1 Kings 3:8: "Thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people that cannot be numbered." 1 Chronicles 16:13: "O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen ones;" Psalm 105:6; 33:12: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance;" Psalm 105:43; 106:5: "That I may see the good of thy chosen or elect, that I may rejoice in the goodness of thy nation;" Psalm 135:4; Isaiah 41:8, 9; 43:20; 44:1, 2; 45:4: "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name." Ezekiel 20:5: "Thus saith the Lord, in the day when I chose Israel, and lifted my hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt." Hence, reinstating them in their former privileges is expressed by choosing them

again. Isaiah 14:1: “For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land;” Zechariah 1:17; 2:12.

12. The first step he took in execution of his purpose of election, was to rescue them from their wretched situation, in the servitude and idolatry of Egypt; and to carry them, through all enemies and dangers, to the liberty and happy state to which he intended to advance them. With regard to which the language of Scripture is: 1. That he delivered; 2. Saved; 3. Bought, or purchased; 4. Redeemed them. Exodus 3:8: “And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them unto a good land.” So Exodus 18:8-10; Judges 6:8, 9; Exodus 6:6: “I am the Lord, and I will bring you from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid (deliver) you out of their bondage. So Exodus 5:23; 1 Samuel 10:18.

13. As God brought them out of Egypt, invited them to the honors and happiness of his people, and by many express declarations and acts of mercy engaged them to adhere to him as their God, he is said to call them, and they were his called. Isaiah 41:8, 9: “But thou, Israel, art my servant,-thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof.” See Isaiah 41:2; Isaiah 51:2; Hos 11:1: “When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.” Isaiah 48:12: “Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel my called.”

14. And as he brought them out of the most abject slavery, and advanced them to a new and happy state of being, attended with distinguishing privileges, enjoyments, and marks of honor, he is said-1. to create, make, and form them; 2. to give them life; 3. to have begotten them. Isaiah 43:1: “But thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not.” Isaiah 43:5: “Fear not, for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and will gather thee from the west.” Isaiah 43:7: “Even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory; I have formed him; yea I have made him.” Isaiah 43:15: “I am the Lord, your Holy One; the creator of Israel, your king.” Deuteronomy 32:6: “Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people?-Hath he not made thee, and established thee?” Deuteronomy 32:15; Psalm 149:2; Isaiah 27:11: “It is a people of no understanding; therefore, he that made them will have no mercy on them; and he that formed them will

show them no favor;” Isaiah 43:21; 44:1, 2: “Yet hear now, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen.: Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb.” Isaiah 44:21, 24: “Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb,” etc.

15. Thus, as God created the whole body of the Jews, and made them to live, they received a being or existence. Isaiah 63:19: “We are; thou hast never ruled over them; (the heathen;) they were not called by thy name.” Or rather thus: “We are of old; thou hast not ruled over them; thy name hath not been called upon them.” It is in the Hebrew, **לֹא מִשְׁלַת בָּם הַיְינוּ מֵעוֹלָם** hayinu me-olam, lo mashalla bam; and are therefore called by the apostle, “things that are,” in opposition to the Gentiles, who, as they were not formerly created in the same manner, were, “the things which are not;” 1 Corinthians 1:28: “God has chosen things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.” Farther:—

16. As he made them live, and begat them, (1) He sustains the character of a Father; and (2) they are his children, his sons and daughters, which were born to him. Deuteronomy 32:6: “Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people?-Is he not thy father that hath bought thee?” Isaiah 63:16: “Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer,” etc. Jeremiah 31:9: “For I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born.” Malachi 2:10: “Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?”

17. And, as the whole body of the Jews were the children of one father, even of God, this naturally established among themselves the mutual and endearing relation of brethren, (including that of sisters,) and they were obliged to consider and to deal with each other accordingly. Leviticus 25:46; Deuteronomy 1:16; 2:8; 15:7: “If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren-thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thine hand against thy poor brother;” Deuteronomy 17:15; 18:15; 19:19; 22:1; 23:19; 24:14; Judges 20:13; 1 Kings 12:24; (Acts 23:1.) And in many other places.

18. And the relation of God, as a father to the Jewish nation, and they his children, will lead our thoughts to a clear idea of their being, as they are



wicked doers from the city of the Lord.” Isaiah 48:1, 2: “Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel; for they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel.”

23. Hence the whole community, or Church, is denoted by the city Jerusalem, and sometimes by Zion, Mount Zion, the city of David. Isaiah 62:1, 6, 7: “I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace-and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” Isaiah 65:18, 19: “I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people;” Isaiah 66:10; Ezekiel 16:2, 3; Joel 3:17; Zechariah 1:14; 8:3, etc.; Zechariah 13:1. Isaiah 28:16: “Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation,” etc.; Isaiah 61:3; Joel 2:32. Obidiah 17: “But upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance,” etc.; Obidiah 21.

24. Hence, also, they are said to be written or enrolled in the book of God, as being citizens invested in the privileges and immunities of his kingdom. Exodus 32:32: “Yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their sin; and, if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book thou hast written.” Exodus 32:33: “And the Lord said-Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book;” Ezekiel 13:9.

25. And it deserves our notice that, as the other nations of the world did not belong to this city, commonwealth, or kingdom of God, and so were not his subjects and people in the same peculiar sense as the Jews, for these reasons they are frequently represented as strangers and aliens, and as being not a people. And, as they served other gods, and were generally corrupt in their morals, they have the character of enemies. Exodus 20:10; Leviticus 25:47: “And if a sojourner, or a stranger, wax rich by thee, and thy brother sell himself to the stranger.” Deuteronomy 14:21: “Thou mayest sell it to an alien.” Isaiah 61:5: “And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen.” And in many other places Deuteronomy 32:21: “I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people;” Isaiah 7:8; Hosea 1:10; 2:23: “I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people: and they shall say, Thou art my God.” Psalm 74:4: “Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregation;” Psalm 78:66; 83:2; 89:10; Isaiah 42:13; 59:18.

Romans 5:10: "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God;"  
Colossians 1:21.

26. The kind and particular regards of God for the Israelites, and their special relation to him, are also signified by that of husband and wife; and his making a covenant with them to be their God, is called espousals. Jeremiah 31:32: "Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, (which my covenant they broke, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord;)" Jeremiah 3:20; Ezekiel 16:31, 32. Hosea 2:2: "Plead (ye children of Judah, and children of Israel, Hosea 1:11) with your mother; plead, for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband;" that is, for her wickedness I have divorced her, (Isaiah 62:4, 5.) Jeremiah 2:2: "Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals; when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in the land that was not sown." Jeremiah 3:14: "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you;" Isaiah 62:4, 5.

27. Hence it is that the Jewish Church, or community, is represented as a mother; and particular members as her children. Isaiah 50:1: "Thus saith the Lord, where is the bill of your mother's divorcement?" etc. Hosea 2:2, 5: "For their mother hath played the harlot." Isaiah 49:17: "Thy children (O Zion) shall make haste," etc.; Isaiah 49:22, 25; Jeremiah 5:7; Ezekiel 16:35, 36. Hosea 4:6: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge-seeing thou hast forgotten the law of God, I will also forget thy children."

28. Hence, also, from the notion of the Jewish Church being a wife to God her husband, her idolatry, or worshipping of strange gods, comes under the name of adultery and whoredom, and she takes the character of a harlot. Jeremiah 3:8: "And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery." Jeremiah 3:9: "And it came to pass, through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks;" Jeremiah 13:27; Ezekiel 16:15; 23:43; Jeremiah 3:6: "Backsliding Israel is gone up upon every high mountain, and under every green tree, and there has played the harlot."



29. As God exercised a singular providence over them in supplying,

throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you;” Ezekiel 20:12; Leviticus 20:8: “And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them; for I am the Lord which sanctify you;” Leviticus 21:8; 22:9, 16, 32; Ezekiel 37:28.

32. Hence it is that they are styled a holy nation, or people, and saints. Exodus 19:6: “And ye shall be to me-a holy nation.” Deuteronomy 7:6: “For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God;” Deuteronomy 14:2; 26:19; 33:3. 2 Chronicles 6:41: “Let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness.” Psalm 34:9: “O fear the Lord, ye his saints.” Psalm 50:5: “Gather my saints together unto me.” Psalm 50:7: “Hear, O my people,” etc.; Psalm 79:2; 148:14: “He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of his saints; even of the children of Israel,” etc.

33. Farther, by his presence among them, and their being consecrated to him, they were made his house or building, the sanctuary which he built. And this is implied by his dwelling and walking amongst them. Psalm 114:2: “Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion.” Isaiah 56:3-5: “Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people:-for thus saith the Lord-Even unto them will I give in my house, and within my walls, a place and a name.” Jeremiah 33:7: “And I will cause the captivity of Judah and of Israel to return,-and will build them as at the first.” Amos 9:11: “I will raise up the tabernacle of David-I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.” Exodus 25:8: “And let them, (the children of Israel,) make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.” Exodus 29:45, 46: “And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and I will be their God,” etc. Leviticus 26:11, 12: “And I will set my tabernacle among you:-And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people;” Numbers 35:34; 2 Samuel 7:7. Ezekiel 43:7, 9: “And he said unto me-the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I dwell in the midst of the children of Israel,” etc. Hence we may gather that dwell, in such places, imports to reign, and may be applied figuratively to whatever governs in our hearts; Romans 7:17, 20; 8:9, 11.

34. And not only did God, as their king, dwell among them, as in his house, temple, or palace; but he also conferred upon them the honor of kings, as he redeemed them from servitude, and made them lords of themselves, and raised them above other nations, to reign over them; and of priests, too, as they were to attend upon God, from time to time, continually, in the solemn offices of religion, which he had appointed. Exodus 19:6: “And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, or a kingly priesthood.” Deuteronomy 26:19: “And to make thee high above all nations—in praise, and in name, and in honor; and that thou mayest be a holy people unto the Lord thy God;” Deuteronomy 28:1; 15:6: “For the Lord thy God blesseth thee—and thou shalt reign over many nations.” Isaiah 61:6: “But ye, (the seed of Jacob,) shall be named the priests of the Lord; men shall call you the ministers of our God.”

35. Thus the whole body of the Jewish nation were separated unto God; and, as they were more nearly related to him than any other people, as they were joined to him in covenant, and felt access to him in the ordinances of worship, and, in virtue of his promise, had a particular title to his regards and blessings, he is said to be near unto them, and they unto him; Exodus 33:16. Leviticus 20:24: “I am the Lord your God, who have separated you from other people;” Leviticus 20:26; 1 Kings 8:52, 53. Deuteronomy 4:7: “For what nation is there so great, that hath God so near unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?” Psalm 148:14: “The children of Israel, a people near unto him.”

36. And here I may observe that, as the Gentiles were not then taken into the same peculiar covenant with the Jews, nor stood in the same special relation to God, nor enjoyed their extraordinary religious privileges, but lay out of the commonwealth of Israel, they are, on the other hand said to be far off. Isaiah 57:19: “I create the fruit of the lips: peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord, and I will heal him.” Zechariah 6:15: “And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple.” Ephesians 2:17: “And came and preached to you, (Gentiles,) which were afar off, and to them that were nigh, (the Jews.)

37. And as God had, in all these respects, distinguished them from all other nations, and sequestered them unto himself, they are styled his peculiar people. Deuteronomy 7:6: “The Lord has chosen thee to be a

special (or peculiar) people unto himself.” Deuteronomy 14:2: “The Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth;” Deuteronomy 26:18.

38. As they were a body of men particularly related to God, instructed by him in the rules of wisdom, devoted to his service, and employed in his true worship, they are called his congregation or Church. Numbers 16:3; 27:17; Joshua 22:17. 1 Chronicles 28:8: “Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel the congregation, the Church, of the Lord;” Psalm 74:2.

39. For the same reason they are considered as God’s possession, inheritance, or heritage. Deuteronomy 9:26: “O Lord, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance;” Deuteronomy 9:29; Psalm 33:12; 106:40; Jeremiah 10:16; 12:7: “I have forsaken my house, I have left my heritage. I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hands of her enemies.” And in many other places.

### ***III. Reflections on the foregoing Privileges and Honours.***

40. Whether I have ranged the foregoing particulars in proper order, or given an exact account of each, let the studious of Scripture knowledge consider. What ought to be specially observed is this; that all the forementioned privileges, benefits, relations, and honors, did belong to ALL the children of Israel, without exception. The Lord Jehovah was the God, King, Savior, Father, Husband, Shepherd, etc., to them ALL. He saved, bought, redeemed; he created, he begot, he made, he planted, etc., them ALL. And they were ALL his people, nation, heritage; his children, spouse, flock, vineyard, etc. They all had a right to the ordinances of worship, to the promises of God’s blessing, and especially to the promise of the land of Canaan; ALL enjoyed the protection and special favors of God in the wilderness, till they had forfeited them; ALL ate of the manna, and ALL drank of the water out of the rock, etc. That these privileges and benefits belonged to the whole body of the Israelitish nation is evident from all the texts I have already quoted; which he, who observes carefully, will find, do all of them speak of the whole nation, the whole community, without exception.

41. And that all these privileges, honors, and advantages were common to the whole nation, is confirmed by this farther consideration; that they

were the effect of God's free grace, without regard to any prior righteousness of theirs; and therefore they are assigned to God's love as the spring from whence they flowed; and the donation of those benefits is expressed by God's loving them: they are also assigned to God's mercy, and the bestowing of them is expressed by God's showing them mercy. Deuteronomy 9:4-6: "Speak not thou in thy heart, after that the Lord hath cast them out before thee, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land. — Not for thy righteousness or the uprightness of thy heart dost thou go to possess their land," etc. "Understand, therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiff-necked people."

42. Deuteronomy 7:7, 8: "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out" (of Egypt.) Deuteronomy 33:3: "He loved the people;" Isaiah 43:3, 4; Jeremiah 31:3; Hosea 3:1; 9:15.

43. It is on account of this general love to the Israelites, that they are honored with the title of Beloved Psalm 60:5: "That thy beloved may be delivered, save with thy right hand, and hear me;" Psalm 108:6. Jeremiah 11:15: "What hath my beloved to do in my house, seeing she hath wrought lewdness with many?" Jeremiah 12:7: "I have forsaken my house, I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hands of my enemies," (and in their present condition at this day the Jews are still, in a sense, beloved, Romans 11:28.)

44. Exodus 15:13: "Thou, in thy mercy, hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed," etc.; Psalm 98:3; Isaiah 54:10. Micah 7:20: "Thou shalt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old." Luke 1:54, 55: "He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spake to our fathers, to Abraham and his seed for ever." Agreeably to this he showed them mercy, as he continued them to be his people, when he might have cut them off. Exodus 33:19: "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." And

when, after their present state of rejection, they shall again be taken into the Church, this too is expressed by their “obtaining mercy,” Romans 11:31.

45. In these texts, and others of the same kind, it is evident the love and mercy of God hath respect not to particular persons among the Jews, but to the whole nation; and therefore it is to be understood of that general love and mercy whereby he singled them out to be a peculiar nation to himself, favored with extraordinary blessings.

46. And it is with regard to this sentiment and manner of speech, that the GENTILES, who were not distinguished in the same manner, are said not to have obtained mercy. Hosea 2:23: “And I will sow her unto me in the earth, and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy, and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.”

47. Farther, it should be noted, as a very material and important circumstance, that all this mercy and love was granted and confirmed to the Israelites under the sanction of a covenant; the most solemn declaration and assurance, sworn to and ratified by the oath of God. Genesis 17:7, 8: “And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.” Genesis 22:16-18: “By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.” This covenant with Abraham was the Magna Charta, the basis of the Jewish constitution, which was renewed afterwards with the whole nation; and is frequently referred to as the ground and security of all their blessings. Exodus 6:3-7: “I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac,” etc. “And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan. I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, and I have remembered my covenant, and will take you to me for a people, and I will

be to you a God;" Deuteronomy 7:8. Psalm 105:8-10: "He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac, and confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting COVENANT;" Jeremiah 11:5; Ezekiel 16:8; 20:5.

48. But, what most of all deserves our attention is this, that the Jewish constitution was a scheme for promoting virtue, true religion, or a good and pious life. In all the forementioned instances they were very happy. But were they to rest in them? Because these blessings were the gift of love and mercy, without respect to their righteousness or obedience, was it therefore needless for them to be obedient? or, were they purely on account of benefits already received, secure of the favor and blessing of God for ever? By no means. And that I may explain this important point more clearly, I shall distinguish their blessings into antecedent and consequent, and show, from the Scriptures, how both stand in relation to their duty.

49. Antecedent blessings are all the benefits hitherto mentioned, which were given by the mere grace of God, antecedently to their obedience, and without respect to it; but yet so that they were intended to be motives to obedience. Which effect if they produced, then their election, redemption, and calling were confirmed; and they were entitled to all their blessings, promised in the covenant; which blessings I therefore call consequent, because they were given only in consequence of their obedience. But, on the other hand, if the antecedent blessings did not produce obedience to the will of God; if his chosen people, his children, did not obey his voice, then they forfeited all their privileges, all their honors, and relations to God, all his favors and promises, and fell under the severest threatenings of his wrath and displeasure. Thus life itself may be distinguished into-I. Antecedent, which God gives freely to all his creatures of his mere good will and liberality, before they can have done any thing to deserve it. II. Consequent life; which is the continuance of life in happy circumstances, and has relation to the good conduct of a rational creature. As he improves life antecedent, so he shall, through the favor of God, enjoy life consequent.

50. And that this was the very end and design of the dispensation of God's extraordinary favors to the Jews, namely, to engage them to duty and obedience; or, that it was a scheme for promoting virtue, is clear, beyond all dispute, from every part of the Old Testament. Note: I shall make ANT. stand for antecedent love or motives; CONS. for consequent love or reward; and THR. for threatening. (Ant.) Genesis 17:1: "I am God, all-sufficient; (Duty) Walk before me, and be thou perfect." Genesis 17:7-9: (Ant.) "I will be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and unto thy seed, the land of Canaan; and I will be their God. (Duty) Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy seed after thee." Genesis 22:16, 18: (Duty) "Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, because thou hast obeyed my voice;" Genesis 22:16-18: (Cons.) "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

51. Here let it be noted, that the same blessings may be both consequent and antecedent with regard to different persons. With regard to Abraham, the blessings promised in this place (Ge 22:16-18) are consequent, as they were the reward of his obedience, "because thou hast obeyed my voice." But with regard to his posterity these same blessings were of the antecedent kind; because, though they had respect to Abraham's obedience, yet; with regard to the Jews, they were given freely or antecedently to any obedience they had performed. So the blessings of redemption, with regard to our Lord's obedience, are consequent; but, with regard to us, they are of free grace and antecedent, not owing to any obedience of ours, though granted in consequence of Christ's obedience; Philippians 2:8, 9, etc.; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 5:8, 9. Nor doth the donation of blessings upon many, in consequence of the obedience of one, at all diminish the grace, but very much recommends the wisdom that bestows them.

52. Isaiah 43:7, 21: (Ant.) "This people have I made for myself: (Duty) They shall show forth my praise;" Jeremiah 13:11; Leviticus 20:7, 8:



(Ant.) “I am the Lord your God; I am the Lord which sanctify you.  
 (Duty) Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy; and ye shall keep  
 my statutes and do them.” Deuteronomy 4:7-9:

(Ant.) “What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh them, as the  
 Lord our God is? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and  
 judgments so righteous,” etc. (Duty) “Only take heed to thyself, and keep  
 thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen.”  
 Deuteronomy 4:20:

(Ant.) “The Lord hath taken you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of  
 Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are at this day.”  
 Deuteronomy 4:23: (Duty) “Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the  
 covenant of the Lord your God.” Deuteronomy 4:24: (Thr.) “For the Lord  
 thy God is a consuming fire.” Deuteronomy 4:25: “When ye shall corrupt  
 yourselves, and do evil in the sight of the Lord thy God.” Deuteronomy  
 4:26: “I call heaven and earth to witness, that ye shall soon utterly perish  
 from off the land.” Deuteronomy 4:34:

(Ant.) “Hath God assayed to go, and take him a nation from the midst of  
 another nation, by signs and wonders,” etc., etc. Deuteronomy 4:39, 40:  
 (Duty) “Know therefore this day, and consider it in thy heart, that the  
 Lord he is God in heaven above,” etc. “Thou shalt keep, therefore, his  
 statutes and his commandments, (Cons.) that it may go well with thee, and  
 with thy children after thee,” etc. Deuteronomy 5:6, 7:

(Ant.) “I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of  
 Egypt, from the house of bondage.” (Duty) “Thou shalt have no other  
 gods before me,” etc. Deuteronomy 5:29: “O that there were such a heart  
 in them that they should fear me and keep all my commandments always,  
 (Cons.) that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever.”  
 Deuteronomy 5:33: (Duty) “You shall walk in all the ways which the  
 Lord your God hath commanded you, (Cons.) that ye may live, and that it  
 may be well with you,” etc. Deuteronomy 6:21:

(Ant.) “We were Pharaoh’s bondmen, and the Lord brought us out of  
 Egypt,” etc. Deuteronomy 6:24: (Duty) “And the Lord commanded us to  
 do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, (Cons.) for our good  
 always, that he might preserve us alive,” etc. Deuteronomy 7:6-8:

(Ant.) “Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself: the Lord loved you and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen.” Deuteronomy 7:9:

(Duty) “Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God,” etc.

Deuteronomy 7:11: “Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments which I command thee this day, to do them.” Deuteronomy 7:12, 13, 18: (Cons.) “Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he sware unto thy fathers. And he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee,” etc. Deuteronomy 8:2:

(Ant.) “Thou shalt remember ail the way which the Lord thy God led thee,” etc. Deuteronomy 8:5: “Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.”

Deuteronomy 8:6: (Duty) “Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.” Deuteronomy 8:11: “Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God,” etc. Deuteronomy 8:19: (Thr.) “And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, I testify against you this day, that ye shall surely perish.” Deuteronomy 10:15:

(Ant.) “The Lord hath a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people.” Deuteronomy 10:12, 16:

(Duty) “Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart,” etc.

Deuteronomy 10:22:

(Ant.) “Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons, and now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.” Deuteronomy 11:1, 8: (Duty) “Therefore shalt thou love the Lord thy God, and keep his charge,” etc. Deuteronomy 11:13, 14:

“And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments,” etc., (Cons.) “that I will give you the rain of your land,” etc. Deuteronomy 11:26: “Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse. A blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord; and a curse, if ye will not obey,” etc. Deuteronomy 12:28: (Duty) “Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, (Cons.) that it may go well with thee and thy children after thee for ever, when thou hast done that

which is good and right in the sight of the Lord thy God;” Deuteronomy 13:17, 18; 15:4, 5; 27:9, 10:

(Ant.) “Take heed and hearken, O Israel: this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God. (Duty) Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God, and do his commandments,” etc. Deuteronomy 28:1: “And it shall come to pass, if thou hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do his commandments, (Cons.) that the Lord will set thee on high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come on thee and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city,” etc. Deuteronomy 28:15: (Thr.) “But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments and his statutes, that all these curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee,” etc. Deuteronomy 28:45: “Moreover, all these curses shalt come upon thee till thou be destroyed, because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the Lord thy God;” Deuteronomy 29:2, 10; 30:15-18: (Duty) “See, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, (Cons.) that thou mayest live and multiply; and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. (Thr.) But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away and worship other gods, and serve them, I denounce unto you this day that ye shall surely perish.”

53. Whosoever peruses the first sixteen, and the twenty-eighth, twenty-ninth, thirtieth, thirty-first, and thirty-second chapters of Deuteronomy, will clearly see that all the privileges, honors, instructions, protections, etc., which were given them as a select body of men, were intended as motives to obedience; which, if thus wisely improved, would bring upon them still farther blessings. Thus God drew them to duty and virtue by his loving-kindness. Jeremiah 31:3: “He drew them with cords of a man, (such considerations as are apt to influence the rational nature,) and with the bands of love;” Hosea 11:4. But if they were disobedient, and did not make a right use of God’s benefits and favors, then they were subjected to a curse, and should perish. And this is so evident from this single book that I shall not need to heap together the numerous quotations

which might be collected from other parts of Scripture, particularly the prophetic writings. Only I may farther establish this point by observing, -that, in fact, though all the Israelites in the wilderness were the people, children, and chosen of God; all entitled to the Divine blessing, and partakers of the several instances of his goodness; yet, notwithstanding all their advantages and honors, when they were disobedient to his will, distrustful of his power and providence, or revolted to the worship of idol gods, great numbers of them fell under the Divine vengeance; Exodus 32:8, 27, 28; Numbers 11:4-6, 33; 16:2, 3, 32, 35, 41, 49; 21:5, 6. And though they had all a promise of entering into the land of Canaan, yet the then generation, from twenty years old and upwards, for their unbelief, were, by the righteous judgment of God, excluded from the benefit of that promise: they forfeited their inheritance, and died in the wilderness; Numbers 14:28-36; Hebrews 3:7, etc.

54. From all this it appears that all the high privileges of the Jews before mentioned, and all the singular relations in which they stood to God, as they were saved, bought, redeemed by him; as they were his called and elect; as they were his children whom he begot, created, made, and formed; his sons and daughters, born to him; his heritage, church, house, and kingdom; his saints, whom he sanctified; his vine or vineyard, which he planted; his sheep and flock; -I say these, and such like honors, advantages, and relations, as they are assigned to the whole body, do not import an absolute final state of happiness and favor of any kind; but are to be considered as displays, instances, and descriptions of God's love and goodness to them, which were to operate as a mean, a moral mean, upon their heart. They were, in truth, motives to oblige and excite to obedience; and only when so improved, became final and permanent blessings; but neglected, or misimproved, they were enjoyed in vain, they vanished and came to nothing; and wicked Israelites were no more the objects of God's favor than wicked heathens. Amos 9:7, speaking of the corrupt Jews: "Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the Lord."

55. And upon the whole, we may from the clearest evidence conclude that the selecting the Jewish nation from the rest of the world, and taking them into a peculiar relation to God, was a scheme for promoting true religion and virtue in all its principles and branches, upon motives adapted to

rational nature; which principles and branches of true religion are particularly specified in their law. And to this end, no doubt, every part of their constitution, even the ceremonial, was wisely adapted, considering their circumstances, and the then state of the world.

56. The love of God, as it was the foundation and original of this scheme, so it was the prime motive in it. God began the work of salvation among them, antecedently to any thing which they might do, on their part, to engage his goodness. They did not first love God; but God first loved them: their obedience did not first advance towards God; but his mercy first advanced towards them, and saved, bought, redeemed them; took them for his people, and gave them a part in the blessings of his covenant. And as for his displeasure, they were under that only consequentially; or after they had neglected his goodness, and abused the mercy and means, the privileges and honors, which they enjoyed. This, I think, must appear very evident to any one who closely and maturely deliberates upon the true state of the Jewish Church.

Thus, and for those ends, not excluding others before or afterwards mentioned, the Jewish constitution was erected.

***IV. The Jewish peculiarity not prejudicial to the rest of Mankind; the Jewish Economy being established; for the Benefit of the World in general.***

57. But although the Father of mankind was pleased, in his wisdom to erect the foregoing scheme, for promoting virtue and preserving true religion in one nation of the world, upon which he conferred particular blessings and privileges; this was no injury nor prejudice to the rest of mankind. For, as to original favors, or external advantages, God, who may do what he pleases with his own, bestows them in any kind or degree, as he thinks fit. Thus he makes a variety of creatures; some angels in a higher sphere of being, some men in a lower. And, among men, he distributes different faculties, stations, and opportunities in life. To one he gives ten talents, to another five, to another two, and to another one, severally as he pleases; without any impeachment of his justice, and to the glorious display and illustration of his wisdom. And so he may bestow different advantages and favors upon different nations, with as much justice and

wisdom as he has placed them in different climates, or vouchsafed them various accommodations and conveniencies of life. But, whatever advantages some nations may enjoy above others, still God is the God and Father of all; and his extraordinary blessings to some are not intended to diminish his regards to others. He erected a scheme of polity and religion for promoting the knowledge of God, and the practice of virtue in one nation; but not with a design to withdraw his goodness or providential regards from the rest. God has made a variety of soils and situations; yet he cares for every part of the globe; and the inhabitants of the North Cape, where they conflict a good part of the year with night and extreme cold, are no more neglected by the universal Lord, than those who enjoy the perpetual summer and pleasures of the Canary Isles. At the same time God chose the children of Israel to be his peculiar people in a special covenant, he was the God of the rest of mankind, and regarded them as the objects of his care and benevolence. Exodus 19:5: "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; **כִּי לִי כָל הָאָרֶץ**, although all the earth is mine." So it should be rendered. Deuteronomy 10:14, 15: "Behold the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth with all that therein are. Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day." Deuteronomy 10:17, 18: "For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, (or is no respecter of persons, Acts 10:34, through partiality to one person or one nation more than another,) nor taketh reward. He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment." A stranger was one who was of any other nation beside the Jewish. Psalm 146:9: "The Lord preserveth the strangers;" Psalm 8:1; 19:1-4; 24:1; 33:5: "The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord." Psalm 33:8: "Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him." Psalm 33:12: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." Psalm 33:13: "The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth; he fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works." Psalm 47:2, 8: "The Lord most high is a great king over all the earth. God reigneth over the heathen;"

Psalm 46:7; 107:8, 15, 21; 145:9: “The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.” Many more passages might be brought out of the Scriptures of the Old Testament to show that all the nations of the earth were the object of the Divine care and goodness; at the same time that he vouchsafed a particular and extraordinary providence towards the Jewish nation.

58. And, agreeably to this, the Israelites were required to exercise all benevolence to the Gentiles, or strangers; to abstain from all injurious treatment; to permit them to dwell peaceably and comfortably among them; to partake of their blessings; to incorporate into the same happy body, if they thought fit; and to join in their religious solemnities. Exodus 22:21: “Thou shalt neither vex a stranger nor oppress him;” Exodus 22:9, 12.

Le 19:10: “Thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger; I am the Lord your God;” Leviticus 23:22; 19:33, 34: “And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born amongst you, and thou shalt love him as thyself.” Leviticus 25:35: “And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee, then thou shalt relieve him; yea, though he be a stranger or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.” Numbers 15:14, 15: “And if a stranger sojourn with you, or whosoever be among you in your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord; as ye do, so shall he do. One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance for ever in your generations; as ye are, so shall the stranger be, before the Lord.” Deuteronomy 26:11, 12: “And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thy house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you;” Ezekiel 22:7, 29.

59. And not only were they required to treat strangers, or men of other nations, with kindness and humanity; but it appears from several parts of Scripture that the whole Jewish dispensation had respect to the nations of the world. Not, indeed, to bring them all into the Jewish Church, (that would have been impracticable as to the greatest part of the world,) but to

spread the knowledge and obedience of God in the earth. Or, it was a scheme which was intended to have its good effects beyond the pale of the Jewish enclosure, and was established for the benefit of all mankind. Genesis 12:5: "And in thee (Abraham) shall all families of the earth be blessed." Genesis 22:18: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Exodus 7:5: "And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth my hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel." Exodus 9:16: "And indeed for this very cause have I raised thee (Pharaoh) up, for to show in thee my power, and that my name shall be declared throughout all the earth;" Exodus 15:14; Leviticus 26:46; Numbers 14:13-15.

60. But though the Jewish peculiarity did not exclude the rest of the world from the care and beneficence of the universal Father; and though the Jews were commanded to exercise benevolence towards persons of other nations; yet, about the time when the Gospel was promulgated, the Jews were greatly elevated on account of their distinguishing privileges: they looked upon themselves as the only favourites of Heaven, and regarded the rest of mankind with a sovereign contempt, as nothing, as abandoned of God, and without a possibility of salvation, unless they should incorporate, in some degree or other, with their nation. Their constitution, they supposed, was established for ever, never to be altered, or in any respect abolished. They were the true and only Church, out of which no man could be accepted of God; and consequently, unless a man submitted to the law of Moses, how virtuous or good soever he were, it was their belief he could not be saved. He had no right to a place in the Church, nor could hereafter obtain life.

***V. The Jewish peculiarity was to receive its perfection from the Gospel.***

61. But the Jewish dispensation, as peculiar to that people, though superior to the mere light of nature, which it supposed and included, was but of a temporary duration, and of an inferior and imperfect kind, in comparison of that which was to follow, and which God from the beginning (when he entered into covenant with Abraham, and made the promise to him) intended to erect, and which he made several declarations under the Old Testament that he would erect, in the proper time, as successive to the Jewish dispensation, and, as a superstructure, perfective



of it. And as the Jewish dispensation was erected by the ministry of a much nobler hand, even that of the SON OF GOD, the Messiah, foreordained before the world was made, promised to Abraham, foretold by the prophets, and even expected by the Jews themselves, though under no just conceptions of the end of his coming into the world. He was to assume and live in a human body, to declare the truth and grace of God more clearly and expressly to the Jews, to exhibit a pattern of the most perfect obedience, and to be obedient even unto death in compliance with the will of God.(1) When Christ came into the world, the Jews were ripe for destruction: but he published a general indemnity for the transgressions of the former covenant, upon their repentance; and openly revealed a future state, as the true land of promise, even eternal life in heaven. Thus he confirmed the former covenant with the Jews as to the favor and blessing of God; and enlarged, or more clearly explained it, as to the blessings therein bestowed; instead of an earthly Canaan, revealing the resurrection from the dead, and everlasting happiness and glory in the world to come.

(1) Yes, and thus to become a sacrifice for sin, that those who believe in him might have redemption in his blood. This is the light in which the New Testament places the death of Christ. — A. C.

62. That the Gospel is the Jewish scheme enlarged and improved, will evidently appear, if we consider that we, Gentiles, believing in Christ, are said to be incorporated into the same body with the Jews; and that believing Jews and Gentiles are now become one, one flock, one body in Christ. John 10:16: “And other sheep I have which are not of this (the Jewish) fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one flock, (so the word **πομνη** signifies, and so our translators have rendered it in all the other places where it is used in the New Testament. See Matthew 26:31; Luke 2:8; 1 Corinthians 9:7. And here also it should have been translated flock, not fold,) and one shepherd.” 1 Corinthians 12:12: “By one Spirit are we all baptized in one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles.” Galatians 3:28: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all ONE in Christ Jesus;” that is, under the Gospel dispensation. Ephesians 2:14-16: “For he is our peace, who has made both (Jews and Gentiles) one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition

between us, (Jews and Gentiles.) Having abolished by his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.”

63. And that this union or coalition between believing Jews and Gentiles is to be understood of the believing Gentiles being taken into that Church and covenant in which the Jews were before the Gospel dispensation was erected, and out of which the unbelieving Jews were cast, is evident from the following considerations.

64. First, that Abraham, the head or root of the Jewish nation, is the father of us all. Romans 4:16, 17: “Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, (the Jews,) but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, (the believing Gentiles,) who is the father of us all, (as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed;” that is to say, in the account and purpose of God, whom he believed, he is the father of US ALL. Abraham, when he stood before God and received the promise, did not, in the account of God, appear as a private person, but as the father of us all; as the head and father of the whole future Church of God, from whom we were all, believing Jews and Gentiles, to descend; as we were to be accepted and interested in the Divine blessing and covenant after the same manner as he was, namely, by faith. Galatians 3:6, etc.: “Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. For the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify (would take into his Church and covenant) the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith (of what country soever they are, heathens as well as Jews) are blessed, (justified, taken into the kingdom and covenant of God,) together with believing Abraham,” (and into that very covenant which was made with him and his seed.)(2) In this covenant were the Jews during the whole period from Abraham to Moses, and from Moses to Christ. For the covenant with Abraham was with him, and with his seed after him,” Genesis 17:7. “To Abraham and his seed were the promises made,”

Galatians 3:16. And the apostle in the next verse tells us that (the promises or) the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was (given by Moses) four hundred and thirty years after could not disannul, that it should make the promise (or covenant with Abraham) of none effect; consequently the Jews, during the whole period of the law, or Mosaical dispensation, were under the covenant with Abraham; and into that same covenant the apostle argues, Romans 4, and Galatians 3, that the believing Gentiles are taken. For which reason he affirms that they are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, that is, the patriarchs, etc. And that the great mystery, not understood in other ages, was this, That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body with his Church and children, the Jews, Ephesians 2:19; 3:5, 6.

(2) Being justified does not merely signify being taken into covenant, so as to be incorporated with the visible Church of God; it is used repeatedly by St. Paul to signify that act of God's mercy whereby a penitent sinner, believing on Christ as a sacrifice for sin, has his transgressions forgiven for Christ's sake Romans 5:1, etc.

65. Secondly. Agreeably to this sentiment, the believing Gentiles are said to partake of all the spiritual privileges which the Jews enjoyed, and from which the unbelieving Jews fell; and to be taken into that kingdom and Church of God out of which they were cast. Several of the parables of our Lord are intended to point out this fact; and many passages in the epistles directly prove it.

66. Matthew 20:1-16. In this parable the vineyard is the kingdom of heaven, into which God, the householder, hired the Jews early in the morning; and into the same vineyard he hired the Gentiles at the eleventh hour, or an hour before sun-set.

in which the ancient prophets exercised their ministry, one after another, is now in our possession; for it was taken from them and given to us.

68. Romans 11:17-24. The Church or kingdom of God is compared to an olive-tree, and the members of it to the branches. “And if some of the branches (the unbelieving Jews) be broken off, and thou (Gentile Christian) wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree;” that is, the Jewish Church and covenant. Romans 11:24: “For if thou (Gentile Christian) wert cut out of the olive-tree, which is wild by nature, and wert grafted, contrary to nature, into the good olive-tree,” etc.

69. 1 Peter 2:7-10: “Unto you Gentiles who believe, he (Christ) is an honor, **τιμη**, but unto them which be disobedient, (the unbelieving Jews,) the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and also a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.(3) They stumbled at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed, (they are fallen from their privileges and honor, as God appointed they should, in case of their unbelief.) But ye (Gentiles, are raised into the high degree from which they are fallen, and so) are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of the heathenish darkness into his marvellous light.”

(3) We render this passage thus: A stone of stumbling and rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient, etc., as if it were one continued sentence. But, thus, violence is done to the text, and the apostle’s sense is thrown into obscurity and disorder, which is restored by putting a period after offense, and beginning a new sentence, thus: They stumble at the word, etc. For observe, the apostle runs a double antithesis between the unbelieving Jews and believing Gentiles.

70. Thirdly. The Jews vehemently opposed the admission of the uncircumcised Gentiles into the kingdom and covenant of God, at the first preaching of the Gospel. But if the Gentiles were not taken into the same Church and covenant in which the Jewish nation had so long gloried, why should they so zealously oppose their being admitted into it? Or why so strenuously insist that they ought to be circumcised in order to their being admitted? For what was it to them, if the Gentiles were called, and taken

into another kingdom and covenant, distinct and quite different from that which they would have confined wholly to themselves, or to such only as were circumcised? It is plain the Gentiles might have been admitted into another kingdom and covenant without any offense to the Jews, as they would still have been left in the sole possession of their ancient privileges. And the apostles could not have failed in using this as an argument to pacify their incensed brethren, had they so understood it. But, seeing they never gave the least intimation of this, it shows they understood the affair as the unbelieving Jews did, namely, that the Gentiles, without being circumcised, were taken into the kingdom of God, in which they and their forefathers had so long stood.

71. Fourthly. It is upon this foundation, namely, that the believing Gentiles are taken into that Church and kingdom in which the Jews once stood, that the apostles drew parallels, for caution and instruction, between the state of the ancient Jews and that of the Christians. 1 Corinthians 10:1-13: “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses, and did all eat of the same spiritual meat, and did all drink of the same spiritual drink; but with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now those things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; neither let us provoke Christ, as some of them provoked,” etc. Hebrews 3:7, etc.: “Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day,(4) when or while you hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the day of temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted me: wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief.” Hebrews 4:1, 2: “Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us hath the Gospel been preached, as well as to them,” that is, we have the joyful promise of a happy state, or of entering into rest, as well as the Jews of old. Hebrews 4:11: “Let us labor, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”

(4) **σημερον, εαν της φωνης αυτου ακουσητε. εαν**, if, should here have been rendered when, as it is rendered, 1 John 3:2, and should have been rendered, John 12:32; 14:3; 16:7; 2 Corinthians 5:1. In like manner the particle **ὡς**, Psalm 95:7, (whence the place is quoted,) should have been translated WHEN or WHILE. For it is translated when, 1 Samuel 15:17; Proverbs 3:24; 4:12; Job 7:4; 17:16; Psalm 50:18; and might have been so translated in other places.

72. Fifthly. Hence also the scriptures of the Old Testament are represented as being written for our use and instruction, and to explain our dispensation as well as theirs. Matthew 5:17: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.” And when our Savior taught his disciples the things pertaining to his kingdom, he opened to them the Scriptures, which were then no other than the Old Testament; Luke 4:17-22; 18:31; 24:27: “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself.” Luke 24:45: “Then opened he their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures.” Thus the apostles were instructed in the things pertaining to the Gospel dispensation. And always, in their sermons in the Acts, they confirm their doctrine from the Scriptures of the Old Testament. And in their Epistles they not only do the same, but also expressly declare that those Scriptures were written as well for the benefit of the Christian as the Jewish Church. Romans 15:4: After a quotation out of the Old Testament, the apostle adds:—“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” 1 Corinthians 9:9: “It is written in the law of Moses, that thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.” 1 Corinthians 9:10: “For our sakes, no doubt, this is written.” 1 Corinthians 10:11: “Now all these things (namely, the before-mentioned privileges, sins, and punishments of the ancient Jews) happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the earth are come.” 2 Timothy 3:16, 17: “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

73. Sixthly. Agreeably to this notion, that the believing Gentiles are taken into that Church or kingdom; out of which the unbelieving Jews are cast, the Christian Church, considered in a body, is called by the same general names as the Church under the Old Testament. Israel was the general name of the Jewish Church, so also of the Christian. Galatians 6:16: "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." Revelation 7:3, 4: Speaking of the Christian Church, the angel said, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them that were sealed: and there were sealed a hundred and forty-four thousand, of all the tribes of the children of Israel." Revelation 21:10-14: "He showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, (the Christian Church,) having the glory of God-and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, (as comprehending the whole Church.) And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." Jews was another running title of the Church in our Saviour's time, and this is also applied to Christians. Revelation 2:8, 9: "And unto the angel of the (Christian) Church in Smyrna, write, I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty; and I know the blasphemy of them who say they are Jews (members of the Church of Christ) and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." And again, Revelation 3:9.

***VI. The particular honors and privileges of Christians, and the terms signifying these honors explained.***

74. Seventhly. In conformity to this sentiment, (namely, that the believing Gentiles are taken into that Church, covenant, and kingdom, out of which the unbelieving Jews were cast,) the state, membership, privileges, honors, and relations of professed Christians, particularly of believing Gentiles, are expressed by the same phrases with those of the ancient Jewish Church; and therefore, unless we admit a very strange abuse of words, must convey the same general ideas of our present state, membership, honors, and relations to God, as we are professed Christians. For instance:—

75. I. As God chose his ancient people the Jews, and they were his chosen and elect, so now the whole body of Christians, Gentiles as well as Jews,

are admitted to the same honor, as they are selected from the rest of the world, and taken into the kingdom of God, for the knowledge, worship, and obedience of God, in hopes of eternal life. Romans 8:33: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" etc. Ephesians 1:4: "According as he hath chosen us (Gentiles, Ephesians 2:11) in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love." Colossians 3:12: "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies," etc. 2 Thessalonians 2:13: "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation; through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." Titus 1:1: "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness." 2 Timothy 2:10: "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory." 1 Peter 1:1, 2: "Peter to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience." 1 Peter 2:9: "Ye (Gentiles) are a chosen generation," etc. 1 Peter 5:13: "The Church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you."

76. II. The first step which the goodness of God took in execution of his purpose of election, with regard to the Gentile world, was to rescue them from their wretched situation in the sin and idolatry of their heathen state (by sending his son Jesus Christ into the world to die for mankind, and thus) to bring them into the light and privileges of the Gospel. With regard to which the language of Scripture is: 1st, that he delivered; 2nd, saved;



and refine our souls, and thus render them capable of enjoying the inheritance of the saints in light. Our justification, adoption, and sanctification, and finally our admission into the kingdom of glory, are most positively attributed to the sacrificial passion and death of Jesus and we are not consequentially delivered from the wrath to come, till our sins are blotted out and our hearts purified from sin; and these blessings we receive from God through Christ, i.e. for his sake, his worth or merit; for he has bought these blessings for mankind by his sacrificial passion and death. Justice required these to make way for mercy. — A. C. See No. 79.

77. 1 Corinthians 1:18: “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 7:16: “What knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?” that is, convert her to the Christian faith. 1 Corinthians 10:33: “Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.” Ephesians 2:8: “For by grace are ye saved, through faith.” 1 Thessalonians 2:16: “Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved.” 1 Timothy 2:4: “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” 2 Timothy 1:9: “Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace.” In this general sense, saved is in other places applied to both Jews and Gentiles; particularly to the Jews, Romans 9:27; 10:1; 11:26. Hence God is styled our Savior. Titus 3:4, 5: “But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.” 1 Timothy 1:1: “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior;” 1 Timothy 2:3; Titus 1:3. Romans 11:11: “Through their (the Jews’) fall, salvation is come to the Gentiles.” And as this salvation is by Jesus Christ, he also is frequently called our Savior.

78. Acts 20:28: “Feed the Church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood.” 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20: “And ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price.” 1 Corinthians 7:23: “Ye are bought with a price.” 2 Peter 2:1: “False prophets shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them.” Revelation 5:9: “Thou wast slain, and hast

redeemed (bought) us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”

79. Titus 2:14: “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.” 1 Peter 1:18: “Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain (heathenish) conversation, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ.” And at the same time he redeemed or bought us from death, or the curse of the law; Galatians 3:13; and the Jews, in particular, from the law, and the condemnation to which it subjected them; Galatians 4:5. Hence frequent mention is made of the redemption which is in Jesus Christ; Romans 3:24; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 9:12, 15. Hence also Christ is said to give himself a ransom for us; Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45. 1 Timothy 2:6: “Who gave himself a ransom for all.” That is, that he might redeem them unto God by the sacrificial shedding of his blood. See the note under 76.

80. III. As God sent the Gospel to bring Gentiles, Christians, out of heathenism, and invited and made them welcome to the honors and privileges of his people, he is said to call them, and they are his called. Romans 1:6, 7: “Among whom are ye also called of Jesus Christ. To all that are at Rome called saints;” Romans 8:28. 1 Corinthians 1:9: “God is faithful, by whom ye were called into the fellowship of his Son;” 1 Corinthians 7:20. Galatians 1:6: “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you;” Galatians 5:13. Ephesians 4:1: “I beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called;” Ephesians 4:4. 1 Thessalonians 2:12: “That ye walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.” 1 Thessalonians 4:7: “God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.” 2 Timothy 1:9: “Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling; not according to our works,” etc. 1 Peter 1:15: “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.” 1 Peter 2:9: “Ye (Gentile Christians) are a chosen generation-to show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”

81. Note-The Jews also were called. Romans 9:24: “Even us, whom he has called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.” 1 Corinthians 1:24; 7:18: “Is any man called being circumcised;” Hebrews 9:15. But the calling

of the Jews must be different from that of the Gentiles. The Gentiles were called into the kingdom of God as strangers and foreigners, who had never been in it before. But the Jews were then subjects of God's kingdom, under the old form; and therefore could be called only to submit to it, as it was now modelled under the Messiah. Or they were called to repentance, to the faith, allegiance, and obedience of the Son of God, and to the hope of eternal life through him; whom rejecting, they were-cast out of God's peculiar kingdom.

82. IV. And as we stand in the relation of children to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, hence it is that we are his brethren, and he is considered as the first born among us. Matthew 28:10; John 20:17: "Jesus saith-Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God;" Hebrews 2:11, 17. Romans 8:29: "That he might be the first-born among many brethren."

83. V. And the relation of God, as a Father, to us Christians, who are his children, will lead our thoughts to a clear idea of our being, as we are called, the house or family of God or of Christ. 1 Timothy 3:15; "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God." Hebrews 3:6: "But Christ, as a Son over his own house, whose house are we, (Christians,) if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Hebrews 10:21: "And having a great high priest over the house of God," etc. 1 Peter 4:17: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God, (that is, when the Christian Church shall undergo sharp trials and sufferings;) and if it first begin at us, (Christians, who are the house or family of God,) what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel?" that is, of the infidel world, who lie out of the Church. See Romans 1:5; 15:18; 1 Peter 1:22. Ephesians 2:19: "We are of the household (domestics) of God." Ephesians 3:14, 15: "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named," etc.

84. VI. Farther, as the land of Canaan was the estate or inheritance belonging to the Jewish family or house, so the heavenly country is given to the Christian house or family for their inheritance. Acts 20:32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which

is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.” Colossians 3:24: “Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance.” Hebrews 9:15: “He is the mediator of the New Testament, that they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.” 1 Peter 1:3, 4: “God has begotten us again-to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.” Hence we have the title of heirs. Titus 3:7: “That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” James 2:5: “Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to them that love him?” See Romans 8:17; 1 Peter 3:7.

85. And as Canaan was considered as the rest of the Jews, so, in reference to our trials and afflictions in this world, heaven is considered as the rest of Christians. 2 Thessalonians 1:7: “And to you who are troubled, (he will give) rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven.” Hebrews 4:1: “Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us hath the Gospel been preached, as well as to them;” that is, we have the joyful promise of entering into rest as well as the Jews of old. Hebrews 4:9: “There remains, therefore, a rest for the people of God;” that is, for Christians now in this world, as well as for the Jews formerly in the wilderness, which is the point the apostle is proving, from Hebrews 4:3-10.

86. VII. Thus Christians, as well as the ancient Jews, are the house or family of God: or we may conceive the whole body of Christians formed into a nation, having God at their head; who, on this account, is styled our God, governor, protector, or king; and we his people, subjects, or servants.

87. VIII. And it is in reference to our being a society peculiarly appropriated to God, and under his special protection and government, that we are called the city of God, the holy city. Hebrews 12:22: “Ye are come unto-the city of the living God.” Revelation 11:2: “And the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.” This city is described in some future happy state; Rev. 21, 26.

88. Hence the whole Christian community or Church is denoted by the city Jerusalem, and sometimes by Mount Zion. Galatians 4:26: “But

Jerusalem, which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all.”-In her reformed, or future happy state, she is the New Jerusalem; Revelation 3:12; 21:2. Hebrews 12:22: “Ye are come unto Mount Zion,” etc.; Revelation 14:1.

89. Hence also we are said to be written or enrolled in the book of God, or, which comes to the same thing, of the Lamb, the Son of God. Revelation 3:5: “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.” Revelation 17:19: “And if any man take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city,” etc.; which shows that the names of such as are in the book of life may be blotted out, consequently, that to be enrolled there is the privilege of all professed Christians.

90. And whereas the believing Gentiles were once strangers, aliens, not a people, enemies; now (Ephesians 2:19) “they are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints.” 1 Peter 2:10: “Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God.” Now “we are at peace with God;” Romans 5:1. Now “we are reconciled and become the servants of God,” the subjects of his kingdom; Romans 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19. (That is, all those who have turned to God by true repentance) (have received remission of sin, and are walking in the way of) (righteousness, with a believing, obedient, loving, and grateful) (heart. — A. C.)

91. On the other hand, the body of the Jewish nation, (having, through unbelief, rejected the Messiah, and the Gospel, and being therefore cast out of the city and kingdom of God,) are, in their turn, at present represented under the name and notion of enemies. Romans 11:28: “As concerning the Gospel, they are enemies for your sake.”

92. IX. The kind and particular regards of God to the converted Gentiles, and their relation to Jesus Christ, is also signified by that of a husband and wife; and his taking them into his covenant is represented by his espousing them. 2 Corinthians 11:2: “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”

93. Hence the Christian Church or community is represented as a mother, and particular members as her children. Galatians 4:26-28: "But Jerusalem, which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath a husband. Now we, brethren, as Israel was, are the children of promise." Galatians 4:31: "So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free."

11:17: “And if some of the branches (Jews) be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree,” etc. See also Romans 11:24.

97. XII. As Christians are, by the will of God, set apart and appropriated in a special manner to his honor, service, and obedience, and furnished with extraordinary means and motives to holiness, so they are said to be sanctified. 1 Corinthians 1:2: “Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus.” 1 Corinthians 6:11: “And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” Hebrews 2:11: “For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one;” Hebrews 10:10.

98. XIII. Farther; by the presence of God in the Christian Church, and our being by profession consecrated to him, we, as well as the ancient Jews, are made his house or temple, which God has built, and in which he dwells, or walks. 1 Peter 2:5: “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house,” etc. 1 Corinthians 3:9: “Ye are God’s building.” 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17: “Know ye not that ye (Christians) are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you: if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” 2 Corinthians 6:16: “And what agreement hath the temple of God (the Christian Church) with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said: I will dwell in them, and walk in them.” Ephesians 2:20-22: “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles, etc., Christ Jesus being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together, for a habitation of God through the Spirit.” 2 Thessalonians 2:4: “So that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, SHOWING HIMSELF that he is God.”

99. XIV. And not only does God, as our king, dwell in the Christian Church, as in his house or temple; but he has also conferred on Christians the honors of kings; as he has redeemed us from the servitude of sin, made us lords of ourselves, and raised us above others, to sit on thrones, and to judge and reign over them. And he has made us priests too, as we are peculiarly consecrated to God, and obliged to attend upon him, from time

to time continually, in the solemn offices of religion which he has appointed. 1 Peter 2:5: “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood.” 1 Peter 2:9: “But ye (Gentile Christians) are a chosen generation, a royal (or kingly) priesthood.” Revelation 1:5, 6: “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father,” etc.

100. XV. Thus the whole body of the Christian Church is separated unto God from the rest of the world. And whereas, before, the Gentile believers were afar off, lying out of the commonwealth of Israel, now they are nigh, as they are joined to God in covenant, have full access to him in the ordinances of worship, and, in virtue of his promise, a particular title to his regards and blessing. 2 Corinthians 6:17: “Wherefore come out from among them, and be separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.” Ephesians 2:13: “But now, in Christ Jesus, ye, who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh, by the blood of Christ.”

101. XVI. And as God, in all these respects, has distinguished the Christian Church, and sequestered them unto himself, they are styled his peculiar people. Titus 2:14: “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” 1 Peter 2:9: “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people.”

102. XVII. As Christians are a body of men particularly related to God, instructed by him in the rules of wisdom, devoted to his service, and employed in his true worship, they are called his Church or congregation. Acts 20:28: “Feed the Church of God.” 1 Corinthians 10:32: “Giving none offense to the Church of God;” 1 Corinthians 15:9; Galatians 1:13; and elsewhere. Ephesians 1:22: “Head over all things to the Church:”-and particular societies are Churches. Romans 16:16: “The Churches of Christ salute you:”-and so in several other places.

103. XVIII. For the same reason they are considered as God’s possession or heritage. 1 Peter 5:3: “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.” The reader cannot well avoid observing that the words and phrases by which our Christian privileges are expressed in the New Testament are the very same with the words and phrases by which the privileges of the Jewish Church are expressed in the Old



Testament; which makes good what St. Paul says concerning the language in which the apostles declared the things that are freely given to us of God. 1 Corinthians 2:12, 1:3: “We (apostles) have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are given to us of God;” namely, the fore-recited privileges and blessings. “Which things we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth,” not in philosophic terms of human invention, “but which the Holy Spirit teacheth,” in the writings of the Old Testament, the only Scriptures from which they took their ideas and arguments, “comparing spiritual things” under the Gospel.

Whence we may conclude: 1. That the holy Scriptures are admirably calculated to be understood in those things which we are most of all concerned to understand. Seeing the same language runs through the whole, and is set in such a variety of lights, that one part is well adapted to illustrate another: an advantage I reckon peculiar to the sacred writings above all others. 2. It follows that, to understand the sense of the Spirit in the New, it is essentially necessary that we understand its sense in the Old Testament.

### ***VII. Reflections on the foregoing Honours and Privileges of the Christian Church.***

From what has been said it appears,

104. I. That the believing Gentiles are taken into that kingdom and covenant in which the Jews once stood, and out of which they were cast for their unbelief and rejection of the Son of God; and that we Christians ought to have the same general ideas of our present religious state, membership, privileges, honors, and relation to God, as the Jews had while they were in possession of the kingdom. Only in some things the kingdom of God under the Gospel dispensation differs much from the kingdom of God under the Mosaical. As, 1. That it is now so constituted that it admits, and is adapted to, men of all nations upon the earth, who believe in Christ. 2. That the law, as a ministration of condemnation, which was an appendage to the Jewish dispensation, is removed and annulled under the Gospel. (But the moral law, as a rule of life, is still in force.) 3. And so is the polity or civil state of the Jews, which was interwoven with their

religion, but has no connection with the Christian religion. 4. The ceremonial part of the Jewish constitution is likewise abolished, for we are taught the spirit and duties of religion, not by figures and symbols, as sacrifices, offerings, watchings, etc., but by express and clear precepts. 5. The kingdom of God is now put under the special government of the Son of God, who is the head and king of the Church, to whom we owe faith and allegiance. (6)

(6) Add to this, that all the privileges under the Gospel are abundantly more spiritual than they were under the law—THAT being the shadow, THIS the substance. Hence, while we consider these privileges the same in kind, we must view them as differing widely in degree. — A. C.

105. II. From the above recited particulars it appears that the Christian Church is happy, and highly honored with privileges of the most excellent nature; of which the apostles, who well understood this new constitution, were deeply sensible. Romans 1:16: “I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” Romans 5:1-3, etc.: “Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access, by faith, into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice (glory) in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also,” etc. Romans 5:11: “And not only so, but we also joy (glory) in God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” etc. Romans 8:31: “What shall we then say to these things, If God be for us, who can be against us? 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? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? Who is he that condemneth? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” Romans 9:23, 24: “He has made known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even on us whom he has called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.” 2 Corinthians 3:18: “But we all, with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Ephesians 1:3, 4, etc.: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him,” etc., etc.

106. And it is the duty of the whole body of Christians to rejoice in the goodness of God, to thank and praise him for all the benefits conferred upon them in the Gospel. Romans 15:10: "Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people." Philippians 3:1: "My brethren, rejoice in the Lord." Philippians 4:4: "Rejoice in the Lord alway; again I say, rejoice." 1 Thessalonians 5:16: "Rejoice evermore;" James 1:9; 1 Peter 1:6, 8. Colossians 1:12: "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Colossians 2:7: "Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, abounding therein with thanksgiving;" 1 Thessalonians 5:18. Hebrews 13:15: "By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." Ephesians 1:6: "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the Beloved;" Ephesians 1:12, 14.

107. Farther, it is to be observed that all the foregoing privileges, benefits, relations, and honors belong to all professed Christians, without exception. God is the God, King, Savior, Father, Husband, Shepherd, etc., of them all. He created, saved, bought, redeemed; he begot, he made, he planted, etc., them all. And they are all as created, redeemed, and begotten by him; his people, nation, heritage; his children, spouse, flock, vineyard, etc. We are all enriched with the blessings of the Gospel, Romans 11:12-14; all

righteousness which we, in our Gentile state, had performed, whereby we had rendered ourselves deserving of the blessings of the Gospel, namely, to be taken into the family, kingdom, or Church of God; by no means. It was not thus of ourselves that we are saved, justified, etc. So far from that, the Gospel, when first preached to us Gentiles, found us sinners, dead in trespasses and sins, enemies through wicked works, disobedient; therefore, I say, all the forementioned privileges, blessings, honors, etc., are the effects of God's free grace or favor, without regard to any prior works or righteousness in the Gentile world, which procured the donation of them. Accordingly, they are always in Scripture, assigned to the love, grace, and mercy of God, as the sole spring from whence they flow. John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Romans 5:8: "But God commendeth his love to us, in that, while we were sinners, Christ died for us." Ephesians 2:4-9, 10: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he has loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us, through Jesus Christ. For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that (salvation is) not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, so that(7) no man (nor Gentile nor Jew) can boast. For we (Christians, converted from heathenism) are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them."

(7) ἵνα μη τις καυχησῆται, lest any man should boast. So we render it; as if the Gospel salvation were appointed to be not of works, to prevent our boasting; which supposes we might have boasted, had not God taken this method to preclude it. Whereas, in truth, we had nothing to boast of. Neither Jew nor Gentile could pretend to any prior righteousness, which might make them worthy to be taken into the house and kingdom of God under his Son; therefore the apostle's meaning is: "We are not saved from heathenism, and translated into the Church and kingdom of Christ, for any prior goodness, obedience, or righteousness we had performed. For which reason, no man can boast, as if he had merited the blessing, etc." This is the apostles sense; and the place should have been translated, so that no

man can boast. For  $\iota\nu\alpha$  signifies so that. See Romans 3:19; 1 Corinthians 7:29; 2 Corinthians 1:17; 7:9; Galatians 5:17; Hebrews 2:17; 6:18; Mark 4:12.

109. It is on account of this general love that Christians are honored with the title of beloved. Romans 1:7: "To all that are in Rome, beloved of God, called saints." Romans 9:25: "I will call her (the Gentile Church) beloved, which was not beloved." Colossians 3:12: "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies," etc.

110. Romans 3:23, 24: "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;" Romans 5:2. 1 Corinthians 1:4: "I thank my God-for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ." Ephesians 1:6, 7: "To the praise of the glory of his grace, whereby he has made us accepted in the beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;" Colossians 1:6; 2 Thessalonians 1:12. 2 Timothy 1:9: "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Jesus Christ before the world began;" Titus 2:11; Hebrews 12:15. Hence grace, and the grace of God, is sometimes put for the whole Gospel, and all its blessings. Acts 13:43: "Paul and Barnabas persuaded them to continue in the grace of God;" 2 Corinthians 6:1. 1 Peter 5:12: "Testifying that this is the true grace of God in which ye stand;" 1 Corinthians 1:4; Romans 5:2; 2 Corinthians 6:1; Titus 2:11; Jude 4. Romans 12:1: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies," etc. Romans 15:9: "And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy." 1 Peter 1:3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope," etc.

111. In these texts, and others of the same kind, it is evident that the love, grace, and mercy of God hath respect, not to particular persons in the Christian Church, but to the whole body, or whole societies, and therefore are to be understood of that general love, grace, and mercy whereby the whole body of Christians is separated unto God, to be his peculiar people, favored with extraordinary blessings. And it is with regard to this sentiment and mode of speech that the Gentiles, who before lay out of the

Church, and had not obtained mercy, are said now to have obtained mercy, Romans 11:30.

112. Hence also we may conclude that all the privileges and blessings of the Gospel, even the whole of our redemption and salvation, are the effect of God's pure, free, original love and grace, to which he was inclined of his own motion, without any other motive besides his own goodness, in mere kindness and good will to a sinful, perishing world. These are the things that are freely given to us of God, 1 Corinthians 2:12.

***VIII. All the grace of the Gospel is dispensed to us by, in, or through Christ Jesus.***

113. Nevertheless, all the forementioned love, grace, and mercy is dispensed or conveyed to us, in, by, or through the Son of God, Jesus Christ, our Lord. To quote all the places to this purpose would be to transcribe a great part of the New Testament. But it may suffice, at present, to review the texts under the numbers 108 and 110. From which texts it is evident that "the grace (or favor) of God is given unto us by Jesus Christ;" that he has "shown the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness to us through Jesus Christ;" that he has "sent his Son into the world that we might live through him;" to be "the propitiation (or mercy seat) for our sins;" that he "died for us;" that "we who were afar off are made nigh by his blood;" that God has "made us accepted in the Beloved, (in his beloved Son,) in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins;" that "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus;" that, "before the world began, the purpose and grace of God (relating to our calling and saltation) was given us in Christ Jesus;" "Before the foundation of the world God chose us in Christ," Ephesians 1:4. "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access into this grace wherein we stand," Romans 5:1, 2. "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son," 1 John 5:11. Nothing is clearer, from the whole current of Scripture, than that all the mercy and love of God, and all the blessings of the Gospel, from first to last, from the original purpose and grace of God to our final salvation in the possession of eternal life, are in, by, or through Christ; and particularly by his blood, by the redemption which is in him, as he is the propitiation (or atonement) for the sins of the whole world, 1 John 2:2. This can bear no dispute

among Christians. The only difference that can be must relate to the manner-how these blessings are conveyed to us in, by, or through Christ. Doubtless they are conveyed through his hands, as he is the minister or agent, appointed of God to put us in possession of them. But his blood, death, and cross could be no ministering cause of blessings assigned to his blood, etc., before we were put in possession of them. See Romans 5:6, 8, 10, 19; Ephesians 2:13, 16; Colossians 1:20-29. Nor truly can his blood be possibly considered as a ministering or instrumental cause in any sense at all; for it is not an agent but an object, and therefore, though it may be a moving cause, or a reason for bestowing blessings, yet it can be no active or instrumental cause in conferring them. His blood and death is indeed to us an assurance of pardon; but it is evidently something more; for it is also considered as an offering and sacrifice to God, highly pleasing to him, to put away our sin, and to obtain eternal redemption; Hebrews 9:12, 14, 26; Ephesians 5:2.

114. But why should God choose to communicate his grace in this mediate way, by the interposition, obedience, and agency of his Son, who again employs subordinate agents and instruments under him? I answer: For the display of the glory of his nature and perfections. The Sovereign Disposer of all things may communicate his blessings by what means and in any way he thinks fit. But whatever he effects by the interposition of means, and a train of intermediate causes, he could produce by his own immediate power. He wants not clouds to distil rain; nor rain nor human industry to make the earth fruitful; nor the fruitfulness of the earth to supply food; nor food to sustain our life. He could do this by his own immediate power; but he chooses to manifest his providence, power, wisdom, and goodness in a variety of ways and dispositions; and yet his power and goodness are not only as much concerned and exercised in this way, as if he produced the end without the intervention of means, but even much more, because his power, wisdom and goodness are as much exerted and illustrated in every single intermediate step, as if he had done the thing at once, without any intermediate step at all. There is as much power and wisdom exercised in producing rain, or in making the earth fruitful, or in adapting food to the nourishment of our bodies-I say there is as much power in any one of these steps as there would be in nourishing our bodies by one immediate act without those intermediate means. Therefore, in this method of

procedure, the displays of the Divine providence and perfections are multiplied and beautifully diversified, to arrest our attention, exercise our contemplation, and excite our admiration and thankfulness; for thus we see God in a surprising variety of instances. Nor, indeed, can we turn our eyes



end of their being is frustrated, it must be as agreeable to his greatness to endeavor (when he sees fit) their reformation, or to restore them to the true ends for which they were created, as it was originally to create them.

116. And as for mankind being a mean and inconsiderable part of the creation, it may not be so easy to demonstrate as we may imagine. The sin that is or hath been in the world will not do it; for then the beings which we know stand in a much higher, and, perhaps, in a very high rank of natural perfection, will be proved to be as mean and inconsiderable as ourselves; seeing they in great numbers have sinned. Neither will our natural weakness and imperfection prove that we are a mean and inconsiderable part of God's creation: for the Son of God, when clothed in our flesh, and encompassed with all our infirmities and temptations, lost nothing of the real excellency and worth he possessed when in a state of glory with the Father before the world was. Still he was the beloved Son of God, in whom he was well pleased. Besides, since God may bestow honors and privileges as he pleases, who will tell me what pre-eminence, in the purpose of God, this world may possibly have above any other part of the universe; or what relation it bears to the rest of the creation? We know that even angels have been ministering spirits to some part at least of mankind. Who will determine how far the scheme of redemption may exceed any scheme of Divine wisdom in other parts of the universe; or how far it may affect the improvement and happiness of other beings in the remotest regions? Ephesians 3:10, 11: "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." 1 Peter 1:12: "Which things (that are reported by them that have preached the Gospel) the angels desire to look into." It is therefore the sense of revelation, that the heavenly principalities and powers study the wisdom and grace of redemption, and even increase their stock of wisdom from the displays of the Divine love in the Gospel. Who can say how much our virtue is, more or less, severely proved, than in other worlds; or how far our virtue may excel that of other beings, who are not subjected to our long and heavy trials? May not a virtue, firm and steady under our present clogs, inconveniences, discouragements, persecutions, trials, and temptations, possibly surpass the virtue of the highest angel, whose state is not

attended with such embarrassments? Do ye know how far such as shall have honourably passed through the trials of this life shall hereafter be dispersed through the creation? How much their capacities will be enlarged? How highly they shall be exalted? What power and trusts will be put into their hands? How far their influence shall extend, and how much they shall contribute to the good order and happiness of the universe? Possibly, the faithful soul, when disengaged from our present incumbrances, may blaze out into a degree of excellency equal to the highest honors, the most important and extensive services. Our Lord has made us kings and priests unto God and the Father, and we shall sit together in heavenly places, and reign with him. To him that overcomes the trials of this present state, he will give to sit with him in his throne. True, many from among mankind shall perish among the vile and worthless for ever: and so shall many of the angels. These considerations may satisfy us that, possibly, mankind are not so despicable as to be below the interposition of the Son of God. Rather, the surprising condescensions and sufferings of a being so glorious should be an argument that the scheme of redemption is of the utmost importance; and that, in the estimate of God, who alone confers dignity, we are creatures of very great consequence. Lastly: God by Christ created the world; and if it was not below his dignity to create, it is much less below his dignity to redeem the world, which, of the two, is the more honorable.

117. It is farther to be observed, that the whole scheme of the Gospel in Christ, and as it stands in relation to his blood, or obedience unto death, was formed in the council of God, before the calling of Abraham, and even before the beginning of the world. Acts 15:18: “Known unto God are all his works (the dispensations which he intended to advance) from the beginning of the world.” Ephesians 1:4: “According as he hath chosen us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world” ([προ καταβολης κοσμου.](#)) 2 Timothy 1:9: “Who hath saved us and called us, according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” 1 Peter 1:20: “Who (Christ) verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, ([προ καταβολης κοσμου.](#)) but was manifest in these last times for you” (Gentiles.) Hence it appears that the whole plan of the Divine mercy in the Gospel, in relation to the method of communicating it, and the person through whose obedience it was to be

dispensed, and by whose ministry it was to be executed, was formed in the mind and purpose of God before this earth was created. God, by his perfect and unerring knowledge, foreknew the future state of mankind, and so before appointed the means which he judged proper for their recovery: which foreknowledge is fully confirmed by the promise to Abraham, and very copiously by the repeated predictions of the prophets, in relation to our Lord's work, and particularly to his death, with the end and design of it.

118. Again: it is to be noted, that all the forementioned mercy and love, privileges and blessings, are granted and confirmed to the Christian Church under the sanction of a covenant; which is a grant or donation of blessings confirmed by a proper authority. The Gospel covenant is established by the promise and oath of God, and ratified by the blood of Christ, as a pledge and assurance that it is a reality, and will certainly be made good. Matthew 26:28: "This is my blood of the new testament" (or covenant.) Luke 22:20: "This cup is the new testament (covenant) in my blood." 2 Corinthians 3:6: "Made us able ministers of the new testament" (covenant.) Hebrews 7:22: "Jesus made a surety of a better testament." Hebrews 8:6: "He is the mediator of a better covenant, established upon better promises;" Hebrews 8:8; 9:15; 12:24; 13:20. Here observe: 1. Jesus is the surety, (**εγγυος**), sponsor, and mediator (**μεσιτης**) of the new covenant, as he is the great agent appointed of God to negotiate, transact, secure, and execute all the blessings which are conferred by this covenant. Obs. 2. That as the covenant is a donation or grant of blessing, hence it is that the promise or promiser, is sometimes put for the covenant; as, Galatians 3:17, 18: "The covenant that was confirmed before (to Abraham) of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect: for if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise. But God gave it to Abraham by promise;" and so, Galatians 3:19. Again Galatians 3:21: "Is the law then against the promises of God?" Galatians 3:22. Obs. 3. That the Gospel covenant was included in that made with Abraham, Genesis 17:1, etc.; Genesis 22:16-18; as appears from Galatians 3:17; and from Hebrews 6:13; "When God made the promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself," etc. Hebrews 6:17, 18: "He confirmed (**εμεσικτευσεν**, he mediated) it by an oath; that

by two immutable things (the promise and oath of God) we (Christians) might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us.”

119. But what should carefully and specially be observed is this, that the Gospel constitution is a scheme, and the most perfect and effectual scheme, for restoring true religion, and for promoting virtue and happiness, that the world has ever yet seen. Upon faith in Christ, men of all nations were admitted into the Church, family, kingdom, and covenant of God by baptism; were all numbered among the justified, regenerate or born again, sanctified, saved, chosen, called, saints, and beloved; were all of the flock, Church, house, vine, and vineyard of God; and were entitled to the ordinances and privileges of the Church; had exceeding great and precious promises given unto them, especially that of entering into the rest of heaven. And in all these blessings and honors we are certainly very happy, as they are the things which are freely given to us of God, 1 Corinthians 2:12. But because these things are freely given, without respect to any obedience or righteousness of ours, prior to the donation of them, is our obedience and personal righteousness therefore unnecessary? Or are we, on account of benefits already received, secure of the favor and blessing of God in a future world and for ever? By no means.

120. To explain this important point more clearly, I shall proceed as before, and show that these privileges and blessings, given in general to the Christian Church, are ANTECEDENT blessings; given indeed freely, without any respect to the prior obedience of the Gentile world, before they were taken into the Church; but intended to be motives to the most upright obedience for the future, after they were joined to the family and kingdom of God. Which effect if they produce, then our election and calling, our redemption, adoption, etc., are made good: upon which account I shall call them CONSEQUENT blessings; because they are secured to us, and made ours for ever, only in consequence of our obedience. But, on the other hand, if the antecedent blessings do not produce obedience to the will of God; if we, his chosen people and children, do not obey the laws and rules of the Gospel; then we, as well as any other wicked persons, may expect tribulation and wrath; then we forfeit all our privileges, and all our honors and relations to God; all the favor and promises given freely to us are of no

avail; we receive the grace of God in vain, and everlasting death will certainly be our wretched portion.

121. That this is the great end of the dispensation of God's grace to the Christian Church—namely, to engage us to duty and obedience, and that it is a scheme for promoting virtue and true religion, is clear from every part of the New Testament, and requires a large and particular proof; not because the thing in itself is difficult or intricate, but because it is of great importance to the right understanding of the Gospel and the apostolic writings, and serves to explain several points which stand in close relation to it; as, particularly, that all the forementioned privileges belong to all professed Christians, even to those that shall perish eternally. For:—

1. If the apostles affirm them of all Christians, to whom they write;
2. If they declare some of those Christians who were favored with those privileges to be wicked, or suppose they might be wicked;
3. If they declare those privileges are conferred by mere grace, without regard to prior works of righteousness;
4. If they plainly intimate those privileges are conferred in order to produce true holiness;
5. If they exhort all to use them to that purpose, as they will answer it to God at the last day;
6. If they declare they shall perish, if they do not improve them to the purifying their hearts, and the right ordering of their conversation; then it must be true that these privileges belong to all Christians, and are intended to induce them to a holy life. And the truth of all those six particulars will sufficiently appear, if we attend to the Gospels and epistles.

### *IX. Conclusions from the preceding Discourse.*

122. Though, in the foregoing collection I have faithfully and impartially endeavored to give the true sense of every text, yet possibly, in some few that are doubtful, I may have erred. But there are so many indisputably plain and full to the purpose as will, I am persuaded, sufficiently justify the following conclusions:—

123. I. That the Gospel is a scheme for restoring true religion, and for promoting virtue and happiness.

124. II. That election, adoption, vocation, salvation, justification, sanctification, regeneration, and the other blessings, honors, and privileges, which come under the head of ANTECEDENT blessings, do, in a sense, belong at present to all Christians, even those who, for their wickedness, may perish eternally.

125. III. That those antecedent blessings, as they are offered and assigned to the whole body of Christians, do not import an absolute final state of favor and happiness, but are to be considered as displays, instances, and descriptions of God's love and goodness to us, which are to operate as a moral mean upon our hearts. They are a display of the love of God, who is the FATHER of the universe, who cannot but delight in the well being of his creatures, and, being perfect in goodness, possessed of all power, and the only original of all life and happiness, must be the prime author of all blessedness, and bestow his favors in the most free, generous, and disinterested manner; and therefore those blessings, as freely bestowed antecedently to our obedience, are perfectly consonant to the nature and moral character of God. He has freely, in our first birth and creation, given us a distinguished and eminent degree of being, and all the noble powers and advantage of reason: and what should stop the course of his liberality, or hinder his conferring new and higher blessings, even when we could pretend no title or claim to them? And as the blessings of the Gospel are of the most noble kind, raising us to high dignity, and the most delightful prospects of immortality, they are well adapted to engage the attention of men, to give the most pleasing ideas of God, to demonstrate most clearly, what nature itself discovers, that he is our FATHER, and to win and engage our hearts to him in love, who has, in a manner so surprising, loved us. By promising the remission of sins, protection and guidance through this world, and the hope of eternal life, every cloud, discouragement, and obstacle is removed; and the grace of God, in its brightest glory, shines full upon our minds, and is divinely powerful to support our patience and animate our obedience under temptations, trials, and difficulties; and to inspire peace of conscience, comfort, and joy.

126. IV. These principles ought to be admitted and claimed by all Christians, and firmly established in their hearts, as containing privileges and blessings in which they are all undoubtedly interested; otherwise it is evident they will be defective in the true principles of their religion, the only ground of their Christian joy and peace, and the proper motives of their Christian obedience. Now those principles (namely, our election, vocation, justification, regeneration, sanctification, etc., in Christ, through the free grace of God) are admitted and duly established in our hearts by FAITH. Faith, then, as exercised upon the blessings which God has gratuitously bestowed upon us, is, in our hearts, the foundation of the Christian life; and retaining and exercising this Christian virtue of faith is called tasting that the Lord is gracious, 1 Peter 2:3. Having<sup>(9)</sup> (or holding fast) grace, Hebrews 12:28. Growing in grace, 2 Peter 3:18. Being strong in the grace of Jesus Christ, 2 Timothy 2:1. Holding faith, 1 Timothy 1:19; 3:9. Continuing in the faith, grounded and settled, and not being moved away from the hope of the Gospel, Colossians 1:23. Holding fast the confidence and rejoicing of hope, Hebrews 3:6. Holding the beginning of our confidence steadfast, Hebrews 3:14. Having (holding) hope, 1 John 3:3. Hoping perfectly for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 1 Peter 1:13. Giving earnest heed to the things we have heard, Hebrews 2:1. Having (holding) the Son, or Christ, 1 John 5:12. By these, and such-like phrases, the apostles express our being thoroughly persuaded of, and duly affected with, the blessings included in our election, vocation, justification, etc.: or, their being firmly established in our hearts as principles of obedience, to secure our perseverance and final happiness, through the mighty working of God's power; to purify our hearts, and to guard us through all our spiritual dangers and conflicts; which power will always assuredly attend every one who holds faith, grace, and hope, 1 Peter 1:5. Here note, that the primary object of faith is not in ourselves, but in God. Not our own obedience or goodness, but the free grace of God, is the primary object of faith. But the fruit of faith must be in ourselves. The grace or free gift of God is the foundation of faith; and faith is the foundation of the whole life of a true Christian. 2 Peter 1:5-7: "Giving all diligence, add to your FAITH virtue," etc. Jude 20: "Building up yourselves on your most holy FAITH," etc.

(9) **εχειν**, to have, in such passages signifies to keep or hold, as a property or principle for use. Matthew 13:12; 25:29; John 3:29; 5:42; 8:12; Romans 1:28; 15:4; 1 Thessalonians 3:6; 1 Timothy 1:19; 3:9; Hebrews 6:9; 9:4; 1 John 2:23; 3:3; 5:12; 2 John 9.

127. These antecedent blessings are the first principles of the Christian religion; but the first principles of religion must be free from all doubt or scruple, otherwise the religion which is built upon them must sink, as having no foundation. The principles of natural religion—that I am endowed with a rational nature, that there is a God in whom I live, move, and have my being, and to whom I am accountable for my actions, are perfectly evident; otherwise the obligations of natural religion would be necessarily doubtful and uncertain. In like manner, the first principles of the Christian religion must be free from all perplexity, otherwise its obligations must be doubtful and perplexed. If it be doubtful whether ever Christ came into the world to redeem it, the whole Gospel is doubtful; and it is the same thing, if it be doubtful who are redeemed by him; for, if he has redeemed we know not whom, it is nearly the same thing, with regard to our improvement of redemption, as if he had redeemed no body at all.

128. Faith is the first act of the Christian life to which every Christian is obliged, and therefore it must have a sure and certain object to work upon; but if the love of God in our election, calling, adoption, justification, redemption, etc., be in itself uncertain to any persons in the Christian Church, then faith has no sure nor certain object to work upon with respect to some Christians; and consequently, some Christians are not obliged to believe; which is false.

129. Farther, the apostles make our election, calling, adoption, etc., motives to obedience and holiness. And therefore these (our election, calling, adoption, etc.) must have an existence antecedent to our obedience; otherwise they can be no motive to it. And if only an uncertain, unknown number of men be elected to eternal life, no individual can certainly know that he is of that number; and so, election can be no motive to obedience to any person in the Christian Church. To confine election, adoption, etc., to some few is unchurching the greatest part of the Church, and robbing them of common motives and comforts.



130. Our election, adoption, and other antecedent blessings, are not of works; consequently we are not to work for them, but upon them. They are not the effect of our good works, but our good works are the effect of them; they are not founded upon our holiness, but our holiness is founded upon them. We do not procure them by our obedience, for they are the effect of free grace; but they are motives and reasons exciting and encouraging our obedience; therefore our election is not proved by our sanctification, or real holiness. Our real holiness proves that our election is made sure; but our election itself is proved by the free grace of God.

131. From all this it follows that we, as well as the Christians of the first times, may claim and appropriate to ourselves all the forementioned antecedent blessings without any doubt or scruple. In confidence of hope and full assurance of faith we may boldly say, “the Lord is my helper,” and come with boldness to the throne of grace. Our life, even eternal life, is sure to every one of us in the promise of God, and the hands of our Lord Jesus Christ. And the business of every Christian is, not to perplex himself with doubts and fears, and gloomy apprehensions, but to rejoice in the Lord, and to do the duties of his place cheerfully and faithfully, in the assured hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ, to whom be everlasting glory and praise. Amen. (10)

(10) This is all right, when the sinner has been led, by a deep knowledge of his lost estate, to seek and find redemption in the blood of the Lamb: then it is his business to rejoice in the Lord and to do the duties of his place cheerfully and faithfully, in the assured hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ. But he must not presume, because he is in a Christian Church, and believes the doctrines of Christianity, that therefore he is safe. He cannot be safe unless Christ be formed in his heart, the hope of glory. — A. C.

132. V. From the preceding collection of texts we may gather that some of the expressions whereby the antecedent blessings are signified, such as elect, justify, sanctify, etc., may be used in a double sense; namely either as they are applied to all Christians in general, in relation to their being translated into the kingdom of God, and made his peculiar people, enjoying the privileges of the Gospel; or, as they signify the effects of those privileges. Wherever any blessing is assigned to all Christians, without exception; wherever it is said not to be of works; wherever

Christians are expected to make a due improvement of it, and threatened with the loss of God's blessing and of eternal life if they do not; there, the expressions which signify that blessing are to be understood in a general sense, as denoting a Gospel privilege, profession, or obligation. And in this general sense, saved, elect, chosen, justified, sanctified, are sometimes used; and calling, called, election, are, I think, always used in the New Testament. But when any blessing denotes real holiness as actually existing in the subject, then it may be understood in the special and eminent sense, and always must be understood in this sense when it implies the actual possession of eternal life; and in this sense, saved, elect, chosen, justify, sanctify, born of God, are sometimes used. Matthew 20:16:

“Many are called, but few are chosen” (who make a worthy use of their calling.) Matthew 24:31: “He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect.” Matthew 12:36, 37: “In the day of judgment, by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” 1 Thessalonians 5:25: “The God of

leads (ought to lead) thee to repentance;” Romans 6:2, 11; 8:9; Colossians 3:3. 1 Peter 1:6: “Wherein ye (ought) greatly (to) rejoice.” 2 Corinthians 3:18: “We all with open face (enjoying the means of) beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are (ought to be-enjoy the means of being) changed into the same image, from glory to glory.” 1 Corinthians 5:7: “Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are (obliged by the Christian profession to be) unleavened.” Hebrews 13:14: “We seek (we ought to seek, or, according to our profession, we seek) a city to come;” 1 John 2:12, 15; 3:9; 5:4, 18, and in various other places.

135. The man of true goodness, courage, and greatness of soul, is he who has that faith which worketh by love; who lives the life he now lives by faith in the Son of God. Such a man is happy under all events. This is he, who while he despises a vain life, has the truest and highest enjoyment of all that can be enjoyed in it. This is the man who alone properly lives, for he has nothing but life and immortality before him; death itself giving no interruption to his life. Blessed, unspeakably blessed is this man. Such the Gospel is designed to make us all; and such we all may be, if we do not shamefully neglect the grace of God and our own happiness. But the

plausible show of supporting and defending palpable contradictions.”-See Dr. Taylor’s Key to the Apostolical Writings.

# A GENERAL SURVEY

## OF THE

## EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

PAUL had never been at Rome when he wrote this letter, and therefore it cannot turn upon some particular points, to revive the remembrance of what he had more largely taught in person, or to satisfy the scrupulous in some things he might not have touched upon at all; but in it we may expect a full account of his Gospel, or those glad tidings of salvation which he preached among the Gentiles, seeing this epistle was intended to supply the total want of his preaching at Rome.

He understood perfectly well the system of religion he taught, for he was instructed in it by the immediate revelation of Jesus Christ, Galatians 1:11; Ephesians 3:3; 1 Corinthians 11:23; and being also endowed with the most eminent gifts of the Holy Spirit; a man disinterested and quite unbiassed by any temporal considerations, we may be sure he has given us the truth, as he received it from our Lord, after his ascension. On the other hand, he was also well acquainted with the sentiments and system of religion which he opposed, for he was well skilled in Jewish literature, having had the best education his country could afford, and having been once a most zealous advocate for Judaism. Having frequently disputed with the Jews he was thoroughly versed in the controversy, and knew very well what would be retorted upon every point: and therefore we may very reasonably suppose that the queries and objections, which the apostle in this epistle puts into the mouth of the Jews, were really such as had been advanced in opposition to his arguments.

He was a great genius and a fine writer; and he seems to have exercised all his talents, as well as the most perfect Christian temper, in drawing up this epistle. The plan of it is very extensive; and it is surprising to see what a spacious field of knowledge he has comprised, and how many

various designs, arguments, explications, instructions, and exhortations, he has executed in so small a compass.

This letter was sent to the world's metropolis, where it might be exposed to all sorts of persons, Heathens, Jews, Christians, philosophers, magistrates, and the emperor himself: and I make no doubt that the apostle kept this in view while he was writing, and guarded and adapted it accordingly.

However, it is plain enough it was designed to confute the unbelieving and to instruct the believing Jew; to confirm the Christian and to convert the idolatrous Gentile. Those several designs he reduces to one scheme, by opposing and arguing with the infidel or unbelieving Jew in favor of the Christian or believing Gentile.

Upon this plan, if the unbelieving Jew escaped and remained unconvinced, yet the Christian Jew would be more inoffensively and more effectually instructed in the nature of the Gospel, and the kind brotherly regards he ought to have to the believing Gentiles, than if he had directed his discourse plainly and immediately to him. But if his arguments should fail in reference to the believing Jew, yet the believing Gentile would see his interest in the covenant and kingdom of God as solidly established, by a full confutation of the Jewish objections, (which were the only objections that could, with any show of reason, be advanced against it,) as if the epistle had been written for no other purpose. And thus it is of the greatest use to us at this day.

It is also at present exceeding useful, as it entirely demolishes the engrossing pretensions and imposing principles of the Church of Rome. For, a professed faith in Christ, and a subjection to him, is, in this epistle, fully shown to be the only Gospel condition of a place in his Church, an interest in the covenant of God, and of Christian fellowship. By this extensive principle God broke down the pales of his own ancient inclosure, the Jewish Church; and therefore, by the same principle, more strongly forbids the building any other partition wall of schemes and terms of Christian fellowship, devised by human wisdom or imposed by human authority. He then who professes faith in Christ and subjection to him is, by the apostle, allowed and demonstrated to be a member of the true visible Church, and to have a right to all its privileges.

Both ancients and moderns make heavy complaints of the obscurity of this epistle, though all agree it is a great and useful performance. Origen, one of the fathers, compares our apostle to a person who leads a stranger into a magnificent palace, but, perplexed with various cross and intricate passages, and many remote and secret apartments, shows him some things at a distance, out of an opulent treasury; brings some things near to his view; conceals others from it; often enters in at one door, and comes out at another; so that the stranger is surprised, and wonders whence he came, where he is, and how he shall get out. But we shall have a tolerable idea of this princely structure if we observe that it consists of four grand parts or divisions. The first division contains the five first chapters; the second, the sixth, seventh, and eighth; the third, the ninth, tenth, and eleventh; the fourth, the five last chapters.

**PART I.** — Displays the riches of Divine grace, as free to all mankind. Jews and Gentiles are equally sinful and obnoxious to wrath; and, therefore, there was no way for the Jew to be continued in the kingdom of God, but by GRACE, through FAITH; and by grace and faith the Gentile might be admitted into it. To reject this way of justification was to reject the very method in which Abraham himself was justified, or interested in the covenant made with him: in which covenant believing Gentiles were included, as well as believing Jews, and had as great or greater privileges to glory in. But if the Jew should pertinaciously deny that, he could not deny that all mankind are interested in the grace of God, which removes the consequences of Adam's offense. Through that offense all mankind were subjected to death; and through Christ's obedience all mankind should be restored to life at the last day. The resurrection from the dead is, therefore, a part of the grace of God in the Redeemer; and if all mankind have an interest in this part of the grace of God, why not in the whole of it? If all mankind were subjected to death through Adam's one offense, is it not much more reasonable that, through the opposite nobler cause, the obedience of the Son of God, all mankind should be interested in the whole of the grace which God has established upon it? And as for law, or the rule of right action, it was absurd for any part of mankind to expect pardon or any blessedness upon the foot of that, seeing all mankind had broken it; and it was still more absurd to seek pardon and life by the law of Moses,

which condemned those that were under it to death for every transgression.

**PART II.** — Having proved that believing Jews and Gentiles were pardoned, and interested in all the privileges and blessings of the Gospel, through mere grace, he next shows the obligations laid upon them to a life of virtue and piety under the new dispensation. And upon this subject he adapts this discourse to the Gentile Christians in the sixth chapter; and in the seventh, and part of the eighth, he turns himself to the Jewish Christians; then, from Romans 8:12 to the end of the eighth chapter, he addresses himself upon the same head to both Christian Jews and Gentiles; particularly giving them right notions of the sufferings to which they were exposed, and by which they might be deterred from the duties required in the Gospel; and concluding with a very strong and lively assertion of the certain perseverance of all who love God, notwithstanding any infirmities or trials in this world.

**PART III.** — Gives right sentiments concerning the rejection of the Jews, which was a matter of great moment to the due establishment of the Gentile converts.

**PART IV.** — Is filled with exhortations to several instances of Christian duty; and concludes with salutations to and from particular persons. It will be an advantage to the reader to have this sketch of the epistle ready in his thoughts.

Farther; we cannot enter into the spirit of this epistle unless we enter into the spirit of a Jew in those times, and have some just notion of his utter aversion to the Gentiles; his valuing and raising himself high upon his relation to God, and to Abraham; upon his law and pompous worship, circumcision, etc., as if the Jews were the only people in the world who had any manner of right to the favor of God.

And let it also be well noted, that the apostle in this epistle disputes with the whole body of the Jews, without respect to any particular sect or party among them, such as Pharisees, Sadducees, etc.; for the grand proposition or question in debate is, Are WE Jews better than THEY Gentiles? (Romans 3:9.) And one argument in proof of the negative which the apostle espouses is this (Romans 3:29:) “Is God the God of the Jews



only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.” These are the two points through which the line of the apostle’s discourse in the third chapter, and consequently in all the argumentative part of the epistle, must necessarily run: and as, both in the proposition and in the argument, he evidently means the whole body of the Jews, in opposition to the whole body of the Gentiles, he who doth not give such a sense of the apostle’s discourse throughout the argumentative part of the epistle as exactly hits and suits this general, collective notion of Jews and Gentiles, certainly misses his aim, and shoots wide of the mark.

Lastly, the whole epistle is to be taken in connection, or considered as one continued discourse; and the sense of every part must be taken from the drift of the whole. Every sentence, or verse, is not to be regarded as a distinct mathematical proposition or theorem, or as a sentence in the book of Proverbs, whose sense is absolute and independent of what goes before or comes after: but we must remember that every sentence, especially in the argumentative part, bears relation to, and is dependent upon, the whole discourse, and cannot be understood unless we understand the scope and drift of the whole; and therefore the whole epistle, or at least the eleven first chapters of it, ought to be read over at once, without stopping.

As to the use and excellency of this epistle, I shall leave it to speak for itself when the reader has studied and well digested the contents of it. And methinks curiosity, if nothing else, should invite us to examine carefully the doctrine by which (accompanied with the gifts and operations of the Spirit of God) a few men, otherwise naked, weak, and contemptible, in opposition to the power, learning, and deep-rooted prejudices of the world, confronted and overthrew the Pagan religion and idolatry throughout the Roman empire: a victory far more difficult and surprising than all the achievements of Alexander and Caesar. The fact cannot be denied. And surely the dignity and virtue of the cause must be proportionable to such an unusual and wonderful event. It is certain the world never, either before or since, has seen any thing equal to the writings of the New Testament. Never was the love of God, and the dignity to which he has raised the human nature, so clearly shown and demonstrated; never were motives so Divine and powerful proposed to induce us to the practice of all virtue and goodness. In short, there we find whatever ennobles and adorns the mind; whatever gives solid peace and joy;

whatever renders us the most excellent and happy creatures; taught, recommended, and enforced by light and authority derived from the only fountain of truth and of all good.

As to the apostle's manner of writing, it is with great spirit and force, I may add, perspicuity too; for it will not be difficult to understand him if our minds are unprejudiced and at liberty to attend to the subject he is upon, and to the current Scriptural sense of the words he uses; for he keeps very strictly to the standard of Scripture phraseology. He takes great care to guard and explain every part of his subject; and I may venture to say he has left no part of it unexplained or unguarded. Never was author more exact and cautious in this than he. Sometimes he writes notes upon a sentence liable to exception and wanting explanation, as Romans 2:12-16; here the 13th and 15th verses are a comment upon the former part of it. Sometimes he comments upon a single word, as Romans 10:11-13; the 12th and 13th verses are a comment upon  $\pi\alpha\varsigma$  every one, in the 11th.

He was studious of a perspicuous brevity. Romans 5:13, 14: "For until the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when law is not in being. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression." Surely never was a greater variety of useful sentiments crowded into a smaller compass, and yet so skilfully, that one part very clearly explains another. Hence we learn: 1. That here imputing of sin means, men's being subject to death for sin; for it follows, Nevertheless death reigned. 2. That law is the constitution that subjects the sinner to death; for he saith, Sin is not imputed when law is not in being. 3. That until the law, is the times before the law of Moses was given; for he saith, Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses. Until the law, is the same as until Moses. 4. That law was not in being from Adam to Moses; for having said, when law is not in being, he immediately adds, nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses. 5. That Adam was under the law; for if the law was not in being from Adam, or after the dispensation he was under, it is plain it was in being before; or, that law was the dispensation under which God placed Adam. 6. That the clause, even over those that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, is not to be understood only of some particular persons, as infants, but of all that lived from Adam to Moses; because none that lived from Adam to Moses were under the law, and so

none could sin after the likeness of Adam's transgression. 7. That the law was in being after Moses; for it was not in being from Adam to Moses, which evidently supposes it was in being afterwards; and that the Jews, from that time, sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, or were by the law condemned to death for every transgression. 8. Lastly, from the whole it is evident that from Adam to Moses men did not die for their own personal transgressions, but in consequence of Adam's one transgression, which is the point to be proved. One shall hardly find in any other author an argument so justly managed, so fully established, attended with such a variety of instructive sentiments in the compass of thirty words; for setting aside the articles, there are no more in the Greek. It is by this unparalleled art that the apostle has brought such a variety of arguments, instructions, and sentiments, all stated, proved, and sufficiently guarded, explained, and defended, within the limits of this letter; which has made it a magazine of the most real, extensive, useful, and profitable knowledge.

He treats his countrymen, the Jews, with great caution and tenderness. He had a natural affection for them, was very desirous of winning them over to the Gospel; he knew that their passions and prejudices were very strong for their own constitution; therefore, in his debates with them he avoids every thing harsh, introduces every kind and endearing sentiment, and is very nice in choosing soft and inoffensive expressions, so far as he honestly could, for he never flatters, nor dissembles the truth.

His transitions and advances to an ungrateful subject are very dexterous and apposite, as Romans 2:1-17; 8:17.

He often carries on a complicated design, and while he is teaching one thing, gives us an opportunity of learning one or two more. So, Romans 13:1-8, he teaches the duty of subjects, and at the same time instructs magistrates in their duty, and shows the true grounds of their authority.

He is a nervous reasoner and a close writer, who never loses sight of his subject, and who throws in every color that may enliven it.

He writes under a deep and lively sense of the truth and importance of the Gospel, as a man who clearly understood it, and in whose heart and

affections it reigned far superior to all temporal considerations. See DR. TAYLOR'S Preface to the Romans.

There is so much good sense and sound criticism in the above remarks, that I cannot help considering them of high importance to a proper understanding of this epistle. The apostle's manner of writing is here well vindicated, and proved to be close, nervous, and conclusive; and such a testimony from such a man as Dr. Taylor must, with every unprejudiced reader, outweigh the miserable sentiment of that philosopher who, while professing to hold the same creed with the above writer, has had the awful temerity to say that St. Paul was "an inconclusive reasoner." By such a saying, a man fixes the broad seal to his own incompetency to Judge either of the apostle's writings or doctrine.

In the preceding pages I have borrowed largely from the work of Dr. Taylor, on a full conviction that it is the best ever written upon this subject, that it is indispensably necessary to a proper understanding of the apostolic writings; and that I could not hope to equal it by any production of my own. Those parts of his Key which did not fall in with my plan I have taken the liberty to pass by; the rest I have greatly abridged, and only added a few notes where I thought there might be any danger of misapprehending the subject.(11)

*May 21, 1814.*

*A. C.*

(11) On this subject a learned and judicious friend wrote as follows:—

"I find there is a hue and cry raised about Dr. Taylor. I have not yielded to my antagonists, and I will still dare to think for myself. I tell them I would go as far as I can with the pope, or any man; yea, with the devil, when he speaks truth, (which he sometimes does.) If these persons alluded to would attentively read and compare the texts in the Old Testament quoted by Dr. Taylor in his Key, it would lead them to a more clear understanding of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans than they ever had before. And I think this Key is better than any thing my friend himself could have written upon the subject. But the cry is, 'An Arian, an Arian!' Prejudice shuts up the mind against truth; but let truth be defended wherever it may be found. It is easy to perceive that a certain class of men would reject Dr. Taylor's Key because it cuts up the very foundation of their system. Go

on in the strength of God; and in all things act with a single eye to his glory. Vive valeque.

*J. C.*

*"13TH MARCH, 1815."*

**THE**

**EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE**

**TO**

**THE ROMANS.**

- Year of the Constantinopolitan AEra of the World, 5566.
- Year of the Alexandrian AEra of the World; 5560.
- Year of the Antiochian AEra of the World, 5550.
- Year of the Julian Period, 4768.
- Year of the Usherian AEra of the World, 4062.
- Year of the two hundred and ninth Olympiad, 2.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to the Roman account, 811.
- Year of the AEra of the Seleucidae, 370.
- Year of the Caesarean AEra of Antioch, 106.
- Year of the Julian AEra, 103.
- Year of the Spanish AEra, 96.
- Year from the birth of Christ, 62.
- Year of the vulgar AEra of Christ's nativity, 58.
- Year of the Dionysian Period, or Easter Cycle, 59.
- Year of the Grecian Cycle of nineteen years, 2, or the first embolismic.
- Year of the Jewish Cycle of nineteen years, 18.
- Year of the Solar Cycle, 11.
- Dominical Letter, A.
- Epact, or the Moon's age at the commencement of the year, 11.
- Jewish Passover, Saturday, March 25.
- Easter Sunday, March 26.
- Year after Bissextile, or Leap-year, 2.
- Year of the reign of the Emperor Nero Caesar, 5.

- Year of Claudius Felix, the Jewish Governor, 6.
- Year of the reign of Vologesus, king of the Parthians, 9.
- Year of Caius Numidius Quadratus, Governor of Syria, 8.
- High Priest of the Jews, Joseph.
- Consuls, Nero Augustus the third time, and Valerius Messala.

## CHAPTER 1.

St. Paul shows the Romans his Divine call to the apostleship, and for what end he was thus called, 1-6. His salutation to the Church at Rome, and his commendation of their faith, 7, 8. His earnest desire to see them, that he might impart to them some spiritual gifts, 9-15. His description of the Gospel of Christ, 16, 17. The crimes and profligacy of the Gentile world, which called aloud for the judgments of God, 18-32.

### PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

DIFFERENT interpreters have divided this epistle into certain parts or divisions, by which they suppose its subject and matter may be the better understood. Some of these divisions have been mentioned in the preceding preface.

The epistle contains three grand divisions.

I. The PREFACE, Romans 1:1-17.

II. The TRACTATION, or setting forth of the main subject, including two sections: 1. Dogmatic, or what relates to doctrine. Paraenetic, or what relates to the necessity and importance of the virtues and duties of the Christian life. The dogmatic part is included in the first eleven chapters, the grand object of which is to show that eternal salvation cannot be procured by any observance of the Jewish law, and can be hoped for only on the Christian scheme; for by the works of the law no man can be justified; but what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God has accomplished by sending his Son into the world, who, becoming an offering for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. The paraenetic part commences with Romans 12:1: I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service, etc.; and extends to Romans 15:14.



III. The peroration or epilogue, which contains the author's apology for writing; his commendation of his apostolical office; his promise to visit them; his request of an interest in their prayers; his commendations of certain persons, and his salutations to others. These points are contained in the succeeding parts of the epistle, from Romans 15:14 to Romans 16:24. The 25th, 26th, and 27th verses {Romans 16:25-27} of this chapter evidently belong to another part of the epistle, and should come in, as they do in a vast majority of the best MSS., after Romans 14:23.

For every thing necessary to a general knowledge of the epistle itself, see the preceding preface.

The inscriptions to this epistle are various in the different MSS. and versions. The following are the principal:-To the Romans-The Epistle of Paul to the Romans-The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans-The Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Romans. The word *αγιος*, holy, we have translated saint; and thus, instead of saying the holy Paul, etc., we say Saint Paul, etc.; and this is now brought into general use. The older the MSS. are, the more simple the appellatives given to apostles and apostolic men.

## NOTES ON CHAP. 1.

**Verse 1.** *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ*— The word *δουλος*, which we translate servant, properly means a slave, one who is the entire property of his master; and is used here by the apostle with great propriety. He felt he was not his own, and that his life and powers belonged to his heavenly owner, and that he had no right to dispose of or employ them but in the strictest subserviency to the will of his Lord. In this sense, and in this spirit, he is the willing slave of Jesus Christ; and this is, perhaps, the highest character which any soul of man can attain on this side eternity. "I am wholly the Lord's; and wholly devoted in the spirit of sacrificial obedience, to the constant, complete, and energetic performance of the Divine will." A friend of God is high; a son of God is higher; but the servant, or, in the above sense, the slave of God, is higher than all;-in a word, he is a person who feels he has no property in himself, and that God is all and in all.

***Called to be an apostle***— The word **αποστολος**, apostle, from **αποστελλειν**, to send, signifies simply a messenger or envoy; one sent on a confidential errand: but here it means an extraordinary messenger; one sent by God himself to deliver the most important message on behalf of his Maker;—in a word, one sent by the Divine authority to preach the Gospel to the nations. The word **κλητος**, called, signifies here the same as constituted, and should be joined with **αποστολος**, as it is in the Greek, and translated thus: Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, constituted an apostle, etc. This sense the word called has in many places of the sacred writings; e. g. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called, **κληθωμεν**, CONSTITUTED, or made the sons of God. As it is likely that no apostle had been employed in founding the Church of Rome, and there was need of much authority to settle the matters that were there in dispute, it was necessary he should show them that he derived his authority from God, and was immediately delegated by him to preach and write as he was now doing.

***Separated unto the Gospel***— Set apart and appointed to this work, and to this only; as the Israelites were separate from all the people of the earth, to be the servants of God: see Leviticus 20:26. St. Paul may here refer to his former state as a Pharisee, which literally signifies a separatist, or one separated. Before he was separated unto the service of his own sect; now he is separated unto the Gospel of God. On the word GOSPEL, and its meaning, see the preface to the notes on St. Matthew; and for the meaning of the word Pharisee, see the same Gospel, Matthew 3:7.

**Verse 2. *Which he had promised afore***— Both in the law and in the prophets God showed his purpose to introduce into the world a more perfect and glorious state of things; which state was to take place by and under the influence of the Messiah, who should bring life and immortality to light by his Gospel.

**Verse 3. *Concerning his Son***— That is, the Gospel relates every thing concerning the conception, birth, preaching, miracles, passion, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, who was of the seed-royal, being, as far as his humanity was considered, the son of David, and then the only rightful heir to the Israelitish throne.

**Verse 4. *And declared to be the Son of God***— See the note on Acts 13:33, where this subject is considered at large. The word **ορισθεντος**, which we render declared, comes from **οριζω**, to bound, define, determine, or limit, and hence our word horizon, the line that determines the farthest visible part of the earth, in reference to the heavens. In this place the word signifies such a manifest and complete exhibition of the subject as to render it indubitable. The resurrection of Christ from the dead was such a manifest proof of our Lord's innocence, the truth of his doctrine, and the fulfillment of all that the prophets had spoken, as to leave no doubt on any considerate and candid mind.

***With power***— **εν δυναμει**, With a miraculous display of Divine energy; for, how could his body be raised again, but by the miraculous energy of God? Some apply the word here to the proof of Christ's sonship; as if it were said that he was most manifestly declared to be the Son of God, with such powerful evidence and argument as to render the truth irresistible.

***According to the spirit of holiness***— There are many differences of sentiment relative to the meaning of this phrase in this place; some supposing that the spirit of holiness implies the Divine nature of Jesus Christ; others, his immaculate sanctity, etc. To me it seems that the apostle simply means that the person called Jesus, lately crucified at Jerusalem, and in whose name salvation was preached to the world, was the Son of God, the very Messiah promised before in the holy Scriptures; and that he was this Messiah was amply demonstrated. 1st, By his resurrection from the dead, the irrefragable proof of his purity, innocence, and the Divine approbation; for, had he been a malefactor, as the Jews pretended, the miraculous power of God would not have been exerted in raising his body from the dead. 1, He was proved to be the Son of God, the promised Messiah, by the Holy Spirit, (called here the spirit of holiness,) which he sent down upon his apostles, and not on them only, but on all that believed on his name; by whose influence multitudes were convinced of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and multitudes sanctified unto God; and it was by the peculiar unction of this spirit of holiness, that the apostles gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, Acts 4:33. Thus, then, Christ was proved to be the true Messiah, the son of David according to the flesh, having the sole right to the throne of Israel; and God recognized this character, and this right, by his resurrection from the dead,

and sending forth the various gifts and graces of the Spirit of holiness in his name.

**Verse 5. *Grace and apostleship***— The peculiar influence and the essential qualifications which such an office requires. Without the GRACE, favor, and peculiar help of God, he could not have been an apostle: he had an extraordinary conversion, and an extraordinary call to preach the Gospel. Probably *χαριν και αποστολην*, grace and apostleship, mean the same as *χαριν της αποστολης*, the apostolical office; for so the word *χαρις* means in Romans 12:3; 15:15; 1 Corinthians 3:10; Ephesians 3:8. See the various acceptations of the word grace, Romans 1:7.

***For obedience to the faith***— That by this office, which I have received from God, and the power by which it is accompanied, I might proclaim the faith, the Gospel of Jesus; and show all nations the necessity of believing in it, in order to their salvation. Here is: 1. The Gospel of the Son of God. 2. An apostle divinely commissioned and empowered to preach it. 3. The necessity of faith in the name of Jesus, as the only Savior of the world. 4. Of obedience, as the necessary consequence of genuine faith. And, 5. This is to be proclaimed among all nations; that all might have the opportunity of believing and being saved.

**Verse 6. *Ye are the called***— Ye Romans are all invited to believe in Christ Jesus, for the salvation of your souls; and to you, with the rest, my apostolical mission extends. This appears to be the most obvious sense of the word called in this place—to be called by the Gospel is to be invited to believe in Christ Jesus, and become his disciples. The word sometimes means constituted, or made, as in Romans 1:1.

**Verse 7. *Called to be saints***— Invited to become holy persons, by believing the Gospel and receiving the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Or, here, the word may have the meaning of made or constituted, as above; *κλητοις αγιοις*, to all that be in Rome, CONSTITUTED saints, for they had already received the Gospel grace, and were formed into a Christian Church.

***Grace to you***— *χαρις υμιν*; May you be partakers of the Divine favor, the source whence every blessing is derived.

I think it necessary, once for all, to give the several acceptations of this word grace which occur in the sacred writings.

1. The word **χαριν** signifies in general favor or benevolence, but especially that favor which is powerful and active, and loads its objects with benefits. Luke 1:30: Fear not, Mary, thou hast found FAVOR, **χαριν**, with God. Luke 2:40: And the child grew-and the GRACE of God, **χαρις θεου**, the favor of God was upon him. Luke 1:52: And Jesus increased in FAVOR, **χαριτι** GRACE, with God and man. Acts 2:47: Having FAVOR, **χαριν**, GRACE, with all the people. Acts 4:33: And great GRACE, **χαρις**, FAVOR, was upon them all. The apostles were at that time in universal favor with the multitude. In this sense the word occurs in a great variety of places, both in the Old and New Testaments.

2. Hence it is often used for the blessing which it dispenses; for, if God be favourably disposed towards a person, his beneficent acts, in that person's behalf, will be a necessary consequence of such favor. John 1:14: Full of GRACE and truth; accomplished in all spiritual blessings. John 1:16: And GRACE upon GRACE: he who is full of the most excellent blessings, confers them liberally on all believers. Acts 11:23: When he had seen the GRACE of God, i.e. had the fullest evidence that they were richly endowed with heavenly gifts. 1 Corinthians 1:4: For the GRACE of God which is given you-the Divine blessings conferred upon you. 2 Corinthians 9:8: God is able to make all GRACE abound toward you; i.e. to enrich you with every benediction. This is also a very common acceptation of the word; and in this sense the word grace or favor is now generally understood among religious people. The grace of God meaning with them some Divine or spiritual blessing communicated.

3. It is sometimes taken for the whole of the Christian religion, as being the grandest possible display of God's favor to a lost, ruined world: and in this sense it appears to be used, John 1:17: For the LAW was given by Moses; but GRACE and truth came by Jesus Christ: where the term GRACE is evidently opposed to LAW; the latter meaning the Mosaic, the other the Christian, dispensation. Acts 13:43: Barnabas persuaded them to continue in the GRACE of God; i.e. to hold fast their profession of the religion of Christ. Romans 6:14: Ye are not under the LAW, but under GRACE-ye are no longer under obligation to fulfill the Mosaic precepts, but are under the Christian dispensation. See also Romans 6:15; and see 2 Corinthians 1:12; 6:1; Galatians 1:6; Colossians 1:6; 2 Timothy 2:1, Titus 2:11: The GRACE of God, that bringeth salvation unto all men, hath appeared. The Jewish

religion was restricted in its benefits to a few; but the Christian religion proposes the salvation of all men; and the author of it has become a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Hebrews 12:15: Looking diligently lest any man fall from the GRACE of God-lest any man apostatize from the Christian religion, and the blessings of pardon and holiness which he has received through it. 1 Peter 5:12: This is the true GRACE of God wherein ye stand-the Christian religion which ye have received is the genuine religion of God.

4. It signifies all the blessings and benefits which Christ has purchased, and which he gives to true believers, both in time and eternity. See Romans 5:15, 17, where the grace of God is opposed to death; i.e. to all the wretchedness and misery brought into the world by Adam's transgression. 1 Corinthians 16:23: The GRACE of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all-May every blessing purchased by Christ's passion and death be the portion of you all. Galatians 5:4: Ye are fallen from GRACE-ye have lost the blessings of the Gospel by submitting to circumcision.

5. It signifies the apostolic and ministerial office, or the authority to propagate the Christian religion, and the unction or influence by which that office is executed; so in the 5th verse of this chapter, {Romans 1:5} as has been already noted: By whom we have received GRACE and apostleship, or, the apostolic office. Romans 13:3: I say, through the GRACE given unto me; i.e. I command you, by the authority of my apostolic office, etc. See also Romans 13:6.

6. It signifies a gift, salary, or money collected for the use of the poor. 1 Corinthians 16:3: Whomsoever ye shall approve-they will I send to bring your LIBERALITY, **την χαριν υμων**, your GRACE; i.e. the collection made for the poor saints: see 1 Corinthians 16:1. 2 Corinthians 8:4: Praying us-that we would receive the GIFT, **την χαριν**, the GRACE, the contribution made in the Churches of Macedonia, for the relief of the poor. In this sense it is used in Eccus. xvii. 22: He will keep the GOOD DEEDS of man, **χαριν**, the same as **ελεημοσυνη**, alms, in the beginning of the verse; and it signifies a kind or friendly act, in the same author. Eccus. xxix. 16: Forget not the FRIENDSHIP, **χαριτας**, of thy surety. GRACES or **χαρις**, was a deity among the ancients; and the three GRACES, **αι τρεις χαριτες**, were called Pitho, Aglaia, and Euphrosyne; **πειθω**, mild persuasion;

**αγλαια**, dignity; **ευφροσυνη**, liberality and joyfulness; and these were always painted naked, to show that all benefits should be gratuitous, this being essential to the nature of a gift. See Suidas, in **χαριτας**.

7. It sometimes signifies merely thanks or thanksgiving. See Luke 17:9: Doth he thank, **μη χαριν εχει**, that servant? Romans 6:17: But God be THANKED, **χαρις οε τω θεω**. 1 Corinthians 10:30: For if I by GRACE, **χαριτι**, THANKSGIVING, as our margin has it, and properly.

8. It signifies remuneration, wages, or reward Luke 6:32-34: If ye love them that love you-do good to them which do good to you-lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what THANK have ye? **ποια υμιν χαρις εστι**; what REWARD have ye? This appears, from the parallel place, Matthew 5:46, to be most evidently the meaning: **τινα μισθον εχετε**; what REWARD have ye? The word is used in this sense by several Greek writers.

9. It signifies whatever is the means of procuring the favor or kindness of another. 1 Peter 2:19, 20: For this is THANKWORTHY, **τουτο γαρ χαρις παρα τω θεω**, this is the means of PROCURING FAVOR from God.

10. It signifies joy, pleasure, and gratification, which is the, meaning of **χαρα**, and with which it is often confounded in the New Testament. Philemon 7: For we have great JOY, **χαριν γαρ εχομεν πολλην**. Tobit vii. 18: The Lord give thee JOY, **χαριν**, for this thy sorrow. In this sense the word is used by the best Greek writers; and in this sense it appears to be used, 2 Corinthians 1:15.

11. It signifies the performance of an act which is pleasing or grateful to others. Acts 24:27: Felix, willing to show the Jews a PLEASURE, **χαριτας καταθεσθαι**, to perform an act which he knew would be highly gratifying to them.

12. It signifies whatever has the power or influence to procure favor, etc. Suavity, kindness, benevolence, gentle demeanour. Luke 4:22: All wondered at the GRACIOUS WORDS, **τοις λογοις της χαριτος**, the benevolent, kind, and tender expressions; such as his text, Luke 4:18, would naturally lead him to speak. He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, etc. Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:6: Let your

speech be always with GRACE; i.e. gracious, kind, benevolent, savouring of the doctrine of Christ: it is thus used by several Greek writers. See Schleusner. As the word **χαρις** GRACE, most frequently signifies some blessing or benefit calculated to promote human happiness, it is generally derived from **χαρω**, I rejoice, because of the effect produced by the blessing.

**And peace**— **ειρηνη**, the same as **שלום** shalom in Hebrew, generally signifying all kinds of blessing, but especially harmony and unity, and the bond of such unity. The most probable derivation of the word **ειρηνη** is from **ειρω**, I bind, and **εν**, one-because peace unites and binds those who were, by discord, before disunited. In the New Testament it signifies-1. Peace, public or private, in the general acceptation of the word, as implying reconciliation and friendship; and to the etymology of the word the apostle seems to allude in Ephesians 4:3: Endeavouring to keep the UNITY of the Spirit in the BOND OF PEACE. Acts 12:20: They of Tyre and Sidon desired PEACE-they sought reconciliation, with Herod, by means of Blastus, the king's chamberlain.

2. It signifies regularity, good order. 1 Corinthians 14:33: God is not the God of confusion, but of PEACE.
3. It signifies the labor or study of preserving peace and concord; and this is supposed to be its meaning, Matthew 10:34; Luke 12:51; and Acts 7:26. Romans 14:17: For the kingdom of God is righteousness and PEACE-the Christian dispensation admits of no contention, but inculcates peace. 1 Corinthians 7:15: God hath called us to PEACE-to labor to preserve quietness and concord. Hebrews 12:14: Follow PEACE-labor to preserve it.
4. It signifies the author or procurer of peace and concord. Ephesians 2:14: He is our PEACE-the author of concord betwixt Jews and Gentiles.
5. It signifies the Gospel and its blessings. Ephesians 2:17: And came and preached PEACE to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.
6. It signifies all kinds of mental and corporeal happiness, and especially the happiness of Christians. Luke 1:79: To guide our feet into the way of PEACE-to show us the way to obtain true happiness. Luke 19:42: The things which belong unto thy PEACE-that by which thou mightest have been made truly happy. 1 Thessalonians 5:23: The very God of



PEACE-God, the only source of true felicity. John 16:33: These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have PEACE-that ye might have confidence and happiness in believing on me as your only Savior.

7. It signifies good wishes and affectionate prayers. Matthew 10:13: And if the house be worthy, let your PEACE come upon it. Our Lord commands his disciples, Matthew 10:12, to salute the house into which they entered; and this was done by saying, Peace be unto this house! that is, Let every blessing, spiritual and temporal, be the portion of this family! See Luke 10:6; John 14:27; Acts 15:33: They were let go in PEACE-they had the most fervent and affectionate prayers of the Church.

8. It signifies praise. Luke 19:38: PEACE in heaven and glory in the highest!-May all the heavenly host praise God, and give him the highest honor!

9. It signifies benignity, benevolence, favor. Romans 5:1: Being justified by faith, we have PEACE with God-In consequence of having our sins forgiven, we have a clear sense of the Divine favor. Philippians 4:7: The PEACE of God which passeth all understanding-the inexpressible blessedness of a sense of the Divine favor. See Schleusner's Lexicon.

***From God our Father***— The apostle wishes them all the blessings which can flow from GOD, as the fountain of grace, producing in them all the happiness which a heart filled with the peace of God can possess; all of which are to be communicated to them through the Lord Jesus Christ. See the note on Acts 28:31.

**Verse 8. *First, I thank my God***— From this to the end of Romans 1:17 belongs to the preface, in which the apostle endeavors to conciliate the good opinion of the Christians at Rome, and to prepare their minds for his reproofs and exhortations.

***Your faith is spoken***— *καταγγελλεται*, is celebrated, throughout the whole world-in every place where the Christian religion is professed, through all parts of the Roman dominions; for in this sense we should understand the words, the whole world.

**Verse 9. *Whom I serve with my spirit***— *λατρευω* Whom I worship with the profoundest religious reverence; for so the original certainly means: I

not only employ all the powers of my body in this service, but all those of my soul; being thoroughly convinced of the absolute truth of the religion I preach. Probably St. Paul opposes, in this place, the spiritual worship of the Gospel to the external, or what some call the carnal, worship of the Jews. Mine is not a religion of ceremonies, but one in which the life and power of the eternal Spirit are acknowledged and experienced.

**Verse 10. *Making request***, etc.— By this we see how earnestly the apostle longed to see Rome. It had long been a subject of continual prayer to God, that he might have a prosperous journey to, or rather meeting with, them, for so we should understand the word *ευοδωθησμαι*: that he had a prosperous meeting with them we cannot doubt; that he had a disastrous journey to them the 27th of the Acts fully proves.

**Verse 11. *Some spiritual gift***— This probably means some of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, which, being given to them, might tend greatly to establish their faith in the Gospel of Christ; and it is very likely that such gifts were only conferred by means of apostles; and as the apostle had not yet been at Rome, consequently the Roman Christians had not yet received any of these miraculous gifts, and thus they differed widely from all the other Churches which had been raised by the apostle's ministry.

**Verse 12. *That I may be comforted together with you***— He here, with great address, intimates that he longs for this opportunity, as well on his own account as on theirs, and to show them that he arrogates nothing to himself; for he intimates that it will require the conjoint action of their faith as well as his own, to be the means of receiving those blessings from God to which he refers.

**Verse 13. *But was let hitherto***— The word *let*, from the Anglo-Saxon, (Anglo-Saxon) to hinder, signifies impediment or hinderance of any kind: but it is likely that the original word, *εκωλυθην*, I was forbidden, refers to a Divine prohibition:—he would have visited them long before, but God did not see right to permit him.

**Verse 14. *I am a debtor both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians***— It has been remarked before that all the nations of the earth, themselves excepted, were termed barbarians by the Greeks. See the origin of the word

barbarous in the note on Acts 28:2. The apostle considers himself, by his apostolical office and call, under obligation to preach the Gospel to all people, as far as the providence of God might open his way; for this is implied in the Divine commission:—Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature—to the wise and the unwise; to the learned and cultivated as well as to the unlearned and uncultivated. This evidently appears to be the import of the terms.

**Verse 15. *I am ready to preach***— *προθυμον*; I have a ready mind. I was only prevented by the providence of God from visiting you long ago. His time is best: in the mean time I write, by his direction, to comfort and instruct you.

**Verse 16. *I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ***— This text is best illustrated by Isaiah 28:16; 49:23, quoted by the apostle, Romans 10:11: For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed; i.e. they shall neither be confounded, nor disappointed of their hope. The Jews, by not believing on Jesus Christ, by not receiving him as the promised Messiah, but trusting in others, have been disappointed, ashamed, and confounded, from that time to the present day. Their expectation is cut off; and, while rejecting Christ, and expecting another Messiah, they have continued under the displeasure of God, and are ashamed of their confidence. On the other hand, those who have believed on Christ have, in and through him, all the blessings of which the prophets spoke; every promise of God being yea and amen through him. Paul, as a Jew, believed on Christ Jesus; and in believing he had life through his name; through him he enjoyed an abundance of grace; so that, being filled with that happiness which an indwelling Christ produces, he could cheerfully say, I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. And why? Because he felt it to be the power of God to the salvation of his believing soul. This appears to be the true sense of this passage, and this interpretation acquires additional strength from the consideration that St. Paul is here most evidently addressing himself to the Jews.

***It is the power of God unto salvation***— *δυναμις γαρ θεου εστιν*: The almighty power of God accompanies this preaching to the souls of them that believe; and the consequence is, they are saved; and what but the power of God can save a fallen, sinful soul?

***To the Jew first***— Not only the Jews have the first offer of this Gospel, but they have the greatest need of it; being so deeply fallen, and having sinned against such glorious privileges, they are much more culpable than the Gentiles, who never had the light of a Divine revelation.

***And also to the Greek***— Though the salvation of God has hitherto been apparently confined to the Jewish people, yet it shall be so no longer, for the Gospel of Christ is sent to the Gentiles as well as the Jews; God having put no difference between them; and Jesus Christ having tasted death for EVERY man.

**Verse 17. *For therein***— In the Gospel of Christ.

***Is the righteousness of God***— God's method of saving sinners.

***Revealed from faith to faith***— Shown to be by faith, and not by the works of any law; for Abraham, the father and founder of the Jewish people, was justified by faith, before even the law was given; and by believing, in reference to the spiritual object held forth in the various ordinances of the law, and now revealed under the Gospel, he and all his believing descendants have been justified. And thus the faith of the old covenant led on to the faith of the new covenant, which shows that salvation has been by faith from the call of Abraham to the present time. And, from the beginning, all that were just or righteous in the earth became such by faith, and by this principle alone they were enabled to persevere; as it is written, The just shall live by faith. That **δικαιοσύνη**, which we translate righteousness in this verse, signifies God's method of saving mankind by faith in Christ, is fully evident from the use of the term in Romans 9:30: The Gentiles which followed not after RIGHTEOUSNESS—who had no knowledge by revelation, of God's method of justifying and saving sinners, have attained to RIGHTEOUSNESS—have had imparted to them God's method of salvation by faith in Christ. Romans 9:31: But Israel, the Jews, which followed after the law of righteousness—that law, the end or object of which is CHRIST, and through him justification to all that believe (Romans 10:4,) have not attained to the law of righteousness—have not found out the genuine plan of salvation, even in that law which so strongly and generally proclaims justification by faith. And why have they not found it? Romans 9:32: Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law—they did not discern that even its works or

prescribed religious observances were intended to lead to faith in that glorious Mediator of whom they were the types and representatives; but the Jews trusted in the observances themselves, hoping to acquire justification and final salvation by that means. For they stumbled at the stumbling-stone-at the doctrine of Christ crucified as the only sure ground on which the expectation of future salvation can be founded. Therefore, being ignorant of God's righteousness-God's method of saving sinners, and going about to establish their own righteousness-their own method of salvation, by the observance of those rites and ceremonies which should have led them by faith to Christ, they did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God-they would not submit to be saved in God's way, and therefore rejected, persecuted, and crucified the Lord Jesus; see Romans 10:3. This collation of passages most evidently shows that the word righteousness here means simply God's method of saving sinners, or God's way of salvation, in opposition to the ways and means invented by the fancies or prejudices of men.

There are few words in the sacred writings which are taken in a greater variety of acceptations than the word **תְּצַדִּיק** tzedakah in Hebrew, and **δικαιοσύνη** in Greek, both of which we generally translate righteousness. Our English word was originally rightwiseness, from the Anglo-Saxon, (Anglo-Saxon), justice, right, and (Anglo-Saxon), to know; and thus the righteous man was a person who was allowed to understand the claims of justice and right, and who, knowing them, acted according to their dictates. Such a man is thoroughly wise; he aims at the attainment of the best end by the use of the best means. This is a true definition of wisdom, and the righteous man is he that knows most and acts best. The Hebrew **צַדִּיק** tsadak, in its ideal meaning, contains the notion of a beam or scales in equipoise, what we call even balance; and it is well known that in all the personifications of Justice, both ancient and modern, she is represented as a beautiful female with a bandage on her eyes, and a beam and scales in her hand, so perfectly poised that neither end preponderates.

The Greek word **δικαιοσύνη** has been derived from **διχαζω**, to divide; and hence **δικη**, justice, because it is the property of this virtue to divide to each his due. With other etymologies it is useless to trouble the reader. Both the noun **δικαιοσύνη** and the verb **δικαιωω** have a great variety of meaning in the New Testament; but they are all reducible to this original

idea, acting according to the requisitions of justice or right. It may not be improper to notice some of the chief of these acceptations in this place.

1. The act of distributing to each man his due is the sense of the word, Acts 17:31: He will judge the world in RIGHTEOUSNESS, i.e. according to the principles of eternal justice and rectitude. See also Revelation 19:2: In RIGHTEOUSNESS doth he judge and make war.

2. It signifies a holy life, as proceeding from piety towards God. Luke 1:75: Might serve him in holiness and RIGHTEOUSNESS all the days of our life.

3. It signifies benignity, liberality, and particularly almsgiving, as justice and righteousness require us, being only stewards of God's bounty, to share it with the necessitous. Matthew 6:1: Take heed that ye do not your ALMS, **δικαιοσυνην**, your RIGHTEOUSNESS, before men. Romans 3:5: But if our unrighteousness commend the RIGHTEOUSNESS, the benignity of God. 2 Corinthians 9:10: Increase the fruits of your RIGHTEOUSNESS, i.e. of your liberality.

4. It signifies God's method of saving sinners; the way which is agreeable to his righteousness and liberality. See the former part of this note, and the scriptures there referred to.

5. It signifies the reward or issue of liberality. 2 Corinthians 9:9: He hath scattered abroad; he hath given to the poor; his RIGHTEOUSNESS-the reward of his bounty, remaineth for ever. See Psalm 112:9.

6. It signifies the whole collection of graces, which constitute the complete Christian character. Matthew 5:6: Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after RIGHTEOUSNESS-they who ardently long for the full salvation of God. Matthew 5:10, 20: If your RIGHTEOUSNESS exceed not the righteousness, etc. Matthew 6:33: Seek the kingdom of God and his RIGHTEOUSNESS.

7. It signifies the result of faith in God and submission to his will, exemplified in a holy and useful life. Hebrews 11:7: By faith Noah prepared an ark, and became heir of the RIGHTEOUSNESS which is by faith-he escaped the deluge and became the instrument of re-peopling the world.

8. It signifies an exact observance of religious ordinances and precepts. Philippians 3:6: Touching the RIGHTEOUSNESS which is of the law, blameless-having lived in an exact conformity to all the Mosaic precepts. In this sense it is to be understood, Matthew 3:15: Thus it becomes us to fulfill all RIGHTEOUSNESS-to observe every precept of the law.

9. It signifies the favor or pardoning mercy of God. Romans 4:6: The blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth RIGHTEOUSNESS-without works-the man is happy to whom God has granted the remission of sins, without respect to his observance of the law of Moses.

10. In 2 Corinthians 5:21, **δικαιοσύνη**, righteousness, is put for **δικαίος**, righteous: That we might become the righteousness of God-that we might receive such a righteousness or holiness, such a salvation, as is worthy of God's grace to impart, and such as the necessities of mankind require.

A few of the leading acceptations of the verb **δικαίωω**, which we translate to justify, may be here properly subjoined, as this verb is so repeatedly used in this epistle.

1. It signifies so declare or pronounce one just or righteous; or, in other words, to declare him to be what he really is. 1 Timothy 3:16: He was JUSTIFIED in the Spirit. — By the almighty power of the Spirit he was proved to be the TRUE MESSIAH.

2. To esteem a thing properly. Matthew 11:19: Wisdom is JUSTIFIED of her children. — Wisdom, propriety of conduct, is properly estimated by wise men.

3. It signifies to approve, praise, and commend. The publicans JUSTIFIED God, Luke 7:29; praised him for calling them to such a state of salvation. Luke 16:15: Ye are they which JUSTIFY yourselves before men-Ye are self-commended, self-applauded, and self-praised. In this sense it is often used in the Greek apocryphal books. Eccclus. vii. 5: JUSTIFY not thyself before the Lord-Do not applaud thyself in the presence of thy-Maker. Ib. x. 29: Who will JUSTIFY (praise or applaud) him that sinneth against his own soul. Ib. xviii. 2: The Lord only is righteous, **δικαιωθησεται**, shall be JUSTIFIED, i.e. praised, because there is none other but he.

4. The verb **δικαιοομαι** is used to clear from all sin. 1 Corinthians 4:4: For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby JUSTIFIED-A man's own consciousness of integrity is not a proof that he is clear from all sin in the sight of God.

5. A judge is said to justify not only when he condemns and punishes, but also when he defends the cause of the innocent. See EURIP. Heraclid. ver. 190. THUCYD. iii. p. 200. POLYB. iii. 31, and SCHLEUSNER on **δικαιωω**. Hence **δικαιουσθαι** is taken in a forensic sense, and signifies to be found or declared righteous, innocent, etc. Matthew 12:37: By thy words shalt thou be JUSTIFIED-thou shalt be declared to be righteous. Romans 3:4: That thou mightest be JUSTIFIED in thy saying-that thou mightest be proved to be true in what thou hast said.

6. It signifies to set free, to escape from. Acts 13:39: And by him all that believe are JUSTIFIED from all things, from which ye could not be JUSTIFIED by the law-by faith in Christ a man escapes those evils which, otherwise, the law of Moses would inflict upon him. Romans 6:7: For he that is dead, **δεδικαιωται**, is JUSTIFIED, properly rendered by our translators, is FREED from sin.

7. It signifies also to receive one into favor, to pardon sin. Romans 8:30: Whom he called, them he also JUSTIFIED-he received them into favor and pardoned their sins. Luke 18:14: This man went down to his house JUSTIFIED-he humbled himself, repented of his iniquity, and God forgave his sin. Romans 3:20: By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be JUSTIFIED-no soul can have his sins forgiven through the observance of the Mosaic law. Romans 4:2: If Abraham were JUSTIFIED (had his sin pardoned) by works. 1 Corinthians 6:11: Such were some of you, but ye are JUSTIFIED-ye are received into the Divine favor, and have your sins forgiven. See James 2:21-25; Romans 3:24, 28; 5:1, 9; Galatians 2:16, 17; 3:11, 24; 5:4; Titus 3:7. In all these texts the word justify is taken in the sense of remission of sins through faith in Christ Jesus; and does not mean making the person just or righteous, but treating him as if he were so, having already forgiven him his sins.

***The just shall live by faith.***— This has been understood two ways: 1. That the just or righteous man cannot live a holy and useful life without exercising continual faith in our Lord Jesus: which is strictly true; for He



only who has brought him into that state of salvation can preserve him in it; and he stands by faith. It is contended by some able critics that the words of the original text should be pointed thus: ὁ δε δίκαιος εκ πιστεως, ζησεται. The just by faith, shall live; that is, he alone that is justified by faith shall be saved: which is also true; as it is impossible to get salvation in any other way. This last meaning is probably the true one, as the original text in Habakkuk 2:4, speaks of those who believed the declarations of God when the Chaldeans besieged Jerusalem, and, having acted conformably to them, escaped with their lives.

**Verse 18. *For the wrath of God is revealed***— The apostle has now finished his preface, and comes to the grand subject of the epistle; namely, to show the absolute need of the Gospel of Christ, because of the universal corruption of mankind; which was so great as to incense the justice of God, and call aloud for the punishment of the world. 1. He shows that all the heathen nations were utterly corrupt, and deserved this threatened punishment. And this is the subject of the first chapter, from verse 18 to the end. {Romans 1:18-32} He shows that the Jews, notwithstanding the greatness of their privileges, were no better than the Gentiles; and therefore the wrath of God was revealed against them also. This subject he treats in Romans 2:1-29 and Romans 3:1-19. 3. He returns, as it were, on both, Romans 3:20-31, and proves that, as the Jews and Gentiles were equally corrupt, they could not be saved by the deeds of any law; that they stood equally in need of that salvation which God had provided; that both were equally entitled to that salvation, for God was the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews.

By **οργη θεου**, the wrath of God, we are not to understand any uneasy passion in the Divine Being; but the displeasure of his righteousness, which is expressed by the punishments inflicted on the ungodly, those who retain not God in their knowledge; and the unrighteous, those whose lives are profligate.

As, in the Gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed for the salvation of the ungodly, so is the wrath of God revealed against the workers of iniquity. Those who refuse to be saved in the way revealed by his mercy must be consumed in the way revealed by his justice.

**Ungodliness**— *ασεβειαν*, from *α*, negative, and *σεβω* or *σεβομαι*, I worship, probably intended here to express atheism, polytheism, and idolatry of every kind.

**Unrighteousness**— *αδικιαν* from *α*, negative, and *δικη*, justice; every thing contrary to strict morality; all viciousness and profligacy of conduct.

**Who hold the truth in unrighteousness**— In what sense could it be said that the heathen held the truth in unrighteousness, when they really had not that truth? Some think this refers to the conduct of their best philosophers, such as Socrates, Plato, Seneca, etc., who knew much more of the Divine nature than they thought safe or prudent to discover; and who acted in many things contrary to the light which they enjoyed. Others think this to be spoken of the Gentiles in general, who either did know, or might have known, much of God from the works of creation, as the apostle intimates in the following verses. But Rosenmuller and some others contend that the word *κατεχειν* here does not signify to hold, but to hinder; and that the place should be translated, who through maliciousness hinder the truth; i.e. prevent it from taking hold of their hearts, and from governing their conduct. This is certainly a very usual acceptance of the verb *κατεχειν*, which Hesychius interprets *κρατειν*, *κωλυειν*, *συνεχειν*, to retain, hinder, etc.; these men hindering, by their vicious conduct, the truth of God from being propagated in the earth.

**Verse 19. That which may be known of God**— Dr. Taylor paraphrases this and the following verse thus: “Although the Gentiles had no written revelation, yet what may be known of God is every where manifest among them, God having made a clear discovery of himself to them. For his being and perfections, invisible to our bodily eyes, have been, ever since the creation of the world, evidently to be seen, if attentively considered, in the visible beauty, order, and operations observable in the constitution and parts of the universe; especially his eternal power and universal dominion and providence: so that they cannot plead ignorance in excuse of their idolatry and wickedness.”

**Verse 20. The invisible things of him**— His invisible perfections are manifested by his visible works, and may be apprehended by what he has made; their immensity showing his omnipotence, their vast variety and

contrivance, his omniscience; and their adaptation to the most beneficent purposes, his infinite goodness and philanthropy.

***His eternal power***— **αιδιος αυτου δυναμις**, That all-powerful energy that ever was, and ever will exist; so that, ever since there was a creation to be surveyed, there have been intelligent beings to make that survey.

***And Godhead***— **θειοτης**, His acting as God in the government and support of the universe. His works prove his being; the government and support of these works prove it equally. Creation and providence form a twofold demonstration of God, 1st. in the perfections of his nature; and, 2ndly. in the exercise of those perfections.

**Verse 21. *Because that when they knew God***— When they thus acquired a general knowledge of the unity and perfections of the Divine nature, they glorified him not as God—they did not proclaim him to the people, but shut up his glory (as Bishop Warburton expresses it) in their mysteries, and gave the people, in exchange for an incorruptible God, an image made like to corruptible man. Wherefore God, in punishment for their sins, thus turning his truth into a lie, suffered even their mysteries, which they had erected for a school of virtue, to degenerate into an odious sink of vice and immorality; giving them up unto all uncleanness and vile affections.

***They glorified him not***— They did not give him that worship which his perfections required.

***Neither were thankful***— They manifested no gratitude for the blessings they received from his providence, but became vain in their imaginations, **διαλογισμοις**, in their reasonings. This certainly refers to the foolish manner in which even the wisest of their philosophers discoursed about the Divine nature, not excepting Socrates, Plato, or Seneca. Who can read their works without being struck with the vanity of their reasonings, as well as with the stupidity of their nonsense, when speaking about God? I might crowd my page with proofs of this; but it is not necessary to those who are acquainted with their writings, and to others it would not be useful. In short, their foolish, darkened minds sought God no where but in the place in which he is never to be found; viz. the vile, corrupted, and corrupting passions of their own hearts. As they did not discover him there, they scarcely sought him any where else.

**Verse 22. *Professing themselves to be wise***— This is most strikingly true of all the ancient philosophers, whether Greeks or Romans, as their works, which remain, sufficiently testify. The word **φασκοντες** signifies not merely the professing but the assumption of the philosophic character. In this sense the word **φασκειν** is used by the best Greek writers. See Kypke. A dispassionate examination of the doctrine and lives of the most famed philosophers of antiquity, of every nation, will show that they were darkened in their mind and irregular in their conduct. It was from the Christian religion alone that true philosophy and genuine philosophers sprang.

**Verse 23. *They changed the glory***, etc.— The finest representation of their deities was in the human figure; and on such representative figures the sculptors spent all their skill; hence the **HERCULES** of Farnese, the **VENUS** of Medicis, and the **APOLLO** of Belvidere. And when they had formed their gods according to the human shape, they endowed them with human passions; and as they clothed them with attributes of extraordinary strength, beauty, wisdom, etc., not having the true principles of morality, they represented them as slaves to the most disorderly and disgraceful passions; excelling in irregularities the most profligate of men, as possessing unlimited powers of sensual gratification.

***And to birds***— As the eagle of Jupiter among the Romans, and the ibis and hawk among the Egyptians; which were all sacred animals.

***Four-footed beasts***— As the apis or white ox among the Egyptians; from which the idolatrous Israelites took their golden calf. The goat, the monkey, and the dog, were also sacred animals among the same people.

***Creeping things***.— Such as the crocodile and scarabeus, or beetle, among the Egyptians.

**Verse 24. *God-gave them up***, etc.— They had filled up the measure of their iniquities, and God, by permitting them to plunge into all manner of irregularities, thus, by one species of sin, inflicted punishment on another.

***Dishonour their own bodies***— Probably alluding here to what is more openly expressed, Romans 1:26, 27.

**Between themselves**— *εν εαυτοις*, Of themselves, of their own free accord; none inciting, none impelling.

**Verse 25. *Changed the truth of God into a lie***— In the place of the true worship of God, they established idolatry. In various places of Scripture idols are termed lies. Isaiah 44:20; Jeremiah 10:14; 13:25. The true God was known among the primitive inhabitants of the earth, those who first became idolaters literally changed the truth of God into a lie: they did know the true God, but they put idols in his place.

**Verse 26. *For this cause God gave them up***, etc.— Their system of idolatry necessarily produced all kinds of impurity. How could it be otherwise, when the highest objects of their worship were adulterers, fornicators, and prostitutes of the most infamous kind, such as Jupiter, Apollo, Mars, Venus, etc.? Of the abominable evils with which the apostle charges the Gentiles in this and the following verse I could produce a multitude of proofs from their own writings; but it is needless to make the subject plainer than the apostle has left it.

**Verse 27. *Receiving in themselves that recompense***, etc.— Both the women and men, by their unnatural prostitutions, enervated their bodies, so that barrenness prevailed, and those disorders which are necessarily attendant on prostitution and sodomitical practices.

**Verse 28. *They did not like to retain God***— It would, perhaps, be more literal to translate *ουκ εδοκιμασαν*, THEY DID NOT SEARCH to retain God in their knowledge. They did not examine the evidences before them (Romans 1:19, 20) of his being and attributes; therefore God gave them over to a REPROBATE mind, *εις αδοκιμον νουν*, to an UNSEARCHING or undiscerning mind; for it is the same word in both places. They did not reflect on the proofs they had of the Divine nature, and God abandoned them to the operations of a mind incapable of reflection. How men of such powers and learning, as many of the Greek and Roman philosophers and poets really were, could reason so inconsecutively concerning things moral and Divine is truly astonishing. But here we see the hand of a just and avenging God; they abused their powers, and God deprived them of the right use of these powers.

**Verse 29. *Being filled with all unrighteousness***— **αδικια**, every vice contrary to justice and righteousness.

***Fornication***— **πορνεια**, all commerce between the sexes out of the bounds of lawful marriage. Some of the best MSS. omit this reading; and others have **ακαθαρσια**, uncleanness.

***Wickedness***— **πονηρια**, malignity, that which is oppressive to its possessor and to its object; from **πονος**, labor, toil, etc.

***Covetousness***— **πλεονεξια**, from **πλειον**, more, and **εξω**, I will have; the intense love or lust of gain; the determination to be rich; the principle of a dissatisfied and discontented soul.

***Maliciousness***— **κακια**, malice, ill-will; what is radically and essentially vicious.

***Full of envy***— **φθονου**, from **φθινω**, to wither, decay, consume, pine away, etc.; “pain felt and malignity conceived at the sight of excellence or happiness in another.” A fine personification of this vice is found in OVID METAM. lib. ii. ver. 768-781, which I shall here insert, with Mr. Addison’s elegant and nervous translation.

— *Videt intus edentem*

*Vipereas carnes, vitiorum alimenta suorum  
Invidiam: visaque oculos avertit. At illa  
Surgit humo pigra: semesarumque relinquit  
Corpora serpentum, passuque incedit inert.  
Utgue deam vidit formaque armisque decoram,  
Ingemuit: vultumque ima ad suspiria duxit.  
Pallor in ORE sedet: macies in CORPORE toto:  
Nusquam recta acies: livent rubigine dentes:  
Pectora felle virent: lingua est suffusa veneno.  
Risus abest, nisi quem visi movere dolores:  
Nec fruitur somno, vigilacibus excita curis:  
Sed videt ingratos, intabescitque videndo  
Successus hominum; carpitque et carpitur una;  
Suppliciumque suum est.*

— *A poisonous morsel in her teeth she chewed,  
And gorged the flesh of vipers for her food.  
Minerva loathing, turned away her eye.  
The hideous monster, rising heavily,  
Came stalking forward with a sullen pace,  
And left her mangled offals on the place.  
Soon as she saw the goddess gay and bright,*

*She fetched a groan at such a cheerful sight.  
Livid and meagre were her looks, her eye  
In foul distorted glances turned awry;  
A hoard of gall her inward parts possessed,  
And spread a greenness o'er her canker'd breast;  
Her teeth were brown with rust, and from her tongue  
In dangling drops the stringy poison hung.  
She never smiles but when the wretched weep;  
Nor lulls her malice with a moment's sleep:  
Restless in spite while watchful to destroy,  
She pines and sickens at another's joy;  
Foe to herself, distressing and distressed,  
She bears her own tormentor in her breast.*

**Murder**— φονου, taking away the life of another by any means; mortal hatred; for he that hates his brother in his heart is a murderer.

**Debate**— εριδος, contention, discord, etc. Of this vile passion the Greeks made a goddess.

**Deceit**— δολου, lying, falsity, prevarication, imposition, etc.; from δελω, to take with a bait.

**Malignity**— κακοηθειας, from κακος, evil, and ηθος, a custom; bad customs, founded in corrupt sentiment, producing evil habits, supported by general usage. It is generally interpreted, a malignity of mind, which leads its possessor to put the worst construction on every action; ascribing to the best deeds the worst motives.

**Whisperers**— ψιθυριστος, secret detractors; those who, under pretended secrecy, carry about accusations against their neighbors, whether true or false; blasting their reputation by clandestine tittle-tattle. This word should be joined to the succeeding verse.

The whispering is well expressed by the Greek word ψιθυριστας, psithuristas.

**Verse 30. Backbiters**— καταλαλως, from κατα, against, and λαλεω, I speak; those who speak against others; false accusers, slanderers.

**Haters of God**— θεοστυγεις, atheists, contemners of sacred things, maligners of providence, scorners, etc. All profligate deists are of this class; and it seems to be the finishing part of a diabolic character.

**Despiteful**— ὑβριστας, from υβριζω, to treat with injurious insolence; stormy, boisterous; abusing both the characters and persons of those over whom they can have any power.

**Proud**— ὑπερηφανους, from υπερ, above or over, and φαινω, I show or shine. They who are continually exalting themselves and depressing others; magnifying themselves at the expense of their neighbors; and wishing all men to receive their sayings as oracles.

**Boasters**— αλαζονας, from λαζομαι, to assume; self-assuming, vain-glorious, and arrogant men.

**Inventors of evil things**— εφευρετας κακων. Those who have invented destructive customs, rites, fashions, etc.; such as the different religious ceremonies among the Greeks and Romans—the orgies of Bacchus, the mysteries of Ceres, the lupercalia, feasts of the Bona Dea, etc., etc. Multitudes of which evil things, destructive and abominable ceremonies, are to be found in every part of the heathen worship.

**Disobedient to parents**— Though filial affection was certainly more recommended and cultivated than many other virtues, yet there are many instances on record of the grossest violation of this great branch of the law of nature.

**Verse 31. Without understanding**— ασυνετους, from α, negative, and συνετος, knowing; persons incapable of comprehending what was spoken; destitute of capacity for spiritual things.

**Covenant-breakers**— ασυνθετους, from α, negative, and συντιθημι, to make an agreement; persons who could be bound by no oath, because, properly speaking, they had no God to witness or avenge their misconduct. As every covenant, or agreement, is made as in the presence of God, so he that opposes the being and doctrine of God is incapable of being bound by any covenant; he can give no pledge for his conduct.

**Without natural affection**— αστοργους; without that attachment which nature teaches the young of all animals to have to their mothers, and the mothers to have for their young. The heathens, in general, have made no scruple to expose the children they did not think proper to bring up, and to despatch their parents when they were grown old or past labor.



**Implacable**— **ασπονδους**, from **α**, negative; and **σπονδη**, A LIBATION. It was customary among all nations to pour out wine as a libation to their gods, when making a treaty. This was done to appease the angry gods, and reconcile them to the contracting parties. The word here shows a deadly enmity; the highest pitch of an unforgiving spirit; in a word, persons who would not make reconciliation either to God or man.

**Unmerciful**— **ανελεημονας**; those who were incapable, through the deep-rooted wickedness of their own nature, of showing mercy to an enemy when brought under their power, or doing any thing for the necessitous, from the principle of benevolence or commiseration.

**Verse 32. Who, knowing the judgment of God**— **δικαιωμα**, the grand rule of right which God has revealed to every man, the knowledge of which he has, less or more, given to every nation of the world, relative to honouring parents, taking care of their own offspring, keeping their engagements, etc., etc. In the worst states of heathenism this great principle has been acknowledged; but, through the prevalence of corruption in the heart, this law, though acknowledged, was not obeyed; and the corruption increased so that those were highest in repute who had cast off all restraints of this kind; so that they even delighted in them; **συνευδοκουσι**, highly applauded, and gladly associated with those transgressors: which argues the very highest pitch of moral depravity.

1. THE preceding chapter gives us one of the finest views of the Gospel of Christ, to be met with any where. It is God's method of saving a lost world, in a way which that world could never have imagined: there is nothing human in it; it is all truly and gloriously Divine; essentially necessary to the salvation of man, and fully adequate to the purposes of its institution. Though it is an extension of the old covenant, yet it is almost wholly dissimilar; being as different from that as the person is from the picture which represents it, and as the substance is from the shadow projected by it. It is a scheme as worthy of God as it is necessary for man; hence there are no excluding clauses in it—it is for the Jew and for the Greek; for the wise and for the unwise; for all the nations of the universe, and for all the individuals of those nations. He blasphemes God who holds the contrary.

2. As God never does any thing that is not fitting, suitable, and necessary to be done, he has not made an unnecessary display of his mercy and goodness in the incarnation and death of his Son—all this was necessary, else it had not been done. But how does the necessity appear? In the deep-rooted and widely extended corruption and profligacy of the nations of the earth. Of these the apostle gives a most affecting and distressing picture. 1. Almost every trace of original righteousness had been obliterated. The proofs of God's eternal power and providence, so manifest in the creation and preservation of the universe, were wholly disregarded. 3. A vain philosophy, without right, principle, or end, was substituted for those Divine truths which had been discovered originally to man. 4. Their hearts were contaminated with every vice which could blind the understanding, pervert the judgment, corrupt the will, and debase the affections and passions. 5. This was proved in the most unequivocal manner, by a profligacy of conduct which had debased them far, far below the beasts that perish; and the apostle here gives a list of their crimes, every article of which can be incontrovertibly proved from their own history and their own writers: crimes which, even bad as the world is now, would shock common decency to describe. See the whole of the second, third, sixth, and ninth Satires of Juvenal.

3. So completely lost were the heathens to a knowledge of the influence of God on the souls and the necessity of that influence, that they asserted, in the most positive manner, that man was the author of his own virtue and wisdom. Cicero, *Nat. Deor.*, lib. iii. c. 36, declares it a general opinion that, although mankind received from the gods the outward conveniencies of life—*virtutem autem nemo unquam acceptam Deo retulit*—"virtue none ever thought they received from the Deity." And again:—"This is the persuasion of all, that fortune is to be had from the gods; wisdom from ourselves." And again:—"Whoever thanked the gods for his being a good man? Men pray to Jupiter, not that he would make them just, temperate, and wise; but rich and prosperous."

JUVENAL

*Thyself may fully on thyself bestow.*

In the same stain, HORACE, EPIST. lib. i. E. xviii. v. penult.

*Haec satis est orare Jovem, qui donat et aufert:  
Det vitam det opes: aequum mi animum ipse parabo.*

*To Jove for life and wealth I pray,  
These Jove may give or take away;  
But, for a firm and tranquil mind,  
That blessing for myself I find.*

Thus, they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; and professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. See Madan's Juvenal, vol. ii. p. 53.

4. By all this we see what the world was, and what it would have continued to be had not God sent a Divine revelation of his will, and established a public ministry to proclaim and enforce it. Were man left to the power and influence of his fallen nature he would be, in all places of his dispersion on the earth, what the apostle describes in the 29th, 30th, and 31st verses of this chapter. {Romans 1:29-31 }

Reader, magnify God, who has called thee from such deep darkness, to the marvellous light of the glorious Gospel of his Son; and walk as a child of the light and of the day, in whom there shall be no cause of stumbling.

## CHAPTER 2.

*The apostle shows that the Jew, who condemns the Gentiles, and considers them utterly unworthy of the blessings of the Gospel, is inexcusable, because he is guilty of the same crimes; and therefore shall not escape the righteous judgment of God, 1-3. It is an awful thing to despise the goodness and long-suffering of God, which lead to repentance, 4, 5. God, the impartial judge, will render to every man according to his works, 6-11. The Jews and the Gentiles will be judged according to their respective advantages and disadvantages, 12, 13. In some cases, the Gentiles, who had no law, have shown a better disposition than the Jews, 14-16. The Jews, by their unfaithfulness, have been a stumbling-block to the Gentiles, 17-24. Jewish rites and ceremonies of no advantage, unless productive of change of heart and conduct, 25. The Gentiles, who attend to the small light which they have received from God, are in a better state than the unfaithful Jews, with all their superior privileges, 26, 27. What constitutes a real Jew in the sight of God, 28, 29.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 2.

Dr. Taylor makes the following sensible observations at the commencement of this chapter.

“The representation of the moral state of the heathen world, in the foregoing chapter, is a demonstration of the necessity of the Gospel for the reformation and salvation of man. And how rich is the favor wherewith God has visited the world! To have destroyed a race of apostate rebels, who had abused their understandings and every gift of a bountiful Creator, would have been justice; to have spared them would have been lenity and goodness; but to send his only begotten Son from heaven to redeem us from all iniquity and ungodliness by his own blood; to grant us a free pardon for all our sins; to put us in a state of mercy and salvation; to take us into his kingdom and family; to give us an inheritance among his saints; to bless us with immortality and all spiritual blessings in heavenly

places;-this is most wonderful and exuberant favor. Rightly is the doctrine which teaches it called the Gospel, or glad tidings. One would think it could not possibly have met with opposition from any part of mankind. But the JEW opposed it! He abhorred the Gentile, and contradicted the grace that honored and saved him. The apostle pleads and defends our cause. His business is to confound the Jew, and to prove that we have as good a right as he to all the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom. And, by his description of the vicious state of the Gentiles, in the former chapter, he has wisely made his advantage of the prejudices of the Jew; for nothing could please him more than the preceding discourse, in which the Gentiles are reduced to so vile and abject a state. Thus the apostle gives him an opportunity to condemn the Gentiles; but he does this that he may the more effectually humble him in this chapter; in which he proves that the Jews, having in an aggravated manner despised the goodness and broken the law of God, were as obnoxious to his wrath as the Gentiles; and if so, how could they, with any conscience or modesty, arrogate all the Divine mercy to themselves, or pretend that others were unworthy of it, when they had done as much or more to forfeit it! Must they not exclude themselves from being the people of God under the Gospel, by the same reason that they would have the Gentiles excluded! But this was an argument highly ungrateful to the Jew; and it would be very difficult to fix any conviction upon his mind. Therefore the apostle addresses him in a covert way:-Thou art therefore inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; not giving out expressly that he meant the Jew, that the Jew might more calmly attend to his reasoning, while he was not apprehensive that he was the man. This point secured, the apostle, very judiciously and with great force of reasoning, turns his thoughts from his present superior advantages to the awful day of judgment, Romans 2:5, 6, when God, in the most impartial equity, will render to all mankind, without exception, according to their works. Thus the apostle grounds his following argument, very methodically and solidly, in God's equal regards to all men, in all nations, who uprightly practice truth and godliness; and his disapproving, and at last condemning, all men, in any nation, however privileged, who live wickedly. This was a blow at the root, and demolished, in the most effectual manner, the Jew's prejudices in favor of his own nation, and the unkind thoughts he had entertained of the Gentiles. For, if a Jew could be convinced that a sober, upright heathen might be blessed with eternal

salvation, he must be persuaded that it was no absurd matter that believing Gentiles should now be pardoned, and taken into the visible Church. Thus the apostle advances with great skill, insinuating himself, by degrees, into the Jew's conscience. It is reasoning is well adapted to encourage the Gentile, humbled by the dismal representation in the preceding chapter; for he would here see that he was not utterly abandoned of God, but might, upon good grounds, hope for his mercy and kindness."

**Verse 1. *That judgest***— ὁ κρινων, the judge; thou assumest the character of a judge, and in that character condemnest others who are less guilty than thyself.

**Verse 2. *We are sure that the judgment of God***, etc.— God is impartial, and will punish sin wheresoever he finds it. Transgression in a Jew is not less criminal than iniquity in a Gentile.

**Verse 4. *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness***— Wilt thou render of none effect that marked benevolence of God towards thee which has given so many superior advantages, and that forbearance which has tolerated thy many miscarriages, and that long-suffering which, after repeated provocations, still continues to bear with thee?

***Not knowing***— αγνοων, not acknowledging that this goodness of God, which has so long manifested itself in forbearance and long-suffering, leadeth thee to repentance—was designed to accomplish this blessed end; which thy want of consideration and acknowledgment has rendered, hitherto, ineffectual. This was a maxim among the Jews themselves; for, in Synopsis Sohar, it is said:—The holy blessed God delays his anger against the wicked, to the end that they may repent and be converted.

**Verse 5. *But after thy hardness***— Occasioned by thy long course of iniquity. And impenitent heart—produced by thy hardness, through which thou art callous to the calls and expostulations of conscience. Treasurest up—continuest to increase thy debt to the Divine justice, which will infallibly inflict wrath—punishment in the day of wrath—the judgment day, in which he will render to every man according to his works. The word treasure the Hebrew uses to express any kind of store or collection:—Treasure or plenty of rain. Deuteronomy 28:12: The Lord shall open unto thee his good TREASURE, to give the RAIN unto thy land.

Treasure of punishment. Deuteronomy 32:34, 35: Is not this sealed up among my TREASURES? To me belongeth VENGEANCE and RECOMPENSE. Treasures of mines, i.e. abundance of minerals. Deuteronomy 33:19: They shall suck of the ABUNDANCE of the seas, and of TREASURES hid in the sand. So treasures of gold, silver, corn, wine, oil, etc., mean collections or an abundance of such things: the word is used by the Greek writers precisely in the same sense. By wrath we are to understand punishment, as in Romans 1:18; and it is used so by the very best Greek writers. See Kypke.

The treasure of wrath, in this verse, is opposed to the riches of goodness, in the preceding. As surely as thou despisest, or neglectest to improve the RICHES of God's GOODNESS, so surely thou shalt share in the TREASURES of his WRATH. The punishment shall be proportioned to the mercy thou hast abused.

**Verse 6. *Who will render***— Who, in the day of judgment, will reward and punish every man according as his life and conversation have been.

**Verse 7. *To them***, etc.— In this manner will God, in the great day, dispense punishments and rewards: 1. He will give eternal life to them who, in all the trials and difficulties of the present state, have persevered in well doing-seeking for and expecting glory, honor, and immortality.

**Verse 8. *But unto them***, etc.— 2. He will manifest his indignation, and inflict wrath-punishment, on all who are contentious—who obstinately dispute against the truth, and obey unrighteousness—who act under the influence of the principle of sin, and not under the influence of the Spirit of God.

**Verse 9. *Tribulation and anguish***— Misery of all descriptions, without the possibility of escape, will this righteous Judge inflict upon every impenitent sinner. The Jew first, as possessing greater privileges, and having abused greater mercies; and also on the Gentile, who, though he had not the same advantages, had what God saw was sufficient for his state; and, having sinned against them, shall have punishment proportioned to his demerit.

**Verse 10. *But glory, honor, and peace***— While the finally impenitent Jew and Gentile shall experience the fullest effects of the righteous

indignation of the supreme Judge, even man that worketh good—that lives in a conscientious obedience to the known will of God, whether he be Jew or Gentile, shall have glory, honor, and peace; i.e. eternal blessedness.

**Verse 11.** *For there is no respect of persons with God.*— The righteous Judge will not act according to any principle of partiality; the character and conduct, alone of the persons shall weigh with him. He will take no wicked man to glory, let his nation or advantages be what they may; and he will send no righteous man to perdition, though brought up in the very bosom of Gentilism. And as he will judge in that day according to character and conduct, so his judgment will proceed on the ground of the graces, privileges, and blessings which they had received, improved or abused. And as there is no respect of persons with God in judgment, so there can be none in the previous administration of his saving blessings. He that will be condemned for his unrighteousness, will be condemned on the ground that he had sufficient grace afforded him for the salvation of his soul; and his condemnation will rest on the simple principle, that he abused the grace which was sufficient to save him, by acting in opposition to its dictates and influence. No man, in that great day, shall be brought to heaven through any partiality of the Judge; and no man sent to hell because God did not afford him sufficient grace, or because he had made a decree which rendered even his use of it ineffectual to his salvation. In reference to the great design of God, in the salvation of man, it shall be said,—in time, at the day of judgment, and throughout eternity, — **THERE IS NO RESPECT OF PERSONS WITH GOD.**

**Verse 12.** *For as many as have sinned without law*, etc.— They, viz. the Gentiles, who shall be found to have transgressed against the mere light of nature, or rather, that true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, John 1:9, shall not come under the same rule with those, the Jews, who have in addition to this enjoyed an extraordinary revelation; but they shall be dealt with according to the inferior dispensation, under which they lived: while those, the Jews, who have sinned against the law—the positive Divine revelation granted to them, shall be judged by that law, and punished proportionably to the abuse of such an extraordinary advantage.

**Verse 13.** *For not the hearers of the law*, etc.— It does not follow, because one people are favored with a Divine revelation, that therefore



they shall be saved; while the others who have not had that revelation, shall finally perish: this is not God's procedure; where he has given a law—a Divine revelation, he requires obedience to that law; and only those who have been doers of that law—who have lived according to the light and privileges granted in that revelation, shall be justified—shall be finally acknowledged to be such as are fit for the kingdom of God.

**Verse 14.** *For when the Gentiles, which have not the law*, etc.—Nor does it follow that the Gentiles who have not had a Divine revelation, shall either perish, because they had it not; or their unrighteous conduct pass unpunished, because not having this revelation might be considered as an excuse for their sins.

*Do by nature the things contained in the law*—Do, without this Divine revelation, through that light which God imparts to every man, the things contained in the law—act according to justice, mercy, temperance and truth, the practice of which the revealed law so powerfully enjoins; these are a law unto themselves—they are not accountable to any other law, and are not to be judged by any dispensation different from that under which they live.

Rabbi Tanchum brings in the Supreme Being as saying: When I decreed any thing against the Gentiles, to whom I have not given laws and statutes, and they know what I have decreed; immediately they repent; but the Israelites do not so. Tanchum, fol. 43. 2.

**Verse 16.** *In the day when God shall judge*—And all this shall be farther exemplified and proved in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ; which judgment shall be according to my Gospel—according to what I am now laying down before you, relative to the impartiality of God, and his righteous procedure in judging men, not according to their opinions or prejudices, not according to revelations which they never possessed, but according to the various advantages or disadvantages of their political, religious, or domestic situation in life.

Much stress has been laid on the word, *φύσει*, by nature, in Romans 2:14, as if the apostle designed to intimate that nature, independently of the influence of Divine grace, possessed such principles as were sufficient to guide a man to glory. But certainly the term cannot be so understood here.

I rather think that the sense given to it in Suicer's Thesaurus, vol ii. col. 1475, *reipsa, revera, CERTAINLY, TRULY*, is its sense here: for when the Gentiles, which have not the law, **φυσει ποιη**, TRULY, or in effect, Do the things contained in the law, etc. This seems to be its sense in Galatians 4:8: When ye knew not God, ye did service to them which **φυσει**, CERTAINLY are no gods; i.e. are false gods. Suicer quotes Cyril of Alexandria, (sub Anathematismo iii. in Actis Ephesinis, p. 212,) speaking of the union of the two natures in Christ; he calls this union **φυσικην**, natural; that is, says he, **αληθη**, true, or real. He adds, that the word should be thus understood in Ephesians 2:3: We were by nature, **φυσει**, children of wrath; and says, **φυσει αντι του αληθως· φυσει** is here used for **αληθως**, TRULY; We were TRULY, INCONTESTABLY, the children of wrath, even as others. That is, like the rest of mankind, we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God, and, consequently are exposed to punishment. Some think that this text refers to the natural corruption of man; but, although it is true that man comes into the world corrupt, and that all men, since the fall, are very far gone from original righteousness, yet it is not clear that the text in Ephesians 2:3, speaks of any other thing than the effects of this degeneracy.

I prefer this sense, in the passage in question, to that which says the light of nature, or natural instinct, is here meant; for I know of no light in nature that is not kindled there by the grace of God. But I have no objection to this sense: "When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do, by the influence of God upon their hearts, the things contained in the law, they are a law unto themselves; that light and influence serving instead of a Divine revelation." That the Gentiles did really do the things contained in the law, in reference to what is termed natural justice, and made the wisest distinctions relative to the great principles of the doctrine of civil RIGHTS and WRONGS, every man conversant with their writings will admit. And in reference to this the word **φυσει** may be legitimately understood thus—they incontestably did the things contained in the law, etc.

The passage in Romans 2:15, Their thoughts-accusing or excusing one another, certainly does not refer to any expostulations or operations of conscience; for this is referred to in the preceding clause. The words accusing, **κατηγορουντων**, and excusing, **απολογουμενων**, answering or defending one another, **μεταξυ αλληλων**, among themselves, are all

forensic or law terms, and refer to the mode of conducting suits of law in courts of justice, where one is plaintiff, who produces his accusation; another is defendant, who rebuts the charge and defends himself; and then the business is argued before the judges. This process shows that they have a law of their own, and that to this law it belongs to adjust differences—to right those who have suffered wrong, and to punish the guilty.

As to the phrase written in their hearts, it is here opposed to the Jewish laws, which were written on tables of stone. The Jews drew the maxims by which their conduct was regulated from a Divine revelation: the GENTILES theirs from what God, in the course of his providence and gracious influence, had shown them to be right, useful, and necessary. And with them this law was well known and affectionately regarded; for this is one meaning of the phrase, written in the heart. It was from this true light, enlightening the Gentiles, that they had so many wise and wholesome laws; laws which had been among them from time immemorial, and of which they did not know the origin. Thus Sophocles, in the noble speech which he puts in the mouth of Antigone:—

ου γαρ τι νυν γε κυχθεις, αλλ' ποτε  
ζη ταυτα, κουδεις οιδεν εξ οτου φανη·

*“Not now, nor yesterday, but evermore  
These laws have lived: nor know we whence they came.”  
Antig. ver. 463-4.*

These are the laws, **νομινα**, which the Spirit of God wrote originally on their hearts; and which, in different forms, they had committed to writing.

**Verse 17. Behold, thou art called a Jew**— What the apostle had said in the preceding verses being sufficient to enforce conviction on the conscience of the Jew, he now throws off the cover, and openly argues with him in the most plain and nervous manner; asserting that his superior knowledge, privileges, and profession, served only to aggravate his condemnation. And that, in fact, he who, under all his greater advantages, transgressed the law of God, stood condemned by the honest Gentile, who, to the best of his knowledge obeyed it. Dr. Taylor.

***And restest in the law***— Thou trustest in it for thy endless salvation. The word **επαναπαυη**, implies the strongest confidence of safety and security. Thou reposest thy whole trust and confidence in this law.

***And makest thy boast of God***— That thou knowest his nature and attributes, which are not known to the Gentiles. The word, **καυχασαι**, implies the idea of exulting in any thing, as being a proper object of hope and dependence: and, when referred to GOD, it points out that HE is the sure cause of hope, dependence, joy, and happiness; and that it is the highest honor to be called to know his name, and be employed in his service. As if the apostle had said: You rejoice in God as the object of your hope and dependence; you praise and magnify him; you account it your greatest honor that HE is your God, and that you worship him.

**Verse 18. *Knowest his will***— Hast been favored with a revelation of his own will, immediately from himself.

***The things that are more excellent***— **τα διαφεροντα**, The things that differ—that revelation which God has given of himself makes the nicest distinctions between right and wrong; between vice and virtue; showing how you should walk so as to please God, and, consequently, acquire the most excellent portion that human spirits can have on this side heaven: for all these blessings ye acknowledge to receive from your law, being instructed, **κατηχουμενος**, being catechized, from your infancy, in the knowledge of Divine things.

**Verse 19. *And art confident***, etc.— In consequence of all these religious advantages, ye believe that ye are able to teach others, and to be guides and lights to the bewildered, darkened Gentiles, who may become proselytes to your religion.

**Verse 20. *An instructor of the foolish***, etc.— Ye believe the Gentiles to be babes and fools when compared with yourselves; that ye alone possess the only true knowledge; that ye are the only favourites of Heaven; and that all nations must look up to you as possessing the only form of knowledge, **μορφωσιν της γνωσεως**, the grand scheme and draught of all true science, of every thing that is worthy to be learned: the system of eternal truth, derived from the law. If, therefore, ye act not as becomes

those who have such eminent advantages, it must be to your endless disgrace and infamy.

**Verse 21. *Thou therefore***— Dr. Taylor has paraphrased this and the three following verses thus: “What signify your pretensions to knowledge, and the office of teaching others, if you have no regard to your own doctrine? What are you the better for preaching against theft, if you are a thief yourself? Or for declaring adultery unlawful, if you live in the practice of it? Or for representing idolatry abominable, if you are guilty of sacrilege? What honors or singular favors do you deserve, if, while you glory in the law and your religious privileges, you dishonor God, and discredit his religion, by transgressing his law, and living in open contradiction to your profession? And this is more than supposition; notorious instances might be produced of the forementioned crimes, whereby the Jews of the present age have brought a reproach upon religion among the Gentiles; as well as those Jews of former times, of whom the Prophet Ezekiel speaks, Ezekiel 36:23: And I will sanctify my great name, which was PROFANED among the HEATHEN, which ye have PROFANED in the midst of them.”

That the Jewish priesthood was exceedingly corrupt in the time of the apostle, and that they were so long before, is fully evident from the sacred writings and from Josephus. The high-priesthood was a matter of commerce, and was bought and sold like other commodities. Of this Josephus gives many instances. The rapine of Eli’s sons descended to several generations. Dr. Whitby well observes that of all these things mentioned by the apostle the Jewish doctors were notoriously guilty; and of most of them they were accused by our Lord. 1. They said and did not; and laid heavy burdens upon others, which they would not touch with their own fingers, Matthew 23:3, 4. 2. They made the house of God a den of thieves, Matthew 21:13; John 2:16. 3. They were guilty of adultery by unjust divorces, Matthew 19:9. 4. Their polygamy was scandalous: even their rabbins, when they came to any place, would exclaim, Who will be my wife for a day? As to idolatry, they were perfectly saved from it ever since the Babylonish captivity but to this succeeded sacrilege, as is most evident in the profanation of the temple, by their commerce transacted even within its courts; and their teaching the people that even their aged parents might be left to starve, provided the children made a present to the temple of that which should have gone for their support. According to

Josephus, Bell. Jud. l. vi. c. 26, They were guilty of theft, treachery, adultery, sacrilege, rapine, and murder. And he adds, that new ways of wickedness were invented by them; and that of all their abominations the temple was the receptacle. In his Antiquities of the Jews, lib. xx. c. 8, he says: The servants of the high priests took away, by violence, the tithes of the priests, so that many of them perished for want of food. Even their own writers acknowledge that there were great irregularities and abominations among the rabbins.

So Bereshith rabba, sect. 55, fol. 54: “Rabbi Abun proposed a parable concerning a master who taught his disciples not to pervert justice, and yet did it himself; not to show respect of persons, and yet did it himself; not to receive bribes, and yet received them himself; not to take usury, and yet took it himself. The disciple replied:-Rabbi, thou teachest me not to take usury, and yet thou takest it thyself! Can that be lawful to thee which is forbidden to me?”

**Verse 24. *For the name of God is blasphemed***, etc.— In Debarim rabba, sect. 2, fol. 251, it is said:-“The rulers destroy the influence of their own words among the people; and this is done when a rabbin, sitting and teaching in the academy, says, Do not take usury, and himself takes it; do not commit rapine, and himself commits it; do not steal, and himself steals.” That they were exceedingly lax in their morals, the following fact proves:- “Rabbi Ilai said, If a man see that his evil propensities are likely to prevail against him, let him go to some place where he is not known, and let him put on black clothes, and cover his head with a black veil; and then let him do whatsoever he pleases, lest the name of God should be publicly profaned.” Moed katon, fol. 17. 1. In Sohar Levit. fol. 31, col. 122, it is said:-“On three accounts the Jews are obliged to remain in captivity-1. Because they openly reproach the Shechinah-2. Because they profane themselves before the Shechinah-3. Because they turn away their faces from the Shechinah.”

But it would be endless to collect from their history the proofs of the charges brought here against them by the apostle. See Whitby, Schoettgen, and others.

**Verse 25. *For circumcision verily profiteth***— It is a blessing to belong to the Church of God and wear the sign of the covenant, provided the terms of the covenant are complied with.

***But if thou be a breaker of the law***— If thou do not observe the conditions of the covenant, the outward sign is both without meaning and without effect. This was a maxim of the rabbins themselves; for they allowed that an apostate or ungodly Israelite must go to hell, notwithstanding his circumcision.

**Verse 26. *Therefore if the uncircumcision***, etc.— If the Gentile be found to act according to the spirit and design of the law, his acting thus uprightly, according to the light which God has afforded him, will be reckoned to him as if he were circumcised and walked agreeably to the law.

**Verse 27. *And shall not uncircumcision, which is by nature***— And shall not the Gentile, who is **εκ φύσεως**, according to the custom of his country—who is, by birth, not obliged to be circumcised.

***If it fulfill the law***— If such a person act according to the spirit and design of the law; judge **κρινει** condemn thee, who, whilst thou dost enjoy the letter, the written law, and bearest in thy body the proof of the circumcision which it requires, dost transgress that law?

**Verse 28. *For he is not a Jew***— A genuine member of the Church of God, who has only an outward profession.

***Neither is that circumcision***— Circumcision is a rite which represents a spiritual thing, viz. the change and purification of the heart, as may be seen, Jeremiah 4:4, 6, 10; 9:26; Ezekiel 44:7, 9.

**Verse 29. *But he is a Jew***— A true member of the Church of God.

***Which is one inwardly***— Who has his heart purified, according to what God has uniformly prescribed by his prophets; see above: for circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, **εν πνευματι** by the Spirit of God, who is the author of all spiritual affections and holy purposes: or, every thing here is to be understood spiritually, and not literally; for without holiness none can please God, and without holiness none can see him.

***Whose praise is not of men***— It has, with great probability, been conjectured that the apostle may here refer to the signification of the name Jew, or Judah, יהודה Yehudah, PRAISE, from ידה Yadah, he PRAISED. Such a one is a true Israelite, who walks in a conformity to the spirit of his religion: his countrymen may praise him because he is a steady professor of the Jewish faith; but GOD praises him, because he has entered into the spirit and design of the covenant made with Abraham, and has got the end of his faith, the salvation of his soul. Sentiments like these, on the same subject, may be found in the ancient Jewish writers. Rabbi Lipman gives the opinion of their most ancient and pure writers in these words:—"A certain Christian mocked us, saying, 'Women, who cannot be circumcised, cannot be reckoned among Jews.' Such persons are ignorant that faith does not consist in circumcision, but in the heart. He who has not genuine faith is not a partaker of the Jewish circumcision; but he who has genuine faith is a Jew, although not circumcised." NIZZACHON, Num. 21, p. 19. It is a curious maxim of the Talmudists, That the Jews sit in the inmost recesses of the heart. NIDDA, fol. 20, 2. This is exactly the sentiment of St. Paul: Circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit. In short, common sense, as well as their law and their prophets, taught every considerate man among them that God could be pleased with their rites and external performances no farther than they led to holiness of heart and righteousness of life.

1. WHAT the apostle says, in the preceding chapter, concerning the Gentiles doing by nature the things contained in the law, if properly considered, would lead certain persons from forming erroneous judgments concerning the Divine dispensations. We are not to suppose that God is not to be found where his written word does not appear; nor that the salvation of the nations yet unblessed with the light of the Gospel is impossible. God has never confined himself to any one particular way of communicating his salvation, any more than he has confined his saving grace to one people. His word is an indescribable blessing; but that word becomes effectual to salvation when accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit. It was that Spirit which gave the word originally; and that same Spirit can speak without this word. It is through his influence alone that the Gentiles do the things contained in his own law; and it is not to be wondered at that the work is the same, both in the law and in the heart, when it has proceeded from the same Spirit.



2. God therefore will judge all nations according to the use and abuse they have made of this word, whether it was written in the heart, or written on tables of stone.
3. As he is no respecter of persons, all nations are equally dear to him; and he has granted and will grant to them such discoveries of himself as have been and will be sufficient for their salvation.
4. His WORD is an infinite blessing; and he has given it to one people that they may be the means of conveying it to another. Europe, and especially Christian Europe, has got the BIBLE; and God requires Europe to send the Bible throughout the earth. If this be not done, through their neglect, the Gentile nations will not be destroyed by a merciful God; yet the Europeans will have a most solemn and awful account to render to their Judge, that they have hidden the heavenly light under their own bushel. BRITAIN is shaking herself from the dust, and, by means of the BRITISH and FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY, is sending the holy Scriptures to every kingdom, and nation, and people, and tongue. The Gentiles are now learning from the written law more fully and savingly what the Spirit of God had before written on their hearts; and it seems as if the kingdom of God were now about to come with all-conquering power.

## CHAPTER 3.

*The apostle points out the peculiar privileges of the Jews, 1-8. But shows that they, also, as well as the Gentiles, had sinned, and forfeited all right and title to God's especial favor, 9. The corrupt state of all mankind, 10-18. All the world is guilty before God, and none can be justified by the works of the law, 19, 20. God's MERCY in providing redemption for a lost world, by Jesus Christ, 21-26. This excludes boasting on the part both of Jew and Gentile; provides salvation through faith for both; and does not set aside, but establishes the law, 27-31.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 3.

Dr. Taylor observes:—"In the preceding chapter the apostle has carried his argument to the utmost length: what remains is to keep the Jew in temper, to fix his convictions, and to draw the grand conclusion.

"He has shown that the Jews were more wicked than the Gentiles; that their possession of the law, circumcision, and outward profession of relation to God, were no ground of acceptance with him. This was in effect to say that the Jews had forfeited their right to the privileges of God's peculiar people, and that they were as unworthy to be continued in the Church as the Gentiles were to be taken into it; and consequently, in order to their enjoying the privileges of the Church under the Messiah, they stood in need of a fresh display of grace, which if they rejected, God would cast them out of the vineyard. The apostle was sensible that the Jew would understand what he said in this sense; and that it must be very irritating to him to hear that his law, circumcision, and all his external advantages, were utterly insufficient to procure him the favor of God. This at once stripped him of all his peculiar honors and privileges; and the apostle, who had often argued with his countrymen on these points, knew what they would be ready to say on this subject; and, therefore, introduces a dialogue between himself and a Jew, in which he gives him leave to answer and defend himself. In this dialogue the apostle undoubtedly refers to the rejection of the Jews, which he considers at large

in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters. After the dialogue is finished, he resumes his argument, and proves, by their own Scriptures, that the Jews were guilty as well as other men; and that no part of mankind could have any right to the blessings of God's kingdom by any works which they had performed, but merely through the propitiatory sacrifice offered by Christ; and that this, far from destroying the law, was just the thing that the law required, and by which its claims were established.

“The sum and force of the apostle's argument is this: All sorts of men, Jews as well as Gentiles, have sinned; therefore, none of them can lay claim to the blessings of his kingdom on the ground of obedience. The Jew, therefore, stands as much in need of God's grace to give him a title to those blessings as the Gentile; and, consequently, the Gentile has as good a title as the Jew. And, when all are in the same circumstances, it is perfectly absurd for any to pretend to engross it to themselves, exclusively of others, who are only as bad as they.

“Thus the apostle solidly proves that we, Gentiles, through faith alone, have a good and firm title to all the blessings of the Gospel covenant-election, adoption, pardon, privileges, ordinances, the Holy Spirit, and the hope of eternal life.”

As the nine first verses are a dialogue between the apostle and a Jew, I shall prefix the speakers to their respective questions and answers, to make the whole the more intelligible to the reader.

**Verse 1. *JEW. What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision?***— As if he had said: You lately allowed, (Romans 2:25,) that circumcision verily profited; but if circumcision, or our being in covenant with God, raises us no higher in the Divine favor than the Gentiles; if the virtuous among them are as acceptable as any of us; nay, and condemn our nation too, as no longer deserving the Divine regards; pray tell me, wherein lies the superior honor of the Jew; and what benefit can arise to him from his circumcision, and being vested in the privileges of God's peculiar people?

**Verse 2. *APOSTLE. Much every way***— The Jews, in reference to the means and motives of obedience, enjoy many advantages beyond the Gentiles; and, principally, because to them were committed the oracles of God—that

revelation of his will to Moses and the prophets, containing a treasure of excellencies, with which no other part of the world has been favored; though they have most grievously abused these privileges.

**Verse 3. JEW. *For what***— *τι γαρ*, What then, if some did not believe, etc. If some of the Jewish nation have abused their privileges, and acted contrary to their obligations, shall their wickedness annul the PROMISE which God made to Abraham, that he would, by an everlasting covenant, be a God to him and to his seed after him? Genesis 17:7. Shall God, therefore, by stripping the Jews of their peculiar honor, as you intimate he will, falsify his promise to the nation, because some of the Jews are bad men?

**Verse 4. APOSTLE. *God forbid***— *μη γενοιτο*, Let it not be, far from it, by no means. Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar, etc. We must ever maintain that God is true, and that if, in any case, his promise appear to fail, it is because the condition on which it was given has not been complied with; which is the sense of what is written, Psalm 51:4: I acknowledge my sin, and condemn myself that the truth of thy promise (2 Samuel 7:15, 16) to establish my house and throne for ever, may be vindicated when thou shalt execute that dreadful threatening, (2 Samuel 12:10,) that the sword shall never depart from my house, which I own I have brought upon myself by my own iniquity. Should any man say that the promise of God had failed toward him, let him examine his heart and his ways, and he will find that he has departed out of that way in which alone God could, consistently with his holiness and truth, fulfill the promise.

**Verse 5. JEW. *But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God***— May we not suppose that our unrighteousness may serve to commend and illustrate the mercy of God in keeping and fulfilling to us the promise which he made to our forefathers? The more wicked we are, the more his faithfulness to his ancient promise is to be admired. And if so, would not God appear unjust in taking vengeance and casting us off?

***I speak as a man***— I feel for the situation both of myself and my countrymen, and it is natural for one to speak as I do.

**Verse 6. APOSTLE. *God forbid***— *μη γενοιτο*, by no means. God cannot be unjust; were he unjust, he could not be qualified to judge the world, nor inflict that punishment on the unfaithful Jews, to which I refer.

**Verse 7. JEW. *For if the truth of God***, etc.— But to resume my reasoning (Romans 3:5:) If the faithfulness of God in keeping his promise made to our fathers is, through our unfaithfulness, made far more glorious than it otherwise would have been, why should we then be blamed for that which must redound so much to the honor of God?

**Verse 8. APOSTLE. *And not rather***, etc.— And why do you not say, seeing you assume this ground, that in all cases we should do wickedly, because God, by freely pardoning, can so glorify his own grace? This is a most impious sentiment, but it follows from your reasoning; it has, indeed, been most injuriously laid to the charge of us apostles, who preach the doctrine of free pardon, through faith, without the merit of works; but this is so manifest a perversion of the truth that a just punishment may be expected to fall on the propagators of such a slander.

**Verse 9. JEW. *What then?***— After all, have not we Jews a better claim to the privileges of the kingdom of God than the Gentiles have?

**APOSTLE. *No, in no wise***— For I have already proved that both Jews and Gentiles are under the guilt of sin; that they are equally unworthy of the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom; and that they must both, equally, owe their salvation to the mere mercy of God. From this, to the end of the 26th verse, the apostle proceeds to prove his assertion, that both Jews and Gentiles were all under sin; and, that he might enforce the conviction upon the heart of the Jew, he quotes his own Scriptures, which he acknowledged had been given by the inspiration of GOD, and consequently true.

**Verse 10. *As it is written***— See Psalm 14:1-3; from which this and the two following verses are taken.

***There is none righteous***— This is true, not only of the Jews, but of the Gentiles; of every soul of man, considered in his natural and practical state, previously to his receiving the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no righteous principle in them, and, consequently, no righteous act can be expected from them; see on Romans 3:12. God himself is represented as looking down from heaven to see if there were any that

feared and sought after him; and yet he, who cannot be deceived, could find none! And therefore we may safely conclude there was none to be found.

**Verse 12. *They are all gone out of the way***— *παντες εξεκλιναν*, they have all diverged from the right way, they have either abandoned or corrupted the worship of God: the Jews, in forsaking the law and the prophets, and the Gentiles, in acting contrary to the law which God had written on their hearts. And the departure of both from the truth proves the evil propensity of human nature in general.

***They are together become unprofitable***— *ηχρειωθησαν*. They are useless, good for nothing; or, as the Hebrew has it, *נאלחו* neelachu, they are putrid: he views the whole mass of mankind as slain and thrown together, to putrefy in heaps. This is what is termed the corruption of human nature; they are infected and infectious. What need of the mercy of God to save from such a state of degeneracy!

***There is none that doeth good***— In Romans 3:10 it is said, There is none righteous; here, There is none that doeth good: the first may refer to the want of a righteous principle; the second, to the necessary consequence of the absence of such a principle. If there be no righteousness within, there will be no acts of goodness without.

**Verse 13. *Their throat is an open sepulchre***— This and all the following verses to the end of the 18th {Romans 3:13-18} are found in the Septuagint, but not in the Hebrew text; and it is most evident that it was from this version that the apostle quoted, as the verses cannot be found in any other place with so near an approximation to the apostle's meaning and words. The verses in question, however, are not found in the Alexandrian MS. But they exist in the Vulgate, the Aethiopic, and the Arabic. As the most ancient copies of the Septuagint do not contain these verses, some contend that the apostle has quoted them from different parts of Scripture; and later transcribers of the Septuagint, finding that the 10th, 11th, and 12th, verses were quoted from the xivth Psalm, {Psalm 14:10-12} imagined that the rest were found originally there too, and so incorporated them in their copies, from the apostle's text.

Their throat is an open sepulchre—By their malicious and wicked words they bury, as it were, the reputation of all men. The whole of this verse appears to belong to their habit of lying, defamation, slandering, etc., by which they wounded, blasted, and poisoned the reputation of others.

**Verse 14. *Whose mouth is full of cursing***, etc.— They never speak but in profane oaths, blasphemies, and malice.

**Verse 15. *Their feet are swift to shed blood***— They make use of every means in their power to destroy the reputation and lives of the innocent.

**Verse 16. *Destruction and misery are in their ways***— DESTRUCTION is their work, and MISERY to themselves and to the objects of their malice is the consequence of their impious and murderous conduct.

**Verse 17. *And the way of peace have they not known***— They neither have peace in themselves, nor do they suffer others to live in quiet: they are brooders and fomenters of discord.

**Verse 18. *There is no fear of God before their eyes***.— This completes their bad character; they are downright atheists, at least practically such. They fear not God's judgments, although his eye is upon them in their evil ways. There is not one article of what is charged against the Jews and Gentiles here that may not be found justified by the histories of both, in the most ample manner. And what was true of them in those primitive times is true of them still. With very little variation, these are the evils in which the vast mass of mankind delight and live. Look especially at men in a state of warfare; look at the nations of Europe, who enjoy most of the light of God; see what has taken place among them from 1792 to 1814; see what destruction of millions, and what misery of hundreds of millions, have been the consequence of Satanic excitement in fallen, ferocious passions! O SIN, what hast thou done! How many myriads of souls hast thou hurried, unprepared, into the eternal world! Who, among men or angels, can estimate the greatness of this calamity! this butchery of souls! What widows, what orphans, are left to deplore their sacrificed husbands and parents, and their own consequent wretchedness! And whence sprang all this? From that, whence come all wars and fightings; the evil desires of men; the lust of dominion; the insatiable thirst for money; and the desire to be sole and independent. This is the sin that ruined our first parents,

expelled them from paradise, and which has descended to all their posterity; and proves fully, incontestably proves, that we are their legitimate offspring; the fallen progeny of fallen parents; children in whose ways are destruction and misery; in whose heart there is no faith; and before whose eyes there is nothing of the fear of God.

**Verse 19. *What things soever the law saith***— That the word law, here, does not mean the pentateuch, is evident from the preceding quotations, not one of which is taken from that work. Either the term law must here mean the Jewish writings in general, or that rule of moral conduct which God had given to both Jews and Gentiles: to the former in their own Scriptures; to the latter in that law written in their hearts by his own Spirit, and acknowledged in their written codes, and in their pleadings in every civil case. Now, according to this great law, this rule of moral conduct, whether given in a written revelation, as to the Jews, or by the secret inspiration of his Spirit, as in certain cases to the Gentiles, every mouth must be stopped, and the whole world, *πας ο κοσμος*, both Jews and Gentiles, stand convicted before God: for all mankind have sinned against this law.

**Verse 20. *Therefore, by the deeds of the law***— On the score of obedience to this moral law, there shall no flesh, *ου πασα σαρξ*, no human being, be justified; none can be accepted in the sight of God. And why? Because by the law is the knowledge of sin: it is that which ascertains what sin is; shows how men have deviated from its righteous demands; and sentences them to death because they have broken it. Thus the law is properly considered as the rule of right; and, unless God had given some such means of discovering what SIN is, the darkened heart of man could never have formed an adequate conception of it. For, as an acknowledged straight edge is the only way in which the straightness or crookedness of a line can be determined, so the moral obliquity of human actions can only be determined by the law of God; that rule of right which proceeds from his own immaculate holiness.

**Verse 21. *But now the righteousness of God***— God's method of saving sinners is now shown, by the Gospel, to be through his own mere mercy, by Christ Jesus; without the law—without any right or claim which might result from obedience to the law; and is evidently that which was intended



by God from the beginning; for it is witnessed by the law and the prophets—the rites and ceremonies of the one, and the preachings and predictions of the others, all bearing testimony to the great design of God, and to the absolute necessity there was for the sacrifice and salvation which God has provided.

**Verse 22. *Even the righteousness of God***— That method of saving sinners which is not of works, but by faith in Christ Jesus; and it is not restrained to any particular people, as the law and its privileges were, but is unto all mankind in its intention and offer, and becomes effectual to them that believe; for God hath now made no difference between the Jews and the Gentiles.

**Verse 23. *For all have sinned***:— And consequently are equally helpless and guilty; and, as God is no respecter of persons, all human creatures being equally his offspring, and there being no reason why one should be preferred before another, therefore his endless mercy has embraced ALL.

***And come short of the glory of God***— και υστερουνται της δοξης του θεου· These words have been variously translated. Failed of attaining the glory of God: Have not been able to bring glory to God: Stand in need of the glory, that is, the mercy of God. The simple meaning seems to be this: that all have sinned, and none can enjoy God's glory but they that are holy; consequently both Jews and Gentiles have failed in their endeavors to attain it, as, by the works of any law, no human being can be justified.

**Verse 24. *Being justified freely by his grace***— So far from being able to attain the glory of God by their obedience, they are all guilty: and, to be saved, must be freely pardoned by God's grace; which is shown to them who believe, through the redemption, απολυτρωσεως, the ransom price, which is in the sacrifice of Christ Jesus. The original is compounded of απο, from, and λυτρωω, I redeem, and properly means the price laid down for the redemption of a captive. Comprehendit haec Christi απολυτρωσις, quicquid is docuit, fecit et passus est, eo consilio, ut homines malis liberati, praecipue peccato, malorum fonte immunes, veram felicitatem adipiscerentur. — Rosenmuller. This redemption of Christ comprehends whatsoever he taught, did, or suffered, in order to free men from evil; especially to free them from sin, the source of evils; that they might attain true felicity. And that it here means the liberation purchased

by the blood-shedding of Christ, is evident from Ephesians 1:7: We have REDEMPTION, **απολυτρωσιν δια του αιματος αυτου**, THROUGH HIS BLOOD, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. See also Colossians 1:14, where the same words are found.

**λυτρα** according to Suidas, is

in which his merciful forbearance was exercised towards the world; and this applies to all who hear the Gospel now: to them is freely offered remission of all past sins.

**Verse 26. *To declare, I say, at this time***— To manifest now, by the dispensation of the Gospel, his righteousness, his infinite mercy; and to manifest it in such a way, that he might still appear to be the just God, and yet the justifier, the pardoner, of him who believeth in Jesus. Here we learn that God designed to give the most evident displays both of his justice and mercy. Of his justice, in requiring a sacrifice, and absolutely refusing to give salvation to a lost world in any other way; and of his mercy, in providing THE sacrifice which his justice required. Thus, because Jesus was an atonement, a ransom price, for the sin of the world, therefore God can, consistently with his justice, pardon every soul that believeth in Jesus. This is the full discovery of God's righteousness, of his wonderful method of magnifying his law and making it honorable; of showing the infinite purity of his justice, and of saving a lost world.

Hitherto, from the ninth verse, {Romans 3:9} the apostle had gone on without interruption, proving that Jew and Gentile were in a state of guilt and condemnation, and that they could be saved only by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. The Jew, finding his boasted privileges all at stake, interrupts him, and asks:—

**Verse 27. *JEW. Where is boasting, then?***— ἡ καυχῆσις, This glorying of ours. Have we nothing in which we can trust for our acceptance with God? No merit of our own? Nothing accruing to us from our circumcision and being in covenant with God.

***APOSTLE, It is excluded***— ἐξεκλεισθη, It is shut out; the door of heaven is shut against every thing of this kind.

***JEW. By what law?***— By what rule, doctrine, or reason is it shut out? by the law of works? The rule of obedience, which God gave to us, and by which obedience we are accepted by him?

***APOSTLE. Nay***— Not by the law of works; glorying is not cut off or shut out by that; it stands in full force as the rule of life; but you have sinned and need pardon. The law of works grants no pardon, it requires obedience, and threatens the disobedient with death. But all glorying in the

expectation of salvation, through your own obedience, is excluded by the law, the doctrine of faith: faith alone, in the mercy of God, through the propitiation made by the blood of Jesus, (Romans 3:25,) is that by which you can be justified, pardoned, and taken into the Divine favor.

**Verse 28. *Therefore we conclude***, etc.— Seeing these things cannot be denied, viz., that all have sinned: that all are guilty, that all are helpless: that none can deliver his own soul, and that God, in his endless mercy, has opened a new and living way to the holiest by the blood of Jesus, Hebrews 10:19, 20, etc: therefore we, apostles and Christian teachers, conclude, *λογιζομεθα*, prove by fair, rational consequence, that a man-any man, is justified-has his sins blotted out, and is received into the Divine favor, by faith in Christ's blood, without the deeds of the law, which never could afford, either to Jew or Gentile, a ground for justification, because both have sinned against the law which God has given them, and, consequently, forfeited all right and title to the blessings which the obedient might claim.

**Verse 29. *Is he the God of the Jews only?***— Do not begin to suppose that because you cannot be justified by the works of the law and God has in his mercy found out a new method of saving you, that therefore this mercy shall apply to the Jews exclusively. Is not God the maker, preserver, and redeemer, also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, as much as of the Jews; for all have equally sinned and there is no reason, if God be disposed to show mercy at all, that he should prefer the one to the other; since they are all equally guilty, sinful, and necessitous.

**Verse 30. *Seeing it is one God***— *επιπερ εις ο θεος*. This has been rendered, Seeing God is one. It however makes little difference in the sense: the apostle's meaning most evidently is, it is one and the same God who made both Jews and Gentiles, who shall justify-pardon, the circumcision-the believing Jews, by faith; and the uncircumcision-the believing Gentiles, by the same faith; as there is but one Savior and one atonement provided for the whole.

It is fanciful to suppose that the apostle has one meaning when he says, *εκ πιστεως*, BY faith, and a different meaning when he says, *δια της πιστεως*, THROUGH faith. Both the prepositions are to be understood in precisely the same sense; only the addition of the article *της*, in the last

case, extends and more pointedly ascertains the meaning. It is one and the same God who shall justify the believing Jews by faith; and the believing Gentiles **διὰ τῆς πίστεως**, by THAT SAME faith.

**Verse 31. *Do we then make void the law through faith?***— 1. By law here we may understand the whole of the Mosaic law, in its rites and ceremonies; of which Jesus Christ was the subject and the end. All that law had respect to him; and the doctrine of faith in Christ Jesus, which the Christian religion proclaimed, established the very claims and demands of that law, by showing that all was accomplished in the passion and death of Christ, for, without shedding of blood, the law would allow of no remission; and Jesus was that Lamb of God which was slain from the foundation of the world, in whose blood we have redemption, even the remission of sins. 2. We may understand, also, the moral law, that which relates to the regulation of the manners or conduct of men. This law also was established by the doctrine of salvation by faith; because this faith works by love, and love is the principle of obedience: and whosoever receives salvation through faith in Christ, receives power to live in holy obedience to every moral precept; for such are God's workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus, unto good works; in which they find it their duty and their interest incessantly to live.

1. IN the notes on the preceding chapter, I have, in general, followed the plan of Dr. Taylor, and especially in regard to its dialogue form, but I have often differed much from that very learned and judicious man, in the application of many words and doctrines. He cannot allow that the death of Christ should be considered as a price paid down for the salvation of men and, I confess, I cannot understand the apostle in any other way. Nor can I see the weight of many of his observations, nor the force of his conclusions, on any other ground than this, that the passion and death of Christ were an atonement made to Divine justice in the behalf of man; and that it is through the merit of that great sacrifice that God forgives sin. Nor can I see any reason why such great stress should be laid on faith, but as that lays hold on and takes up the sacrifice of Christ as a ransom price for the redemption of the soul from the thralldom and misery of sin and Satan.

2. This chapter contains a fine and striking synopsis of the whole Christian system. The wretched state of man is awfully exhibited, from

the 10th to the 18th verse; {Romans 3:10-18} and the plan of salvation, in the 24th, 25th, and 26th verses. {Romans 3:24-26} A pious writer calls these the Catechism of Christian Righteousness. The following points in this catechism are worthy of high consideration-viz. How is God glorified in us, and we in him?-By his GRACE. What does his grace work in us?-True holiness. Upon what motive?-Because it is pleasing to him. By whom does he give us salvation?-By Jesus Christ. How has Christ obtained this for us?-By redeeming us. What price did he give?-His BLOOD. What does his blood effect?-It reconciles us to God. How is it applied?-By FAITH. Who has given this victim of reconciliation?- -God the Father. Why did he choose these means?-To confound the false righteousness of the Gentiles; to abolish the FIGURATIVE righteousness of the Jews; and to establish his own. What does this grace of God perform?-It pardons sin and purifies the heart. For whom is this designed?-For all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles. To whom are these blessings actually communicated?-To all who repent, turn from their sin, and believe on the Lord Jesus. Why did not God make known this grand method of salvation sooner? 1. To make it the more valued: 2. To show his fidelity in the performance of his promises: and, 3. To make known the virtue and efficacy of the blood of Christ, which sanctifies the present, extends its influence to the past, and continues the availing sacrifice and way of salvation to all future ages.

3. On considering this glorious scheme of salvation, there is great danger, lest, while we stand amazed at what was done FOR us, we neglect what must be done IN us. Guilt in the conscience and sin in the heart ruin the man. Pardon in the conscience and Christ in the heart save the soul. Christ has done much to save us, and the way of salvation is made plain; but, unless he justify our conscience from dead works, and purify our hearts from all sin, his passion and death will profit us nothing. While we boast in Christ Jesus, let us see that our rejoicing, *καυχῆσιν*, our boasting, be this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have our conversation in the world, 2 Corinthians 1:12.

4. We must beware of Antinomianism; that is, of supposing that, because Christ has been obedient unto death, there is no necessity for our obedience to his righteous commandments. If this were so, the grace of

Christ would tend to the destruction of the law, and not to its establishment. He only is saved from his sins who has the law of God written in his heart; and he alone has the law written in his heart who lives an innocent, holy, and useful life. Wherever Christ lives he works: and his work of righteousness will appear to his servants, and its effect will be quietness and assurance for ever. The life of God in the soul of man is the principle which saves and preserves eternally.

## CHAPTER 4.

Abraham was justified by faith, and not by the works of the law; for his faith was imputed to him for righteousness, 1-5. David also bears testimony to the same doctrine, 6-8. Abraham, the father of the Jewish race, was justified by faith, even before he was circumcised; therefore salvation must be of the Gentiles as well as the Jews, 9-12. And the promise that all the nations of the earth should be blessed in him, was made to him while he was in an uncircumcised state; and, therefore, if salvation were of the Jews alone, the law, that was given after the promise, would make the promise of no effect, 13-17. Description of Abraham's faith, and its effects, 18-92. This account is left on record for our salvation, that we might believe on Christ, who was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification, 23-25.

### NOTES ON CHAP. 4.

The apostle, having proved in the foregoing chapter that neither Jews nor Gentiles have a right to the blessing of God's peculiar kingdom, otherwise than by grace, which is as free for the one as the other, in this chapter advances a new argument to convince the Jew, and to show the believing Gentile, in a clear light, the high value and strong security of the mercies freely bestowed on them in the Gospel; and, at the same time, to display the scheme of Divine providence, as laid in the counsel and will of God. His argument is taken from Abraham's case: Abraham was the father and head of the Jewish nation; he had been a heathen, but God pardoned him, and took him and his posterity into his special covenant, and bestowed upon them many extraordinary blessings above the rest of mankind; and it is evident that Abraham was not justified by any obedience to law, or rule of right action, but, in the only way in which a sinner can be justified, by prerogative or the mercy of the lawgiver. Now, this is the very same way in which the Gospel saves the believing Gentiles, and gives them a part in the blessings of God's covenant. Why then should the Jews oppose the Gentiles? especially as the Gentiles were actually included in the covenant



made with Abraham for the promise, Genesis 17:4, stated that he should be the father of many nations: consequently, the covenant being made with Abraham, as the head or father of many nations, all in any nation who stood on the same religious principle with him, were his seed and with him interested in the same covenant. But Abraham stood by faith in the mercy of God pardoning his idolatry; and upon this footing the believing Gentiles stand in the Gospel; and, therefore, they are the seed of Abraham, and included in the covenant and promise made to him.

To all this the apostle knew well it would be objected, that it was not faith alone, that gave Abraham a right to the blessings of the covenant, but his obedience to the law of circumcision; and this, being peculiar to the Jewish nation, gave them an interest in the Abrahamic covenant; and that, consequently, whoever among the Gentiles would be interested in that covenant, ought to embrace Judaism, become circumcised, and thus come under obligation to the whole law. With this very objection the apostle very dexterously introduces his argument, Romans 4:1, 2; shows that, according to the Scripture account, Abraham was justified by faith, Romans 4:3-5; explains the nature of that justification, by a quotation out of the Psalms, Romans 4:6-9; proves that Abraham was justified long before he was circumcised, Romans 4:9-11; that the believing Gentiles are his seed to whom the promise belongs, as well as the believing Jews, Romans 4:12-17; and he describes Abraham's faith, in order to explain the faith of the Gospel, Romans 4:17-25. See Dr. Taylor's notes. We may still suppose that the dialogue is carried on between the apostle and the Jew, and it will make the subject still more clear to assign to each his respective part. The Jew asks a single question, which is contained in the first and part of the second verses. And the apostle's answer takes up the rest of the chapter.

**Verse 1. JEW. *What shall we then say that Abraham, our father as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?***— The **κατα σαρκα**, pertaining to the flesh, must here refer to the sign in Abraham's flesh, viz. his circumcision; on which the Jew would find his right to peculiar blessings. That this is the meaning of **κατα σαρκα**, according to the flesh, Dr. Taylor has proved by a collation of several parallel scriptures, which it is not necessary to produce here. We may, therefore, suppose the Jew arguing thus: But you set your argument on a wrong footing, viz. the

corrupt state of our nation; whereas we hold our prerogative above the rest of mankind from Abraham, who is our father; and we have a right to the blessings of God's peculiar kingdom, in virtue of the promise made to him; his justification is the ground of ours. Now what shall we make of his case, on your principles? Of what use was his obedience to the law of circumcision, if it did not give him a right to the blessing of God? And if, by his obedience to that law, he obtained a grant of extraordinary blessings, then, according to your own concession, Romans 3:27, he might ascribe his justification to something in himself; and, consequently, so may we too, in his right; and if so, this will exclude all those who are not circumcised as we are.

**Verse 2. *For if Abraham were justified by works***— The JEW proceeds:-I conclude, therefore, that Abraham was justified by works, or by his obedience to this law of circumcision; and, consequently, he has cause for glorying, *καυχημα*, to exult in something which he has done to entitle him to these blessings. Now, it is evident that he has this glorying, and consequently that he was justified by works.

**APOSTLE. *But not before God***— These seem to be the apostle's words, and contain the beginning of his answer to the arguments of the Jew, as if he had said:- Allowing that Abraham might glory in being called from heathenish darkness into such marvellous light, and exult in the privileges which God had granted to him; yet this glorying was not before God as a reason why those privileges should be granted; the glorying itself being a consequence of these very privileges.

**Verse 3. *For, what saith the Scripture?***— The Scriptural account of this transaction, Genesis 15:6, is decisive; for there it is said, Abraham believed God, and it was counted, *ελογισθη*, it was reckoned to him for righteousness, *εις δικαιοσυνην*, for justification.

**Verse 4. *Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.***— Therefore, if Abraham had been justified by works, the blessings he received would have been given to him as a reward for those works, and consequently his believing could have had no part in his justification, and his faith would have been useless.

**Verse 5. *But to him that worketh not***— Which was the case with Abraham, for he was called when he was ungodly, i.e. an idolater; and, on his believing, was freely justified: and, as all men have sinned, none can be justified by works; and, therefore, justification, if it take place at all, must take place in behalf of the ungodly, forasmuch as all mankind are such. Now, as Abraham's state and mode in which he was justified, are the plan and rule according to which God purposes to save men; and as his state was ungodly, and the mode of his justification was by faith in the goodness and mercy of God; and this is precisely the state of Jews and Gentiles at present; there can be no other mode of justification than by faith in that Christ who is Abraham's seed, and in whom, according to the promise, all the nations of the earth are to be blessed.

It is necessary to observe here, in order to prevent confusion and misapprehension, that although the verb **δικαιωω** has a variety of senses in the New Testament, yet here it is to be taken as implying the pardon of sin; receiving a person into the favor of God. See these different acceptations cited in the note on Romans 1:17, and particularly under No. 7. It is also necessary to observe, that our translators render the verb **λογιζομαι** differently in different parts of this chapter. It is rendered counted, Romans 4:3, 5; reckoned, Romans 4:4, 9, 10; imputed, Romans 4:6, 8, 11, 22-24. Reckoned is probably the best sense in all these places.

**Verse 6. *Even as David also***, etc.— David, in Psalm 32:1, 2, gives us also the true notion of this way of justification, i.e. by faith, without the merit of works, where he says:—

**Verse 7. *Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven***— That is, the man is truly happy whose iniquities **αι ανομιαι**, whose transgressions of the law are forgiven; for by these he was exposed to the most grievous punishment. Whose sins, **αι αμαρτιαι**, his innumerable deviations from the strict rule of truth and righteousness, are covered-entirely removed out of sight, and thrown into oblivion. See the meaning of the word sin in the note on Genesis 13:13.

**Verse 8. *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.***— That man is truly happy to whose charge God does not reckon sin; that is, they alone are happy who are redeemed from the curse of the law and the

consequence of their ungodly life, by having their sins freely forgiven, through the mercy of God.

**Verse 9. *Cometh this blessedness-upon the circumcision only***— The word *μονον*, only, is very properly supplied by our translators, and indeed is found in some excellent MSS., and is here quite necessary to complete the sense. The apostle's question is very nervous. If this pardon, granted in this way, be essential to happiness-and David says it is so-then is it the privilege of the Jews exclusively? This cannot be; for, as it is by the mere mercy of God, through faith, the circumcision cannot even claim it. But if God offer it to the circumcision, not because they have been obedient, for they also have sinned, but because of his mere mercy, then of course the same blessedness may be offered to the Gentiles who believe in the Lord Jesus. And this is evident; for we say, following our own Scriptures, that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness; he had no merit, he was an idolater; but he believed in God, and his faith was reckoned to him *εις δικαιοσυνην*, in reference to his justification; he brought faith when he could not bring works; and God accepted his faith in the place of obedience; and this became the instrumental cause of his justification.

**Verse 10. *How was it then reckoned?***— In what circumstances was Abraham when this blessing was bestowed upon him? When he was circumcised, or before?

***Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.***— Faith was reckoned to Abraham for justification, as we read Genesis 15:6, (where see the note;) but circumcision was not instituted till about fourteen or fifteen years after, Genesis 17:1, etc.; for faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness or justification at least one year before Ishmael was born; compare Genesis 15, and 16. At Ishmael's birth he was eighty-six years of age, Genesis 16:16; and, at the institution of circumcision, Ishmael was thirteen, and Abraham ninety-nine years old. See Genesis 17:24, 25; and see Dr. Taylor.

**Verse 11. *And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal,*** etc.— So far was obedience to the law of circumcision from being the reason of his justification, that he not only received this justification before he was circumcised, but he received the sign of circumcision, as a seal of the

pardon which he had before actually received. And thus he became the father, the great head and representative, of all them that believe; particularly the Gentiles, who are now in precisely the same state in which Abraham was when he received the mercy of God. Hence it appears, says Dr. Taylor, that the covenant established with Abraham, Genesis 17:2-15, is the same with that, Genesis 12:2, 3; 15:5, etc.; for circumcision was not a seal of any new grant, but of the justification and promise which Abraham had received before he was circumcised; and that justification and promise included the Gospel covenant in which we are now interested. St. Paul refers to this, Galatians 3:8: The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify us, heathens, through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. The whole of the apostle's argument, in this fourth chapter to the Romans, proves that we, believing Gentiles, are the seed of Abraham, to whom, as well as to himself, the promise was made; and that the promise made to him is the same in effect as that promise which is now made to us; consequently, it is the Abrahamic covenant in which we now stand; and any argument taken from the nature of that covenant, and applied to ourselves, must be good and valid. It is also undeniably evident, from this eleventh verse, as well as from Genesis 17:1-11, that circumcision was a seal or sign of the Gospel covenant in which we now stand. See Taylor.

There is nothing more common in the Jewish writers than the words

**Verse 12. *And the father of circumcision***— He is also the head and representative of all the circumcision of all the JEWS who walk in the steps of that faith; who seek for justification by faith only, and not by the works of the law; for this was the faith that Abraham had before he received circumcision. For, the covenant being made with Abraham while he was a Gentile, he became the representative of the Gentiles, and they primarily were included in that covenant, and the Jews were brought in only consequentially; but salvation, implying justification by faith, originally belonged to the Gentiles; and, when the Gospel came, they laid hold on this as their original right, having been granted to them by the free mercy of God in their father and representative, Abraham. So that the Jews, to be saved, must come under that Abrahamic covenant, in which the Gentiles are included. This is an unanswerable conclusion, and must, on this point, for ever confound the Jews.

**Verse 13. *For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world***— This promise intimated that he should be the medium through whom the mercy of God should be communicated to the world, to both Jews and Gentiles; and the manner in which he was justified, be the rule and manner according to which all men should expect this blessing. Abraham is here represented as having all the world given to him as his inheritance; because in him all nations of the earth are blessed: this must therefore relate to their being all interested in the Abrahamic covenant; and every person, now that the covenant is fully explained, has the privilege of claiming justification through faith, by the blood of the Lamb, in virtue of this original grant.

**Verse 14. *For, if they which are of the law be heirs***— If the Jews only be heirs of the promise made to Abraham, and that on the ground of prior obedience to the law, then faith is made void—is entirely useless; and the promise, which was made to faith, is made of none effect.

**Verse 16. *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace***— On this account the promise is mercifully grounded, not on obedience to a law, but on the infinite goodness of God: and thus the promise is sure to all the seed—to all, both Jews and Gentiles, who, believing in Christ Jesus, have a right to all the blessings contained in the Abrahamic covenant. All the seed necessarily comprehends all mankind. Of the Gentiles there can be no doubt, for the promise was given to Abraham while he was a Gentile; and

the salvation of the Jews may be inferred, because they all sprang from him after he became an heir of the righteousness or justification which is received by faith; for he is the father of us all, both Jews and Gentiles. Dr. Taylor has an excellent note on this verse. “Here,” says he, “it should be well observed that faith and grace do mutually and necessarily infer each other. For the grace and favor of God, in its own nature, requires faith in us; and faith on our part, in its own nature, supposes the grace or favor of God. If any blessing is the gift of God, in order to influence our temper and behavior, then, in the very nature of things, it is necessary that we be sensible of this blessing, and persuaded of the grace of God that bestows it; otherwise it is not possible we should improve it. On the other hand, if faith in the goodness of God, with regard to any blessing, is the principle of our religious hopes and action, then it follows that the blessing is not due in strict justice, nor on the foot of law, but that it is the free gift of Divine goodness. If the promise to Abraham and his seed be of faith on their part, then it is of grace on the part of God. And it is of faith, that it might be by grace: grace, being the mere good will of the donor, is free and open to all whom he chooses to make the objects of it: and the Divine wisdom appointed faith to be the condition of the promise; because faith is, on our part, the most simple principle, bearing an exact correspondence to grace, and reaching as far as that can extend; that so the happy effects of the promise might extend far and wide, take in the largest compass, and be confined to no condition, but what is merely necessary in the nature of things.”

**Verse 17.** *As it is written, I have made thee a father*— That Abraham’s being a father of many nations has relation to the covenant of God made with him, may be seen, Genesis 17:4, 5: Behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations: neither shall thy name any more be called Abram; but thy name shall be Abraham, for a father of many nations have I made thee, i.e. he was constituted the head of many nations, the Gentile world, by virtue of the covenant, which God made then with him.

*God, who quickeneth the dead*, etc.— God is the most proper object of trust and dependence; for being almighty, eternal, and unchangeable, he can even raise the dead to life, and call those things which be not as though they were. He is the Creator, he gave being when there was none; he can as

infallibly assure the existence of those things which are not, as if they were already actually in being. And, on this account, he can never fail of accomplishing whatsoever he has promised.

**Verse 18. *Who against hope believed in hope***— The faith of Abraham bore an exact correspondence to the power and never-failing faithfulness of God; for though, in the ordinary course of things, he had not the best foundation of hope, yet he believed that he should be the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken; namely, that his posterity should be like the stars of heaven for multitude, and like the dust of the earth.

**Verse 19. *He considered not his own body now dead***— He showed at once the correctness and energy of his faith: God cannot lie; Abraham can believe. It is true that, according to the course of nature, he and Sarah are so old that they cannot have children; but God is almighty, and can do whatsoever he will, and will fulfill his promise. This was certainly a wonderful degree of faith; as the promise stated that it was in his posterity that all the nations of the earth were to be blessed; that he had, as yet, no child by Sarah; that he was 100 years old; that Sarah was 90; and that, added to the utter improbability of her bearing at that age, she had ever been barren before. All these were so many reasons why he should not credit the promise; yet he believed; therefore it might be well said, Romans 4:20, that he staggered not at the promise, though every thing was unnatural and improbable; but he was strong in faith, and, by this almost inimitable confidence, gave glory to God. It was to God's honor that his servant put such unlimited confidence in him; and he put this confidence in him on the rational ground that God was fully able to perform what he had promised.

**Verse 21. *And being fully persuaded***— πληροφορηθεις, his measure: his soul was full of confidence, that the truth of God bound him to fulfill his promise and his power enabled him to do it.

**Verse 22. *And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness***— The verse is thus paraphrased by Dr. Taylor: "For which reason God was graciously pleased to place his faith to his account; and to allow his fiducial reliance upon the Divine goodness, power, and faithfulness, for a



title to the Divine blessing, which, otherwise, having been an idolater, he had no right to.”

Abraham’s strong faith in the promise of the coming Savior, for this was essential to his faith, was reckoned to him for justification: for it is not said that any righteousness, either his own, or that of another, was imputed or reckoned to him for justification; but it, i.e. his faith in God. His faith was fully persuaded of the most merciful intentions of God’s goodness; and this, which, in effect, laid hold on Jesus Christ, the future Savior, was the means of his justification; being reckoned unto him in the place of personal righteousness, because it laid hold on the merit of Him who died to make an atonement for our offenses, and rose again for our justification.

**Verse 23. *Now it was not written for his sake alone***— The fact of Abraham’s believing and receiving salvation through that faith is not recorded as a mere circumstance in the patriarch’s life, intended to do him honor: see Romans 4:24.

**Verse 24. *But for us also***— The mention of this circumstance has a much more extensive design than merely to honor Abraham. It is recorded as the model, according to which God will save both Jews and Gentiles: indeed there can be no other way of salvation; as all have sinned, all must either be saved by faith through Christ Jesus, or finally perish. If God, therefore, will our salvation, it must be by faith; and faith contemplates his promise, and his promise comprehends the Son of his love.

**Verse 25. *Who was delivered for our offenses***— Who was delivered up to death as a sacrifice for our sins; for in what other way, or for what other purpose could He, who is innocence itself, be delivered for our offenses?

***And was raised again for our justification.***— He was raised that we might have the fullest assurance that the death of Christ had accomplished the end for which it took place; viz. our reconciliation to God, and giving us a title to that eternal life, into which he has entered, and taken with him our human nature, as the first-fruits of the resurrection of mankind.

1. FROM a careful examination of the Divine oracles it appears that the death of Christ was an atonement or expiation for the sin of the world: For him hath God set forth to be a PROPITIATION through FAITH in HIS BLOOD,

Romans 3:25. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ DIED FOR the UNGODLY, Romans 5:6. And when we were ENEMIES, we were RECONCILED to God by the DEATH of his Son, Romans 5:10. In whom we have REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, the FORGIVENESS of SINS, Ephesians 1:7. Christ hath loved us, and GIVEN HIMSELF FOR US, an OFFERING and a SACRIFICE to God for a sweet-smelling savour, Ephesians 5:2. In whom we have REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, the FORGIVENESS OF SINS, Colossians 1:14. And having made PEACE THROUGH the BLOOD of his CROSS, in the BODY of HIS FLESH, through DEATH, Colossians 1:20, 22. Who GAVE HIMSELF a RANSOM for all, 1 Timothy 2:6. Who GAVE HIMSELF FOR US, that he might REDEEM us from all iniquity, Titus 2:14. By which will we are sanctified, through the OFFERING of the BODY of Jesus Christ, Hebrews 10:10. So Christ was once OFFERED TO BEAR THE SINS of many, Hebrews 9:28. See also Ephesians 2:13, 16; 1 Peter 1:18, 19; Revelation 5:9. But it would be transcribing a very considerable part of the New Testament to set down all the texts that refer to this most important and glorious truth.

2. And as his death was an atonement for our sins, so his resurrection was the proof and pledge of our eternal life. See 1 Corinthians 15:17; 1 Peter 1:3; Ephesians 1:13, 14, etc., etc.

3. The doctrine of justification by faith, which is so nobly proved in the preceding chapter, is one of the grandest displays of the mercy of God to mankind. It is so very plain that all may comprehend it; and so free that all may attain it. What more simple than this? Thou art a sinner, in consequence condemned to perdition, and utterly unable to save thy own soul. All are in the same state with thyself, and no man can give a ransom for the soul of his neighbor. God, in his mercy, has provided a Savior for thee. As thy life was forfeited to death because of thy transgressions, Jesus Christ has redeemed thy life by giving up his own; he died in thy stead, and has made an atonement to God for thy transgressions; and offers thee the pardon he has thus purchased, on the simple condition, that thou believe that his death is a sufficient sacrifice, ransom, and oblation for thy sin; and that thou bring it as such, by confident faith, to the throne of God, and plead it in thy own behalf there. When thou dost so, thy faith in that sacrifice shall be imputed to thee for righteousness; i.e. it shall be the means of receiving that salvation which Christ has bought by his blood.

4. The doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ, as held by many, will not be readily found in this chapter, where it has been supposed to exist in all its proofs. It is repeatedly said that FAITH is imputed for righteousness; but in no place here, that Christ's obedience to the moral law is imputed to any man. The truth is, the moral law was broken, and did not now require obedience; it required this before it was broken; but, after it was broken, it required death.

Either the sinner must die, or some one in his stead: but there was none whose death could have been an equivalent for the transgressions of the world but JESUS CHRIST. Jesus therefore died for man; and it is through his blood, the merit of his passion and death, that we have redemption; and not by his obedience to the moral law in our stead. Our salvation was obtained at a much higher price. Jesus could not but be righteous and obedient; this is consequent on the immaculate purity of his nature: but his death was not a necessary consequent. As the law of God can claim only the death of a transgressor-for such only forfeit their right to life-it is the greatest miracle of all that Christ could die, whose life was never forfeited. Here we see the indescribable demerit of sin, that it required such a death; and here we see the stupendous mercy of God, in providing the sacrifice required. It is therefore by Jesus Christ's death, or obedience unto death, that we are saved, and not by his fulfilling any moral law. That he fulfilled the moral law we know; without which he could not have been qualified to be our mediator; but we must take heed lest we attribute that to obedience (which was the necessary consequence of his immaculate nature) which belongs to his passion and death. These were free-will offerings of eternal goodness, and not even a necessary consequence of his incarnation.

5. This doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ is capable of great abuse. To say that Christ's personal righteousness is imputed to every true believer, is not Scriptural: to say that he has fulfilled all righteousness for us, or in our stead, if by this is meant his fulfillment of all moral duties, is neither Scriptural nor true: that he has died in our stead, is a great, glorious, and Scriptural truth: that there is no redemption but through his blood is asserted beyond all contradiction; in the oracles of God. But there are a multitude of duties which the moral law requires which Christ never fulfilled in our stead, and never could. We have various duties of a domestic kind which belong solely to ourselves, in the relation of parents,

husbands, wives, servants, etc., in which relations Christ never stood. He has fulfilled none of these duties for us, but he furnishes grace to every true believer to fulfill them to God's glory, the edification of his neighbor, and his own eternal profit. The salvation which we receive from God's free mercy, through Christ, binds us to live in a strict conformity to the moral law; that law which prescribes our manners, and the spirit by which they should be regulated, and in which they should be performed. He who lives not in the due performance of every Christian duty, whatever faith he may profess, is either a vile hypocrite, or a scandalous Antinomian.

## CHAPTER 5.

*The effects of justification by faith, peace with God, 1. The joyous hope of eternal glory, 2. Glorifying in tribulations, 3. And gaining thereby patience, experience, and hope, 4. And having the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, 5. The state of the world when Christ died for it, 6-10. Jesus Christ is an atonement, 11. Sin and death entered into the world by Adam's transgression, and all became guilty before God, 12-14. God's grace in sending Christ into the world to save fallen man, 15-19. The law is brought in to show the exceeding sinfulness of sin, 20. The grace of Christ is to be as extensive in its influences and reign, as sin has been in its enslaving and destructive nature, 21.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 5.

Is the former chapter, the apostle, having proved that the believing Gentiles are justified in the same way with Abraham, and are, in fact, his seed, included with him in the promise and covenant; he judged this a proper place, as the Jews built all their glorying upon the Abrahamic covenant, to produce some of the chief of those privileges and blessings in which the Christian Gentile can glory, in consequence of his justification by faith. And he produces three particulars which, above all others, were adapted to this purpose. 1. The hope of eternal life, in which the law, wherein the Jew gloried, Romans 2:17, was defective, Romans 5:2. 2. The persecutions and sufferings to which Christians were exposed, Romans 5:3, 4, and on account of which the Jews were greatly prejudiced against the Christian profession: but he shows that these had a happy tendency to establish the heart in the hope of the Gospel. 3. An interest in God, as our GOD and FATHER—a privilege upon which the Jews valued themselves highly above all nations, Romans 5:11.

These three are the singular privileges belonging to the Gospel state, wherein true Christians may glory, as really belonging to them, and greatly redounding, if duly understood and improved, to their honor and benefit.

**Verse 1. *Therefore being justified by faith***— The apostle takes it for granted that he has proved that justification is by faith, and that the Gentiles have an equal title with the Jews to salvation by faith. And now he proceeds to show the effects produced in the hearts of the believing Gentiles by this doctrine. We are justified—have all our sins pardoned by faith, as the instrumental cause; for, being sinners, we have no works of righteousness that we can plead.

***We have peace with God***— Before, while sinners, we were in a state of enmity with God, which was sufficiently proved by our rebellion against his authority, and our transgression of his laws; but now, being reconciled, we have peace with God. Before, while under a sense of the guilt of sin, we had nothing but terror and dismay in our own consciences; now, having our sin forgiven, we have peace in our hearts, feeling that all our guilt is taken away. Peace is generally the first-fruits of our justification.

***Through our Lord Jesus Christ***— His passion and death being the sole cause of our reconciliation to God.

**Verse 2. *By whom also***— We are not only indebted to our Lord Jesus Christ for the free and full pardon which we have received, but our continuance in a justified state depends upon his gracious influence in our hearts, and his intercession before the throne of God.

***We have access***— *προσάγωγην εσχηκαμεν*, We have received this access. It was only through Christ that we could at first approach God; and it is only through him that the privilege is continued to us. And this access to God, or introduction to the Divine presence, is to be considered as a lasting privilege. We are not brought to God for the purpose of an interview, but to remain with him; to be his household; and, by faith, to behold his face, and walk in the light of his countenance.

***Into this grace***— This state of favor and acceptance.

***Wherein we stand***— Having firm footing, and a just title through the blood of the Lamb to the full salvation of God.

***And rejoice***— Have solid happiness, from the evidence we have of our acceptance with Him.

***In hope of the glory of God.***— Having our sins remitted, and our souls adopted into the heavenly family, we are become heirs; for if children, then heirs, Galatians 4:7; and that glory of God is now become our endless inheritance. While the Jews boast of their external privileges—that they have the temple of God among them; that their priests have an entrance to God as their representatives, carrying before the mercy-seat the blood of their offered victims; we exult in being introduced by Jesus Christ to the Divine presence; his blood having been shed and sprinkled for this purpose; and thus we have, spiritually and essentially, all that these Jewish rites, etc., signified. We are in the peace of God, and we are happy in the enjoyment of that peace, and have a blessed foretaste of eternal glory. Thus we have heaven upon earth, and the ineffable glories of God in prospect.

**Verse 3. *And not only so***— We are not only happy from being in this state of communion with our God, and the prospect of being eternally with him;

***But we glory in tribulations also***— All the sufferings we endure for the testimony of our Lord are so sanctified to us by his grace, that they become powerful instruments of increasing our happiness.

***Tribulation worketh patience***— ὑπομονην, Endurance under trials, without sustaining loss or deterioration. It is a metaphor taken from refining metals. We do not speak thus from any sudden raptures, or extraordinary sensations we may have of spiritual joy: for we find that the tribulations through which we pass are the means of exercising and increasing our patience, our meek forbearance of injuries received, or persecutions experienced, on account of the Gospel.

**Verse 4. *And patience, experience***— δοκιμεν, Full proof, by trial, of the truth of our religion, the solidity of our Christian state, and the faithfulness of our God. In such cases we have the opportunity of putting our religion to the test; and, by every such test, it receives the deeper sterling stamp. The apostle uses here also a metaphor taken from the purifying, refining, and testing of silver and gold.

***Experience, hope***— For we thus calculate, that he who has supported us in the past will support us in those which may yet come; and as we have

received so much spiritual profiting by means of the sufferings through which we have already passed, we may profit equally by those which are yet to come: and this hope prevents us from dreading coming trials; we receive them as means of grace, and find that all things work together for good to them that love God.

**Verse 5. *And hope maketh not ashamed***— A hope that is not rationally founded will have its expectation cut off; and then shame and confusion will be the portion of its possessor. But our hope is of a different kind; it is founded on the goodness and truth of God; and our religious experience shows us that we have not misapplied it; nor exercised it on wrong or improper objects.

***Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts***— We have the most solid and convincing testimony of God's love to us, by that measure of it which he has communicated to our hearts. There, *εκκεχυται*, it is poured out, and diffused abroad; filling, quickening, and invigorating all our powers and faculties. This love is the spring of all our actions; it is the motive of our obedience; the principle through which we love God, we love him because he first loved us; and we love him with a love worthy of himself, because it springs from him: it is his own; and every flame that rises from this pure and vigorous fire must be pleasing in his sight: it consumes what is unholy; refines every passion and appetite; sublimates the whole, and assimilates all to itself. And we know that this is the love of God; it differs widely from all that is earthly and sensual. The Holy Ghost comes with it; by his energy it is diffused and pervades every part; and by his light we discover what it is, and know the state of grace in which we stand. Thus we are furnished to every good word and work; have produced in us the mind that was in Christ; are enabled to obey the pure law of our God in its spiritual sense, by loving him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength; and our neighbor, any and every soul of man, as ourselves. This is, or ought to be, the common experience of every genuine believer; but, in addition to this, the primitive Christians had, sometimes, the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. These were then needful; and were they needful now, they would be again communicated.

**Verse 6. *For when we were yet without strength***— The apostle, having pointed out the glorious state of the believing Gentiles, takes occasion to



contrast this with their former state; and the means by which they were redeemed from it. Their former state he points out in four particulars; which may be applied to men in general.

I. They were **ασθενεις**, without strength; in a weak, dying state: neither able to resist sin, nor do any good: utterly devoid of power to extricate themselves from the misery of their situation.

II. They were **ασεβεις**, ungodly; without either the worship or knowledge of the true God; they had not God in them; and, consequently, were not partakers of the Divine nature: Satan lived in, ruled, and enslaved their hearts.

III. They were **αμαρτωλοι**, sinners, Romans 5:8, aiming at happiness, but constantly missing the mark, which is the ideal meaning of the Hebrew **חַטָּא** chata, and the Greek **αμαρτανω**. See this explained, Genesis 13:13. And in missing the mark, they deviated from the right way; walked in the wrong way; trespassed in thus deviating; and, by breaking the commandments of God, not only missed the mark of felicity, but exposed themselves to everlasting misery.

IV. They were **εχθροι** enemies, Romans 5:10, from **εχθος**, hatred, enmity, persons who hated God and holiness; and acted in continual hostility to both. What a gradation is here! 1. In our fall from God, our first apparent state is, that we are without strength; have lost our principle of spiritual power, by having lost the image of God, righteousness and true holiness, in which we were created. 2. We are ungodly, having lost our strength to do good; we have also lost all power to worship God aright. The mind which was made for God is no longer his residence. 3. We are sinners; feeling we have lost our centre of rest, and our happiness, we go about seeking rest, but find none: what we have lost in losing God, we seek in earthly things; and thus are continually missing the mark, and multiplying transgressions against our Maker. 4. We are enemies; sin, indulged, increases in strength; evil acts engender fixed and rooted habits; the mind, every where poisoned with sin, increases in averseness from good; and mere aversion produces enmity; and enmity, acts of hostility, fell cruelty, etc.: so that the enemy of God hates his Maker and his service; is cruel to his fellow creatures; “a foe to God, was ne’er true friend to man;” and even torments his own soul! Though every man brings into the world the seeds

of all these evils, yet it is only by growing up in him that they acquire their perfection-nemo repente fuit turpissimus-no man becomes a profligate at once; he arrives at it by slow degrees; and the speed he makes is proportioned to his circumstances, means of gratifying sinful passions, evil education, bad company, etc., etc. These make a great diversity in the moral states of men: all have the same seeds of evil-nemo sine vitii nascitur-all come defiled into the world; but all have not the same opportunities of cultivating these seeds. Besides, as God's Spirit is continually convincing the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and the ministers of God are seconding its influence with their pious exhortations, as the Bible is in almost every house, and is less or more heard or read by almost every person, these evil seeds are receiving continual blasts and checks, so that, in many cases, they have not a vigorous growth. These causes make the principal moral differences that we find among men; though in evil propensities they are all radically the same.

That all the preceding characters are applied by some learned men to the Gentiles, exclusively as such, I am well aware; and that they may be all applied to them in a national point of view, there can be little doubt. But there are too many correspondences between the state of the modern Gentiles and that of the ancient Gentiles, to justify the propriety of

highest, and peace and good will among men. And the success that attended the preaching of Christ and his apostles, together with the wide and rapid spread of the Gospel, all prove that it was the due time, **κατα καιρον**, the proper season; and that Divine wisdom was justified in fixing upon that time in preference to all others.

***Died for the ungodly***— **ὑπερ ασεβων απεθανε**, He died INSTEAD of the ungodly, see also Romans 5:8; so Luke 22:19. The body of Christ, **το υπερ υμων διδομενον**, which is given FOR you; i.e. the life that is laid down in your STEAD. In this way the preposition **υπερ**, is used by the best Greek writers.

**Verse 7. *For scarcely for a righteous man will one die***— The Jews divide men, as to their moral character, into four classes: Those who say, “what is mine, is my own; and what is thine, is thy own.” These may be considered the just, who render to every man his due; or rather, they who neither give nor take. The second class is made up of those who say, “what is mine, is thine; and what is thine, is mine.” These are they who accommodate each other, who borrow and lend. The third class is composed of those who say, “What is mine, is thine; and what is thine, let it be thine.” These are the pious, or good, who give up all for the benefit of their neighbor. The fourth class are those who say, “What is mine, is mine; and what is thine, shall be mine.” These are the impious, who take all, and give nothing. Now, for one of the first class, who would die? There is nothing amiable in his life or conduct that would so endear him to any man, as to induce him to risk his life to save such a person.

***Peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.***— This is for one of the third class, who gives all he has for the good of others. This is the truly benevolent man, whose life is devoted to the public good: for such a person, peradventure, some who have had their lives perhaps preserved by his bounty, would even dare to die: but such cases may be considered merely as possible: they exist, it is true, in romance; and we find a few rare instances of friends exposing themselves to death for their friends. See the case of Jonathan and David; Damon and Pythias, Val. Max. lib. iv. c. 7; Nisus and Euryalus, Virgil. And our Lord says, John 15:13: Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. This is the utmost we can expect among men.

**Verse 8.** *But God commendeth his love*, etc.— συνιστησι: God hath set this act of infinite mercy in the most conspicuous light, so as to recommend it to the notice and admiration of all.

*While we were yet sinners*— We were neither righteous nor good; but impious and wicked. See the preceding verse, and see the note on Romans 5:6.

**Verse 9.** *Much more then, being now justified*— If Jesus Christ, in his endless comparison towards us gave his life for ours, while we were yet enemies; being now justified by his blood—by his death on the cross, and thus reconciled to God, we shall be saved from wrath—from punishment for past transgression, through him—by what he has thus suffered for us.

**Verse 10.** *For if, when we were enemies*— See under Romans 5:6.

*We were reconciled*— The enmity existing before rendered the reconciliation necessary. In every human heart there is a measure of enmity to holiness, and, consequently to the author of it. Men seldom suspect this; for one property of sin is to blind the understanding, so that men do not know their own state.

*We shall be saved by his life*.— For, as he died for our sins, so he rose again for our justification; and his resurrection to life, is the grand proof that he has accomplished whatever he had purposed in reference to the salvation of man. 2. This may be also understood of his life of intercession: for it is written. He ever LIVETH to make INTERCESSION for us, Hebrews 7:25. Through this life of intercession at the right hand of God we are spared and blessed. 3. And it will not be amiss to consider that, as our salvation implies the renovation of our nature, and our being restored to the image of God, so, σωθησομεθα εν τη ζωη αυτου, may be rendered: we shall be saved IN his life; for, I suppose, it is pretty generally agreed, that the life of God in the soul of man is essential to its salvation. 4. The example also of the life of Christ is a means of salvation. He hath left us an example that we should follow his steps: and he that followeth him, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of LIFE, John 8:12.

**Verse 11.** *We also joy* (καυχωμενοι, *we exult, or glory*) *in God*, etc.— We now feel that God is reconciled to us, and we are reconciled to him: the enmity is removed from our souls; and He, for Christ's sake, through

whom we have received the atonement, **καταλλαγή**, the reconciliation, has remitted the wrath, the punishment which we deserved: and now, through this reconciliation, we expect an eternal glory.

It was certainly improper to translate **καταλλαγή** here by atonement, instead of reconciliation; as **καταλλάσσω** signifies to reconcile, and is so rendered by our translators in all the places where it occurs. It does not mean the atonement here, as we generally understand that word, viz. the sacrificial death of Christ; but rather the effect of that atonement, the removal of the enmity, and by this, the change of our condition and state; from **κατα**, intensive, and **αλλάσσω** to change; the thorough change of our state from enmity to friendship. God is reconciled to us, and we are reconciled to him by the death of his Son; and thus there is a glorious change from enmity to friendship; and we can exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received this reconciliation. Though boasting is forbidden to a Jew, because his is a false confidence, yet boasting is enjoined to a Christian, to one reconciled to God; for, his boasting is only in that reconciliation, and the endless mercy by which it is procured. So he that glorieth (boasteth) must glory in the Lord.

**Verse 12.** *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world*— From this verse, to the conclusion of the chapter, the apostle produces a strong argument to prove that, as all mankind stood in need of the grace of God in Christ to redeem them from their sins, so this grace has been afforded equally to all, both Jews and Gentiles.

Dr. Taylor has given the following analysis of the apostle's mode of argumentation. The argument stands thus:—"The consequences of Christ's obedience extend as far as the consequences of Adam's disobedience. The consequences of Adam's disobedience extend to all mankind; and therefore, so do the consequences of Christ's obedience. Now, if the Jews will not allow the Gentiles any interest in Abraham, as not being naturally descended from him, yet they must own that the Gentiles are the descendants of Adam, as well as themselves; and being all equally involved in the consequences of his sin, from which" (as far as the death of the body is concerned) "they shall all equally be released at the resurrection, through the free gift of God, therefore they could not deny the Gentiles a share in all the other blessings included in the same gift."

This argument, besides proving the main point, goes to show: 1. That the grace of God in the Gospel abounds beyond, or very far exceeds, the mere reversing of the sufferings brought upon mankind by Adam's one offense; as it bestows a vast surplusage of blessings which have no relation to that offense, but to the many offenses which mankind have committed, and to the exuberance of the Divine grace. 2. To show how justly the Divine grace is founded on the obedience of Christ, in correspondence to the dispensation Adam was under, and to the consequences of his disobedience: if this disobedience involved all mankind in death, it is proper that the obedience of Christ should be the cause not only of reversing that death to all mankind, but also of other blessings which God should see fit (through him) to bestow on the world. 3. It serves to explain, and set in a clear view, the difference between the law and grace. It was the law which, for Adam's one transgression, subjected him and his posterity, as included in him when he transgressed, to death, without hopes of a revival. It is grace which restores all men to life at the resurrection; and, over and above that, has provided a gracious dispensation for the pardon of their sins; for reducing them to obedience; for guarding them against temptations; supplying them with strength and comfort; and for advancing them to eternal life. This would give the attentive Jew a just notion of the law which himself was under, and under which he was desirous of bringing the Gentiles.

The order in which the apostle handles this argument is this:- He affirms that death passed upon all men by Adam's one transgression, Romans 5:12. 2. He proves this, Romans 5:13, 14: 3. He affirms there is a correspondence between Adam and Christ; or between the **παραπτώμα**, offense, and the **χαρίσμα**, free gift, Romans 5:14. 4. This correspondence, so far as the two opposite parts answer to each other, is justly expressed, Romans 5:18, 19; and there we have the main or fundamental position of the apostle's argument, in relation to the point which he has been arguing from the beginning of the epistle, namely, the extensiveness of the grace of the Gospel, that it actually reaches to ALL MEN, and is not confined to the Jews. 5. But, before he laid down this position, it was necessary that he should show that the correspondence between Adam and Christ, or between the offense and the gift, is not to be confined strictly to the bounds specified in the position, as if the gift reached no farther than the

consequences of the offense; when in reality it extends vastly beyond them, Romans 5:15-17. 6. Having settled these points, as previously necessary to clear his fundamental position, and fit to his argument, he then lays down that position in a diversified manner of speech, Romans 5:18, 19, just as in 1 Corinthians 15:20, 21, and leaves us to conclude, from the premises laid down, Romans 5:15-17, that the gift and the grace in its utmost extent, is as free to all mankind who are willing to accept of it, as this particular instance, the resurrection from the dead. They shall all be raised from the dead hereafter; they may all be quickened by the Spirit here. 7. Having thus shown the extensiveness of the Divine grace, in opposition to the dire effects of the law under which Adam was; that the Jews might not overlook what he intended they should particularly observe, he puts them in mind that the law given to Adam, transgress and die, was introduced into the Jewish constitution by the ministry of Moses; and for this end, that the offense, with the penalty of death annexed to it, might abound, Romans 5:20. But, to illustrate the Divine grace by setting it in contrast to the law, he immediately adds: where sin, subjecting to death, hath abounded, grace hath much more abounded; that is, in blessings bestowed; it has stretched far beyond both Adam's transgression, and the transgressions under the law of Moses, Romans 5:20, 21, and see the note on the first of these verses.

Upon this argument the learned doctor makes the following general remarks:—

“I. As to the order of time: the apostle carries his arguments backwards from the time when Christ came into the world (Romans 1:17; to Romans 4.) to the time when the covenant was made with Abraham, (Romans 4.,) to the time when the judgment to condemnation, pronounced upon Adam, came upon all men, Romans 5:12, to the end. And thus he gives us a view of the principal dispensations from the beginning of the world.

“II. In this last case, as well as in the two former, he uses law or forensic terms; judgment to condemnation, justification, justify, made sinners, made righteous. And therefore, as he considers both Jews and Gentiles at the coming of Christ, and Abraham when the covenant was made with him, so he considers Adam, and all men, as standing in the court before the

tribunal of God. And this was the clearest and concisest way of representing his arguments.” Notes, p. 283.

***Sin entered into the world***— There was neither sin nor death before the offense of Adam; after that there were both. Adam’s transgression was therefore the cause of both.

***And death by sin***— Natural evil is evidently the effect of moral evil; if man had never sinned, he had never suffered. Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return, was never spoken till after Adam had eaten the forbidden fruit.

***Death passed upon all men***— Hence we see that all human beings partook in the consequences of Adam’s sin. He propagated his like; and, with the rudiments of his own nature, propagated those of his moral likeness.

***For that all have sinned***— All are born with a sinful nature; and the seeds of this evil soon vegetate, and bring forth corresponding fruits. There has never been one instance of an immaculate human soul since the fall of Adam. Every man sins, and sins too after the similitude of Adam’s transgression. Adam endeavored to be independent of God; all his offspring act in the same way: hence prayer is little used, because prayer is the language of dependence; and this is inconsistent with every emotion of original sin. When these degenerate children of degenerate parents are detected in their sins, they act just as their parents did; each excuses himself, and lays the blame on another. What hast thou done? -The woman whom THOU gavest me, to be with me; SHE gave me, and I did eat. What hast THOU done? -The SERPENT beguiled me, and I did eat. Thus, it is extremely difficult to find a person who ingenuously acknowledges his own transgressions.

See the notes on Genesis 3:6, etc., where the doctrine of original sin is particularly considered.

**Verse 13. *For until the law sin was in the world***— As death reigned from Adam to Moses, so also did sin. Now, as there was no written law from Adam to that given to Moses, the death that prevailed could not be the breach of that law; for sin, so as to be punished with temporal death, is not imputed where there is no law, which shows the penalty of sin to be death. Therefore, men are not subjected to death for their own personal



transgressions, but for the sin of Adam; as, through his transgression, all come into the world with the seeds of death and corruption in their own nature, superadded to their moral depravity. All are sinful—all are mortal—and all must die.

**Verse 14. *Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses***— This supposes, as Dr. Taylor very properly observes:-1. That sin was in the world from Adam to Moses. 2. That law was not in the world from Adam to Moses during the space of about 2500 years; for, after Adam's transgression, that law was abrogated; and, from that time, men were either under the general covenant of grace given to Adam or Noah, or under that which was specially made with Abraham. 3. That, therefore, the sins committed were not imputed unto them to death, for they did not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression; that is, they did not, like him, transgress a law, or rule of action, to which death, as the penalty, was annexed. And yet-4. Death reigned over mankind during the period between Adam and Moses; therefore men did not die for their own transgressions, but in consequence of Adam's one transgression.

***Who is the figure of him that was to come.***— Adam was the figure, **τυπος**, the type, pattern, or resemblance of him who was to come; i.e. of the Messiah. The correspondence between them appears in the following particulars:-1. Through him, as its spring and fountain, sin became diffused through the world, so that every man comes into the world with sinful propensities: for by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, Romans 5:12. Through Christ, as its spring and fountain, righteousness becomes diffused through the earth; so that every man is made partaker of a principle of grace and truth; for he is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, John 1:9. As in Adam all die; so in Christ shall all be made alive, 1 Corinthians 15:22. For, since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead, 1 Corinthians 15:21. As in or through Adam guilt came upon all men, so, through Christ, the free gift comes upon all men unto justification of life, Romans 5:18. These alone seem to be the instances in which a similitude exists between Adam and Christ.

**Verse 15. *But not as the offense, so also is the free gift.***— The same learned writer, quoted above, continues to observe:- “It is evident that the

apostle, in this and the two following verses, is running a parallel, or making a comparison between the offense of Adam and its consequence; and the opposite gift of God and its consequences. And, in these three verses, he shows that the comparison will not hold good in all respects, because the free gift, **χαρισμα**, bestows blessings far beyond the consequences of the offense, and which, therefore, have no relation to it. And this was necessary, not only to prevent mistakes concerning the consequence of Adam's offense, and the extent of Gospel grace; but it was also necessary to the apostle's main design, which was not only to prove that the grace of the Gospel extends to all men, so far as it takes off the consequence of Adam's offense, (i.e. death, without the promise or probability of a resurrection,) but that it likewise extends to all men, with respect to the surplussage of blessings, in which it stretches far beyond the consequence of Adam's offense. For, the grace that takes off the consequence of Adam's offense, and the grace which abounds beyond it, are both included in the same **χαρισμα**, or free gift, which should be well observed; for in this, I conceive, lie the connection and sinews of the argument: the free gift, which stands opposed to Adam's offense, and which, I think, was bestowed immediately after the offense; Genesis 3:15: The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. This gift, I say, includes both the grace which exactly answers to the offense, and is that part of the grace which stretches far beyond it. And, if the one part of the gift be freely bestowed on all mankind, as the Jews allow, why not the other? especially, considering that the whole gift stands upon a reason and foundation in excellence and worth, vastly surpassing the malignity and demerit of the offense; and, consequently, capable of producing benefits vastly beyond the sufferings occasioned by the offense. This is the force of the apostle's argument; and therefore, supposing that in the 18th and 19th verses, {Romans 5:18, 19} literally understood, he compares the consequence of Adam's offense and Christ's obedience, only so far as the one is commensurate to the other, yet his reasoning, Romans 5:15-17, plainly shows that it is his meaning and intention that we should take into his conclusion the whole of the gift, so far as it can reach, to all mankind."

***For if, through the offense of one, many be dead***— That the **οι πολλοι**, the many of the apostle here means all mankind needs no proof to any but that person who finds himself qualified to deny that all men are mortal.

And if the many, that is, all mankind, have died through the offense of one; certainly, the gift by grace, which abounds unto **τους πολλους**, the many, by Christ Jesus, must have reference to every human being. If the consequences of Christ's incarnation and death extend only to a few, or a select number of mankind—which, though they may be considered many in themselves, are few in comparison of the whole human race—then the consequences of Adam's sin have extended only to a few, or to the same select number: and if only many, and not all have fallen, only that many had need of a Redeemer. For it is most evident that the same persons are referred to in both clauses of the verse. If the apostle had believed that the benefits of the death of Christ had extended only to a select number of mankind, he never could have used the language he has done here: though, in the first clause, he might have said, without any qualification of the term, Through the offense of one, **MANY** are dead; in the 2nd clause, to be consistent with the doctrine of particular redemption, he must have said, The grace of God, and the gift by grace, hath abounded unto **SOME**. As by the offense of one judgment came upon **ALL** men to condemnation; so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon **SOME** to justification, Romans 5:18. As, by one man's disobedience, **MANY** were made sinners; so, by the obedience of one, shall **SOME** be made righteous, Romans 5:19. As in Adam **ALL** die; so, in Christ, shall **SOME** be made alive, 1 Corinthians 15:22. But neither the doctrine nor the thing ever entered the soul of this divinely inspired man.

***Hath abounded unto many.***— That is, Christ Jesus died for every man; salvation is free for all; saving grace is tendered to every soul; and a measure of the Divine light is actually communicated to every heart, John 1:9. And, as the grace is offered, so it may be received; and hence the apostle says, Romans 5:17: They which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by Christ Jesus: and by receiving is undoubtedly meant not only the act of receiving, but retaining and improving the grace which they receive; and, as all may receive, so **ALL** may improve and retain the grace they do receive; and, consequently, **ALL** may be eternally saved. But of multitudes Christ still may say, They **WILL** not come unto me, that they might have life.

**Verse 16. *And not as it was by one that sinned***— That is, the judicial act that followed Adam's sin (the sentence of death pronounced upon him,

and his expulsion from paradise) took its rise from his one offense alone, and terminated in condemnation; but the free gift of God in Christ takes its rise also from the many offenses which men, in a long course of life, have personally committed; and the object of this grace is to justify them freely, and bring them to eternal life.

**Verse 17. *Death reigned by one***— Death is here personified, and is represented as reigning over the human race; and death, of course, reigns unto death; he is known as reigning, by the destruction of his subjects.

***Shall reign in life***— Those who receive, retain, and improve the abundant grace offered by Jesus Christ, shall be redeemed from the empire of death, and exalted to the throne of God, to live and reign with him ever, world without end. See Revelation 1:5, 6; 2:7, 10, 11; 3:21.

If we carefully compare Romans 5:15 with Romans 5:17, we shall find that there is a correspondence between **περισσειαν**, the abounding, Romans 5:17, and **επερισευσε** hath abounded, Romans 5:15; between **της δωρεας της δικαιοσυνης**, the gift of righteousness, i.e. justification, Romans 5:17, and **η δωρεα εν χαριτι**, the gift by grace, Romans 5:15; therefore, if we understand the abounding of grace, and the gift of justification, Romans 5:17, we shall understand the grace of God, and the gift by grace which hath abounded unto the many, Romans 5:15. But the abounding of grace, and the gift of justification, Romans 5:17, is that grace and gift which is RECEIVED by those who shall reign in eternal life.

Reigning in life is the consequence of receiving the grace and gift.

Therefore, receiving the grace is a necessary qualification on our part for reigning in life; and this necessarily implies our believing in Christ Jesus, as having died for our offenses, receiving the grace so freely offered us; using the means in order to get more grace, and bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit. Receive must here have the same sense as in Matthew 13:20: He heareth the word, and anon with joy RECEIVETH it. John 1:12: But as many as RECEIVED him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God. John 3:11: Ye RECEIVE not our witness. — See also John 3:32, 33. John 5:43: I am come in my Father's name, and ye RECEIVE me not. John 12:48: He that RECEIVETH not my words. John 13:20: He that receiveth whomsoever I send, RECEIVETH me. John 14:17: The Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot RECEIVE. John 17:8: I have given them the words which

thou gavest me; and they have RECEIVED them. In all these passages it is evident that receiving and not receiving imply improving or not improving.

**Verse 18.** *Therefore, as by the offense of one*, etc.— The Greek text of this verse is as follows:—*αρα ουν, ως δι' ενος παραπτωματος, εις παντας ανθρωπους εις κατακριμα· αυτω και ενος δικαιωματος, εις παντας ανθρωπους, εις δικαιωσιν ζωης*; which literally rendered stands thus:—Therefore, as by one offense unto all men, unto condemnation; so likewise, by one righteousness unto all men, to justification of life. This is evidently an elliptical sentence, and its full meaning can be gathered only from the context. He who had no particular purpose to serve would, most probably, understand it, from the context, thus:— Therefore, as by one sin all men came into condemnation; so also by one righteous act all men came unto justification of life: which is more fully expressed in the following verse. Now, leaving all particular creeds out of the question, and taking in the scope of the apostle's reasoning in this and the preceding chapter, is not the sense evidently this?—Through the disobedience of Adam, a sentence of condemnation to death, without any promise or hope of a resurrection, passed upon all men; so, by the obedience of Christ unto death, this one grand righteous act, the sentence was so far reversed, that death shall not finally triumph, for all shall again be restored to life. Justice must have its due; and therefore all must die. The mercy of God, in Christ Jesus, shall have its due also; and therefore all shall be put into a salvable state here, and the whole human race shall be raised to life at the great day. Thus both justice and mercy are magnified; and neither is exalted at the expense of the other.

The apostle uses three remarkable words in these three verses:—1. *δικαιωμα*, justification, Romans 5:16. 2. *δικαιοσυνη*, which we render righteousness, Romans 5:17; but is best rendered justification, as expressing that pardon and salvation offered to us in the Gospel: see the note on Romans 1:16. 3. *δικαιωσις*, which is also rendered justification, Romans 5:18.

The first word, *δικαιωμα*, is found in the following places: Luke 1:6; Romans 1:32; 2:26; 5:16, 18; 8:4; Hebrews 9:1, 10; Revelation 15:4; 19:8; to which the reader may refer. *δικαιωμα* signifies, among the Greek writers, the sentence of a judge, acquitting the innocent, condemning and

punishing the guilty; but in the New Testament it signifies whatever God has appointed or sanctioned as a law; and appears to answer to the Hebrew **מִשְׁפַּט יְהוָה** mishpat Yehovah, the statute or judgment, of the Lord; It has evidently this sense in Luke 1:6: Walking in all the commandments and ORDINANCES, **δικαιωμασι**, of the Lord blameless; and it has the like meaning in the principal places referred to above; but in the verse in question it most evidently means absolution, or liberation, from punishment, as it is opposed to **κατακριμα**, condemnation, Romans 5:18. See the note on Romans 1:16; and see Schleusner in voce.

The second word, **δικαιοσυνη**, I have explained at large in Romans 1:16, already referred to.

The third word **δικαιωσις**, is used by the Greek writers, almost universally, to denote the punishment inflicted on a criminal, or the condemnatory sentence itself; but in the New Testament where it occurs only twice, (Romans 4:25, he was raised for our justification, **δικαιωσιν**; and Romans 5:18, unto justification of life, **δικαιωσιν ζωης**,) it evidently signifies the pardon and remission of sins; and seems to be nearly synonymous with **δικαιωμα**. Dr. Taylor thinks that “**δικαιοσυνη** is Gospel pardon and salvation, and has reference to God’s mercy. **δικαιωμα** is our being set quite clear and right; or our being restored to sanctity, delivered from eternal death, and being brought to eternal life; and has reference to the power and guilt of sin. And **δικαιωσις** he thinks may mean no more than our being restored to life at the resurrection.” Taking these in their order, there is: First, pardon of sin. Secondly, purification of heart, and preparation for glory. Thirdly, the resurrection of the body, and its being made like to his glorious body, so as to become a fit tabernacle for the soul in a glorified state for ever and ever.

The same writer observes that, when the apostle speaks of forgiveness of sins simply, he insists on faith as the condition; but here, where he speaks of justification of life, he mentions no condition; and therefore he supposes justification of life, the phrase being understood in a forensic sense, to mean no more than the decree or judgment that determines the resurrection from the dead. This is a favourite point with the doctor, and he argues largely for it: see his notes.

**Verse 19.** *For, as by one man's disobedience*, etc.— The explanation of this verse has been anticipated in the foregoing.

**Verse 20.** *The law entered that (ἵνα) the offense might abound*.— After considering various opinions concerning the true meaning of this verse, (see under Romans 5:12,) I am induced to prefer my own, as being the most simple. By law I understand the Mosaic law. By entering in, *παρεισηλθεν*, or, rather, coming in privily, see Galatians 2:4, (the only place where it occurs besides,) I understand the temporary or limited use of that law, which was, as far as its rites and ceremonies are considered, confined to the Jewish people, and to them only till the Messiah should come; but considered as the moral law, or rule of conscience and life, it has in its spirit and power been slipped in-introduced into every conscience, that sin might abound—that the true nature, deformity, and extent of sin might appear; for by the law is the knowledge of sin: for how can the finer deviations from a straight line be ascertained, without the application of a known straight edge? Without this rule of right, sin can only be known in a sort of general way; the innumerable deviations from positive rectitude can only be known by the application of the righteous statutes of which the law is composed. And it was necessary that this law should be given, that the true nature of sin might be seen, and that men might be the better prepared to receive the Gospel; finding that this law worketh only wrath, i.e. denounces punishment, forasmuch as all have sinned. Now, it is wisely ordered of God, that wherever the Gospel goes there the law goes also; entering every where, that sin may be seen to abound, and that men may be led to despair of salvation in any other way or on any terms but those proposed in the Gospel of Christ. Thus the sinner becomes a true penitent, and is glad, seeing the curse of the law hanging over his soul, to flee for refuge to the hope set before him in the Gospel. On the meaning of *ἵνα*, in various places, see Chrysost. vol. iii. p. 241. See also Hammond on the word in his notes on the New Testament.

*But where sin abounded*— Whether in the world, or in the heart of the individual, being discovered by this most pure and righteous law, grace did much more abound: not only pardon for all that is past is offered by the Gospel, so that all the transgressions for which the soul is condemned to death by the law, are freely and fully forgiven; but also the Holy Spirit, in the abundance of his gifts and graces, is communicated, so as to prepare

the receiver for an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Thus the grace of the Gospel not only redeems from death, and restores to life, but brings the soul into such a relationship with God, and into such a participation of eternal glory, as we have no authority to believe ever would have been the portion even of Adam himself, had he even eternally retained his innocence. Thus, where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound.

**Verse 21. *That as sin hath reigned unto death***— As extensively, as deeply, as universally, as sin, whether implying the act of transgression or the impure principle from which the act proceeds, or both. Hath reigned, subjected the whole earth and all its inhabitants; the whole soul, and all its powers and faculties, unto death, temporal of the body, spiritual of the soul, and eternal of both; even so, as extensively, deeply, and universally might grace reign-filling the whole earth, and pervading, purifying, and refining the whole soul: through righteousness-through this doctrine of free salvation by the blood of the Lamb, and by the principle of holiness transfused through the soul by the Holy Ghost: unto eternal life-the proper object of an immortal spirit's hope, the only sphere where the human intellect can rest, and be happy in the place and state where God is; where he is seen AS HE IS; and where he can be enjoyed with out interruption in an eternal progression of knowledge and beatitude: by Jesus Christ our Lord-as the cause of our salvation, the means by which it is communicated, and the source whence it springs. Thus we find, that the salvation from sin here is as extensive and complete as the guilt and contamination of sin; death is conquered, hell disappointed, the devil confounded, and sin totally destroyed. Here is glorying: To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and has made us kings and priests to God and his Father, be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen. Hallelujah! The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth! Amen and Amen.

WHAT highly interesting and momentous truths does the preceding chapter bring to our view! No less than the doctrine of the fall of man from original righteousness; and the redemption of the world by the incarnation and death of Christ. On the subject of the FALL, though I have spoken much in the notes on Genesis, chap. 3, yet it may be necessary to make a few farther observations:—



1. That all mankind have fallen under the empire of death, through this original transgression, the apostle most positively asserts; and few men who profess to believe the Bible, pretend to dispute. This point is indeed ably stated, argued, and proved by Dr. Taylor, from whose observations the preceding notes are considerably enriched. But there is one point which I think not less evident, which he has not only not included in his argument, but, as far as it came in his way, has argued against it, viz. the degeneracy and moral corruption of the human soul. As no man can account for the death brought into the world but on the ground of this primitive transgression, so none can account for the moral evil that is in the world on any other ground. It is a fact, that every human being brings into the world with him the seeds of dissolution and mortality. Into this state we are fallen, according to Divine revelation, through the one offense of Adam. This fact is proved by the mortality of all men. It is not less a fact, that every man that is born into the world brings with him the seeds of moral evil; these he could not have derived from his Maker; for the most pure and holy God can make nothing impure, imperfect, or unholy. Into this state we are reduced, according to the Scripture, by the transgression of Adam; for by this one man sin entered into the world, as well as death.

2. The fact that all come into the world with sinful propensities is proved by another fact, that every man sins; that sin is his first work, and that no exception to this has ever been noticed, except in the human nature of Jesus Christ; and that exempt case is sufficiently accounted for from this circumstance, that it did not come in the common way of natural generation.

3. As like produces its like, if Adam became mortal and sinful, he could not communicate properties which he did not possess; and he must transmit those which constituted his natural and moral likeness: therefore all his posterity must resemble himself. Nothing less than a constant miraculous energy, presiding over the formation and development of every human body and soul, could prevent the seeds of natural and moral evil from being propagated. That these seeds are not produced in men by their own personal transgressions, is most positively asserted by the apostle in the preceding chapter; and that they exist before the human being is capable of actual transgression, or of the exercise of will and judgment, so as to prefer and determine, is evident to the most superficial observer: 1st,

from the most marked evil propensities of children, long before reason can have any influence or control over passion; and, 2ndly, it is demonstrated by the death of millions in a state of infancy. It could not, therefore, be personal transgression that produced the evil propensities in the one case, nor death in the other.

4. While misery, death, and sin are in the world, we shall have incontrovertible proofs of the fall of man. Men may dispute against the doctrine of original sin; but such facts as the above will be a standing irrefragable argument against every thing that can be advanced against the doctrine itself.

5. The justice of permitting this general infection to become diffused has been strongly oppugned. "Why should the innocent suffer for the guilty?" As God made man to propagate his like on the earth, his transmitting the same kind of nature with which he was formed must be a necessary consequence of that propagation. He might, it is true, have cut off for ever the offending pair; but this, most evidently, did not comport with his creative designs. "But he might have rendered Adam incapable of sin." This does not appear. If he had been incapable of sinning, he would have been incapable of holiness; that is, he could not have been a free agent; or in other words he could not have been an intelligent or intellectual being; he must have been a mass of inert and unconscious matter. "But God might have cut them off and created a new race." He certainly might; and what would have been gained by this? Why, just nothing. The second creation, if of intelligent beings at all, must have been precisely similar to the first; and the circumstances in which these last were to be placed, must be exactly such as infinite wisdom saw to be the most proper for their predecessors, and consequently, the most proper for them. They also must have been in a state of probation; they also must have been placed under a law; this law must be guarded by penal sanctions; the possibility of transgression must be the same in the second case as in the first; and the lapse as probable, because as possible to this second race of human beings as it was to their predecessors. It was better, therefore, to let the same pair continue to fulfill the great end of their creation, by propagating their like upon the earth; and to introduce an antidote to the poison, and by a dispensation as strongly expressive of wisdom as of goodness, to make the ills of life, which were the consequences of their transgression, the means

of correcting the evil, and through the wondrous economy of grace, sanctifying even these to the eternal good of the soul.

6. Had not God provided a Redeemer, he, no doubt, would have terminated the whole mortal story, by cutting off the original transgressors; for it would have been unjust to permit them to propagate their like in such circumstances, that their offspring must be unavoidably and eternally wretched.

God has therefore provided such a Savior, the merit of whose passion and death should apply to every human being, and should infinitely transcend the demerit of the original transgression, and put every soul that received that grace (and ALL may) into a state of greater excellence and glory than that was, or could have been, from which Adam, by transgressing, fell.

7. The state of infants dying before they are capable of hearing the Gospel, and the state of heathens who have no opportunity of knowing how to escape from their corruption and misery, have been urged as cases of peculiar hardship. But, first, there is no evidence in the whole book of God that any child dies eternally for Adam's sin. Nothing of this kind is intimated in the Bible; and, as Jesus took upon him human nature, and condescended to be born of a woman in a state of perfect helpless infancy, he has, consequently, sanctified this state, and has said, without limitation or exception, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. We may justly infer, and all the justice as well as the mercy of the Godhead supports the inference, that all human beings, dying in an infant state, are regenerated by that grace of God which bringeth salvation to all men, Titus 2:11, and go infallibly to the kingdom of heaven. As to the Gentiles, their case is exceedingly clear. The apostle has determined this; see Romans 2:14, 15, and the notes there. He who, in the course of his providence, has withheld from them the letter of his word, has not denied them the light and influence of his SPIRIT; and will judge them in the great day only according to the grace and means of moral improvement with which they have been favored. No man will be finally damned because he was a Gentile, but because he has not made a proper use of the grace and advantages which God had given him. Thus we see that the Judge of all the earth has done right; and we may rest assured that he will eternally act in the same way.

8. The term FALL we use metaphorically, to signify degradation: literally, it signifies stumbling, so as to lose the centre of gravity, or the proper poise of our bodies, in consequence of which we are precipitated on the ground. The term seems to have been borrowed from the **παραπτώμα** of the apostle, Romans 5:15-18, which we translate offense, and which is more literally FALL, from **παρα**, intensive, and **πιπτω**, I fall; a grievous, dangerous, and ruinous fall, and is property applied to transgression and sin in general; as every act is a degradation of the soul, accompanied with hurt, and tending to destruction. The term, in this sense, is still in common use; the degradation of a man in power we term his fall; the impoverishment of a rich man we express in the same way; and when a man of piety and probity is overcome by any act of sin, we say he is fallen; he has descended from his spiritual eminence, is degraded from his spiritual excellence, is impure in his soul, and becomes again exposed to the displeasure of his God.

## CHAPTER 6.

*We must not abuse the boundless goodness of God by continuing in sin, under the wicked persuasion that the more we sin the more the grace of God will abound, 1. For, having been baptized into Christ, we have professed thereby to be dead to sin, 2-4. And to be planted in the likeness of his resurrection, 5. For we profess to be crucified with him, to die and rise again from the dead, 6-11. We should not, therefore, let sin reign in our bodies, but live to the glory of God, 12-14. The Gospel makes no provision for living in sin, any more than the law did; and those who commit sin are the slaves of sin, 15-19. The degrading and afflictive service of sin, and its wages eternal death; the blessed effects of the grace of God in the heart, of which eternal life is the fruit, 20-23.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 6.

The apostle, having proved that salvation, both to Jew and Gentile, must come through the Messiah, and be received by faith only, proceeds in this chapter to show the obligations under which both were laid to live a holy life, and the means and advantages they enjoyed for that purpose. This he does, not only as a thing highly and indispensably necessary in itself-for without holiness none can see the Lord-but to confute a calumny which appears to have been gaining considerable ground even at that time, viz. that the doctrine of justification by faith alone, through the grace of Christ Jesus, rendered obedience to the moral law useless; and that the more evil a man did, the more the grace of God would abound to him, in his redemption from that evil. That this calumny was then propagated we learn from Romans 3:8; and the apostle defends himself against it in the 31st verse of the same, {Romans 3:31} by asserting, that his doctrine, far from making void the law, served to establish it. But in this and the two following chapters he takes up the subject in a regular, formal manner; and shows both Jews and Gentiles that the principles of the Christian religion absolutely require a holy heart and a holy life, and make the amplest provisions for both.

**Verse 1. *Shall we continue in sin***— It is very likely that these were the words of a believing Gentile, who-having as yet received but little instruction, for he is but just brought out of his heathen state to believe in Christ Jesus-might imagine, from the manner in which God had magnified his mercy, in blotting out his sin on his simply believing on Christ, that, supposing he even gave way to the evil propensities of his own heart, his transgressions could do him no hurt now that he was in the favor of God. And we need not wonder that a Gentile, just emerging from the deepest darkness, might entertain such thoughts as these; when we find that eighteen centuries after this, persons have appeared in the most Christian countries of Europe, not merely asking such a question, but defending the doctrine with all their might; and asserting in the most unqualified manner, “that believers were under no obligation to keep the moral law of God; that Christ had kept it for them; that his keeping it was imputed to them; and that God, who had exacted it from Him, who was their surety and representative, would not exact it from them, forasmuch as it would be injustice to require two payments for one debt.” These are the Antinomians who once flourished in this land, and whose race is not yet utterly extinct.

**Verse 2. *God forbid***— *μη γενοιτο*, Let it not be; by no means; far from it; let not such a thing be mentioned!-Any of these is the meaning of the Greek phrase, which is a strong expression of surprise and disapprobation: and is not properly rendered by our God forbid! for, though this may express the same thing, yet it is not proper to make the sacred NAME SO familiar on such occasions.

***How shall we, that are dead to sin***— The phraseology of this verse is common among Hebrews, Greeks, and Latins. To DIE to a thing or person, is to have nothing to do with it or him; to be totally separated from them: and to live to a thing or person is to be wholly given up to them; to have the most intimate connection with them. So Plautus, *Clitell. iii. 1, 16: Nihil mecum tibi, MORTUUS TIBI SUM.* I have nothing to do with thee; I am DEAD to thee. Persa, i. 1, 20: *Mihi quidem tu jam MORTUUS ERAS, quia te non visitavi.* Thou wast DEAD to me because I visited thee not. So AELIAN, *Var. Hist. iii. 13: ὅτι φιλοινωτατον εθνος το των ταπυρων, τοσουτον, ωστε ζην αυτους εν οινω, και το πλειστον του βιου εν τη προς αυτον ομιλια καταναλισκειν.* “The Tapyrians are such lovers of wine,

that they LIVE in wine; and the principal part of their LIFE is DEVOTED to it." They live to wine; they are insatiable drunkards. See more examples in Wetstein and Rosenmuller.

**Verse 3. *Know ye not*,** etc.— Every man who believes the Christian religion, and receives baptism as the proof that he believes it, and has taken up the profession of it, is bound thereby to a life of righteousness. To be baptized into Christ, is to receive the doctrine of Christ crucified, and to receive baptism as a proof of the genuineness of that faith, and the obligation to live according to its precepts.

***Baptized into his death?***— That, as Jesus Christ in his crucifixion died completely, so that no spark of the natural or animal life remained in his body, so those who profess his religion should be so completely separated and saved from sin, that they have no more connection with it, nor any more influence from it, than a dead man has with or from his departed spirit.

**Verse 4. *We are buried with him by baptism into death***— It is probable that the apostle here alludes to the mode of administering baptism by immersion, the whole body being put under the water, which seemed to say, the man is drowned, is dead; and, when he came up out of the water, he seemed to have a resurrection to life; the man is risen again; he is alive! He was, therefore, supposed to throw off his old Gentile state as he threw off his clothes, and to assume a new character, as the baptized generally put on new or fresh garments. I say it is probable that the apostle alludes to this mode of immersion; but it is not absolutely certain that he does so, as some do imagine; for, in the next verse, our being incorporated into Christ by baptism is also denoted by our being planted, or rather, grafted together in the likeness of his death; and Noah's ark floating upon the water, and sprinkled by the rain from heaven, is a figure corresponding to baptism, 1 Peter 3:20, 21; but neither of these gives us the same idea of the outward form as burying. We must be careful, therefore, not to lay too much stress on such circumstances. Drowning among the ancients was considered the most noble kind of death; some think that the apostle may allude to this. The grand point is, that this baptism represents our death to sin, and our obligation to walk in newness of life: without which, of what use can it or any other rite be?

***Raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father***— From this we learn, that as it required the glory of the Father, that is, his glorious energy, to raise up from the grave the dead body of Christ, so it requires the same glorious energy to quicken the dead soul of a sinner, and enable him to walk in newness of life.

**Verse 5. *For if we have been planted together***— *συμφυτοὶ γεγόναμεν*. Dr. Taylor observes, that our translation does not completely express the apostle's meaning. *τα συμφυτα* are such plants as grow, the one upon and in the other, deriving sap and nourishment from it, as the mistletoe upon the oak, or the scion upon the stock in which it is grafted. He would therefore translate the words: For if we have been growers together with Christ in the likeness of his death, (or in that which is like his death,) we shall be also growers together with him in the likeness of his resurrection; or in that which is like his resurrection. He reckons it a beautiful metaphor, taken from grafting, or making the scion grow together with a new stock.

But if we take the word planted in its usual sense, we shall find it to be a metaphor as beautiful and as expressive as the former. When the seed or plant is inserted in the ground, it derives from that ground all its nourishment, and all those juices by which it becomes developed; by which it increases in size, grows firm, strong, and vigorous; and puts forth its leaves, blossoms, and fruit. The death of Jesus Christ is represented as the cause whence his fruitfulness, as the author of eternal salvation to mankind is derived; and genuine believers in him are represented as being planted in his death, and growing out of it; deriving their growth, vigor, firmness, beauty, and fruitfulness from it. In a word, it is by his death that Jesus Christ redeems a lost world; and it is from that vicarious death that believers derive that pardon and holiness which makes them so happy in themselves, and so useful to others. This sacrificial death is the soil in which they are planted; and from which they derive their life, fruitfulness, and their final glory.

**Verse 6. *Our old man is crucified with him***— This seems to be a farther extension of the same metaphor. When a seed is planted in the earth, it appears as if the whole body of it perished. All seeds, as they are commonly termed, are composed of two parts; the germ, which contains the rudiments of the future plant; and the lobes, or body of the seed,



which by their decomposition in the ground, become the first nourishment to the extremely fine and delicate roots of the embryo plant, and support it till it is capable of deriving grosser nourishment from the common soil. The body dies that the germ may live. Parables cannot go on all fours; and in metaphors or figures, there is always some one (or more) remarkable property by which the doctrine intended is illustrated. To apply this to the purpose in hand: how is the principle of life which Jesus Christ has implanted in us to be brought into full effect, vigor, and usefulness? By the destruction of the body of sin, our old man, our wicked, corrupt, and fleshly self, is to be crucified; to be as truly slain as Christ was crucified; that our souls may as truly be raised from a death of sin to a life of righteousness, as the body of Christ was raised from the grave, and afterwards ascended to the right hand of God. But how does this part of the metaphor apply to Jesus Christ? Plainly and forcibly. Jesus Christ took on him a body; a body in the likeness of sinful flesh, Romans 8:3; and gave up that body to death; through which death alone an atonement was made for sin, and the way laid open for the vivifying Spirit, to have the fullest access to, and the most powerful operation in, the human heart. Here, the body of Christ dies that he may be a quickening Spirit to mankind. Our body of sin is destroyed by this quickening Spirit, that henceforth we should live unto Him who died and rose again. Thus the metaphor, in all its leading senses, is complete, and applies most forcibly to the subject in question. We find that *παλαίος άνθρωπος*, the old man, used here, and in Ephesians 4:22, and Colossians 3:9, is the same as the flesh with its affections and lusts, Galatians 5:24; and the body of the sins of the flesh, Colossians 2:11; and the very same which the Jewish writers term *אדם הקדמוני*, Adam hakkadmoni, the old Adam; and which they interpret by *יצר הרע* yetsar hara, “evil concupiscence,” the same which we mean by indwelling sin, or the infection of our nature, in consequence of the fall. From all which we may learn that the design of God is to counterwork and destroy the very spirit and soul of sin, that we shall no longer serve it, *δουλεύειν*, no longer be its slaves. Nor shall it any more be capable of performing its essential functions than a dead body can perform the functions of natural life.

**Verse 7. *He that is dead is freed from sin.***— *δεδικαιώται*, literally, is justified from sin; or, is freed or delivered from it. Does not this simply

mean, that the man who has received Christ Jesus by faith, and has been, through believing, made a partaker of the Holy Spirit, has had his old man, all his evil propensities destroyed; so that he is not only justified freely from all sin, but wholly sanctified unto God? The context shows that this is the meaning. Every instance of violence is done to the whole scope and design of the apostle, by the opinion, that “this text is a proof that believers are not fully saved from sin in this life, because only he that is dead is freed from sin.” Then death is his justifier and deliverer! Base and abominable insinuation, highly derogatory to the glory of Christ! Dr. Dodd, in his note on the preceding verse, after some inefficient criticism on the word *καταργηθη*, destroyed, which, he thinks, should be rendered enervated, has the following most unevangelical sentiment: “The body of sin in believers is, indeed, an enfeebled, conquered, and deposed tyrant, and the stroke of death finishes its destruction.” So then, the death of Christ and the influences of the Holy Spirit were only sufficient to depose and enfeeble the tyrant sin; but OUR death must come in to effect his total destruction! Thus our death is, at least partially, our Savior; and thus, that which was an effect of sin (for sin entered into the world, and death by sin) becomes the means of finally destroying it! That is, the effect of a cause can become so powerful, as to react upon that cause and produce its annihilation! The divinity and philosophy of this sentiment are equally absurd. It is the blood of Christ alone that cleanses from all unrighteousness; and the sanctification of a believer is no more dependent on death than his justification. If it he said, “that believers do not cease from sin till they die;” I have only to say, they are such believers as do not make a proper use of their faith; and what can be said more of the whole herd of transgressors and infidels? They cease to sin, when they cease to breathe. If the Christian religion bring no other privileges than this to its upright followers, well may we ask, wherein doth the wise man differ from the fool, for they have both one end? But the whole Gospel teaches a contrary doctrine.

**Verse 8. *Now if we be dead with Christ***— According to what is stated in the preceding verses. See particularly on the 5th verse. {Romans 6:5}

**Verse 9. *Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more***— So we, believing in Christ Jesus, and having a death unto sin, and a life unto righteousness, should sin no more. If we be risen indeed with Christ, we

should seek the things above, and set our affections on things above, and not on the earth. The man who walks in humble, loving obedience, to an indwelling Christ, sin has no more dominion over his soul than death has over the immortal and glorified body of his Redeemer.

**Verse 10. *He died unto sin once***— On this clause Rosenmuller speaks thus: “**τη αμαρτια απεθανεν εφπαξ**: propter peccatum mortuus est semel, et quidem misera morte. **τη αμαρτια**, i.e. **επερ της αμαρτιας**, ad expianda peccata; res ipsa docet aliter homines **αποθνησκειν τη αμαρτια**, aliter Christum: amat Paulus parallelismum, in quo interpretando multa cautione opus est.” “He died unto sin once: i.e. he died on account of sin, and truly a miserable death. **τη αμαρτια**, is the same as **υπερ της αμαρτιας**, for the expiation of sin. Common sense teaches us that men die to sin in one sense; Christ in another: St. Paul loves parallelisms, in the interpretation of which there is need of much caution.” From the whole scope of the apostle’s discourse it is plain that he considers the death of Christ as a death or sacrifice for sin; a sin-offering: in this sense no man has ever died for sin, or ever can die.

**Verse 11. *Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead***— Die as truly unto sin, as he died for sin. Live as truly unto God, as he lives with God. This seems to be the spirit of the apostle’s meaning.

**Verse 12. *Let not sin therefore reign***— This is a prosopopoeia, or personification. Sin is represented as a king, ruler, or tyrant, who has the desires of the mind and the members of the body under his control so that by influencing the passions he governs the body. Do not let sin reign, do not let him work; that is, let him have no place, no being in your souls; because, wherever he is he governs, less or more: and indeed sin is not sin without this. How is sin known? By evil influences in the mind, and evil acts in the life. But do not these influences and these acts prove his dominion? Certainly, the very existence of an evil thought to which passion or appetite attaches itself, is a proof that there sin has dominion; for without dominion such passions could not be excited. Wherever sin is felt, there sin has dominion; for sin is sin only as it works in action or passion against God. Sin cannot be a quiescent thing: if it do not work it does not exist.

***That ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.***— *αυτη εν ταις επιθυμιαις αυτου*. This clause is wanting in the most ancient and reputable MSS. and in the principal versions. Griesbach has left it out of his text; and Professor White says, Certissime delenda: “These words should certainly be expunged” they are not necessary to the apostle’s argument; it was enough to say, Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it. If it be there it will reign there; and its reign supposes, necessarily, the subjection of that in which it reigns. A king reigns when his laws are enforced, and the people obey them. When there is no executive government there is no reign. There may be a royal shadow there, but there is no king.

**Verse 13. *Neither yield ye your members***— Do not yield to temptation. It is no sin to be tempted, the sin lies in yielding. While the sin exists only in Satan’s solicitation, it is the devil’s sin, not ours: when we yield, we make the devil’s sin our own: then we ENTER INTO temptation. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Satan himself cannot force you to sin: till he wins over your will, he cannot bring you into subjection. You may be tempted; but yield not to the temptation.

***Yield yourselves unto God***— Let God have your wills; keep them ever on his side; there they are safe, and there they will be active. Satan cannot force the will, and God will not. Indeed it would cease to be will were it forced by either: it is essential to its being that it be free.

***And your members as instruments***, etc.— Let soul and body be employed in the service of your Maker; let him have your hearts; and with them, your heads, your hands, your feet. Think and devise what is pure; speak what is true, and to the use of edifying; work that which is just and good; and walk steadily in the way that leads to everlasting felicity. Be holy within and holy without.

**Verse 14. *Sin shall not have dominion over you***— God delivers you from it; and if you again become subject to it, it will be the effect of your own choice or negligence.

***Ye are not under the law***— That law which exacts obedience, without giving power to obey; that condemns every transgression and every

unholy thought without providing for the extirpation of evil or the pardon of sin.

***But under grace.***— Ye are under the merciful and beneficent dispensation of the Gospel, that, although it requires the strictest conformity to the will of God, affords sufficient power to be thus conformed; and, in the death of Christ, has provided pardon for all that is past, and grace to help in every time of need.

**Verse 15. *Shall we sin because we are not under the law***— Shall we abuse our high and holy calling because we are not under that law which makes no provision for pardon, but are under that Gospel which has opened the fountain to wash away all sin and defilement? Shall we sin because grace abounds? Shall we do evil that good may come of it? This be far from us!

**Verse 16. *To whom ye yield yourselves***— Can you suppose that you should continue to be the servants of Christ if ye give way to sin? Is he not the master who exacts the service, and to whom the service is performed? Sin is the service of Satan; righteousness the service of Christ. If ye sin ye are the servants of Satan, and not the servants of God.

The word *δουλος*, which we translate servant, properly signifies slave; and a slave among the Greeks and Romans was considered as his master's property, and he might dispose of him as he pleased. Under a bad master, the lot of the slave was most oppressive and dreadful; his ease and comfort were never consulted; he was treated worse than a beast; and, in many cases, his life hung on the mere caprice of the master. This state is the state of every poor, miserable sinner; he is the slave of Satan, and his own evil lusts and appetites are his most cruel task-masters. The same word is applied to the servants of Christ, the more forcibly to show that they are their Master's property; and that, as he is infinitely good and benevolent, therefore his service must be perfect freedom. Indeed, he exacts no obedience from them which he does not turn to their eternal advantage; for this master has no self-interest to secure. See on Romans 1:1.

**Verse 17. *But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin***— This verse should be read thus: But thanks be to God that, although ye were the

servants of sin, nevertheless ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine that was delivered unto you; or, that mould of teaching into which ye were cast. The apostle does not thank God that they were sinners; but that, although they were such, they had now received and obeyed the Gospel. The Hebrew phrase, Isaiah 12:1, is exactly the same as that of the apostle here: In that day thou shalt say, I will praise thee, for thou wast angry with me: that is, although thou wast angry with me, thou hast turned away thy wrath, etc.

***That form of doctrine***— *τυπον διδαχης*; here Christianity is represented under the notion of a mould, or die, into which they were cast, and from which they took the impression of its excellence. The figure upon this die is the image of God, righteousness and true holiness, which was stamped on their souls in believing the Gospel and receiving the Holy Ghost. The words *εις ον παρεδοθητε τυπον* refer to the melting of metal; which, when it is liquified, is cast into the mould, that it may receive the impression that is sunk or cut in the mould; and therefore the words may be literally translated, into which mould of doctrine ye have been cast. They were melted down under the preaching of the word, and then were capable of receiving the stamp of its purity.

**Verse 18. *Being then made free from sin***— *ελευθερωθεντες* is a term that refers to the manumission of a slave. They were redeemed from the slavery of sin, and became the servants of righteousness. Here is another prosopopoeia: both sin and righteousness are personified: sin can enjoin no good and profitable work; righteousness can require none that is unjust or injurious.

**Verse 19. *I speak after the manner of men***— This phrase is often used by the Greek writers to signify what was easy to be comprehended; what was ad captum vulgi, level with common understandings, delivered in a popular style; what was different from the high flights of the poets, and the studied sublime obscurity of the philosophers.

***Because of the infirmity of your flesh***— As if he had said: I make use of metaphors and figures connected with well-known natural things; with your trades and situation in life; because of your inexperience in heavenly things, of which ye are only just beginning to know the nature and the names.

***Servants to uncleanness***, etc.— These different expressions show how deeply immersed in and enslaved by sin these Gentiles were before their conversion to Christianity. Several of the particulars are given in the first chapter of this epistle.

**Verse 20. *Ye were free from righteousness***.— These two servitudes are incompatible; if we cannot serve God and Mammon, surely we cannot serve Christ and Satan. We must be either sinners or saints; God's servants or the devil's slaves. It cannot be as a good mistaken man has endeavored to sing:—

*“To good and evil equal bent,  
I'm both a devil and a saint.”*

I know not whether it be possible to paint the utter prevalence of sin in stronger colors than the apostle does here, by saying they were FREE from righteousness. It seems tantamount to that expression in Genesis, Genesis 6:5, where, speaking of the total degeneracy of the human race, the writer says, Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. They were all corrupt; they were altogether abominable: there was none that did good; no, not one.

**Verse 21. *What fruit had ye then in those things***— God designs that every man shall reap benefit by his service. What benefit have ye derived from the service of sin?

***Whereof ye are now ashamed?***— Ye blush to remember your former life. It was scandalous to yourselves, injurious to others, and highly provoking to God.

***The end of those things is death***.— Whatever sin may promise of pleasure or advantage, the end to which it necessarily tends is the destruction of body and soul.

**Verse 22. *But now being made free from sin***— As being free from righteousness is the finished character of a sinner, so being made free from sin is the finished character of a genuine Christian.

***And become servants to God***— They were transferred from the service of one master to that of another: they were freed from the slavery of sin, and engaged in the service of God.

*Fruit unto holiness*— Holiness of heart was the principle; and righteousness of life the fruit.

**Verse 23. *For the wages of sin is death***— The second death, everlasting perdition. Every sinner earns this by long, sore, and painful service. O! what pains do men take to get to hell! Early and late they toil at sin; and would not Divine justice be in their debt, if it did not pay them their due wages?

*But the gift of God is eternal life*— A man may MERIT hell, but he cannot MERIT heaven. The apostle does not say that the wages of righteousness is eternal life: no, but that this eternal life, even to the righteous, is **το χαρισμα του θεου**, THE gracious GIFT of GOD. And even this gracious gift comes through Jesus Christ our Lord. He alone has procured it; and it is given to all those who find redemption in his blood. A sinner goes to hell because he deserves it; a righteous man goes to heaven because Christ has died for him, and communicated that grace by which his sin is pardoned and his soul made holy. The word **οψωνια**, which we here render wages, signified the daily pay of a Roman soldier. So every sinner has a daily pay, and this pay is death; he has misery because he sins. Sin constitutes hell; the sinner has a hell in his own bosom; all is confusion and disorder where God does not reign: every indulgence of sinful passions increases the disorder, and consequently the misery of a sinner. If men were as much in earnest to get their souls saved as they are to prepare them for perdition, heaven would be highly peopled, and devils would be their own companions. And will not the living lay this to heart?

1. IN the preceding chapter we see the connection that subsists between the doctrines of the Gospel and the practice of Christianity. A doctrine is a teaching, instruction, or information concerning some truth that is to be believed, as essential to our salvation. But all teaching that comes from God, necessarily leads to him. That Christ died for our sins and rose again for our justification, is a glorious doctrine of the Gospel. But this is of no use to him who does not die to sin, rise in the likeness of his resurrection, and walk in newness of life: this is the use that should be made of the doctrine. Every doctrine has its use, and the use of it consists in the practice founded on it. We hear there is a free pardon—we go to God and receive it; we hear that we may be made holy—we apply for the sanctifying



Spirit; we hear there is a heaven of glory, into which the righteous alone shall enter—we watch and pray, believe, love, and obey, in order that, when he doth appear, we may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless. Those are the doctrines; these are the uses or practice founded on those doctrines.

2. It is strange that there should be found a person believing the whole Gospel system, and yet living in sin! SALVATION FROM SIN is the long-continued sound, as it is the spirit and design, of the Gospel. Our Christian name, our baptismal covenant, our profession of faith in Christ, and avowed belief in his word, all call us to this: can it be said that we have any louder calls than these? Our self-interest, as it respects the happiness of a godly life, and the glories of eternal blessedness; the pains and wretchedness of a life of sin, leading to the worm that never dies and the fire that is not quenched; second most powerfully the above calls. Reader, lay these things to heart, and: answer this question to God; How shall I escape, if I neglect so great salvation? And then, as thy conscience shall answer, let thy mind and thy hands begin to act.

## CHAPTER 7.

*The law has power over a man as long as he lives, 1. And a wife is bound to her husband only as long as he lives, 2, 3. Christian believers are delivered from the Mosaic law by Christ Jesus, and united to God, 5-7. By the law is the knowledge of sin, 8. But it gives no power over it, 9-11. Yet it is holy, just, and good, 12. How it convinces of sin, and brings into bondage, 13-24. No deliverance from its curse but by Jesus Christ, 25.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 7.

The apostle having, in the preceding chapter, shown the converted Gentiles the obligations they were under to live a holy life, addresses himself here to the Jews who might hesitate to embrace the Gospel; lest, by this means, they should renounce the law, which might appear to them as a renunciation of their allegiance to God. As they rested in the law, as sufficient for justification and sanctification, it was necessary to convince them of their mistake. That the law was insufficient for their justification the apostle had proved, in chapters iii., iv., and v.; that it is insufficient for their sanctification he shows in this chapter; and introduces his discourse by showing that a believing Jew is discharged from his obligations to the law, and is at liberty to come under another and much happier constitution, viz. that of the Gospel of Christ, Romans 7:1-4. In Romans 7:5 he gives a general description of the state of a Jew, in servitude to sin, considered as under mere law. In Romans 7:6 he gives a summary account of the state of a Christian, or believing Jew, and the advantages he enjoys under the Gospel. Upon Romans 7:5 he comments, from Romans 7:7-25, and upon Romans 7:6 he comments, Romans 8:1-11.

In explaining his position in Romans 7:5 he shows: 1. That the law reaches to all the branches and latent principles of sin, Romans 7:7. That it subjected the sinner to death, Romans 7:8-12, without the expectation of pardon. 3. He shows the reason why the Jew was put under it, Romans 7:13. 4. He proves that the law, considered as a rule of action, though it was spiritual, just, holy, and good in itself, yet was insufficient for

sanctification, or for freeing a man from the power of inbred sin. For, as the prevalency of sensual appetites cannot wholly extinguish the voice of reason and conscience, a man may acknowledge the law to be holy, just, and good, and yet his passions reign within him, keeping him in the most painful and degrading servitude, while the law supplied no power to deliver him from them, Romans 7:14-24, as that power can only be supplied by the grace of Jesus Christ, Romans 7:25. See Taylor.

**Verse 1. *For I speak to them that know the law***— This is a proof that the apostle directs this part of his discourse to the Jews.

*As long as he liveth?*— Or, as long as It liveth; law does not extend its influence to the dead, nor do abrogated laws bind. It is all the same whether we understand these words as speaking of a law abrogated, so that it cannot command; or of its objects being dead, so that it has none to bind. In either case the law has no force.

**Verse 2. *For the woman which hath a husband***— The apostle illustrates his meaning by a familiar instance. A married woman is bound to her husband while he lives; but when her husband is dead she is discharged from the law by which she was bound to him alone.

**Verse 3. *So then, if, while her husband liveth***— The object of the apostle's similitude is to show that each party is equally bound to the other; but that the death of either dissolves the engagement.

*So-she is no adulteress, though she be married to another*— And do not imagine that this change would argue any disloyalty in you to your Maker; for, as he has determined that this law of ordinances shall cease, you are no more bound to it than a woman is to a deceased husband, and are as free to receive the Gospel of Christ as a woman in such circumstances would be to remarry.

**Verse 4. *Wherefore, my brethren***— This is a parallel case. You were once under the law of Moses, and were bound by its injunctions; but now ye are become dead to that law—a modest, inoffensive mode of speech, for, The law, which was once your husband, is dead; God has determined that it shall be no longer in force; so that now, as a woman whose husband is dead is freed from the law of that husband, or from her conjugal vow, and may legally be married to another, so God, who gave the law under which

ye have hitherto lived, designed that it should be in force only till the advent of the Messiah; that advent has taken place, the law has consequently ceased, and now ye are called to take on you the yoke of the Gospel, and lay down the yoke of the law; and it is the design of God that you should do so.

***That ye should be married to another—who is raised from the dead***— As Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, the object of God in giving the law was to unite you to Christ; and, as he has died, he has not only abolished that law which condemns every transgressor to death, without any hope of a revival, but he has also made that atonement for sin, by his own death, which is represented in the sacrifices prescribed by the law. And as Jesus Christ is risen again from the dead, he has thereby given the fullest proof that by his death he has procured the resurrection of mankind, and made that atonement required by the law. That we should bring forth fruit unto God—we, Jews, who believe in Christ, have, in consequence of our union with him, received the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit; so that we bring forth that fruit of holiness unto God which, without this union, it would be impossible for us to produce. Here is a delicate allusion to the case of a promising and numerous progeny from a legitimate and happy marriage.

**Verse 5. *For, when we were in the flesh***— When we were without the Gospel, in our carnal and unregenerated state, though believing in the law of Moses, and performing the rites and offices of our religion.

***The motions of sins, which were by the law***— τα παθηματα των αμαρτιων, the passions of sins, the evil propensities to sins; to every particular sin there is a propensity: one propensity does not excite to all kinds of sinful acts; hence the apostle uses the plural number, the PASSIONS or propensities of SINS; sins being not more various than their propensities in the unregenerate heart, which excite to them. These παθηματα, propensities, constitute the fallen nature; they are the disease of the heart, the pollution and corruption of the soul.

***Did work in our members***— The evil propensity acts εν τοις μελεσιν, in the whole nervous and muscular system, applying that stimulus to every part which is necessary to excite them to action.

***To bring forth fruit unto death.***— To produce those acts of transgression which subject the sinner to death, temporal and eternal. When the apostle says, the motion of sin which were by the law, he points out a most striking and invariable characteristic of sin, viz. its rebellious nature; it ever acts against law, and the most powerfully against known law. Because the law requires obedience, therefore it will transgress. The law is equally against evil passions and evil actions, and both these exert themselves against it. So, these motions which were by the law, became roused into the most powerful activity by the prohibitions of the law. They were comparatively dormant till the law said, thou shalt NOT do this, thou shalt Do that; then the rebellious principle in the evil propensity became roused, and acts of transgression and omissions of duty were the immediate consequences.

**Verse 6. *But now we are delivered from the law***— We, who have believed in Christ Jesus, are delivered from that yoke by which we were bound, which sentenced every transgressor to perdition, but provided no pardon even for the penitent, and no sanctification for those who are weary of their inbred corruptions.

***That being dead wherein we were held***— To us believers in Christ this commandment is abrogated; we are transferred to another constitution; that law which kills ceases to bind us; it is dead to us who have believed in Christ Jesus, who is the end of the law for justification and salvation to every one that believes.

***That we should serve in newness of spirit***— We are now brought under a more spiritual dispensation; now we know the spiritual import of all the Mosaic precepts. We see that the law referred to the Gospel, and can only be fulfilled by the Gospel.

***The oldness of the letter.***— The merely literal rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices are now done away; and the newness of the spirit, the true intent and meaning of all are now fully disclosed; so that we are got from an imperfect state into a state of perfection and excellence. We sought justification and sanctification, pardon and holiness, by the law, and have found that the law could not give them: we have sought these in the Gospel scheme, and we have found them. We serve God now, not according to the old literal sense, but in the true spiritual meaning.

**Verse 7. *Is the law sin?***— The apostle had said, Romans 7:6: The motions of sins, which were by the law, did bring forth fruit unto death; and now he anticipates an objection, “Is therefore the law sin?” To which he answers, as usual, *μη γενοιτο*, by no means. Law is only the means of disclosing; this sinful propensity, not of producing it; as a bright beam of the sun introduced into a room shows; millions of motes which appear to be dancing in it in all directions; but these were not introduced by the light: they were there before, only there was not light enough to make them manifest; so the evil propensity was there before, but there was not light sufficient to discover it.

***I had not known sin, but by the law***— Mr. Locke and Dr. Taylor have properly remarked the skill used by St. Paul in dexterously avoiding, as much as possible, the giving offense to the Jews: and this is particularly evident in his use of the word I in this place. In the beginning of the chapter, where he mentions their knowledge of the law, he says YE; in {Romans 7:4} the 4th verse he joins himself with them, and says we; but here, and so to the end of the chapter, where he represents the power of sin and the inability of the law to subdue it, he appears to leave them out, and speaks altogether in the first person, though it is plain he means all those who are under the law. So, Romans 3:7, he uses the singular pronoun, why am I judged a sinner? when he evidently means the whole body of unbelieving Jews.

There is another circumstance in which his address is peculiarly evident; his demonstrating the insufficiency of the law under color of vindicating it. He knew that the Jew would take fire at the least reflection on the law, which he held in the highest veneration; and therefore he very naturally introduces him catching at that expression, Romans 7:5, the motions of sins, which were by the law, or, notwithstanding the law. “What!” says this Jew, “do you vilify the law, by charging it with favoring sin?” By no means, says the apostle; I am very far from charging the law with favoring sin. The law is holy, and the commandment is holy, just, and good, Romans 7:12. Thus he writes in vindication of the law; and yet at the same time shows: 1. That the law requires the most extensive obedience, discovering and condemning sin in all its most secret and remote branches, Romans 7:7. 2. That it gives sin a deadly force, subjecting every transgression to the penalty of death, Romans 7:8-14. And yet, 3.

supplies neither help nor hope to the sinner, but leaves him under the power of sin, and the sentence of death, Romans 7:14, etc. This, says Dr. Taylor, is the most ingenious turn of writing I ever met with. We have another instance of the same sort, Romans 13:1-7.

It is not likely that a dark, corrupt human heart can discern the will of God. His law is his will. It recommends what is just, and right, and good and forbids what is improper, unjust, and injurious. If God had not revealed himself by this law, we should have done precisely what many nations of the earth have done, who have not had this revelation—put darkness for light, and sin for acts of holiness. While the human heart is its own measure it will rate its workings according to its own propensities; for itself is its highest rule. But when God gives a true insight of his own perfections, to be applied as a rule both of passion and practice, then sin is discovered, and discovered too, to be exceedingly sinful. So strong propensities, because they appear to be inherent in our nature, would have passed for natural and necessary operations; and their sinfulness would not have been discovered, if the law had not said, Thou shalt not covet; and thus determined that the propensity itself, as well as its outward operations, is sinful. The law is the straight edge which determines the quantum of obliquity in the crooked line to which it is applied.

It is natural for man to do what is unlawful, and to desire especially to do that which is forbidden. The heathens have remarked this propensity in man.

Thus LIVY, xxxiv. 4:—

*Luxuria-ipsis vinculis, sicut fera bestia, irritata.*

*“Luxury, like a wild beast, is irritated by its very bonds.”*

*Audax omnia perpeti  
Gens humana ruit per vetitum; nefas.*

*“The presumptuous human race obstinately rush into prohibited acts of wickedness.”*

*HOR. Carm. lib. i. Od. iii. ver. 25.*

And OVID, Amor. lib. ii. Eleg. xix. ver. 3:—

Quod licet, ingratum est; quod non licet, acrius urit.

*“What is lawful is insipid; the strongest propensity  
is excited towards that which is prohibited.”*

And again, Ib. lib. iii. E. iv. ver. 17:—

*Nitimur in vetitum semper, cupimusque negata.*

*“Vice is provoked by every strong restraint,  
Sick men long most to drink, who know they mayn’t.”*

The same poet delivers the same sentiment in another place:—

*Acrior admonitu est, irritaturque retenta  
Et crescit rabies: remoraminaque ipsa nocebant.  
METAM. lib. iii. ver. 566.*

“Being admonished, he becomes the more obstinate; and his fierceness is irritated by restraints. Prohibitions become incentives to greater acts of vice.”

But it is needless to multiply examples; this most wicked principle of a sinful, fallen nature, has been felt and acknowledged by ALL mankind.

**Verse 8. *Sin, taking occasion by the commandment***— I think the pointing, both in this and in the 11th verse, to be wrong: the comma should be after occasion, and not after commandment. But sin taking occasion, wrought in me by this commandment all manner of concupiscence. There are different opinions concerning the meaning of the word **αφορμη**, which we here translate occasion. Dr. Waterland translates the clause, Sin, taking ADVANTAGE. Dr. Taylor contends that all commentators have mistaken the meaning of it, and that it should be rendered having received FORCE. For this acceptation of the word I can find no adequate authority except in its etymology—**απο**, from, and **ορμη**, impetus. The word appears to signify, in general, whatsoever is necessary for the completion or accomplishment of any particular purpose. Xenophon uses **αφορμαι εις τον βιον** to signify whatever is necessary for the support of life. There is a personification in the text: sin is, represented as a murderer watching for life, and snatching at every means and embracing every opportunity to carry his fell purpose into effect. The miserable sinner has a murderer, sin, within him; this murderer can only destroy life in certain circumstances; finding that the law condemns the



object of his cruelty to death, he takes occasion from this to work in the soul all manner of concupiscence, evil and irregular desires and appetites of every kind, and, by thus increasing the evil, exposes the soul to more condemnation; and thus it is represented as being slain, Romans 7:11. That is, the law, on the evidence of those sinful dispositions, and their corresponding practices, condemns the sinner to death: so that he is dead in law. Thus the very prohibition, as we have already seen in the preceding verse, becomes the instrument of exciting the evil propensity; for, although a sinner has the general propensity to do what is evil, yet he seems to feel most delight in transgressing known law: *stat pro ratione voluntas*; "I will do it, because I will."

***For without the law, sin was dead.***— Where there is no law there is no transgression; for sin is the transgression of the law; and no fault can be imputed unto death, where there is no statute by which such a fault is made a capital offense.

Dr. Taylor thinks that *χωρις νομον*, without the law, means the time before the giving of the law from Mount Sinai, which took in the space of 430 years, during which time the people were under the Abrahamic covenant of grace; and without the law that was given on Mount Sinai, the sting of death, which is sin, had not power to slay the sinner; for, from the time that Adam sinned, the law was not re-enacted till it was given by Moses, Romans 5:13. The Jew was then alive, because he was not under the law subjecting him to death for his transgressions; but when the commandment came, with the penalty of death annexed, sin revived, and the Jew died. Then the sting of death acquired life; and the Jew, upon the first transgression, was dead in law. Thus sin, the sting of death, received force or advantage to destroy by the commandment, Romans 7:8, 11.

***All manner of concupiscence.***— It showed what was evil and forbade it; and then the principle of rebellion, which seems essential to the very nature of sins rose up against the prohibition; and he was the more strongly incited to disobey in proportion as obedience was enjoined. Thus the apostle shows that the law had authority to prohibit, condemn, and destroy; but no power to pardon sin, root out enmity, or save the soul.

The word *επιθυμια*, which we render concupiscence, signifies simply strong desire of any kind; but in the New Testament, it is generally taken

to signify irregular and unholy desires. Sin in the mind is the desire to do, or to be, what is contrary to the holiness and authority of GOD.

***For without the law, sin was dead.***— This means, according to Dr. Taylor's hypothesis, the time previous to the giving of the law. See before. But it seems also consistent with the apostle's meaning, to interpret the place as implying the time in which Paul, in his unconverted Jewish state, had not the proper knowledge of the law-while he was unacquainted with its spirituality. He felt evil desire, but he did not know the evil of it; he did not consider that the law tried the heart and its workings, as well as outward actions. This is farther explained in the next verse.

**Verse 9. *I was alive without the law once***— Dr. Whitby paraphrases the verse thus:—"For the seed of Abraham was alive without the law once, before the law was given, I being not obnoxious to death for that to which the law had not threatened death; but when the commandment came, forbidding it under that penalty, sin revived, and I died; i.e. it got strength to draw me to sin, and to condemn me to death. Sin is, in Scripture, represented as an enemy that seeks our ruin and destruction; and takes all occasions to effect it. It is here said to war against the mind, Romans 7:23; elsewhere, to war against the soul, 1 Peter 2:11; to surround and beset us, Hebrews 12:1; to bring us into bondage and subjection, and get the dominion over us, Romans 6:12; to entice us, and so to work our death, James 1:14-16; and to do all that Satan, the grand enemy of mankind, doth, by tempting us to the commission of it. Whence Chrysostom, upon those words, Hebrews 12:4: Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, **προς την αμαρτιαν αςταγωνιζομενοι**, striving against sin; represents sin as an armed and flagrant adversary. When, therefore, it finds a law which threatens death to the violater of it, it takes occasion thence more earnestly to tempt and allure to the violation of it, that so it may more effectually subject us to death and condemnation on that account; for the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, condemning us to death for transgressing it. Thus, when God had forbidden, on pain of death, the eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge, Satan thence took occasion to tempt our first parents to transgress, and so slew them, or made them subject to death; **εξηπατησε**, he deceived them, Genesis 3:13; 1 Timothy 2:14; which is the word used Romans 7:11. The phrase, without the law,

sin was dead, means, that sin was then (before the law was given) comparatively dead, as to its power of condemning to death; and this sense the antithesis requires; without the law, *ἁμαρτία νεκρά, ἐγὼ δὲ ἐζῶν*, sin was dead, but I was living; but when the commandment came, (i.e. the law,) sin revived, and I died. How were men living before the law, but because then no law condemned them? Sin, therefore, must be then dead, as to its condemning power. How did they die when the law came but by the law condemning them to death? Sin therefore revived, then, as to its power of condemning, which it received first from the sin of Adam, which brought death into the world; and next, from the law of Moses, which entered that the offense might abound, and reign more unto death, Romans 5:20, 21. For though sin was in the world from Adam to Moses, or until the law was given, yet it was not imputed unto death, when there was no law that did threaten death; so that death reigned from that interval by virtue of Adam's sin alone; even over them who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, i.e. against a positive law, forbidding it under the penalty of death; which law being delivered by Moses, sin revived; i.e. it had again its force to condemn men as before to death, by virtue of a law which threatened death. And in this sense the apostle seems to say, Galatians 3:19, the law was added because of transgressions, to convince us of the wrath and punishment due to them; and that the law, therefore, worketh wrath, because where no law is there is no transgression, Romans 4:15, subjecting us to wrath; or no such sense of the Divine wrath as where a plain Divine law, threatening death and condemnation, is violated." See Whitby, in loco.

**Verse 10. *And the commandment***— Meaning the law in general, which was ordained to life; the rule of righteousness teaching those statutes which if a man do he shall live in them, Leviticus 18:5, I found, by transgressing it, to be unto death; for it only presented the duty and laid down the penalty, without affording any strength to resist sin or subdue evil propensities.

**Verse 11. *Sin, taking occasion***— Sin, deriving strength from the law, threatening death to the transgressor, (see Clarke's note on "Romans 7:8",) deceived me, drew me aside to disobedience, promising me gratification honor, independence, etc., as it promised to Eve; for to her history the apostle evidently alludes, and uses the very same expression, deceived me,

ἐξηπατησε με · See the preceding note; and see the Septuagint, Genesis 3:13.

*And by it slew me.*— Subjected me to that death which the law denounced against transgressors; and rendered me miserable during the course of life itself. It is well known to scholars that the verb ἀποκτείνειν signifies not only to slay or kill, but also to make wretched. Every sinner is not only exposed to death because he has sinned, and must, sooner or later, die; but he is miserable in both body and mind by the influence and the effects of sin. He lives a dying life, or a living death.

**Verse 12. *Wherefore the law is holy***— As if he had said, to soothe his countrymen, to whom he had been showing the absolute insufficiency of the law either to justify or save from sin: I do not intimate that there is any thing improper or imperfect in the law as a rule of life: it prescribes what is holy, just, and good; for it comes from a holy, just, and good God. The LAW, which is to regulate the whole of the outward conduct, is holy; and the COMMANDMENT, Thou shalt not covet, which is to regulate the heart, is not less so. All is excellent and pure; but it neither pardons sin nor purifies the heart; and it is because it is holy, just, and good, that it condemns transgressors to death.

**Verse 13. *Was then that which is good made death unto me?***— This is the question of the Jew, with whom the apostle appears to be disputing. “Do you allow the law to be good, and yet say it is the cause of our death?” The apostle answers:—God forbid! γένοιτο, by no means: it is not the law that is the cause of your death, but sin; it was sin which subjected us to death by the law, justly threatening sin with death: which law was given that sin might appear—might be set forth in its own colors; when we saw it subjected us to death by a law perfectly holy, just, and good; that sin, by the law, might be represented what it really is:—καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν αμαρτωλός, an EXCEEDING GREAT and deadly evil.

Thus it appears that man cannot have a true notion of sin but by means of the law of God. For this I have already given sufficient reasons in the preceding notes. And it was one design of the law to show the abominable and destructive nature of sin, as well as to be a rule of life. It would be almost impossible for a man to have that just notion of the demerit of sin so as to produce repentance, or to see the nature and necessity of the

death of Christ, if the law were not applied to his conscience by the light of the Holy Spirit; it is then alone that he sees himself to be carnal, and sold under sin; and that the law and the commandment are holy, just, and good. And let it be observed, that the law did not answer this end merely among the Jews in the days of the apostle; it is just as necessary to the Gentiles to the present hour. Nor do we find that true repentance takes place where the moral law is not preached and enforced. Those who preach only the Gospel to sinners, at best only heal the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly. The law, therefore, is the grand instrument in the hands of a faithful minister, to alarm and awaken sinners; and he may safely show that every sinner is under the law, and consequently under the curse, who has not fled for refuge to the hope held out by the Gospel: for, in this sense also, Jesus Christ is the END of the LAW for justification to them that believe.

**Verse 14.** *For, we know that the law is spiritual*— This is a general proposition, and probably, in the apostle's autograph, concluded the above sentence. The law is not to be considered as a system of external rites and ceremonies; nor even as a rule of moral action: it is a spiritual system; it reaches to the most hidden purposes, thoughts, dispositions, and desires of the heart and soul; and it reproveth and condemns every thing, without hope of reprieve or pardon, that is contrary to eternal truth and rectitude.

*But I am carnal, sold under sin.*— This was probably, in the apostle's letter, the beginning of a new paragraph. I believe it is agreed, on all hands, that the apostle is here demonstrating the insufficiency of the law in opposition to the Gospel. That by the former is the knowledge, by the latter the cure, of sin. Therefore by I here he cannot mean himself, nor any Christian believer: if the contrary could be proved, the argument of the apostle would go to demonstrate the insufficiency of the Gospel as well as the law.

It is difficult to conceive how the opinion could have crept into the Church, or prevailed there, that “the apostle speaks here of his regenerate state; and that what was, in such a state, true of himself, must be true of all others in the same state.” This opinion has, most pitifully and most shamefully, not only lowered the standard of Christianity, but destroyed

its influence and disgraced its character. It requires but little knowledge of the spirit of the Gospel, and of the scope of this epistle, to see that the apostle is, here, either personating a Jew under the law and without the Gospel, or showing what his own state was when he was deeply convinced that by the deeds of the law no man could be justified, and had not as yet heard those blessed words: Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way, hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost, Acts 9:17.

In this and the following verses he states the contrariety between himself, or any Jew while without Christ, and the law of God. Of the latter he says, it is spiritual; of the former, I am carnal, sold under sin. Of the carnal man, in opposition to the spiritual, never was a more complete or accurate description given. The expressions, in the flesh, and after the flesh, in Romans 7:5, and in Romans 8:5, 8, 9, etc., are of the same import with the word carnal in this verse. To be in the flesh, or to be carnally minded, solely respects the unregenerate. While unregenerate, a man is in a state of death and enmity against God, Romans 8:6-9. This is St. Paul's own account of a carnal man. The soul of such a man has no authority over the appetites of the body and the lusts of the flesh: reason has not the government of passion. The work of such a person is to make provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof, Romans 13:14. He minds the things of the flesh, Romans 8:5; he is at enmity with God. In all these things the spiritual man is the reverse; he lives in a state of friendship with God in Christ, and the Spirit of God dwells in him; his soul has dominion over the appetites of the body and the lusts of the flesh; his passions submit to the government of reason, and he, by the Spirit, mortifies the deeds of the flesh; he mindeth the things of the Spirit, Romans 8:5. The Scriptures, therefore, place these two characters in direct opposition to each other. Now the apostle begins this passage by informing us that it is his carnal state that he is about to describe, in opposition to the spirituality of God's holy law, saying, But I am carnal.

Those who are of another opinion maintain that by the word carnal here the apostle meant that corruption which dwelt in him after his conversion; but this opinion is founded on a very great mistake; for, although there may be, after justification, the remains of the carnal mind, which will be less or more felt till the soul is completely sanctified, yet the man is never

denominated from the inferior principle, which is under control, but from the superior principle which habitually prevails. Whatever epithets are given to corruption or sin in Scripture, opposite epithets are given to grace or holiness. By these different epithets are the unregenerate and regenerate denominated. From all this it follows that the epithet carnal, which is the characteristic designation of an unregenerate man, cannot be applied to St. Paul after his conversion; nor, indeed, to any Christian in that state.

But the word carnal, though used by the apostle to signify a state of death and enmity against God, is not sufficient to denote all the evil of the state which he is describing; hence he adds, sold under sin. This is one of the strongest expressions which the Spirit of God uses in Scripture, to describe the full depravity of fallen man. It implies a willing slavery: Ahab had sold himself to work evil, 1 Kings 21:20. And of the Jews it is said, in their utmost depravity, Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, Isaiah 50:1. They forsook the holy covenant, and joined themselves to the heathen, and WERE SOLD to do mischief, 1 Macc. i. 15. Now, if the word carnal, in its strongest sense, had been sufficiently significant of all he meant, why add to this charge another expression still stronger? We must therefore understand the phrase, sold under sin, as implying that the soul was employed in the drudgery of sin; that it was sold over to this service, and had no power to disobey this tyrant, until it was redeemed by another. And if a man be actually sold to another, and he acquiesce in the deed, then he becomes the legal property of that other person. This state of bondage was well known to the Romans. The sale of slaves they saw daily, and could not misunderstand the emphatical sense of this expression. Sin is here represented as a person; and the apostle compares the dominion which sin has over the man in question to that of a master over his legal slave. Universally through the Scriptures man is said to be in a state of bondage to sin until the Son of God make him free: but in no part of the sacred writings is it ever said that the children of God are sold under sin. Christ came to deliver the lawful captive, and take away the prey from the mighty. Whom the Son maketh free, they are free indeed. Then, they yield not up their members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; for sin shall not have the dominion over them, because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made them free from the law of sin and death, Romans 6:13, 14; 8:2. Anciently, when

regular cartels were not known, the captives became the slaves of their victors, and by them were sold to any purchaser; their slavery was as complete and perpetual as if the slave had resigned his own liberty, and sold himself: the laws of the land secured him to his master; he could not redeem himself, because he had nothing that was his own, and nothing could rescue him from that state but a stipulated redemption. The apostle speaks here, not of the manner in which the person in question became a slave; he only asserts the fact, that sin had a full and permanent dominion over him. — Smith, on the carnal man's character.

***I am carnal, sold under sin.***— I have been the more particular in ascertaining the genuine sense of this verse, because it determines the general scope of the whole passage.

**Verse 15. *For, that which I do, I allow not,*** etc.— The first clause of this verse is a general assertion concerning the employment of the person in question in the state which the apostle calls carnal, and sold under sin. The Greek word **κατεργαζομαι** which is here translated I do, means a work which the agent continues to perform till it is finished, and is used by the apostle, Philippians 2:12, to denote the continued employment of God's saints in his service to the end of their lives. **WORK OUT** your own salvation; the word here denotes an employment of a different kind; and therefore the man who now feels the galling dominion of sin says, What I am continually labouring at I allow not, **ου γινωσκω**, I do not acknowledge to be right, just, holy, or profitable.

***But what I hate, that do I.***— I am a slave, and under the absolute control of my tyrannical master: I hate his service, but am obliged to work his will. Who, without blaspheming, can assert that the apostle is speaking this of a man in whom the Spirit of the Lord dwells? From Romans 7:7 to this one the apostle, says Dr. Taylor, denotes the Jew in the flesh by a single I; here, he divides that I into two I's, or figurative persons; representing two different and opposite principles which were in him. The one I, or principle, assents to the law that it is good, and wills and chooses what the other does not practice, Romans 7:16. This principle he expressly tells us, Romans 7:22, is the inward man; the law of the mind, Romans 7:23; the mind, or rational faculty, Romans 7:25; for he could find no other inward man, or law of the mind, but the rational faculty, in a person who was



carnal and sold under sin. The other I, or principle, transgresses the law, Romans 7:23, and does those things which the former principle allows not. This principle he expressly tells us, Romans 7:18, is the flesh, the law in the members, or sensual appetite, Romans 7:23; and he concludes in the last verse, that these two principles were opposite to each other; therefore it is evident that those two principles, residing and counteracting each other in the same person; are reason and lust, or sin that dwells in us. And it is very easy to distinguish these two I's, or principles, in every part of this elegant description of iniquity, domineering over the light and remonstrances of reason. For instance, Romans 7:17: Now then, it is no more I that do it, but SIN that dwelleth in me. The I he speaks of here is opposed to indwelling or governing sin; and therefore plainly denotes the principle of reason, the inward man, or law of the mind; in which, I add, a measure of the light of the Spirit of God shines, in order to show the sinfulness of sin. These two different principles he calls, one flesh, and the other spirit, Galatians 5:17; where he speaks of their contrariety in the same manner that he does here.

And we may give a probable reason why the apostle dwells so long upon the struggle and opposition between these two principles; it appears intended to answer a tacit but very obvious objection. The Jew might allege: "But the law is holy and spiritual; and I assent to it as good, as a right rule of action, which ought to be observed; yea, I esteem it highly, I glory and rest in it, convinced of its truth and excellency. And is not this enough to constitute the law a sufficient principle of sanctification?" The apostle answers, "No; wickedness is consistent with a sense of truth. A man may assent to the best rule of action, and yet still be under the dominion of lust and sin; from which nothing can deliver him but a principle and power proceeding from the fountain of life."

The sentiment in this verse may be illustrated by quotations from the ancient heathens; many of whom felt themselves in precisely the same state, (and expressed it in nearly the same language,) which some most monstrously tell us was the state of this heavenly apostle, when vindicating the claims of the Gospel against those of the Jewish ritual! Thus OVID describes the conduct of a depraved man:—

*Sed trahit invitam nova vis; aliudque cupido,  
Mens aliud suadet. Video meliora, proboque;  
Deteriora sequor.*

OVID, *Met. lib. vii. ver. 19.*

*My reason this, my passion that persuades;  
I see the right, and I approve it too;  
Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue.*

— *indignum facinus! nunc ego et  
Illam scelestam esse, et me miserum sentio:  
Et taedet: et amore ardeo: et prudens, sciens,  
Vivus, vidensque pereo: nec quid agam scio.*

— *TERENT. Eun. ver. 70.*

An unworthy act! Now I perceive that she is wicked, and I am wretched. I burn with love, and am vexed at it. Although prudent, and intelligent, and

*And I well understand the evil which I presume to commit.  
 Passion, however, is more powerful than my reason;  
 Which is the cause of the greatest evils to mortal men.*

Thus we find that enlightened heathens, both among the Greeks and Romans, had that same kind of religious experience which some suppose to be, not only the experience of St. Paul in his best state, but to be even the standard of Christian attainments! See more examples in Wetstein.

The whole spirit of the sentiment is well summed up and expressed by St. Chrysostom: *οταν τινος επιθυμωμεν, ειτε κωλυμεθα, αιρεται μαλλον της επιθυμιας η φλοξ*: If we lust after any thing which is afterwards prohibited, the flame of this desire burns the more fiercely.

**Verse 16.** *If then I do that which I would not*, etc.— Knowing that the law condemns it, and that therefore it must be evil. I consent unto the law; I show by this circumstance that I acknowledge the law to be good.

**Verse 17.** *Now then it is no more I*— It is not that I which constitutes reason and conscience, but sin-corrupt and sensual inclinations, that dwelleth in me—that has the entire domination over my reason, darkening my understanding, and perverting my judgment; for which there is condemnation in the law, but no cure. So we find here that there is a principle in the unregenerate man stronger than reason itself; a principle which is, properly speaking, not of the essence of the soul, but acts in it, as its lord, or as a tyrant. This is inbred and indwelling sin—the seed of the serpent; by which the whole soul is darkened, confused, perverted, and excited to rebellion against God.

**Verse 18.** *For I know that in me*, etc.— I have learned by experience that in an unregenerate man there is no good. There is no principle by which the soul can be brought into the light; no principle by which it can be restored to purity: fleshly appetites alone prevail; and the brute runs away with the man.

*For to will is present with me*— Though the whole soul has suffered indescribably by the FALL, yet there are some faculties that appear to have suffered less than others; or rather have received larger measures of the supernatural light, because their concurrence with the Divine principle is so necessary to the salvation of the soul. Even the most unconcerned

about spiritual things have understanding, judgment, reason, and will. And by means of these we have seen even scoffers at Divine revelation become very eminent in arts and sciences; some of our best metaphysicians, physicians, mathematicians, astronomers, chemists, etc., have been known-to their reproach be it spoken and published-to be without religion; nay, some of them have blasphemed it, by leaving God out of his own work, and ascribing to an idol of their own, whom they call nature, the operations of the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Most High. It is true that many of the most eminent in all the above branches of knowledge have been conscientious believers in Divine revelation; but the case of the others proves that, fallen as man is, he yet possesses extra-ordinary powers, which are capable of very high cultivation and improvement. In short, the soul seems capable of any thing but knowing, fearing, loving, and serving God. And it is not only incapable, of itself, for any truly religious acts; but what shows its fall in the most indisputable manner is its enmity to sacred things. Let an unregenerate man pretend what he pleases, his conscience knows that he hates religion; his soul revolts against it; his carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be. There is no reducing this fell principle to subjection; it is SIN, and sin is rebellion against God; therefore sin must be destroyed, not subjected; if subjected, it would cease to be sin, because sin is in opposition to God: hence the apostle says, most conclusively, it cannot be subjected, i.e. it must be destroyed, or it will destroy the soul for ever. When the apostle says, to will is present with me, he shows that the will is on the side of God and truth, so far that it consents to the propriety and necessity of obedience. There has been a strange clamor raised up against this faculty of the soul, as if the very essence of evil dwelt in it; whereas the apostle shows, throughout this chapter, that the will was regularly on God's side, while every other faculty appears to have been in hostility to him. The truth is, men have confounded the will with the passions, and laid to the charge of the former what properly belongs to the latter. The will is right, but the passions are wrong. It discerns and approves, but is without ability to perform: it has no power over sensual appetites; in these the principle of rebellion dwells: it nills evil, it wills good, but can only command through the power of Divine grace: but this the person in question, the unregenerate man, has not received.

**Verse 19. *For the good that I would I do not***— Here again is the most decisive proof that the will is on the side of God and truth.

***But the evil which I would not***— And here is equally decisive proof that the will is against, or opposed to evil. There is not a man in ten millions, who will carefully watch the operations of this faculty, that will find it opposed to good and obstinately attached to evil, as is generally supposed. Nay, it is found almost uniformly on God's side, while the whole sensual system is against him. — It is not the WILL that leads men astray; but the corrupt PASSIONS which oppose and oppress the will. It is truly astonishing into what endless mistakes men have fallen on this point, and what systems of divinity have been built on these mistakes. The will, this almost only friend to God in the human soul, has been slandered as God's worst enemy, and even by those who had the seventh chapter to the Romans before their eyes! Nay, it has been considered so fell a foe to God and goodness that it is bound in the adamant chains of a dire necessity to do evil only; and the doctrine of will (absurdly called free will, as if will did not essentially imply what is free) has been considered one of the most destructive heresies. Let such persons put themselves to school to their Bibles and to common sense.

The plain state of the case is this: the soul is so completely fallen, that it has no power to do good till it receive that power from on high. But it has power to see good, to distinguish between that and evil; to acknowledge the excellence of this good, and to will it, from a conviction of that excellence; but farther it cannot go. Yet, in various cases, it is solicited and consents to sin; and because it is will, that is, because it is a free principle, it must necessarily possess this power; and although it can do no good unless it receive grace from God, yet it is impossible to force it to sin. Even Satan himself cannot do this; and before he can get it to sin, he must gain its consent. Thus God in his endless mercy has endued this faculty with a power in which, humanly speaking, resides the salvability of the soul; and without this the soul must have eternally continued under the power of sin, or been saved as an inert, absolutely passive machine; which supposition would go as nearly to prove that it was as incapable of vice as it were of virtue.

“But does not this arguing destroy the doctrine of free grace?” No! it establishes that doctrine. 1. It is through the grace, the unmerited kindness, of God, that the soul has such a faculty, and that it has not been extinguished by sin. 2. This will, though a free principle, as it respects its nilling of evil and choosing good, yet, properly speaking, has no power by which it can subjugate the evil or perform the good. We know that the eye has a power to discern objects, but without light this power is perfectly useless, and no object can be discerned by it. So, of the person represented here by the apostle, it is said, *το γαρ θελειν παρακειται μοι*. To will is ever in readiness, it is ever at hand, it lies constantly before me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not; that is, the man is unregenerate, and he is seeking justification and holiness from the law. The law was never designed to give these—it gives the knowledge, not the cure of sin; therefore, though he nills evil and wills good, yet he can neither conquer the one nor perform the other till he receives the grace of Christ, till he seeks and finds redemption in his blood. Here, then, the free agency of man is preserved, without which he could not be in a salvable state; and the honor of the grace of Christ is maintained, without which there can be no actual salvation. There is a good sentiment on this subject in the following words of an eminent poet:—

*Thou great first CAUSE, least understood;  
Who all my sense confined  
To know but this, that thou art good;  
And that myself am blind.  
Yet gave me in this dark estate  
To see the good from ill;  
And binding nature fast in fate,  
Left free the human will.  
POPE'S Universal Prayer.*

**Verse 20. *It is no more I***— My will is against it; my reason and conscience condemn it. But sin that dwelleth in me—the principle of sin, which has possessed itself of all my carnal appetites and passions, and thus subjects my reason and domineers over my soul. Thus I am in perpetual contradiction to myself. Two principles are continually contending in me for the mastery: my reason, on which the light of God shines, to show what is evil; and my passions, in which the principle of sin works, to bring forth fruit unto death.

This strange self-contradictory propensity led some of the ancient philosophers to imagine that man has two souls, a good and a bad one; and it is on this principle that Xenophon, in his life of Cyrus, causes Araspes, a Persian nobleman, to account for some misconduct of his relative to Panthea, a beautiful female captive, whom Cyrus had entrusted to his care:—"O Cyrus, I am convinced that I have two souls; if I had but one soul, it could not at the same time pant after vice and virtue; wish and abhor the same thing. It is certain, therefore, that we have two souls; when the good soul rules, I undertake noble and virtuous actions; but when the bad soul predominates, I am constrained to do evil. All I can say at present is that I find my good soul, encouraged by thy presence, has got the better of my bad soul." See Spectator, vol. viii. No. 564. Thus, not only the ancients, but also many moderns, have trifled, and all will continue to do so who do not acknowledge the Scriptural account of the fall of man, and the lively comment upon that doctrine contained in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.

**Verse 21. *I find then a law***— I am in such a condition and state of soul, under the power of such habits and sinful propensities, that when I would do good—when my will and reason are strongly bent on obedience to the law of God and opposition to the principle of sin, evil is present with me, **κακον παρακειται**, evil is at hand, it lies constantly before me. That, as the will to do good is constantly at hand, Romans 7:18, so the principle of rebellion exciting me to sin is equally present; but, as the one is only will, wish, and desire, without power to do what is willed, to obtain what is wished, or to perform what is desired, sin continually prevails.

The word **νομος**, law, in this verse, must be taken as implying any strong or confirmed habit, **συνηθεια**, as Hesychius renders it, under the influence of which the man generally acts; and in this sense the apostle most evidently uses it in Romans 7:23.

**Verse 22. *I delight in the law of God after the inward man***— Every Jew, and every unregenerate man, who receives the Old Testament as a revelation from God, must acknowledge the great purity, excellence and utility of its maxims, etc., though he will ever find that without the grace of our Lord Jesus he can never act according to those heavenly maxims; and without the mercy of God, can never be redeemed from the curse

entailed upon him for his past transgressions. To say that the inward man means the regenerate part of the soul, is supportable by no argument. ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος, and ο ἔντος ἄνθρωπος, especially the latter, are expressions frequently in use among the purest Greek ethic writers, to signify the soul or rational part of man, in opposition to the body of flesh. See the quotations in Wetstein from Plato and Plotinus. The Jews have the same form of expression; so in Yalcut Rubeni, fol. 10, 3, it is said: The flesh is the inward garment of the man; but the SPIRIT is the INWARD man,



not its chief and most essential precepts.” See farther observations on this point at the end of the chapter.

So far, then, is it from being true that none but a REGENERATE man can delight in the law of God, we find that even a proud, unhumbled PHARISEE can do it; and much more a poor sinner, who is humbled under a sense of his sin, and sees, in the light of God, not only the spirituality, but the excellence of the Divine law.

**Verse 23. *But I see another law in my members***— Though the person in question is less or more under the continual influence of reason and conscience, which offer constant testimony against sin, yet as long as help is sought only from the law, and the grace of Christ in the Gospel is not received, the remonstrances of reason and conscience are rendered of no effect by the prevalence of sinful passions; which, from repeated gratifications, have acquired all the force of habit, and now give law to the whole carnal man.

***Warring against the law of my mind***— There is an allusion here to the case of a city besieged, at last taken by storm, and the inhabitants carried away into captivity; **αντιστρατευομενον**, carrying on a system of warfare; laying continual siege to the soul; repeating incessantly its attacks; harassing, battering, and storming the spirit; and, by all these assaults, reducing the man to extreme misery. Never was a picture more impressively drawn and more effectually finished; for the next sentence shows that this spiritual city was at last taken by storm, and the inhabitants who survived the sackage led into the most shameful, painful, and oppressive captivity.

***Bringing me into captivity to the law of sin***— He does not here speak of an occasional advantage gained by sin, it was a complete and final victory gained by corruption; which, having stormed and reduced the city, carried away the inhabitants with irresistible force, into captivity. This is the consequence of being overcome; he was now in the hands of the foe as the victor’s lawful captive; and this is the import of the original word, **αιχμαλωτιζοντα**, and is the very term used by our Lord when speaking of the final ruin, dispersion, and captivity of the Jews. He says, **αιχμαλωτισθησονται**, they shall be led away captives into all the nations, Luke 21:24. When all this is considered, who, in his right mind,

can apply it to the holy soul of the apostle of the Gentiles? Is there any thing in it that can belong to his gracious state? Surely nothing. The basest slave of sin, who has any remaining checks of conscience, cannot be brought into a worse state than that described here by the apostle. Sin and corruption have a final triumph; and conscience and reason are taken prisoners, laid in fetters, and sold for slaves. Can this ever be said of a man in whom the Spirit of God dwells, and whom the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made free from the law of sin and death? See Romans 8:2.

**Verse 24.** *O wretched man that I am*, etc.— This affecting account is finished more impressively by the groans of the wounded captive. Having long maintained a useless conflict against innumerable hosts and irresistible might, he is at last wounded and taken prisoner; and to render his state more miserable, is not only encompassed by the slaughtered, but chained to a dead body; for there seems to be here an allusion to an ancient custom of certain tyrants, who bound a dead body to a living man, and obliged him to carry it about, till the contagion from the putrid mass took away his life! Virgil paints this in all its horrors, in the account he gives of the tyrant Mezentius. *AEneid*, lib. viii. ver. 485.

*Quid memorem infandas caedes? quid facta tyranni?  
MORTUA quin etiam jungebat corpora VIVIS,  
Componens manibusque manus, atque oribus ora;  
Tormenti genus! et sanie taboque fluentes  
Complexu in misero, longa sic morte necabat.*

*What tongue can such barbarities record,  
Or count the slaughters of his ruthless sword?  
'Twas not enough the good, the guiltless bled,  
Still worse, he bound the living to the dead:  
These, limb to limb, and face to face, he joined;  
O! monstrous crime, of unexampled kind!  
Till choked with stench, the lingering wretches lay,  
And, in the loathed embraces, died away!*

*Pitt.*

Servius remarks, in his comment on this passage, that sanies, mortui est; tabo, viventis scilicet sanguis: “the sanies, or putrid ichor, from the dead body, produced the tabes in the blood of the living.” Roasting, burning, racking, crucifying, etc., were nothing when compared to this diabolically invented punishment.

We may naturally suppose that the cry of such a person would be, Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this dead body? And how well does this apply to the case of the person to whom the apostle refers! A body-a whole mass of sin and corruption, was bound to his soul

which the apostle brings his argument in the following clause; which, like the rest of the chapter, has been most awfully abused, to favor anti-evangelical purposes.

*So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God*— That this clause contains the inference from the preceding train of argumentation appears evident, from the **απα ουν**, therefore, with which the apostle introduces it. As if he had said: “To conclude, the sum of what I have advanced, concerning the power of sin in the carnal man, and the utter insufficiency of all human means and legal observances to pardon sin and expel the corruption of the heart, is this: that the very same person, the **αυτος εγω**, the same I, while without the Gospel, under the killing power of the law, will find in himself two opposite principles, the one subscribing to and approving the law of God; and the other, notwithstanding, bringing him into captivity to sin: his inward man—his rational powers and conscience, will assent to the justice and propriety of the requisitions of the law; and yet, notwithstanding this, his fleshly appetites—the law in his members, will war against the law of his mind, and continue, till he receives the Gospel of Christ, to keep him in the galling captivity of sin and death.”

1. THE strong expressions in this clause have led many to conclude that the apostle himself, in his regenerated state, is indisputably the person intended. That all that is said in this chapter of the carnal man, sold under sin, did apply to Saul of Tarsus, no man can doubt: that what is here said can ever be with propriety applied to Paul the Apostle, who can believe? Of the former, all is natural; of the latter, all here said would be monstrous and absurd, if not blasphemous.

2. But it is supposed that the words must be understood as implying a regenerate man, because the apostle says, Romans 7:22, I delight in the law of God; and in this verse, I myself with the mind serve the law of God. These things, say the objectors, cannot be spoken of a wicked Jew, but of a regenerate man such as the apostle then was. But when we find that the former verse speaks of a man who is brought into captivity to the law of sin and death, surely there is no part of the regenerate state of the apostle to which the words can possibly apply. Had he been in captivity to the law of sin and death, after his conversion to Christianity, what did he gain by that conversion? Nothing for his personal holiness. He had found no

salvation under an inefficient law; and he was left in thralldom under an equally inefficient Gospel. The very genius of Christianity demonstrates that nothing like this can, with any propriety, be spoken of a genuine Christian.

3. But it is farther supposed that these things cannot be spoken of a proud or wicked Jew; yet we learn the contrary from the infallible testimony of the word of God. Of this people in their fallen and iniquitous state, God says, by his prophet, They SEEK me DAILY, and DELIGHT to know my ways, as a nation that did RIGHTEOUSNESS, and FORSOOK not the ORDINANCES of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of JUSTICE, and TAKE DELIGHT in approaching to God, Isaiah 58:2. Can any thing be stronger than this? And yet, at that time, they were most dreadfully carnal, and sold under sin, as the rest of that chapter proves. It is a most notorious fact, that how little soever the life of a Jew was conformed to the law of his God, he notwithstanding professed the highest esteem for it, and gloried in it: and the apostle says nothing stronger of them in this chapter than their conduct and profession verify to the present day. They are still delighting in the law of God, after the inward man; with their mind serving the law of God; asking for the ordinances of justice, seeking God daily, and taking delight in approaching to God; they even glory, and greatly exult and glory, in the Divine original and excellency of their LAW; and all this while they are most abominably carnal, sold under sin, and brought into the most degrading captivity to the law of sin and death. If then all that the apostle states of the person in question be true of the Jews, through the whole period of their history, even to the present time; if they do in all their professions and their religious services, which they zealously maintain, confess, and conscientiously too, that the law is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good; and yet, with their flesh, serve the law of sin; the same certainly may be said with equal propriety of a Jewish penitent, deeply convinced of his lost estate, and the total insufficiency of his legal observances to deliver him from his body of sin and death. And consequently, all this may be said of Paul the JEW, while going about to establish his own righteousness-his own plan of justification; he had not as yet submitted to the righteousness of God-the Divine plan of redemption by Jesus Christ.

4. It must be allowed that, whatever was the experience of so eminent a man, Christian, and apostle, as St. Paul, it must be a very proper standard of Christianity. And if we are to take what is here said as his experience as a Christian, it would be presumption in us to expect to go higher; for he certainly had pushed the principles of his religion to their utmost consequences. But his whole life, and the account which he immediately gives of himself in the succeeding chapter, prove that he, as a Christian and an apostle, had a widely different experience; an experience which amply justifies that superiority which he attributes to the Christian religion over the Jewish; and demonstrates that it not only is well calculated to perfect all preceding dispensations, but that it affords salvation to the uttermost to all those who flee for refuge to the hope that it sets before them. Besides, there is nothing spoken here of the state of a conscientious Jew, or of St. Paul in his Jewish state, that is not true of every genuine penitent; even before, and it may be, long before, he has believed in Christ to the saving of his soul. The assertion that “every Christian, howsoever advanced in the Divine life, will and must feel all this inward conflict,” etc., is as untrue as it is dangerous. That many, called Christians, and probably sincere, do feel all this, may be readily granted; and such we must consider to be in the same state with Saul of Tarsus, previously to his conversion; but that they must continue thus is no where intimated in the Gospel of Christ. We must take heed how we make our experience, which is the result of our unbelief and unfaithfulness, the standard for the people of God, and lower down Christianity to our most reprehensible and dwarfish state: at the same time, we should not be discouraged at what we thus feel, but apply to God, through Christ, as Paul did; and then we shall soon be able, with him, to declare, to the eternal glory of God’s grace, that the law

try, the efficiency of the blood of the covenant; and be not content with less salvation than God has provided for thee. Thou art not straitened in God, be not straitened in thy own bowels.

## CHAPTER 8.

The happy state of those who believe in Christ, and walk under the influence of his Spirit, 1, 2. The design of God in sending his Son into the world was to redeem men from sin, 3, 4. The miserable state of the carnally minded, 6-8. How Christ lives and works in his followers; their blessedness here, and their happiness hereafter, 9-17. Sufferings are the common lot of all men; and from which Gentiles and Jews have the hope of being finally delivered, 18-23. The use and importance of hope, 24, 25. The Spirit makes intercession for the followers of Christ, 26, 27. All things work together for good to them that love God, and who act according to his gracious purpose in calling them, 28. The means used to bring men to eternal glory, 29, 30. The great blessedness, confidence, and security of all genuine Christians, whom, while they hold fast faith and a good conscience, nothing can separate from the love of God, 31-39.

### NOTES ON CHAP. 8.

**Verse 1.** *There is, therefore, now no condemnation*— To do justice to St. Paul's reasoning, this chapter must be read in the closest connection with the preceding. There we have seen the unavailing struggles of an awakened Jew, who sought pardon and holiness from that law which he was conscious he had broken; and in which he could find no provision for pardon, and no power to sanctify. This conviction having brought him to the very brink of despair, and, being on the point of giving up all hope, he hears of redemption by Jesus Christ, thanks God for the prospect he has of salvation, applies for and receives it; and now magnifies God for the unspeakable gift of which he has been made a partaker.

Those who restrain the word now, so as to indicate by it the Gospel dispensation only, do not take in the whole of the apostles meaning. The apostle has not been dealing in general matters only, but also in those which are particular. He has not been pointing out merely the difference between the two dispensations, the Mosaic and the Christian; but he marks out the state of a penitent under the former, and that of a believer



under the latter. The last chapter closed with an account of the deep distress of the penitent; this one opens with an account of his salvation. The now, therefore, in the text, must refer more to the happy transition from darkness to light, from condemnation to pardon, which this believer now enjoys, than to the Christian dispensation taking the place of the Jewish economy.

***Who walk not after the flesh***, etc.— In this one verse we find the power and virtue of the Gospel scheme; it pardons and sanctifies; the Jewish law could do neither. By faith in our Lord Jesus Christ the penitent, condemned by the law, is pardoned; the carnal man, labouring under the overpowering influence of the sin of his nature, is sanctified. He is first freely justified; he feels no condemnation; he is fully sanctified; he walks not after the FLESH, but after the SPIRIT.

This last clause is wanting in the principal MSS., versions, and fathers. Griesbach has excluded it from the text; and Dr. White says, *Certissime delenda*; it should most undoubtedly be expunged. Without it, the passage reads thus: There is, therefore, no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus; for the law of the Spirit of life, etc. It is a fairly assumed point, that those who are in Christ Jesus, who believe in his name, have redemption in his blood; are made partakers of his Spirit, and have the mind in them that was in him; will not walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit: therefore the thing itself is included in the being in Christ, whether it be expressed or not: and it was probably to make the thing more obvious, that this explanatory clause was added by some copyist, for it does not appear to have made an original part of the text; and it is most likely that it was inserted here from the fourth verse.

**Verse 2. *For the law of the Spirit of life***— The Gospel of the grace of Christ, which is not only a law or rule of life, but affords that sovereign energy by which guilt is removed from the conscience, the power of sin broken, and its polluting influence removed from the heart. The law was a spirit of death, by which those who were under it were bound down, because of their sin, to condemnation and death. The Gospel proclaims Jesus the Savior; and what the law bound unto death, It looses unto life eternal. And thus the apostle says, whether of himself or the man whom he is still personating, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath

made me free from the law of sin and death. Most people allow that St. Paul is here speaking of his own state; and this state is so totally different from that described in the preceding chapter, that it is absolutely impossible that they should have been the state of the same being, at one and the same time. No creature could possibly be carnal, sold under sin, brought into captivity to the law of sin and death; and at the same time be made free from that law of sin and death, by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus! Until the most palpable absurdities and contradictions can be reconciled, these two opposite states can never exist in the same person at the same time.

**Verse 3. *For what the law could not do***— The law could not pardon; the law could not sanctify; the law could not dispense with its own requisitions; it is the rule of righteousness, and therefore must condemn unrighteousness. This is its unalterable nature. Had there been perfect obedience to its dictates, instead of condemning, it would have applauded and rewarded; but as the flesh, the carnal and rebellious principle, had prevailed, and transgression had taken place, it was rendered weak, inefficient to undo this word of the flesh, and bring the sinner into a state of pardon and acceptance with God.

***God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh***— Did that which the law could not do; i.e. purchased pardon for the sinner, and brought every believer into the favor of God. And this is effected by the incarnation of Christ: He, in whom dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily, took upon him the likeness of sinful flesh, that is, a human body like ours, but not sinful as ours; and for sin, *και περι αμαρτιας*, and as a SACRIFICE FOR SIN, (this is the sense of the word in a multitude of places,) condemned sin in the flesh—condemned that to death and destruction which had condemned us to both.

***Condemned sin in the flesh***— The design and object of the incarnation and sacrifice of Christ was to condemn sin, to have it executed and destroyed; not to tolerate it as some think, or to render it subservient to the purposes of his grace, as others; but to annihilate its power, guilt, and being in the soul of a believer.

**Verse 4. *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us***— That the guilt might be pardoned through the merit of that sacrifice; and

that we might be enabled, by the power of his own grace and Spirit, to walk in newness of life; loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves: and thus the righteousness, the spirit, design, and purpose of the law is fulfilled in us, through the strength of the Spirit of Christ, which is here put in opposition to the weakness of the law through the flesh.

It is very likely that the concluding clause of this verse, which is the very same as that found in the common text of the first verse, has been transferred to that verse from this place.

**Verse 5. *For they that are after the flesh***— And here is the great distinction between Jews and genuine Christians: the former are after the flesh—are under the power of the carnal, rebellious principle; and consequently mind, *πρωουσιυ*, relish, the things of the flesh—the things which appertain merely to the present life; having no relish for spiritual and eternal things.

***But they that are after the Spirit***— They who are regenerated, who are born of the Spirit, being redeemed from the influence and law of the carnal mind; these relish the things of the Spirit—they are spiritually minded, and pass through things temporal, so as not to lose the things which are eternal. And this, which in these apostolic times distinguished between the carnal Jew and the spiritual believer in Christ, is the grand mark of distinction between the nominal and the real Christian now. The former is earthly minded, and lives for this world; the latter is spiritually minded, and lives for the world to come.

**Verse 6. *For to be carnally minded is death***— To live under the influence of the carnal mind is to live in the state of condemnation, and consequently liable to death eternal: whereas, on the contrary, he who is spiritually minded has the life and peace of God in his soul, and is in full prospect of life eternal.

**Verse 7. *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God***— Because it is a carnal mind, and relishes earthly and sinful things, and lives in opposition to the pure and holy law of God: therefore, it is enmity against God; it is irreconcilable and implacable hatred.

***It is not subject to the law of God***— It will come under no obedience; for it is sin, and the very principle of rebellion; and therefore it cannot be subject, nor subjected; for it is essential to sin to show itself in rebellion; and when it ceases to rebel, it ceases to be sin.

From this we learn that the design of God in the economy of the Gospel, is not to weaken, curtail, or lay the carnal principle in bonds, but to destroy it. As it is not subject, and cannot be subject, to the law of God, it must be destroyed, else it will continue to rebel against God. It cannot be mended, or rendered less offensive in its nature, even by the operations of God; it is ever sin, and sin is ever enmity; and enmity, wherever it has power, will invariably show itself in acts of hostility and rebellion.

**Verse 8. *So then***— Because this carnal mind is enmity against God, they that are in the flesh—who are under the power of the workings of this carnal mind, (which every soul is that has not received redemption in the blood of the Lamb,)—

***Cannot please God.***— Because of the rebellious workings of this principle of rebellion and hatred. And, if they cannot please God, they must be displeasing to him; and consequently in the broad road to final perdition.

**Verse 9. *But ye are not in the flesh***— Ye Christians, who have believed in Christ Jesus as the sin offering which has condemned sin in the flesh; and, having been justified by faith and made partakers of the Holy Spirit, are enabled to walk in newness of life.

***If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.***— Or seeing that, *ειπερ*, the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. The flesh, the sinful principle, dwelt in them before; and its motions were the proofs of its indwelling; but now the Spirit dwells in them; and its testimony in their conscience, and its powerful operations in their hearts, are the proofs of its indwelling. God made man in union with himself, and his heart was his temple. Sin being committed, the temple was defiled, and God abandoned it. Jesus Christ is come by his sacrifice and Spirit to cleanse the temple, and make man again a habitation of God through the Spirit. And when this almighty Spirit again makes the heart his residence, then the soul is delivered from the moral effects of the fall. And that this is absolutely necessary to our present peace and final salvation is proved from this: that if any man have

not the Spirit of Christ—the mind that was in him, produced there by the power of the Holy Ghost—he is none of his; he does not belong to the kingdom, flock, or family of God. This is an awful conclusion! Reader, lay it to heart.

**Verse 10.** *And if Christ be in you*, etc.— This is the criterion by which you may judge of the state of grace in which ye stand. If Christ dwell in your hearts by faith, the body is dead because of sin, *δι' αμαρτιαν*, in reference to sin; the members of your body no more perform the work of sin than the body of a dead man does the functions of natural life. Or the apostle may mean, that although, because of sin, the life of man is forfeited; and the sentence, dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return, must be fulfilled on every human being, until the judgment of the great day; yet, their souls being quickened by the indwelling Spirit of Christ, which enables them to live a life of righteousness, they receive a full assurance that their bodies, which are now condemned to death because of sin, shall be raised again to a life of immortal glory.

**Verse 11.** *But if the Spirit*, etc.— This verse confirms the sense given to the preceding. He who here receives the grace and Spirit of Christ, and continues to live under its influence a life of obedience to the Divine will, shall have a resurrection to eternal life; and the resurrection of Christ shall be the pattern after which they shall be raised.

*By his Spirit that dwelleth in you*.— Instead of *δια του ενοικουντος αυτου πνευματος*, because of the Spirit of him who dwelleth in you, DEFG, a great many others, with the Vulgate, Itala, and several of the fathers, have *δια το ενοικουν αυτου πνευμα*, which gives almost no variety of meaning. The latter may be neater Greek, but it is not better sense than the preceding.

**Verse 12.** *Therefore, brethren*, etc.— Dr. Taylor is of opinion that the apostle having spoken separately, both to Jews and Gentiles, concerning holiness and the obligations to it, now addresses himself to both conjointly, and,

I. Draws the general conclusion from all his arguments upon this subject, Romans 8:12.

II. Proves the validity of their claims to eternal life, Romans 8:14-17.

III. And as the affair of suffering persecution was a great stumbling block to the Jews, and might very much discourage the Gentiles, he introduces it to the best advantage, Romans 8:17, and advances several arguments to fortify their minds under all trials: as—(1.) That they suffered with Christ; (2.) In order to be glorified with him in a manner which will infinitely compensate all sufferings, Romans 8:17, 18. (3.) All mankind are under various pressures, longing for a better state, Romans 8:19-22. (4.) Many of the most eminent Christians are in the same distressed condition, Romans 8:23. (5.) According to the plan of the Gospel, we are to be brought to glory after a course of patience exercised in a variety of trials, Romans 8:24, 25. (6.) The Spirit of God will supply patience to every upright soul under persecution and suffering, Romans 8:26, 27. (7.) All things, even the severest trials, shall work together for their good, Romans 8:28. And this he proves, by giving us a view of the several steps which the wisdom and goodness of God have settled, in order to our complete salvation, Romans 8:29, 30. Thence he passes to the affair of our perseverance; concerning which he concludes, from the whole of his preceding arguments, that as we are brought into a state of pardon by the free grace of God, through the death of Christ, who is now our mediator in heaven; no possible cause, providing we continue to love and serve God, shall be able to pervert our minds, or separate us from his love in Christ Jesus, Romans 8:31-39. Therefore, **απα ουν** is the grand inference from all that he has been arguing in relation to sanctity of life, both to the Gentiles, chap. 6, and to the Jews, chap. 7, and 8, to this verse, where I suppose he begins to address himself to both, in a body, to the end of the chapter. — Taylor, page 317.

**Verse 13.** *For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die*— Though **μελλετε αποθνησκειν** may mean, ye shall afterwards die, and this seems to indicate a temporal death, yet not exclusively of an eternal death; for both, and especially the latter, are necessarily implied.

*But if ye through the Spirit*— If ye seek that grace and spiritual help which the Gospel of Christ furnishes, resist, and, by resisting, mortify the deeds of the flesh, against which the law gave you no assistance, ye shall live a life of faith, love, and holy obedience here, and a life of glory hereafter.

**Verse 14. *For as many as are led by the Spirit***, etc.— No man who has not Divine assistance can either find the way to heaven, or walk in it when found. As Christ, by his sacrificial offering, has opened the kingdom of God to all believers; and, as a mediator, transacts the concerns of their kingdom before the throne; so the Spirit of God is the great agent here below, to enlighten, quicken, strengthen, and guide the true disciples of Christ; and all that are born of this Spirit are led and guided by it; and none can pretend to be the children of God who are not thus guided.

**Verse 15. *Ye have not received the spirit of bondage***— All that were under the law were under bondage to its rites and ceremonies; and as, through the prevalence of that corrupt nature with which every human being is polluted, and to remove which the law gave no assistance, they were often transgressing, consequently they had forfeited their lives, and were continually, through fear of death, subject to bondage, Hebrews 2:15. The believers in Christ Jesus were brought from under that law, and from under its condemnation; and, consequently, were freed from its bondage. The Gentiles were also in a state of bondage as well as the Jews, they had also a multitude of burdensome rites and ceremonies, and a multitude of deities to worship; nor could they believe themselves secure of protection while one of their almost endless host of gods, celestial, terrestrial, or infernal, was left unpropitiated.

***But ye have received the Spirit of adoption***— Ye are brought into the family of God by adoption; and the agent that brought you into this family is the Holy Spirit; and this very Spirit continues to witness to you the grace in which ye stand, by enabling you to call God your Father, with the utmost filial confidence and affection.

***The Spirit of adoption***— Adoption was an act frequent among the ancient Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans; by which a person was taken out of one family and incorporated with another. Persons of property, who had no children of their own, adopted those of another family. The child thus adopted ceased to belong to his own family, and was in every respect bound to the person who had adopted him, as if he were his own child; and in consequence of the death of his adopting father he possessed his estates. If a person after he had adopted a child happened to have children of his own, then the estate was equally divided between the adopted and

real children. The Romans had regular forms of law, by which all these matters were settled. — See in Aulus Gellius. *Noctes Attic.*, vol. i. cap. xix. p. 331. Edit Beloe; and the note there.

***Whereby we cry, Abba, Father.***— The reason why the Syriac and Greek words are here conjoined, may be seen in the note on Mark 14:36, to which the reader is referred. The introduction of the words here shows that the persons in question had the strongest evidence of the excellence of the state in which they stood; they knew that they were thus adopted; and they knew this by the Spirit of God which was given them on their adoption; and let me say, they could know it by no other means. The Father who had adopted them could be seen by no mortal eye; and the transaction being purely of a spiritual nature, and transacted in heaven, can be known only by God's supernatural testimony of it upon earth. It is a



Hebrew canon, relative to this, is extant in the tract Berachoth, fol. 16. 2, אבא פלוגי ילא אימא פלוגית העבדים והשפחות אי קורי אותם ל haabadim vehashshephachoth ein korin otham, lo Abba N, velo Imma N. Men-servants and maid-servants do not call to their master Abba, (father,) N. nor to their mistress Imma, (mother,) N. And from this some suppose that the apostle intimates that being now brought from under the spirit of bondage, in which they durst not call God their Father, they are not only brought into a new state, but have got that language which is peculiar to that state. It is certain that no man who has not redemption in the blood of the cross has any right to call God Father, but merely as he may be considered the Father of the spirits of all flesh.

Some have supposed that the apostle, by using the Syriac and Greek words which express Father, shows the union of Jewish and Gentile believers in those devotions which were dictated by a filial spirit. Others have thought that these were the first words which those generally uttered who were made partakers of the Holy Spirit. It is enough to know that it was the language of their sonship, and that it expressed the clear assurance they had of being received into the Divine favor, the affection and gratitude they felt for this extraordinary blessing, and their complete readiness to come under the laws and regulations of the family, and to live in the spirit of obedience.

**Verse 16.** *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit*— **αυτο το πνευμα**, that same Spirit, the Spirit of adoption; that is, the Spirit who witnesses this adoption; which can be no other than the Holy Ghost himself, and certainly cannot mean any disposition or affection of mind which the adopted person may feel; for such a disposition must arise from a knowledge of this adoption, and the knowledge of this adoption cannot be given by any human or earthly means; it must come from God himself: therefore the **αυτο το πνευμα** must have reference to that Spirit, by whom alone the knowledge of the adoption is witnessed to the soul of the believer.

*With our spirit*— In our understanding, the place or recipient of light and information; and the place or faculty to which such information can properly be brought. This is done that we may have the highest possible evidence of the work which God has wrought. As the window is the

proper medium to let the light of the sun into our apartments, so the understanding is the proper medium of conveying the Spirit's influence to the soul. We, therefore, have the utmost evidence of the fact of our adoption which we can possibly have; we have the word and Spirit of God; and the word sealed on our spirit by the Spirit of God. And this is not a momentary influx: if we take care to walk with God, and not grieve the Holy Spirit, we shall have an abiding testimony; and while we continue faithful to our adopting Father, the Spirit that witnesses that adoption will continue to witness it; and hereby we shall know that we are of God by the Spirit which he giveth us.

**Verse 17. *And if children, then heirs***— For the legitimate children can alone inherit the estate. This is not an estate to which they succeed in consequence of the death of a former possessor; it is like the promised land, given by God himself, and divided among the children of the family.

***Heirs of God***— It is neither an earthly portion nor a heavenly portion; but GOD himself, who is to be their portion. It is not heaven they are to inherit; it is GOD, who is infinitely greater and more glorious than heaven itself. With such powers has God created the soul of man, that nothing less than himself can be a sufficient and satisfactory portion for the mind of this most astonishing creature.

***Joint heirs with Christ***— Partaking of the same eternal glory with the glorified human nature of Christ.

***If so be that we suffer with him***— Observe, says Dr. Taylor, how prudently the apostle advances to the harsh affair of suffering. He does not mention it till he had raised up their thoughts to the highest object of joy and pleasure—the happiness and glory of a joint inheritance with the ever-blessed Son of God.

We are heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him. This, with the additional consideration that we suffer with Christ, or, as he himself suffered, would greatly qualify the transitory afflictions of this world, and dispose them to attend to the other arguments he had to offer.

**Verse 18. *For I reckon that the sufferings***, etc.— If the glory that is to be revealed be the enjoyment of God himself, (see above,) then the sufferings

of this life, which, when compared with eternity, are but as for a moment, are not worthy to be put in competition with this glory which shall be revealed in us. This case is perfectly clear.

**Verse 19. *For the earnest expectation of the creature***— There is considerable difficulty in this and the four following verses: and the difficulty lies chiefly in the meaning of the word **ἡ κτίσις**, which we translate the creature, and creation. Some think that by it the brute creation is meant; others apply it to the Jewish people; others to the godly; others to the Gentiles; others to the good angels; and others to the fallen spirits, both angelic and human. Dissertations without end have been written on it; and it does not appear that the Christian world are come to any general agreement on the subject. Dr. Lightfoot's mode of explanation appears to me to be the best, on the whole. "There is," says he, "a twofold key hanging at this place, which may unlock the whole, and make the sense plain and easy.

1. The first is the phrase, **πάσα ἡ κτίσις**, which we render the whole creation, Romans 8:22, and with which we meet twice elsewhere in the New Testament. Mark 16:15: Preach the Gospel, **πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει**, to every creature; and Colossians 1:23: The Gospel was preached, **ἐν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει**, to every creature. Now it is sufficiently apparent what is meant by **πάσα κτίσις** in both these places, viz. all nations, or the heathen world. For that which in St. Mark is, preach the Gospel to every creature, is, in St. Matthew, go and teach, **πάντα τὰ ἔθνη**, all nations. And this very phrase in this place lays claim to that very interpretation. And the Hebrew **כל הבריות** col habberioth, which answers to the Greek **πάσα ἡ κτίσις**, every creature, is applied by the Jews to the Gentiles, and that by way of opposition to Israel.

2. The second key is the word **ματαιότητι**, Romans 8:20, which is not unfitly rendered vanity; but then this vanity is improperly applied to the vanishing, dying, changing state of the creation. For **ματαιότης**, vanity, does not so much denote the vanishing condition of the outward state, as it does the inward vanity or emptiness of the mind. So the apostle, speaking of the Gentiles concerning whom he speaks here, tells us **εματαιώθησαν**, They became vain in their imaginations, Romans 1:21; and again, The Gentiles walk **ἐν ματαιότητι**, in the vanity of their mind, Ephesians 4:17;

so also, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, **οτι εισι ματαιοι**, that they are vain, 1 Corinthians 3:20. To all which let me add this farther observation, that throughout this whole place the apostle seems to allude to the bondage of the Israelites in Egypt, and their deliverance from it; with a comparison made betwixt the Jewish and the Gentile Church. When God would deliver Israel from his bondage, he challenges him for his Son, and his first-born, Exodus 4:22. And in like manner the Gentiles earnestly expect and wait for such a kind of manifestation of the sons of God, within and among themselves. The Romans, to whom the apostle writes, knew well how many predictions and promises it had pleased God to publish by his prophets, concerning gathering together and adopting sons to himself among the Gentiles; the manifestation of which sons the whole Gentile world with a neck as it were stretched out, as the word **αποκαραδοκια** implies, (**απο**, from, and **καρα**, the head, and **δοκω**, to expect,) doth now wait for." See the observations at the end of this chapter.

**Verse 20. *For the creature was made subject to vanity***— The Gentile world were subject to vanity of mind; but how? not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same. May we not say, it became vain willingly, but was made subject to vanity unwillingly? For, let us recur to the origin of Gentilism, the confusion of languages, by reason of the attempt to build the tower of Babel; and though there are some passages in the gloss of the Targumists upon this matter that are sufficiently ridiculous, yet as to their scope and design they are worthy of notice. "They said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, and let its head reach unto the top of heaven; and let us make a house of worship in the top of it; and let us put a sword in his hand that he may wage war for us against our enemies, before we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." It is an ancient tradition among the Jews, that this tower was built on an idolatrous account. The confusion of tongues, by which true religion was lost in the world, is a proof that the builders of this tower sinned against God in the highest degree. They were inclined to vanity, i.e. idolatry, **WILLINGLY**; but they were subjected to vanity **UNWILLINGLY**; for this proceeded from the just indignation and vengeance of God. From this time the world lay under heathenism till the bringing in of the Gospel, upwards of 2000 years after. See Lightfoot.

**Verse 21. *Because the creature***— This and the preceding verse should be thus connected: in hope THAT (οτι) the creature itself also shall be delivered. The word φθορα denotes, very frequently, sinful corruption. So, 2 Peter 1:4: Corruption through lust, της εν επιθυμια φθορας. 2 Corinthians 11:3: Lest your minds should be corrupted. 1 Corinthians 15:33: Evil communications corrupt good manners. The sense, therefore, of the apostle in this place seems to be: the Gentile world shall, in time, be delivered from the bondage of their sinful corruption, i.e. the bondage of their lusts and vile affections; and be brought into such a noble liberty as the sons of God enjoy.

**Verse 22. *The whole creation groaneth and travaileth***— If it be inquired how the Gentile world groaned and travailed in pain; let them who explain this of the fabric of the material world, tell us how that groans and travails? They must needs own it to be a borrowed and allusive phrase: but in the sense above given, the very literal construction may be admitted.

**Verse 23. *And not only they, but ourselves also***— Neither the Gentiles only, but we Jews also, (however we belong to a nation envious of the heathen,) to whom God hath granted the first fruits of the Spirit; we sigh among ourselves for their sakes, waiting for the adoption; that is, the redemption of our mystical body, whereof the Gentiles make a very great part. Lightfoot's works. vol. ii. p. 359 and 707.

The scope and design of St. Paul in these verses may be thus summed up:-The apostle shows that the whole creation is in a suffering state, into which it has been brought by the disobedience of one man, Adam; therefore, it was made subject to vanity-pain, sickness, and death; not willingly, for mankind had no part in that transgression which "brought death into the world and all our wo;" but God subjected the whole, purposing to afford them a deliverance and infusing into every heart a hope that a more auspicious era should take place; and it is through the influence of this hope, which every man possesses, that the present ills are so patiently borne, because all are expecting better days. The great deliverer is the Messiah, and the Gospel days the auspicious era which God intended to bring forward. They who believe in Christ with a heart unto righteousness are freed from the bondage of their sinful corruption, and brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God; and they look

forward with joyous expectation, waiting for the general resurrection, when their bodies also shall be redeemed from corruption, and the whole man, body and soul, be adopted into the family of heaven ABOVE, as their souls had been previously adopted into the family of faith BELOW. And although it may be said that the redemption provided by the Gospel can not be an object of hope to those who have never heard of it; yet, as every man has hope, and this hope is inspired by God for this very purpose; that it may be the means of supporting them in the ills of life, and God, in inspiring it, had respect to the glorious state of Christianity, therefore it is this state, in effect, that the whole creation are longing for. So Jesus Christ is said, by the Prophet Haggai, Haggai 2:7, to be the desire of all nations; and yet not one of the nations of the earth had, at that time, heard of him. And thus, as Dr. Whitby has very properly remarked, “desire and expectation are ascribed to creatures, in reference to things they want, and which tend to their advantage; notwithstanding they explicitly know nothing of them.”

**Verse 24. *For we are saved by hope***— We are supported and are comfortable in the expectation we have of receiving from the hand of our God all the good we need in the troubles and adversities of this life, and of having our bodies raised from corruption and death at the general resurrection.

***Hope that is seen is not hope***— As hope signifies the expectation of future good, so it necessarily supposes that the object of it is not seen, i.e. not enjoyed; for to see, in Scripture language, sometimes signifies to enjoy, as in Job 7:7: Mine eye shall no more SEE (margin, ENJOY) good. Job 9:25: My days flee away, and SEE no good; i.e. enjoy no prosperity. Psalm 50:23: I will SHOW the salvation of God: I will give that man to enjoy my salvation who walks uprightly. Matthew 5:8: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall SEE God; that is, they shall enjoy his favor and blessing. See also John 3:36; Hebrews 12:14, and 1 John 3:2. The hope that is seen, that is, enjoyed, is no longer hope, it is fruition: and a man cannot hope for that which he has in his possession.

**Verse 25. *But if we hope for that we see not***— If we have a well-grounded expectation of our resurrection and final glorification, knowing that such things are necessarily future, and must for a certain time be delayed; then

do we patiently wait for them, continue patiently to endure the common ills of life, and whatever tribulations we may be exposed to in consequence of our Christian profession; for we know, FAITHFUL is he who has promised. Hope is a sort of universal blessing, and one of the greatest which God has granted to man. To mankind, in general, life would be intolerable without it; and it is as necessary as faith is even to the followers of God.

The ancients have a very instructive and elegant fable concerning it. “Prometheus having made a human body, went up to heaven, and stole some celestial fire to animate it: Jupiter, incensed at the theft, sent down Pandora, with a box full of diseases and plagues of every kind, as an ensnaring present to Prometheus; but he refused to accept it. Epimetheus took and opened it, and instantly all those diseases, etc., by which mankind have been made miserable, flew out, and spread themselves over the whole earth; and only HOPE remained at the bottom of the box.” This fable explains itself, as to its main design. Men find life, with its various and unavoidable ills, only supportable by the hope they have of not only getting safely through them, but of enjoying a state of blessedness in the end. Hope is still at the bottom; and therefore man is encouraged to bear up in all the pressures of life. Take away hope, and then black despair and indescribable wretchedness would be the instant result. Hope stands justly among the highest mercies of God.

**Verse 26.** *The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities* — The same Spirit, **το πνευμα**, mentioned before as bearing witness with ours that we are the children of God; and consequently it is not a disposition or frame of mind, for the disposition of our mind surely cannot help the infirmities of our minds.

The word **συναντιλαμβανεται** is very inadequately expressed by helpeth. It is compounded of **συν**, together, **αντι**, against, and **λαμβανομαι**, to support or help, and signifies such assistance as is afforded by any two persons to each other, who mutually bear the same load or carry it between them. He who prays, receives help from the Spirit of God; but he who prays not receives no such help. Whatever our strength may be, we must put it forth, even while most implicitly depending on the strength of God himself.

***For we know not what we should pray for as we ought***— And should therefore be liable to endless mistakes in our prayers, if suitable desires were not excited by the Holy Spirit and power received to bring these desires, by prayer, before the throne of grace.

***But the Spirit itself***— **αυτο το πνευμα**, The same Spirit, viz. the Spirit that witnesses of our adoption and sonship, Romans 8:15, 16, makes intercession for us. Surely if the apostle had designed to teach us that he meant our own sense and understanding by the Spirit, he never could have spoken in a manner in which plain common sense was never likely to comprehend his meaning. Besides, how can it be said that our own spirit, our filial disposition, bears witness with our own spirit; that our own spirit helps the infirmities of our own spirit; that our own spirit teaches our own spirit that of which it is ignorant; and that our own spirit maketh intercession for our own spirit, with groanings unutterable? This would have been both incongruous and absurd. We must therefore understand these places of that help and influence which the followers of God receive from the Holy Ghost; and consequently, of the fulfillment of the various promises relative to this point which our Lord made to his disciples, particularly in John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26, 27; 16:7; and particularly John 16:13, 14: Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.

**Verse 27. *He maketh intercession for the saints***— The word **εντυγχανω** signifies to apply one's self to a person in behalf of another; to intercede or negotiate for. Our Lord makes intercession for us, by negotiating and managing, as our friend and agent, all the affairs pertaining to our salvation. And the Spirit of God makes intercession for the saints, not by supplication to God on their behalf, but by directing and qualifying their supplications in a proper manner, by his agency and influence upon their hearts; which, according to the Gospel scheme, is the peculiar work and office of the Holy Spirit. See Taylor.

***According to the will of God.***— **κατα θεον** According to the mind, intention, or design of God. And thus the prayers which we offer up, and the desires which subsist in the unutterable groanings, are all such as are pleasing in the sight of God. So that God, whose is the Spirit, and who is



acquainted with the mind of the Spirit, knows what he means when he leads the saints to express themselves in words, desires, groans, sighs, or tears: in each God reads the language of the Holy Ghost, and prepares the answer according to the request.

From all this we learn that a fluency in prayer is not essential to praying: a man may pray most powerfully in the estimation of God, who is not able to utter even one word. The unutterable groan is big with meaning, and God understands it, because it contains the language of his own Spirit. Some desires are too mighty to be expressed; there is no language expressive enough to give them proper form and distinct vocal sound: such desires show that they came from God; and as they came from him, so they express what God is disposed to do, and what he has purposed to do. This is a matter of great encouragement to all those who are agonizing to enter in at the strait gate.

**Verse 28.** *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God*— To understand this verse aright, let us observe: 1. That the persons in whose behalf all things work for good are they who love God, and, consequently, who live in the spirit of obedience. 2. It is not said that all things shall work for good, but that *συνεργει*, they work now in the behalf of him who loveth now, *αγαπῶσι*; for both verbs are in the present tense. All these things work together; while they are working, God's providence is working, his Spirit is working, and they are working TOGETHER with him. And whatever troubles, or afflictions, or persecutions may arise, God presses them into their service; and they make a part of the general working, and are caused to contribute to the general good of the person who now loves God, and who is working by faith and love under the influence and operation of the Holy Ghost. They who say sin works for good to them that love God speak blasphemous nonsense. A man who now loves God is not now sinning against God; and the promise belongs only to the present time: and as love is the true incentive to obedience, the man who is entitled to the promise can never, while thus entitled, (loving God,) be found in the commission of sin. But though this be a good general sense for these words, yet the all things mentioned here by the apostle seem more particularly to mean those things mentioned in Romans 8:28-30.

*To them who are the called according to his purpose.*— Dr. Taylor translates *τοις κλητοις*, the invited; and observes that it is a metaphor taken from inviting guests, or making them welcome to a feast. As if he had said: Certainly all things work together for their good; for this reason, because they are called, invited, or made welcome to the blessings of the covenant, (which is ratified in eating of the covenant sacrifice,) according to God's original purpose first declared to Abraham, Genesis 17:4: Thou shalt be a father of many nations-and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him, Genesis 18:18. Thus this clause is to be understood; and thus it is an argument to prove that all things, how afflictive soever, shall work for our good while we continue to love God. Our being called or invited, according to God's purpose, proves that all things work for our good, on the supposition that we love God, and not otherwise. For our loving God, or making a due improvement of our calling, is evidently inserted by the apostle to make good his argument. He does not pretend to prove that all things shall concur to the everlasting happiness of all that are called; but only to those of the called who love God. Our calling, thus qualified is the ground of his argument, which he prosecutes and completes in the two next verses. Our calling he takes for granted, as a thing evident and unquestionable among all Christians. But you will say: How is it evident and unquestionable that we are called? I answer: From our being in the visible Church, and professing the faith of the Gospel. For always, in the apostolic writings, all that are in the visible Church, and profess the faith of the Gospel, are numbered among the called or invited; i.e. among the persons who are invited to feast on the covenant sacrifice, and who thus, in reference to themselves, confirm and ratify the covenant. As for what is termed effectual calling, as distinguished from the general invitations of the Gospel, it is a distinction which divines have invented without any warrant from the sacred writings. Our calling, therefore, is considered by the apostle in the nature of a self-evident proposition, which nobody doubts or denies; or which, indeed, no Christian ought to doubt, or can call in question, Taylor's notes.

**Verse 29.** *For whom he did foreknow*, etc.— “In this and the following verse the apostle shows how our calling is an argument that all things work together to advance our eternal happiness, by showing the several steps which the wisdom and goodness of God have settled, in order to complete

our salvation. In order to this he first gives us, in this verse, the foundation and finishing, or the beginning and end, of the scheme of our redemption: For whom God did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. To foreknow, here signifies to design before, or at the first forming of the scheme; to bestow the favor and privilege of being God's people upon any set of men, Romans 11:2. This is the foundation or first step of our salvation; namely, the purpose and grace of God, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began, 2 Timothy 1:9. Then, he knew or favored us; for in this sense the word to know is taken in a great variety of places, both in the Old and New Testaments. And as he knew the GENTILES then, when the scheme was laid, and before any part of it was executed, consequently, in reference to the execution of this scheme, he foreknew us. This is the first step of our salvation, and the end or finishing of it is our conformity to the Son of God in eternal glory, Romans 8:17, which includes and supposes our moral conformity to him. When God knew us, at the forming of the Gospel scheme; or, when he intended to bestow on us the privilege of being his people; he then destined or designed us to be conformed to the image of his Son; and, as he destined or determined us then to this very high honor and happiness, he pre-destinated, fore-ordained, or pre-determined us to it. Thus we are to understand the foundation and finishing of the scheme of our salvation. The foundation is the foreknowledge, or gracious purpose of God; the finishing is our being joint heirs with Christ. Now, our calling or invitation (see on Romans 8:28) stands in connection with both these. 1. It stands in connection with God's foreknowledge; and so it is a true and valid calling: for we are called, invited, or chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, who may bestow his blessings upon any people, as may seem good in his sight, 1 Peter 1:2; consequently, we have a good title to the blessings of the Gospel to which we are called or invited. And this was to be proved, that the Jew, to whom the apostle particularly wrote, might see that the Gentiles being now called into the Church of God was not an accidental thing, but a matter which God had determined when he conceived the Gospel scheme. Thus our calling is connected with God's foreknowledge. 2. It stands also in connection with our being conformed to the image of his Son; for we are invited by the Gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Thessalonians 2:14. And therefore, supposing, what the apostle supposes, that we love God, it is certain,

from our being called, that we shall be glorified with the sons of God; and so our calling proves the point, that all things should work together for our good in our present state, because it proves that we are intended for eternal glory; as he shows in the next verse. For we must understand his foreknowing, predestinating, calling, and justifying, in relation to his glorifying; and that none are finally glorified, but those who, according to his purpose, are conformed to the image of his Son.” Taylor.

***The first-born among many brethren.***— That he might be the chief or head of all the redeemed; for His human nature is the first fruits of the resurrection from the dead; and He is the first human being that, after having passed through death, was raised to eternal glory. See Dr. Taylor.

**Verse 30. *Whom he did predestinate***, etc.— The Gentiles, whom He determined to call into his Church with the Jewish people, He called—He invited by the preaching of the Gospel, to believe on his Son Jesus Christ. It is worthy of note, that all that is spoken here refers to what had already taken place; for the calling, justifying, and glorifying are here represented as having already taken place, as well as the foreknowing and the predestinating. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that the apostle refers to what God had already done among the Jews and Gentiles: though he may also speak of the things that were not as though they were.

***He also justified***— Pardoned the sins of all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turned unto him.

***He also glorified.***— He has honored and dignified the Gentiles with the highest privileges, and he has already taken many of them to the kingdom of glory, and many more are on their way thither; and all who love him, and continue faithful unto death, shall inherit that glory eternally. Hence it is added, them he also glorified; for all the honors which he confers on them have respect to and are intended to promote their endless felicity; and though the terms are here used in a more general sense, yet, if we take them more restrictedly, we must consider that in the work of justification sanctification is implied; justification being the foundation and beginning of that work. From all this we learn that none will be glorified who have not been sanctified and justified; that the justified are those who have been called or invited by the Gospel of Christ; that those who have had this calling are they to whom God determined to grant this privilege—they did

not choose this salvation first, but God sent it to them when they knew him not—and therefore the salvation of the Gentile world, as well as that of the Jews, comes through the gratuitous mercy of God himself, was the result of infinite designs, and stands on the same ground as the calling, etc., of the Jewish people. The word **δοξα**, which we render glory, and **δοξαζω**, to glorify, both mean to render illustrious, eminent, etc., etc., in various parts of the New Testament; and in this sense the verb is used John 11:4; 12:23, 28; 13:31, 32; 14:13; 15:8; 21:19; Acts 3:13; 11:13; in none of which places eternal beatification can be intended. Here it seems to mean that those whom God had called into a state of justification he had rendered illustrious by innumerable gifts, graces, and privileges, in the same manner as he had done to the Israelites of old.

The whole of the preceding discourse will show that every thing here is conditional, as far as it relates to the ultimate salvation of any person professing the Gospel of Christ; for the promises are made to character, and not to persons, as some have most injudiciously affirmed. The apostle insists upon a character all along from the beginning of the chapter.

Romans 8:1: There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Romans 8:13: If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, etc. The absolute necessity of holiness to salvation is the very subject of his discourse; this necessity he positively affirms, and establishes by the most solid arguments. At the very entrance of his argument here, he takes care to settle the connection between our calling and our love and obedience to God, on purpose to prevent that mistake into which so many have fallen, through their great inattention to the scope of his reasoning. Romans 8:28: All things work together for good—to whom? To THEM that LOVE GOD: to them that are called according to his purpose. To them that love God, because they are called according to his purpose; for those only who love God can reap any benefit by this predestination, vocation, or any other instance of God's favor. See the observations at the end of this chapter.

**Verse 31.** *What shall we then say to these things?*—What conclusion should we draw from the above premises? From all that was already laid down in the preceding chapters, but especially in the preceding verses, from Romans 8:28-30 inclusive. As if he had said: What comfort may we derive from these doctrines? God has called us all to holiness, and to love

to him, which is the principle of holiness. We are persecuted and despised, it is true, and we may be more so; but, as God has called us to love him, and all things work together for good to them that love him; and, as his covenant with Abraham, while he was in his Gentile state, shows his gracious purpose towards us Gentiles, whom he has foreknown, who have been objects of his gracious foreknowledge, as well as the Jews, and who have now the fullest proof that we were so, by his sending us the Gospel, and showing us, in it, that if the Israelites were to be a holy priesthood, a royal nation, we are no less favored, as he has predestinated, from the beginning determined, that we should be conformed to the image of his Son, who is to be the first-born among many brethren, the head and chief of all converted Jews and Gentiles, and, in order to our final salvation, has called, invited us to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, has justified those who do believe, and has glorified, highly honored, and adorned them with innumerable gifts and graces, and, if they continue to possess that faith which worketh by love, will bring them, both body and soul, to his eternal glory, their bodies being made like unto his glorious body:-seeing, therefore, all these things are so, what comfort in our tribulations shall we derive from them?-Why this: If God be for us, who can be against us? He who is infinitely wise has undertaken to direct us: He who is infinitely powerful has undertaken to protect us: He who is infinitely good has undertaken to save us. What cunning, strength, or malice, can prevail against his wisdom, power, and goodness? None. Therefore we are safe who love God; and not only shall sustain no essential damage by the persecutions of ungodly men, but even these things work together for our good.

**Verse 32. *He that spared not his own Son***— And can we, his sincere followers, doubt of the safety of our state, or the certainty of his protection? No: for if he loved us, Gentiles and Jews, so intensely as to deliver up to death his own Son for us all, can he withhold from us any minor blessing? Nay, will he not, on the contrary, freely give us all things? For if he told Abraham, who is the father of the faithful, and representative of us all, and with whom the covenant was made, that, because he had not withheld from him his only son Isaac, but delivered him up to that death which he thought his God had required, in blessing, he would bless him; and in multiplying, he would multiply him; that his

seed should possess the gate of his enemies; and that in it all the nations of the earth should be blessed, Genesis 22:16-19; will HE not give US all that was spiritually intended by these promises, whose only begotten Son was not sacrificed in a figure, but really, in order to purchase every blessing that the soul of man can need and that the hand of God can dispense.

**Verse 33.** This and the two following verses contain a string of questions, most appropriately introduced and most powerfully urged, tending to show the safety of the state of those who have believed the Gospel of the grace of God. I shall lay these verses down as they are pointed by the best Greek critics:—

“Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect?-God who justifieth? Who is he that condemneth?-Christ who died? or, rather, who is risen again? He, who is at the right hand of God? He, who maketh intercession for us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?-Tribulation? or distress? or persecution? or famine? or nakedness? or peril? or sword?” In all these questions the apostle intimates that if neither GOD nor CHRIST would bring any charge against them who love him, none else could. And as God justifies through Christ who died, consequently no charge can lie against these persons, as God alone could produce any; and He, so far from doing this, has justified them-freely forgiven their trespasses.

For the proper meaning and sense of the terms chosen, elect, called, etc., etc., see the discourse prefixed to this epistle; and especially sect. vi. p. 19, etc., and sect. vii. p. 23, etc.

**Verse 34.** *Who is even at the right hand of God*— To which he has exalted our human nature, which he took in conjunction with his Divinity; and there he maketh intercession for us-manages all the concerns of his own kingdom in general, and of every member of his Church in particular.

**Verse 35.** *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?*— I do think that this question has been generally misunderstood. The apostle is referring to the persecutions and tribulations to which genuine Christians were exposed through their attachment to Christ, and the gracious provision God had made for their support and final salvation. As in this provision God had shown his infinite love to them in providing Jesus

Christ as their sin-offering, and Jesus Christ had shown his love in suffering death upon the cross for them; so, here, he speaks of the love of the followers of God to that Christ who had first loved them. Therefore the question is not, Who shall separate the love of Christ from us? or prevent Christ from loving us? but, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Who or what shall be able to remove our affection from him? And the questions that immediately follow show that this is the sense of the passage; for the tribulation, distress, etc., which he enumerates, are things by which they might be affected, but by which Christ could not be affected; and, consequently, the question most evidently refers to their love to him who had first loved them, and, while it affords a strong presumption of their perseverance, furnishes a most powerful argument against apostasy.

*Shall tribulation?*— **φλιψις**, grievous affliction, or distress of any kind; from **φλιβω**, to compress, oppress, straiten, etc.; any thing by which a man is rendered miserable.

*Or distress?*— **στενοχωρια**, a word of nearly the same import with the former, but more intense in its signification. It signifies straitness, being hemmed in on every side, without the possibility of getting out or escaping; from **στενος**, strait or narrow, and **χωρος**, a place.

*Or persecution?*— **διωγμος**, from **διωκω**, to pursue, press upon, prosecute, signifies such pursuing as an enemy uses in order to overtake the object of his malice, that he may destroy him.

*Or famine?*— **λιμος**, from **λειπω**, to fail; the total want of bread, and all the necessaries of life.

*Or nakedness?*— **γυμνοτης**, being absolutely without clothing; forcibly expressed by the derivation of the word **γυια μονα εχων**, having one's limbs only, being totally unclothed.

*Or peril?*— **κινδυνος**, a state of extreme and continued danger, perplexing and distressing with grievous forebodings and alarms; derived from **κινει τας οδυνας**, it excites anguish; because much evil is felt, and much more feared.



*Or sword?*— **μαχαίρα**, slaughter; the total destruction of life, and especially beheading, and such like, done by the order of the civil magistrate; for the word is used in this epistle, Romans 13:4, to signify the authority and power which he has of judicially terminating life; i.e. of inflicting capital punishment.

**Verse 36. *As it is written***— And these are no more than we may naturally expect from the present constitution of the world, and the positive predictions of the prophet, Psalm 44:22, who foresaw that a wicked world would always persecute and oppress the true followers of God.

**Verse 37. *Nay***— as the prophet adds in the same place, all this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, nor dealt falsely in thy covenant, Romans 8:17, 18, so all these things may happen unto us; but in all these things we are more than conquerors; WE abide faithful in the new covenant of our God; and HE is faithful who has promised to support and make us more than conquerors; i.e. to give us a complete triumph over sin, and death, and hell, not leaving one enemy unsubdued.

**Verse 38. *For I am persuaded***— After the blessed experience we have had of support by the grace and Spirit of him that loved us, that neither fear of death, nor hope of life, nor evil angels, nor principalities, nor powers, persecuting us for Christ's sake; nor the things we endure at present, nor the things to come, whatever tribulation we may be called to suffer in future;

**Verse 39.** Nor height-of honor, nor depth-of ignominy, nor any other creature, **ουτε τις κτισις ετερα**, (nor any other thing whatever,) shall be able to separate us, who love God, from the love of God, which he has vouchsafed to us in Christ Jesus. See Whitby. And for farther observations on the subject of the 29th and 30th verses, see at the end of the chapter.

1. THE confidence expressed by the apostle at the end of this chapter, is as rational as it is bold. On the premises laid down by him, in reference to which he has most logically conducted his whole argument, the conclusion to which he arrives is as natural and forcible as it is legitimate. The permanency of the Christian Church, in all the tribulations it has endured from pagans and papists, is a full proof of the correctness of the apostle's

reasoning. The true followers of Christ can never be forsaken by him. And his Church, which is founded on the rock, can never be shaken down by the tempests of persecution. And what God does for his Church in general, (the collective body of those who believe in the Lord Jesus, love, and obey him,) he does for every individual in that body: no man that trusts in him can be confounded. While the love of God is in his heart, and the work of God in his hand, he may be as fully persuaded as he is of his own being, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other thing whatsoever, shall be able to separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. The reader who has any knowledge of what is great, commanding, and sublime in composition, will not hesitate to add here, with Dr. Taylor: "The conclusion of this chapter is the most elegant and sublime piece of writing I remember ever to have read. It is founded on the grand and solid principles of the Gospel; it breathes the true spirit of Christian magnanimity; raises our minds far above all things created; and shows, in a bright and heavenly view, the greatness of soul and the strong consolation which the Gospel inspires. God grant that it may stand clear before our understandings, and be transcribed into all our hearts! They who despise the Gospel despise all that is great, and happy, and glorious!"

2. The doctrine of the necessity of personal holiness, so clearly and strongly laid down in the former part of this chapter, should be deeply considered by every person professing godliness; and while from the seventh chapter they learn that they have an infected and morally diseased nature, they should learn from the eighth that to destroy the work of the devil was Jesus Christ manifested; and that no soul can be said to be saved by Jesus Christ who is not saved from its sins. What a full proof is it of the fallen state of man, that there should be found persons professing Christianity more fervent in their pleadings for the necessary continuance of indwelling sin, than they are for the mind that was in Christ. The seventh chapter, because there are some expressions which, being misunderstood, seem to favor this doctrine, is read and incessantly quoted: the eighth chapter, though given by the same inspiration, yet because it so strongly shows the necessity of being saved from all sin, is seldom read and scarcely ever quoted!

3. The restoration of the brute creation to a state of happiness has been thought by several to be the doctrine of Romans 8:19-25. In the notes on those verses I have given reasons against this opinion, and have proved that the Gentiles, and not the irrational part of the creation, are the persons of whom the apostle speaks; nor can any consistent interpretation be given of the place, if it be applied to the brute creation. But, although this doctrine is not contained in the above verses, it does not follow that the doctrine itself is not true. Indeed, there are several reasons which render the supposition very probable. 1. The brute creation never sinned against God, nor are they capable of it, and consequently cannot be justly liable to punishment. But the whole brute creation is in a state of suffering, and partake of the common infirmities and privations of life, as well as mankind: they suffer, but who can say that they suffer justly? As they appear to be necessarily involved in the sufferings of sinful man, and yet neither through their fault nor their folly, it is natural to suppose that the Judge of all the earth, who ever does right, will find some means by which these innocent creatures shall be compensated for their sufferings. 4. That they have no compensation here, their afflictions, labors, and death prove; and if they are to have any compensation, they must have it in another state. 5. God, the fountain of all goodness, must have originally designed them for that measure of happiness which is suited to the powers with which he had endowed them; but, since the fall of man, they never had that happiness; and, in their present circumstances, never can. 6. In reference to intelligent beings, God has formed his purposes in reference to their happiness on the ground of their rational natures. He has decreed that they shall be happy if they will, all the means of it being placed within their power; and, if they be ultimately miserable, it is the effect of their own unconstrained choice. Therefore his purpose is fulfilled, either in their happiness or misery; because he has purposed that they shall be happy if they please, and that misery shall be the result of their refusal. 7. But it does not appear that the brute creation are capable of this choice; and it is evident that they are not placed in their present misery through either their choice or their sin; and if no purpose of God can be ultimately frustrated, these creatures must be restored to that state of happiness for which they have been made, and of which they have been deprived through the transgression of man. To say that the enjoyments which they have in this life are a sufficient compensation, is most evidently false; for, had not sin

entered into the world, they would have had much greater enjoyments, without pain, excessive labor and toil, and without death, and all those sufferings which arise from its predisposing causes. Nor does it appear that they have much happiness from eating, drinking, and rest, as they have these only in the proportion in which they are necessary to their existence as the slaves of men. Therefore, allowing that they have even gratification and enjoyment in life, they have much less than they would have had had not sin entered into the world; and consequently they have been deprived of the greater portion of the happiness designed for them by their bountiful Creator. 9. It is therefore obvious that the gracious purpose of God has not been fulfilled in them; and that, as they have not lost their happiness through their own fault, both the beneficence and justice of God are bound to make them a reparation. 10. Hence it is reasonable to conclude that, as from the present constitution of things they cannot have the happiness designed for them in this state, they must have it in another.

4. On the subject of the foreknowledge of God, some observations have been made at the conclusion of the notes on the second chapter of Acts. On the subject of the prescience and predestination mentioned here, Romans 8:29, 30, vast volumes have been written, and the Christian world greatly agitated and perplexed. These doctrines of men have very little place in the texts in question. After a long and serious investigation of this business, I am led to conclude that, whether the doctrine of the decrees be true or false, it does not exist in these verses.

No portion of the word of God has been more unhappily misunderstood than several parts of the Epistle to the Romans; because men have applied to individuals what belongs to nations; and referred to eternity transactions which have taken place in time.

We have already seen that one grand aim of the apostle in writing this epistle was: 1. To prove, to both Jews and Gentiles, that they were all under sin, and that neither of them had any claim either on the justice or beneficence of God; yet he, of his own free mercy, had revealed himself to the Jews, and crowned them with innumerable privileges; and, 2. That, as he was no respecter of persons, his mercy was as free to the Gentiles as to them, being equally their God as he was the God of the Jews, and therefore had, by the Gospel, called them to a state of salvation; and to

this display of his mercy the two verses in question seem particularly to refer, and show us not what God will do for some selected individuals, but what he has already done for nations.

After having shown that the whole Gentile world was groaning and travailing in pain together, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, he shows that it was, according to the affectionate purpose, **προθεσιν**, of God, that the Gentiles should be also called into the glorious liberty of the sons of God-into equal privileges with the Jews. He therefore represents them as objects of God's gracious foreknowledge. That the word **προγινωσκω**, which literally signifies to know, or discern beforehand, and to know so as to determine, signifies also to approve, or love before, to be well affected to, is not only evident from **יָדָע** *yada* in Hebrew, but also from the simple verb **γινωσκω**, in Greek, by which it is translated, and to which the compound verb repeatedly answers, without any extension of meaning by means of the preposition, as its use among the best Greek writers proves: and it is evident that the apostle uses the word in the sense of loving, being graciously affected to, Romans 11:1, 2. I say then, hath God cast away his people, which he FOREKNEW, **ὃν προεγνων**; to whom he has been so long graciously affected? By no means. As, therefore, he had been so long graciously affected towards the Jews, so has he towards the Gentiles. His call of Abraham, and the promises made to him, are the proof of it. The Jews, thus foreknown, were called into a glorious state of salvation, and endowed with privileges the most extraordinary ever bestowed on any people; as their whole history testifies. But is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, Romans 3:29; and to prove this is the main subject of the ninth chapter. Now, as he is the God of the Gentiles, he foreknew, had from the beginning a gracious purpose to them as well as to the Jews; and, being thus graciously disposed towards them, he determined **προωρισε**, from **προ**, before, and **οριζω**, to bound, define, etc., he defined, circumscribed, and determined the boundaries of this important business from the beginning, that they also should be taken into his Church, and conformed to the image of his Son; and, as Jesus Christ was to be their pattern, it must be by his Gospel that they should be brought into the Church; and consequently, that bringing in could not take place before the revelation of Christ. Having therefore thus foreknown and

thus predestinated them ALSO, he called them ALSO by the Gospel; he justified them ALSO on their believing; and he glorified them ALSO, dignified them also with the same privileges, blessings, honors, and Divine gifts: so that they were now what the Jews had been before, the peculiar people of God. The apostle, therefore, speaks here not of what they should be, or of what they might be, but of what they then were—the called, the justified, the highly honored of God. See the note on Romans 8:30.

It is strange that so obvious a meaning of the passage should not have been noticed; but the word **δοξάζω**, which we render to glorify, and by which we understand eternal beatification, which it is very seldom used to express, being taken in this sense in the passage in question, fixed the meaning of the preceding terms; and thus the whole passage was applied to things eternal, which had reference only to things in time. This seems to me to be the true key of the passage, and the whole scope of the epistle, and especially of the context, which shows that this is the sense in which it should be understood. The passages understood in this way illustrate the infinite mercy and wisdom of God; they show that whatever appearances his providential dealings may assume of partiality towards any particular people, yet he is equally the Father of the spirits of all flesh; hateth nothing that he hath made; is loving to all; that his tender mercies are over all his works; and that he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come unto the knowledge of the truth and be saved. Hence, whatever he did for the Jews he purposed to do for the Gentiles: if he foreknew, predestinated, called, justified, and glorified the former; he ALSO foreknew, predestinated, called, justified, and glorified the latter; having brought them into the same state of salvation, with a vast extension of blessings and higher degrees of honor. As the Jews forfeited their privileges, and now, instead of being glorified, instead of being highly honored, and rendered illustrious, they are degraded, brought down, and rendered contemptible; because they have not made a proper use of their election, they are now reprobated; so a similar reverse awaits the Gentiles if they sin after the similitude of their transgression; and it is against this that the apostle so solemnly warns them, Romans 11:20-22: Because of unbelief they (the Jews) were broken off—thou (the Gentiles) standest by faith. If God spared not the NATURAL BRANCHES, take heed lest he also

spare not THEE. Behold the goodness and severity of God! on them which FELL severity; but toward THEE goodness, IF THOU CONTINUE in his goodness; otherwise THOU ALSO shalt be CUT OFF.

5. This is also a lesson of solemn instruction to Christians in general: God has called them into a glorious state of salvation, and has furnished them with every requisite help to enable them to work out that salvation with fear and trembling. As it is an awful thing to receive the grace of God in vain, (whether that grace imply the common benefits of the Gospel, or those especial blessings received by believing souls,) so every person professing godliness should be jealous over himself lest he should trifle with matters of eternal moment; for, should he even neglect so great a salvation, his escape would be impossible. Hebrews 2:3; and if so, to what severe punishment must they be exposed who despise and reject it?

## CHAPTER 9.

*Paul expresses his great sorrow for the unbelief and obstinacy of the Jews, 1-3. Whose high privileges he enumerates, 4, 5. Points out the manner in which God has chosen to communicate the knowledge of his name to both Jews and Gentiles; and how he deals, whether in judgment or mercy, with individuals; and produces the cases of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Esau, and Pharaoh, 6-17. God shows mercy and judgment as he thinks proper, and none have a right to find fault with his proceedings, 18-20. He has the same power over the human race as the potter has over the clay, 21-23. The prophets predicted the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews, 24-29. The Gentiles have attained to the knowledge of God's method of saving sinners; while the Jews have not attained this knowledge, 30, 31. The reason why the Jews have not attained the salvation provided for them in the Gospel, 32, 33.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 9.

To this and the tenth chapter, Dr. Taylor has prefixed the following judicious summary:—

The apostle has largely proved in the preceding chapters, that the grace of God extends to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews; and that the dispensation of God's mercy was absolutely, and in itself, free to all who believe, whether Jews or Gentiles, in opposition to the merit of any works, or of conformity to any law whatever; and that the Gentiles have, by faith, a good title to the blessings of God's covenant, to which blessings the Jews cannot have a title any other way. Hitherto the apostle has not considered the Jews as rejected, except in an indirect way, but that they had the possibility of continuing in the Church, from entering into which they should not attempt to prevent the Gentiles, but allow them to be sharers in the mercies of God; and hence his language is in sum this: Why may not believing Gentiles be admitted, pardoned, and saved, as well as you?



But in this chapter, and the two following, the apostle considers the reception of the Gentiles into the kingdom and covenant of God under the notion of calling or invitation, and of election or choice: which shows that he views the two parties in a light different to that in which he had before placed them. The Gentiles he considers as invited into the kingdom of God, and as chosen to be his people; and the Jews he considers as left out and rejected; for as the main body of them had now rejected the Gospel of Christ, he saw that God was about to unchurch them, overturn their polity, destroy their temple, and disperse them over the face of the earth. Thus he knew they would be accursed, or anathematized from Christ, and reduced to a level with the heathen nations of the world. And the event has proved that his declarations were dictated by the Spirit of truth.

It is observable that, agreeably to his delicate manner of writing, and his nice and tender treatment of his countrymen, he never mentions their rejection—a subject extremely painful to his thoughts—otherwise than in a wish that he himself were accursed from Christ for them, or to prevent them from being accursed from Christ, (Romans 9:3,) till he comes to Rom. 11, where he has much to say in their favor, even considered, as at present, rejected. But it is very evident that his arguments in this chapter rest on the supposition that the main body of the Jewish nation would be cast out of the visible kingdom of God; and it is for this reason that in this and the two following chapters he considers the reception of any people into the kingdom and covenant of God under the relative notion of inviting and choosing, or of calling and election. The Jews were rejected and reprobated; the Gentiles were chosen and called, or elected. As this is most obviously the apostle's meaning, it is strange that any should apply his doctrine to the particular and unconditional reprobation and election of individuals.

It is upon this rejection of the Jews that the calling and election of the Gentiles rest. If the Jews be not rejected, but are still the visible Church and kingdom of God, then the Gentiles, according to the most proper inference from the apostle's doctrine, have no right to the blessings of the kingdom. Instead of being invited or called, they are intruders at the heavenly feast; and this the unbelieving Jews labored to prove, and thus unhinge the believing Gentiles by persuading them that they were not duly taken into the Church of God; that the Jews were, and ever must continue

to be, the only Church and kingdom of God, and that they could not be cast off so long as God was faithful to his promise to Abraham; and that the Gentiles were most miserably deceived when they supposed they were brought into that kingdom by faith in Christ, whereas there was no way of entering it, or of being entitled to its privileges, but by submitting to the law of Moses. This being the fixed opinion of the Jews, and the ground on which they opposed the Gentiles and endeavored to sap the foundation of their hope of salvation from the Gospel of Christ, it was therefore a matter of the utmost importance to be able to prove that the Jews, by rejecting Christ and his Gospel, were themselves cast out of the Church, and this in a way perfectly consistent with the truth of the promise made to Abraham. He had slightly touched on this subject at the beginning of the third chapter; but it would have broken in too much on the thread of his discourse to have pursued the argument there, for which reason he appears to have reserved it to this place, where he (1) solemnly declares his tenderest affection for his countrymen, and his real grief of heart for their infidelity and consequent rejection, Romans 9:1-5; (2) Answers objections against this rejection, Romans 9:6-23; (3) Proves the calling of the Gentiles from their own Scriptures, Romans 9:24-30; (4) Gives the true state and reasons of the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, Romans 9:30 to Romans 10:14; (5) Proves the necessity of the apostolic mission to the Gentiles in order to their salvation, Romans 10:14-21.

And all this was intended at once to vindicate the Divine dispensations; to convince the infidel Jew; to satisfy the believing Gentile that his calling or invitation into the Church of God was valid; to arm him against the cavils and objections of the unbelieving Jews, and to dispose the Christian Jew to receive and own the believing Gentile as a member of the family and kingdom of God, by Divine right, equal to any to which he himself could pretend. See Taylor's notes, p. 321, etc.

**Verse 1.** *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not*— This is one of the most solemn oaths any man can possibly take. He appeals to Christ as the searcher of hearts that he tells the truth; asserts that his conscience was free from all guile in this matter, and that the Holy Ghost bore him testimony that what he said was true. Hence we find that the testimony of

a man's own conscience, and the testimony of the Holy Ghost, are two distinct things, and that the apostle had both at the same time.

As the apostle had still remaining a very awful part of his commission to execute, namely, to declare to the Jews not only that God had chosen the Gentiles, but had rejected them because they had rejected Christ and his Gospel, it was necessary that he should assure them that however he had been persecuted by them because he had embraced the Gospel, yet it was so far from being a gratification to him that they had now fallen under the displeasure of God, that it was a subject of continual distress to his mind, and that it produced in him great heaviness and continual sorrow.

**Verse 3. *For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ***— This and the two preceding verses are thus paraphrased by Dr. Taylor: I am so far from insisting on the doctrine (of the rejection of the Jews) out of any ill-will to my countrymen, that I solemnly declare, in the sincerity of my heart, without the least fiction or dissimulation—and herein I have the testimony of my own conscience, enlightened and directed by the Spirit of God—that I am so far from taking pleasure in the rejection of the Jewish nation, that, contrariwise, it gives me continual pain and uneasiness, insomuch that, as Moses formerly (when God proposed to cut them off, and in their stead to make him a great nation, Exodus 32:10) begged that he himself should rather die than that the children of Israel should be destroyed, Exodus 32:32, so I could even wish that the exclusion from the visible Church, which will happen to the Jewish nation, might fall to my own share, if hereby they might be kept in it and to this I am inclined by natural affection, for the Jews are my dear brethren and kindred.

Very few passages in the New Testament have puzzled critics and commentators more than this. Every person saw the perfect absurdity of understanding it in a literal sense, as no man in his right mind could wish himself eternally damned in order to save another, or to save even the whole world. And the supposition that such an effect could be produced by such a sacrifice, was equally absurd and monstrous. Therefore various translations have been made of the place, and different solutions offered. Mr. Wakefield says: “I see no method of solving the difficulty in this verse, which has so exercised the learning and ingenuity of commentators, but by the *εὐχομαι εἶναι* of Homer, I profess myself to be; and he

translates the passage in a parenthesis, thus: (for I also was once an alien from Christ) on account of my brethren, etc. But how it does appear that Saul of Tarsus was ever an alien from Christ on account of his kinsmen, is to me perfectly indiscernible. Let us examine the Greek text. **ηυχομην γαρ αυτος**

Christ may be considered as devoting them to destruction, (see Matthew 24,) Paul is willing that in their place Christ should devote him: for I could wish myself, *αναθεμα ειμαι απο* (or, as some excellent MSS. have it, *υπο*) *του χριστου*, to be devoted BY Christ, to that temporal destruction to which he has adjudged the disobedient Jews, if by doing so I might redeem them. This, and this alone, seems to be the meaning of the apostle's wish.

**Verse 4. *Who are Israelites***— Descendants of Jacob, a man so highly favored of God, and from whom he received his name Israel—a prince of God, Genesis 32:28; from which name his descendants were called Israelites, and separated unto God for his glory and praise. Their very name of Israelites implied their very high dignity; they were a royal nation; princes of the most high God.

***The adoption***— The Israelites were all taken into the family of God, and were called his sons and first-born, Exodus 4:22; Deuteronomy 14:1; Jeremiah 31:9; Hosea 11:1; and this adoption took place when God made the covenant with them at Horeb.

***The glory***— The manifestation of God among them; principally by the cloud and pillar, and the Shekinah, or Divine presence, appearing between the cherubim over the mercy-seat. These were peculiar to the Jews; no other nation was ever thus favored.

***The covenants***— The covenants made with Abraham, both that which relates to the spiritual seed, and that which was peculiar to his natural descendants, Galatians 3:16, 17; which covenants were afterwards renewed by Moses, Deuteronomy 29:1. Some suppose that the singular is here put for the plural, and that by covenants we are to understand the decalogue, which is termed *ברית* berith, or covenant, Deuteronomy 4:13. But it is more likely that the apostle alludes to the great covenant made with Abraham, and to its various renewals and extensions at different times afterwards, as well as to its twofold design—the grant of the land of Canaan, and the rest that remains for the people of God.

***The giving of the law***— The revelation of God by God himself, containing a system of moral and political precepts. This was also peculiar

to the Jews; for to no other nation had he ever given a revelation of his will.

**The service**— *λατρεία*. The particular ordinances, rites, and ceremonies of their religious worship, and especially the sacrificial system, so expressive of the sinfulness of sin and the holiness of God.

**The promises**— The land of Canaan, and the blessings of the Messiah and his kingdom; which promises had been made and often repeated to the patriarchs and to the prophets.

**Verse 5. Whose are the fathers**— Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, the twelve patriarchs, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, etc., etc., without controversy, the greatest and most eminent men that ever flourished under heaven. From these, is an uninterrupted and unpolluted line, the Jewish people had descended; and it was no small glory to be able to reckon, in their genealogy, persons of such incomparable merit and excellency.

**And of whom, as concerning the flesh Christ came**— These ancestors were the more renowned, as being the progenitors of the human nature of the MESSIAH. Christ, the Messiah, *κατα σαρκα*, according to the flesh, sprang from them. But this Messiah was more than man, he is God over all; the very Being who gave them being, though he appeared to receive a being from them.

Here the apostle most distinctly points out the twofold nature of our Lord—his eternal Godhead and his humanity; and all the transpositions of particles, and alterations of points in the universe, will not explain away this doctrine. As this verse contains such an eminent proof of the deity of Christ, no wonder that the opposers of his divinity should strive with their utmost skill and cunning to destroy its force. And it must be truly painful to a mind that has nothing in view but truth, to see the mean and hypocritical methods used to elude the force of this text. Few have met it in that honest and manly way in which Dr. Taylor, who was a conscientious Arian, has considered the subject. “Christ,” says he, “is God over all, as he is by the Father appointed Lord, King, and Governor of all. The Father hath committed all judgement to the Son, John 5:22; has given all things into his hands, Matthew 28:18; he is Lord of all, Acts 10:36. God has given him a name above every name, Philippians 2:9; above every

name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and has put all things (himself excepted, 1 Corinthians 15:27) under his feet and given him to be head over all things, Ephesians 1:21, 22. This is our Lord's supreme Godhead. And that he is *ευλογητος*, blessed for ever, or the object of everlasting blessing, is evident from Revelation 5:12, 13: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power-and blessing and honor be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Thus it appears the words may be justly applied to our blessed Lord." Notes, p. 329. Yes, and when we take other scriptures into the account, where his essential Godhead is particularly expressed, such as Colossians 1:16, 17: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created BY him, and FOR him: and he is BEFORE all things, and BY him do all things consist; we shall find that he is not God by investiture or office, but properly and essentially such; for it is impossible to convey in human language, to human apprehension, a more complete and finished display of what is essential to Godhead, indivisible from it, and incommunicable to any created nature, than what is contained in the above verses. And while these words are allowed to make a part of Divine revelation, the essential Godhead of Jesus Christ will continue to be a doctrine of that revelation.

I pass by the groundless and endless conjectures about reversing some of the particles and placing points in different positions, as they have been all invented to get rid of the doctrine of Christ's divinity, which is so obviously acknowledged by the simple text; it is enough to state that there is no omission of these important words in any MS. or version yet discovered.

**Verse 6.** *Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect.*— A Jew might have objected, as in Romans 3:3: "Is not God bound by his faithfulness to continue the Jews as his peculiar Church and people, notwithstanding the infidelity of the major part of them? If they are brought to a level with the Gentiles, will it not follow that God hath failed in the performance of his promise to Abraham? Genesis 17:7, 8: I will establish my covenant between me and thee for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee." To which it may be answered: This awful dispensation of God towards the Jews is not

inconsistent with the veracity of the Divine promise; for even the whole body of natural born Jews are not the whole of the Israelites comprehended in the promise. Abraham is the father of many nations; and his seed is not only that which is of the law, but that also which is of the faith of Abraham, Romans 4:16, 17. The Gentiles were included in the Abrahamic covenant as well as the Jews; and therefore the Jews have no exclusive right to the blessings of God's kingdom.

**Verse 7. *Neither because they are the seed of Abraham***, etc.— Nor can they conclude, because they are the natural descendants of Abraham, that therefore they are all of them, without exception, the children in whom the promise is to be fulfilled.

***But, in Isaac shall thy seed be called***.— The promise is not confined to immediate natural descent, but may be accomplished in any part of Abraham's posterity. For Abraham had several sons besides Isaac, Genesis 25:1, 2, particularly Ishmael, who was circumcised before Isaac was born, and in whom Abraham was desirous that the promise should be fulfilled, Genesis 17:18, and in him God might have fulfilled the promise, had he so pleased; and yet he said to Abraham, Genesis 21:12: Not in Ishmael, but in Isaac, shall thy seed be called.

**Verse 8. *That is, They which are the children of the flesh***— Whence it appears that not the children who descend from Abraham's loins, nor those who were circumcised as he was, nor even those whom he might expect and desire, are therefore the Church and people of God; but those who are made children by the good pleasure and promise of God, as Isaac was, are alone to be accounted for the seed with whom the covenant was established.

**Verse 9. *For this is the word of promise***, etc.— That is, this is evidently implied in the promise recorded Genesis 18:10: At this time I will come, saith God, and exert my Divine power, and Sarah, though fourscore and ten years old, shall have a son; which shows that it is the sovereign will and act of God alone, which singles out and constitutes the peculiar seed that was to inherit the promise made to Abraham.

It should be considered that the apostle, in this and the following quotations, does not give us the whole of the text which he intends should



be taken into his argument, but only a hint or reference to the passages to which they belong; directing us to recollect or peruse the whole passage, and there view and judge of the argument.

That he is so to be understood appears from the conclusion he draws, Romans 9:16: So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. In his arguments, Romans 9:7, 8, etc., he says not one word of Abraham's willing Ishmael to be the seed in whom the promise might be fulfilled; nor of Isaac's willing Esau; nor of Moses' willing and interceding that the Israelites might be spared; nor of Esau's running for venison; but by introducing these particulars into his conclusion, he gives us to understand that his quotations are to be taken in connection with the whole story, of which they are a part; and without this the apostle's meaning cannot be apprehended.

*Neither having done any good*— To merit the distinction of being made the peculiar people of God; nor evil, to deserve to be left out of this covenant, and the distinguishing national blessings which it conferred; that the purpose of God according to election might stand—that such distinctions might appear to depend on nothing but God’s free choice, not of works, or any desert in the people or nations thus chosen; but of the mere purpose of him who calleth any people he pleases, to make them the depositories of his especial blessings, and thus to distinguish them from all others.

**Verse 12.** *The elder shall serve the younger*— These words, with those of Malachi, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated, are cited by the apostle to prove, according to their typical signification, that the purpose of God, according to election, does and will stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; that is, that the purpose of God, which is the ground of that election which he makes among men, unto the honor of being Abraham’s seed, might appear to remain unchangeable in him; and to be even the same which he had declared unto Abraham. That these words are used in a national and not in a personal sense, is evident from this: that, taken in the latter sense they are not true, for Jacob never did exercise any power over Esau, nor was Esau ever subject to him. Jacob, on the contrary, was rather subject to Esau, and was sorely afraid of him; and, first, by his messengers, and afterwards personally, acknowledged his brother to be his lord, and himself to be his servant; see Genesis 32:4; 33:8, 13. And hence it appears that neither Esau nor Jacob, nor even their posterities, are brought here by the apostle as instances of any personal reprobation from eternity: for, it is very certain that very many, if not the far greatest part, of Jacob’s posterity were wicked, and rejected by God; and it is not less certain that some of Esau’s posterity were partakers of the faith of their father Abraham.

From these premises the true sense of the words immediately following, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated, Malachi 1:2, 3, fully appears; that is, that what he had already cited from Moses concerning the two nations, styled by the names of their respective heads, Jacob and Esau, was but the same in substance with what was spoken many years after by the Prophet Malachi. The unthankful Jews had, in Malachi’s time, either in words or in their heart, expostulated with God, and demanded of him

wherein he had loved them? I have loved you, saith the Lord: yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Malachi 1:2-5. To this the Lord answers: Was not Esau Jacob's brother? Yet I loved Jacob and hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.

the sovereign of his own ways, has a right to dispense his blessings as he chooses, and to give salvation to mankind, not in the ways of their devising, but in that way that is most suitable to his infinite wisdom and goodness.

Therefore, 1. He chose the Jewish people from all others, and revealed himself to them. Thus they were the elect, and all the nations of mankind reprobate. 2. When the fullness of the time came he revealed himself also to the Gentiles, who gladly received the Gospel: and the Jews rejecting it, were cast off. Thus the elect became reprobate, and the reprobate, elect. 3. He published to all mankind that the pardon of sin could and should be obtained ONLY by faith in his Son Jesus, and not by any obedience to any law. And the Jews, the descendants of Jacob, who rejected this way of salvation, became precisely like the Edomites, the descendants of Esau; they builded, but God pulled down; their mountains and heritage are Now laid waste for the dragons of the wilderness; and they properly may now be called the border of wickedness, a people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever: they have rejected the Lord that bought them, and so have brought upon themselves swift destruction. That no personal, absolute, eternal reprobation of Esau can have been intended, we learn from this; that he was most amply reconciled to his brother, who had so deeply wronged and offended him, by depriving him of his birthright and his blessing: and his having forgiven his brother his trespasses, was no mean proof that God had forgiven him. See our Lord's words, Matthew 6:14. Therefore there can be assigned no competent ground of his damnation, much less of his personal reprobation from all eternity. 8. And were such a personal reprobation intended, is it not shocking to suppose that the God of endless mercy, in whose sight his pious parents had found favor, should inform them, even before their child was born, that he had absolutely consigned him, by an irrevocable decree to eternal damnation? A message of such horrid import coming immediately from the mouth of God, to a tender, weak, and delicate woman, whose hour of travail with two children was just at hand, could not have failed to produce abortion, and destroy her life. But the parents perfectly understood their God, and saw no decree of reprobation in his message; two manner of nations are in thy womb-and the elder shall serve the younger. There is no reason, worthy the most wise and gracious God, why he should make known to

the world such a thing concerning Esau, who was yet unborn, that he had reprobated him from all eternity. Such a revelation could be of no spiritual advantage or edification to mankind, but rather of a malignant influence, as directly occasioning men to judge hardly of their Maker, and to conceive of him as no faithful Creator; as having no care, no love, no bowels of compassion towards the workmanship of his own hands. See Goodwin's Exposition: and see my notes on Gen. 27.

**Verse 14.** *What shall we say then?*— To what conclusion shall we come on the facts before us? Shall we suggest that God's bestowing peculiar privileges in this unequal manner, on those who otherwise are in equal circumstances, is inconsistent with justice and equity? By no means. Whatever God does is right, and he may dispense his blessings to whom and on what terms he pleases.

**Verse 15.** *For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy,* etc.— The words of God to Moses, Exodus 33:19, show that God has a right to dispense his blessings as he pleases; for, after he had declared that he would spare the Jews of old, and continue them in the relation of his peculiar people, when they had deserved to have been cut off for their idolatry, he said: I will make all my goodness pass before thee; and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. As if he had said: I will make such a display of my perfections as shall convince you that my nature is kind and beneficent; but know, that I am a debtor to none of my creatures. My benefits and blessings are merely from my own good will: nor can any people, much less a rebellious people, challenge them as their due in justice or equity. And therefore I now spare the Jews; not because either you, who intercede for them or they themselves have any claim upon my favor, but of my own free and sovereign grace I choose to show them mercy and compassion. I will give my salvation in my own way and on my own terms. He that believeth on my Son Jesus shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned. This is God's ultimate design; this purpose he will never change; and this he has fully declared in the everlasting Gospel. This is the grand DECREE of reprobation and election.

**Verse 16.** *So then it is not of him that willeth*, etc.— I conclude, therefore, from these several instances, that the making or continuing any body of men the peculiar people of God, is righteously determined; not by the judgment, hopes, or wishes of men, but by the will and wisdom of God alone. For Abraham judged that the blessing ought, and he willed, desired, that it might be given to Ishmael; and Isaac also willed, designed, it for his first-born, Esau: and Esau, wishing and hoping that it might be his, readily went, ran a hunting for venison, that he might have the blessing regularly conveyed to him: but they were all disappointed—Abraham and Isaac, who willed, and Esau who ran: for God had originally intended that the blessing of being a great nation and distinguished people should, of his mere good pleasure, be given to Isaac and Jacob, and be confirmed in their posterity; and to them it was given. And when by their apostasy they had forfeited this privilege, it was not Moses' willing, nor any prior obligation God was under, but his own sovereign mercy, which continued it to them.

**Verse 17.** *For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh*— Instead of showing the Israelites mercy he might justly have suffered them to have gone on in sin, till he should have signalized his wisdom and justice in their destruction; as appears from what God in his word declares concerning his dealings with Pharaoh and the Egyptians, Exodus 9:15, 16: For now, saith the Lord, I had stretched forth my hand, (in the plague of boils and blains,) and I had smitten thee and thy people with the pestilence; and thou hadst (by this plague) been cut off from the earth; (as thy cattle were by the murrain;) but in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up—I have restored thee to health by removing the boils and blains, and by respiting thy deserved destruction to a longer day, that I may, in thy instance, give such a demonstration of my power in thy final overthrow, that all mankind may learn that I am God, the righteous Judge of all the earth, the avenger of wickedness. See this translation of the original vindicated in my notes on Exodus 9:15, 16; and, about the hardening of Pharaoh, see the notes on those places where the words occur in the same book.

**Verse 18.** *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will*— This is the apostle's conclusion from the facts already laid down: that God, according to his own will and wisdom, in perfect righteousness, bestows mercy; that is to say, his blessings upon one part of mankind, (the Jews of old, and the Gentiles of the present time,) while he suffers another part (the Egyptians

of old, and the Jews of the present day) to go on in the abuse of his goodness and forbearance, hardening themselves in sin, till he brings upon them a most just and exemplary punishment, unless this be prevented by their deep repentance and general return to God through Jesus the promised, the real Messiah.

**Verse 19.** *Why doth he yet find fault?*— The apostle here introduces the Jew making an objection similar to that in Romans 3:7: If the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, that is, if God's faithfulness is glorified by my wickedness, why yet am I also judged as a sinner? Why am I condemned for that which brings so much glory to him? The question here is: If God's glory be so highly promoted and manifested by our obstinacy, and he suffers us to proceed in our hardness and infidelity, why does he find fault with us, or punish us for that which is according to his good pleasure?

**Verse 20.** *Nay but, O man, who art thou*— As if he had said: Weak, ignorant man, dardest thou retort on the infinitely good and righteous GOD? Reflect on thyself; and tell me, after thou hast abused the grace of God, and transgressed his laws, wilt thou cavil at his dispensations? God hath made, created, formed the Jewish nation; and shall the thing formed, when it hath corrupted itself, pretend to correct the wise and gracious Author of its being, and say, Why hast thou made me thus? Why hast thou constituted me in this manner? Thou hast done me wrong in giving me my being under such and such conditions.

Old John Goodwin's note on this passage is at least curious: "I scarce (says he) know any passage of the Scripture more frequently abused than this. When men, in the great questions of predestination and reprobation, bring forth any text of Scripture which they conceive makes for their notion, though the sense which they put upon it be ever so uncouth and dissonant from the true meaning of the Holy Ghost, yet, if any man contradict, they frequently fall upon him with—Nay but, O man; who art thou? As if St. Paul had left them his heirs and successors in the infallibility of his spirit! But when men shall call a solid answer to their groundless conceits about the meaning of the Scriptures, a replying against God, it savours more of the spirit who was seen falling like lightning from heaven, than of His, who saw him in this his fall."

**Verse 21. *Hath not the potter power over the clay***— The apostle continues his answer to the Jew. Hath not God shown, by the parable of the potter, Jeremiah 18:1, etc., that he may justly dispose of nations, and of the Jews in particular, according as he in his infinite wisdom may judge most right and fitting; even as the potter has a right, out of the same lump of clay, to make one vessel to a more honorable and another to a less honorable use, as his own judgment and skill may direct; for no potter will take pains to make a vessel merely that he may show that he has power to dash it to pieces? For the word came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work upon the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hands of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. It was not fit for the more honorable place in the mansion, and therefore he made it for a less honorable place, but as necessary for the master's use there, as it could have been in a more honorable situation. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation-to build and to plant it; is it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them. The reference to this parable shows most positively that the apostle is speaking of men, not individually, but nationally; and it is strange that men should have given his words any other application with this scripture before their eyes.

**Verse 22. *What if God, willing to show his wrath***— The apostle refers here to the case of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and to which he applies Jeremiah's parable of the potter, and, from them, to the then state of the Jews. Pharaoh and the Egyptians were vessels of wrath—persons deeply guilty before God; and by their obstinate refusal of his grace, and abuse of his goodness, they had fitted themselves for that destruction which the wrath, the vindictive justice of God, inflicted, after he had endured their



obstinate rebellion with much long-suffering; which is a most absolute proof that the hardening of their hearts, and their ultimate punishment, were the consequences of their obstinate refusal of his grace and abuse of his goodness; as the history in Exodus sufficiently shows. As the Jews of the apostle's time had sinned after the similitude of the Egyptians, hardening their hearts and abusing his goodness, after every display of his long-suffering kindness, being now fitted for destruction, they were ripe for punishment; and that power, which God was making known for their salvation, having been so long and so much abused and provoked, was now about to show itself in their destruction as a nation. But even in this case there is not a word of their final damnation; much less that either they or any others were, by a sovereign decree, reprobated from all eternity; and that their very sins, the proximate cause of their punishment, were the necessary effect of that decree which had from all eternity doomed them to endless torments. As such a doctrine could never come from God, so it never can be found in the words of his apostle.

**Verse 23. *And that he might make known***— God endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath: 1. To show his wrath, and to make his power known. And also, 2. That he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy.

***Which he had afore prepared unto glory***— The Jews were fitted for destruction long before; but the fittest time to destroy them was after he had prepared the believing Gentiles unto glory. For the rod of the Messiah's strength was to be sent out of Zion, Psalm 110:2. The Jewish nation was to supply the first preachers of the Gospel, and from Jerusalem their sound was to go forth into all the earth. Therefore the Jewish state, notwithstanding its corruptions, was to be preserved till the Messiah came, and even till the Gospel preached by the apostles had taken deep root in the Gentile world. Another thing which rendered the time when the Jewish polity was overthrown the most proper, was this, because then the immediate occasion of it was the extensiveness of the Divine grace. They would not have the Gentiles admitted into the Church of God; but contradicted, and blasphemed, and rejected the Lord that bought them: thus, then, the extensiveness of the Divine grace occasioned their infidelity, Romans 9:33; 10:3; 11:11, 12, 15, 28, 30. Thus the Jews were diminished by that abundance of grace which has enriched the

Gentiles. And so the grace of God was illustrated; or, so God made known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy—the apostles and primitive believers among the Jews, and the Gentile world, which received the Gospel by the preaching of the apostles and their successors.

**Verse 24.** *Even us, whom he hath called*— All the Jews and Gentiles who have been invited by the preaching of the Gospel to receive justification by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and have come to the Gospel feast on this invitation.

**Verse 25.** *As he saith also in Osee*— It is a cause of not a little confusion, that a uniformity in the orthography of the proper names of the Old and New Testaments has not been preserved. What stranger to our sacred books would suppose that the Osee above meant the Prophet Hosea, from whom, Hosea 2:23, this quotation is taken: I will have mercy on her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people. The apostle shows that this calling of the Gentiles was no fortuitous thing, but a firm purpose in the Divine mind, which he had largely revealed to the prophets; and by opposing the calling of the Gentiles, the Jews in effect renounced their prophets, and fought against God.

**Verse 26.** *And it shall come to pass*, etc.— These quotations are taken out of Hosea, Hosea 1:10, where (immediately after God had rejected the ten tribes, or kingdom of Israel, Hosea 1:9, then saith God, Call his name Lo-ammi; for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God,) he adds, yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered: and it shall come to pass, that in the place in which it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. As if he had said: The decrease of numbers in the Church, by God's utterly taking away the ten tribes, (Hosea 1:6,) shall be well supplied by what shall afterwards come to pass, by calling the Gentiles into it. They, the rejected Jews, which had been the people of God, should become a Lo-ammi-not my people. On the contrary, they, the Gentiles, who had been a Lo-ammi-not my people, should become the children of the living God. Again, Hosea 2:23: I will sow her (the Jewish Church) unto me in the earth, (alluding probably to the dispersion of the Jews over all the Roman

empire; which proved a fruitful cause of preparing the Gentiles for the reception of the Gospel,) and, or moreover, I will have mercy upon her, the body of the believing Gentiles, that had not obtained mercy. See Taylor.

**Verse 27. *Esaias also crieth***— The apostle pursues his argument, which had for its object the proof that God, for their infidelity, had rejected the great body of the Jews, and that but a few of them would embrace the Gospel, and be saved from that besom of destruction which was now coming to sweep them and their state away. Dr. Taylor paraphrases this and the following verses thus: And that but a small remnant of the Jews shall now be taken into the Church, is agreeable to former dispensations; for the Prophet Isaiah expressly declares concerning the Israelites, Isaiah 10:22, 23: Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, (for the promise to Abraham has been amply fulfilled,) only a remnant shall be saved; the consumption decreed shall overflow in righteousness. For the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined in the midst of all the land.

**Verse 28. *For he will finish the work, and cut it short***, etc.— These appear to be forensic terms, and refer to the conclusion of a judicial proceeding; the Lord has tried and found them guilty, and will immediately execute upon them the punishment due to their transgressions.

**Verse 29. *And as Esaias said before***— What God designs to do with the Jews at present, because of their obstinacy and rebellion, is similar to what

were not destroyed from the land; some remained, and the harvest was in the days of the apostles.

**Verse 30. *What shall we say then?***— What is the final conclusion to be drawn from all these prophecies, facts, and reasonings? This: That the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness, etc. This, with the succeeding verses, together with what belongs to the same subject in the beginning of the following chapter, I have explained at large in the notes on Romans 1:17, to which I must refer the reader; and shall content myself in this place with Dr. Taylor's general paraphrase. We may suppose the apostle to express himself to the following effect. Thus I have vindicated the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, with regard to the Divine veracity and justice. Now let us turn our thoughts to the true reason and state of the affair considered in itself. And, in the first place, what just notion ought we to have of the calling of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews? I answer: The true notion of the calling or inviting of the Gentiles is this: whereas they had no apprehension of being reinstated in the privileges of God's peculiar kingdom, and consequently used no endeavors to obtain that blessing, yet, notwithstanding, they have attained to justification, to the remission of sins, and the privileges of God's people: not on account of their prior worthiness and obedience, but purely by the grace and mercy of God, received by faith on their part. And so, by embracing the scheme of life published by the Gospel, they are adopted into the family and Church of God. Thus the Gentiles are called or invited.

**Verse 31. *But Israel, which followed after***— But the Jews, who have hitherto been the people of God, though they have been industrious in observing a rule by which they supposed they could secure the blessings of God's peculiar kingdom, yet have not come up to the true and only rule by which those blessings can be secured.

**Verse 32. *Wherefore?***— And where lies their mistake? Being ignorant of God's righteousness-of his method of saving sinners by faith in Christ, they went about to establish their own righteousness-their own method of obtaining everlasting salvation. They attend not to the Abrahamic covenant, which stands on the extensive principles of grace and faith; but they turn all their regards to the law of Moses. They imagine that their obedience to that law gives them a right to the blessings of the Messiah's

kingdom. But, finding that the Gospel sets our special interest in God and the privileges of his Church on a different footing, they are offended, and refuse to come into it.

**Verse 33. *As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion***— Christ, the Messiah, is become a stone of stumbling to them: and thus what is written in the prophecy of Isaiah is verified in their case, Isaiah 8:14; 28:16: Behold, I lay in Sion, i.e. I shall bring in my Messiah; but he shall be a widely different person from him whom the Jews expect; for, whereas they expect the Messiah to be a mighty secular prince, and to set up a secular kingdom, he shall appear a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs; and redeem mankind, not by his sword or secular power, but by his humiliation, passion, and death. Therefore they will be offended at him and reject him, and think it would be reproachful to trust in such a person for salvation.

***And whosoever believeth on him***— But so far shall any be from confusion or disappointment who believes in Christ; that on the contrary, every genuine believer shall find salvation—the remission of sins here, and eternal glory hereafter. See the notes on Romans 1:16, 17, and Dr. Taylor's paraphrase and notes.

1. ON the subject of vicarious punishment, or rather the case of one becoming an anathema or sacrifice for the public good, in illustration of Romans 9:3, I shall make no apology for the following extracts, taken from an author whose learning is vast, and whose piety is unblemished.

“When mankind lost sight of a beneficent Creator, the God of purity, and consecrated altars to the sun, the moon, the stars; to demons; and to hero gods, under the names of Moloch, Ashtaroth and Baalim; these objects of their worship led them to the most horrid acts of cruelty, and to every species of obscenity; even their sons and their daughters they burnt in the fire to their gods, more especially in seasons of distress. Such was the conduct of the king of Moab; for, when he was besieged in his capital, and expected he should fall into the hands of his enemies, he took his eldest son, who should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering on the wall.

With these facts thus related from the Scriptures, all accounts, ancient and modern, exactly correspond. Homer, who it must be recollected wrote more than nine hundred years before the Christian era, although he describes chiefly the common sacrifices of quadrupeds, yet gives one account of human victims. But in succeeding generations, when it was conceived that one great and most malignant spirit was the proper object of their fear, or that subordinate provincial gods, equally malignant, *nesciaque humanis precibus mansuescere corda*, disposed of all things in our world, men bound their own species to the altar, and in circumstances of national distress presented such as they valued most, either their children or themselves. Herodotus informs us that, when the army of Xerxes came to the Strymon, the magi offered a sacrifice of white horses to that river. On his arrival at the Scamander, the king ascended the citadel of Priam; and having surveyed it, he ordered a thousand oxen to be sacrificed to the Trojan Minerva. But on other occasions he chose human victims; for we are informed that, when, having passed the Strymon, he reached the nine ways, he buried alive nine young men and as many virgins, natives of the country. In this he followed the example of his wife, for she commanded fourteen Persian children, of illustrious birth, to be offered in that manner to the deity who reigns beneath the earth. Thus, in the infancy of Rome we see Curtius, for the salvation of his country, devoting himself to the infernal gods, when, as it appears, an earthquake occasioned a deep and extensive chasm in the forum, and the augurs had declared that the portentous opening would never close until what contributed most to the strength and power of the Romans should be cast into it; but that by such a sacrifice they would obtain immortality for their republic. When all men were at a loss how to understand this oracle, M. Curtius, armed as for battle, presented himself in the forum, and explained it thus: ‘What is more valuable to Rome than her courage and her arms?’ So saying, he urged forward his impetuous steed, and buried himself in the abyss. His grateful countrymen admired his fortitude, and attributed the increasing splendor of their state to the sacrifice he made. Animated by this example, Decius, in the war between Rome and Latium, having solemnly offered himself as an expiatory sacrifice, rushed single into the thickest ranks of the astonished Latins, that by his death he might appease the anger of the gods, transfer their indignation to the enemy, and secure the victory to Rome. *Conspectus ab utroque acie aliquanto augustior humano visu, sicut*

Caelo missus, piaculum omnis deorum irae, qui pestem ab suis aversam in hostes ferret.

Here we see distinctly marked the notion of vicarious suffering, and the opinion that the punishment of guilt may be transferred from the guilty to the innocent. The gods call for sacrifice-the victim bleeds-atonement is made-and the wrath of the infernal powers falls in its full force upon the enemy. Thus, while Themistocles at Salamine was offering sacrifice, three captives, the sons of Sandance, and nephews to Xerxes, all distinguished for their beauty, elegantly dressed and decked, as became their birth, with ornaments of gold, being brought on board his galley, the augur, Euphrantides, observing at the very instant a bright flame ascending from the altar, whilst one was sneezing on the right, which he regarded as a propitious omen, he seized the hand of Themistocles, and commanded that they should all be sacrificed to Bacchus, (*ὠμηστη διονυσω*-cruel and relentless Bacchus! Homer has the same expression,) predicting, on this occasion, safety and conquests to the Greeks. Immediately the multitude with united voices called on the god, and led the captive princes to the altar, and compelled Themistocles to sacrifice them.

So when Aeneas was to perform the last kind office for his friend Pallas, he sacrificed (besides numerous oxen, sheep, and swine) eight captives to the infernal gods. In this he followed the example of Achilles, who had caused twelve Trojans of high birth to bleed by the sacerdotal knife, over the ashes of his friend Patroclus.

*A hundred feet in length, a hundred wide,  
The glowing structure spreads on every side,  
High on the top the manly course they lay,  
And well-fed sheep and sable oxen slay;  
Achilles covered with their fat the dead,  
And the piled victims round the body spread;  
Then jars of honey and of fragrant oil  
Suspend around, low bending o'er the pile.  
Four sprightly coursers with a deadly groan  
Pour forth their lives, and on the pyre are thrown  
Of nine large dogs, domestic at his board,  
Fell two, selected to attend their lord:  
The last of all, and horrible to tell,  
Sad sacrifice! twelve Trojan captives fell;  
On these the rage of fire victorious preys,  
Involves and joins them in one common blaze.  
Smear'd with the bloody rites, he stands on high,*

*And calls the spirit with a cheerful cry,  
All hail, Patroclus! let thy vengeful ghost  
Hear, and exult on Pluto's dreary coast.*

*POPE'S Homer, IL. xxiii. ver. 203*

How much was it to be lamented, that even civilized natures should forget the intention for which sacrifices were originally instituted! The bad effects, however, would not have been either so extensive or so great, had they not wholly lost the knowledge of Jehovah; and taken, as the object of their fear, that evil and apostate spirit whose name, with the utmost propriety is called Apollyon, or the destroyer, and whose worship has been universally diffused at different periods among all the nations of the earth.

The practice of shedding human blood before the altars of their gods was not peculiar to the Trojans and the Greeks; the Romans followed their example. In the first ages of their republic they sacrificed children to the goddess Mania; in later periods, numerous gladiators bled at the tombs of the patricians, to appease the manes of the deceased. And it is particularly noticed of Augustus, that, after the taking of Perusia, he sacrificed on the



The Egyptians, in Heliopolis, sacrificed three men every day to Juno. The Spartans and Arcadians scourged to death young women; the latter to appease the wrath of Bacchus, the former to gratify Diana. The Sabian idolaters in Persia offered human victims to Mithras, the Cretans to Jupiter, the Lacedemonians and Lusitanians to Mars, the Lesbians to Bacchus, the Phocians to Diana, the Thessalians to Chiron.

The Gauls, equally cruel in their worship, sacrificed men, originally to Eso and Teutate, but latterly to Mercury, Apollo, Mars, Jupiter, and Minerva. Caesar informs us that, whenever they thought themselves in danger, whether from sickness, or after any considerable defeat in war, being persuaded that unless life be given for life the anger of the gods can never be appeased, they constructed wicker images of enormous hulk, which they filled with men, who were first suffocated with smoke, and then consumed by fire. For this purpose they preferred criminals; but when a sufficient number of these could not be found, they supplied the deficiency from the community at large.

The Germans are said to have differed from the Gauls in having no druids, and in being little addicted to the service of the altar. Their only gods were the sun, Vulcan, and the moon; yet, among the objects of their worship was Tuisco their progenitor and Woden the hero of the north. It is true that neither Caesar nor Tacitus say any thing of their shedding blood in sacrifice; yet the probability is, that, like the Saxons and other northern nations, they not only offered blood, but took their choicest victims from the human race.

In Sweden the altars of Woden smoked incessantly with blood: this flowed most abundantly at the solemn festivals celebrated every ninth year at Upsal. Then the king, attended by the senate and by all the great officers about his court, entered the temple, which glittered on all sides with gold, and conducted to the altar nine slaves, or in time of war nine captives. These met the caresses of the multitude, as being about to avert from them the displeasure of the gods, and then submitted to their fate: but in times of distress more noble victims bled; and it stands upon record that when Aune their king was ill, he offered up to Woden his nine sons, to obtain the prolongation of his life.

The Danes had precisely the same abominable customs. Every ninth year, in the month of January, they sacrificed ninety-nine men, with as many horses, dogs, and cocks; and Hacon, king of Norway, offered his own son to obtain from Woden the victory over Harold, with whom he was at war.

In Russia the Slavi worshipped a multitude of gods, and erected to them innumerable altars. Of these deities Peroun, that is, the thunderer, was the supreme, and before his image many of their prisoners bled. Their god of physic, who also presided over the sacred fires, shared with him; and the great rivers, considered as gods, had their portion of human victims, whom they covered with their inexorable waves. But Suetovid, the god of war, was the god in whom they most delighted; to him they presented annually, as a burnt offering, three hundred prisoners, each on his horse; and when the whole was consumed by fire, the priests and people sat down to eat and drink till they were drunk. It is worthy of remark, that the residence of Suetovid was supposed to be in the sun.

To this luminary the Peruvians, before they were restrained by their Incas, sacrificed their children.

Among the sacred books of the Hindoos, the Ramayuna demands particular attention, because of its antiquity, the extent of country through which it is revered, and the view which it exhibits of the religion, doctrine, mythology, customs, and manners of their remote progenitors.

In this we have a golden age of short duration, succeeded by a state of universal wickedness and violence, which continued till the deity, incarnate, slew the oppressors of the human race, and thus restored the reign of piety and virtue.

This poem contains a description of the Ushwamedha, or most solemn sacrifice of the white horse, instituted by Swuymbhoo, that is, by the self-existent. At the celebration of this festival, the monarch, as the representative of the whole nation, acknowledged his transgressions; and when the offerings were consumed by the sacrificial fire, he was

instant when his blood was to have been shed, this illustrious youth was by miracle delivered; and the monarch, as the reward of his intended sacrifice, received virtue, prosperity, and fame.

It is well known that the Brahmins have in all ages had their human victims, and that even in our days thousands have voluntarily perished under the wheels of their god Jaghernaut.”-Townsend’s character of Moses, p. 76.

Though in the preceding notes I have endeavored to make every point as clear and plain as possible; yet it may be necessary, in order to see the scope of the apostle’s design more distinctly, to take a general survey of the whole. No man has written with more judgment on this epistle than Dr. Taylor, and from his notes I borrow the principal part of the following observations.

The principal thing that requires to be settled in this chapter is, what kind of election and reprobation the apostle is arguing about: whether election, by the absolute decree and purpose of God, to eternal life; and reprobation, by a like absolute decree, to eternal misery; or only election to the present privileges and external advantages of the kingdom of God in this world; and reprobation, or rejection, as it signifies the not being favored with those privileges and advantages. I think it demonstrably clear that it is the latter election and rejection the apostle is discoursing on, and not the former; as the following considerations appear to me to demonstrate.

I. The subject of the apostle’s argument is manifestly such privileges as are enumerated, Romans 9:4, 5: Who are Israelites, to whom pertains the adoption, etc. From these privileges he supposes the Jews had fallen, or would fall; or, that for a long time they would be deprived of the benefit of them. For it is with regard to the loss of those privileges that he was so much concerned for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh, Romans 9:2, 3. And it is with reference to their being stripped of these privileges that he vindicates the word and righteousness of God, Romans 9:24. Not as though the word of God had taken no effect, or failed, etc.; proving that God, according to his purpose of election, was free to confer them upon any branch of Abraham’s family: consequently, those privileges were the singular blessings which by the purpose of God

according to election, not of works, but of him that calleth, were conferred upon Jacob's posterity. But those privileges were only such as the whole body of the Israelites enjoyed in this world, while they were the Church and people of God, and such privileges as they might afterwards lose, or of which they might be deprived; therefore the election of Jacob's posterity to those privileges was not an absolute election to eternal life.

II. Agreeably to the purpose of God according to election, it was said unto Rebecca, The elder shall serve the younger, meaning the posterity of the elder and the younger; Genesis 25:23: 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. These are the words which signify the purpose of God according to election: therefore the election refers to Jacob's posterity, or the whole nation of Israel. But all the nation of Israel were not absolutely elected to eternal life: therefore the purpose of God according to election referred to temporal and not to eternal blessings, and was a privilege of which they might be deprived.

III. Agreeably to the purpose of God according to election, it was said to Rebecca, The elder shall serve the younger; but to serve, in Scripture, never meant to be eternally damned in the world to come: consequently the opposite blessing, bestowed upon the posterity of the younger, could not be eternal salvation, but certain privileges in this life; therefore the purpose according to election refers to those privileges, and the servitude does not imply everlasting perdition.

IV. The election the apostle speaks of is not of works, Romans 9:11, but of the mere will of God, who calls and invites, and refers to no qualifications in the persons thus elected and called. But in no part of the sacred writings is final salvation said to be given to any who are not qualified by holiness to receive and enjoy it; therefore election to eternal glory cannot be what the apostle speaks of in this epistle.

V. The election of which the apostle speaks took place, first in Abraham and his seed, before his seed was born; and then (secluding Ishmael and all his posterity) in Isaac and his seed before they were born. And then, secluding Esau and all his posterity, in Jacob and his seed before they were born. But the Scripture no where represents eternal life as bestowed upon

any family or race of men in this manner; therefore this election mentioned by the apostle cannot be an election unto eternal life.

VI. Vessels of mercy, Romans 9:23, are manifestly opposed to vessels of wrath, Romans 9:22. The vessels of mercy are the whole body of the Jews and Gentiles, who were called or invited into the kingdom of God under the Gospel, Romans 9:24; consequently, the vessels of wrath are the whole body of the unbelieving Jews. So in Romans 9:30, 31, the whole body of believing Gentiles, who, according to God's purpose of election, had attained justification, are opposed to the whole body of the Israelites, who came short of it. But men shall not be received into eternal life or subjected to eternal damnation at the last day in collective bodies, but according as particular persons in those bodies have acted well or ill; therefore, this election is not of these particular bodies unto eternal life, etc.

VII. Whoever carefully peruses the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters, will find that those who have not believed, Romans 11:31, are the present rejected Jews, or that Israel to whom blindness hath happened in part, Romans 11:25; the same who fell, and on whom God hath shown severity, Romans 11:22; the same with the natural branches whom God spared not, Romans 11:21; who were broken off from the olive tree, Romans 11:20, 19, 17; who were cast away, Romans 11:15; who were diminished and fallen, Romans 11:12; who had stumbled, Romans 11:11; who were a disobedient and, gainsaying people, Romans 10:21; who, being ignorant of God's righteousness, went about to establish their own, Romans 10:3; because they sought righteousness, not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, Romans 9:32, and therefore had not attained to the law of righteousness, Romans 9:31; the same people spoken of in all these places, are the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, Romans 9:22, and the same for whom Paul had great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart, Romans 9:2, 3; -in short, they are the unbelieving nation, or people of Israel; and it is with regard to the reprobation or rejection of this people that he is arguing and vindicating the truth, justice, and wisdom of God in this ninth chapter.

Now, if we turn back and review those three chapters, we shall find that the apostle, Romans 11:1, heartily desired and prayed that those same

reprobated and rejected people of Israel might be saved; he affirms that they had not stumbled so as to fall finally and irrecoverably, Romans 11:11; that they should have again a fullness, Romans 11:12; that they should be received again into the Church, Romans 11:16; that a holiness still belonged to them, Romans 11:16; that if they did not still abide in unbelief, they should be grafted into their own olive tree again, Romans 11:23, 24; that blindness had happened unto them only for a time, till the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, Romans 11:25; and then he proves from Scripture, that all Israel—all those nations at present under blindness, shall be saved, Romans 11:26, 27; that, as touching the (original) election, they were still beloved for the fathers', the patriarchs', sake, Romans 11:28; that, in their case, the gifts and calling of God were without repentance, Romans 11:29; that through our (the believing Gentiles') mercy, they shall at length obtain mercy, Romans 11:31. All these several things are spoken of that Israel, or the body of people concerning whose rejection the apostle argues in the ninth chapter. And therefore the rejection which he there argues about cannot be absolute reprobation to eternal damnation, but to their being, as a nation, stripped of those honors and privileges of God's peculiar Church and kingdom in this world, to which, at a certain future period, they shall again be restored.

VIII. Once more: whoever carefully peruses those three chapters will find that the people who in times past believed not God, but have NOW obtained mercy through the unbelief of the Jews, Romans 11:30, are the whole body of the believing Gentiles; the same who were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted, contrary to nature, into the good olive tree, Romans 11:24, 17; the same to whom God hath shown goodness, Romans 11:22; the WORLD that was reconciled, Romans 11:15; the GENTILES who were enriched by the diminishing of the Jews, Romans 11:12; to whom salvation came through their fall, Romans 11:11; the Gentiles who had attained to righteousness, (justification,) Romans 9:30; who had not been God's people, nor believed; but now were his people, beloved, and children of the living God, Romans 9:25, 26; even US whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, out also of the Gentiles, Romans 9:24, who are the vessels of mercy, on whom God has made known the riches of his glory, Romans 9:23; the vessels made unto honor, Romans 9:21. He speaks of the same body of men in all these places;

namely, of the believing Gentiles principally, but not excluding the small remnant of the believing Jews, who were incorporated with them. And it is this body of men, whose calling and election he is proving, in whose case the purpose of God according to election stands good, Romans 9:11, and who are the children of the promise that are counted for the seed, Romans 9:8: these are the election, or the elect.

Now, concerning this called or elect body of people, or any particular person belonging to this body, the apostle writes thus, Romans 11:20-22: Well, because of unbelief, they (the Jews) were broken off, (reprobated, rejected,) and thou standest (in the Church among God's called and elect) by faith; be not high minded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches, (the Jews,) take heed, lest he also spare not thee, (the Gentiles.) Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them (the Jews) which fell, severity; but towards thee (believing Gentiles) goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off, rejected, reprobated. This proves that the calling, and election, for which the apostle is arguing in the ninth chapter, is not absolute election unto eternal life, but to the present privileges of the Church-the honors and advantages of God's peculiar people; which election, through unbelief and misimprovement, may be rendered void and come to nothing. See Dr. Taylor, p. 330, etc.

From thus carefully considering the apostle's discourse, and taking in his scope and design, and weighing the different expressions he uses, in connection with the Scripture facts and Scripture phrases employed in describing those facts, we must be fully convinced that the doctrines of eternal, absolute, unconditional election and reprobation have no place here, and that nothing but a pre-established creed, and a total inattention to the apostles scope and design, could ever have induced men to bend these scriptures to the above purpose, and thus to endeavor to establish as articles of faith, doctrines which, far from producing glory to God in the highest, and peace and good will among men, have filled the Church of God with contention, set every man's sword against his brother, and thus done the work of Apollyon in the name of Christ. If men will maintain these and such like for Scriptural doctrines, it is but reasonable to request that it be done in the spirit of the Gospel.





## CHAPTER 10.

*The apostle expresses his earnest desire for the salvation of the Jews, 1. Having a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge, they sought salvation by works, and not by faith in Christ, 2-4. The righteousness which is of the law described, 5. That which is by faith described also, 6-10. He that believes and calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved, 11-13. What is necessary to salvation, believing, hearing, preaching, a Divine mission, the Gospel, and obedience to its precepts, 14-16. Faith comes by hearing, 17. The universal spread of the Gospel predicted by the prophets, 18-20. The ingratitude and disobedience of the Israelites, 21.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 10.

**Verse 1.** *My heart's desire*, etc.— Though the apostle knew that the Jews were now in a state of rejection, yet he knew also that they were in this state through their own obstinacy, and that God was still waiting to be gracious, and consequently, that they might still repent and turn to him. Of his concern for their salvation he had already given ample proof, when he was willing to become a sacrifice for their welfare, see Romans 9:3.

**Verse 2.** *They have a zeal of God*— They believe their law to have come immediately from God himself, and are jealous of its glory and excellence; they conscientiously observe its rites and ceremonies, but they do not consider the object and end of those rites; they sin more through ignorance than malice; and this pleads in their excuse. By this fine apology for them, the apostle prepares them for the harsher truths which he was about to deliver.

**Verse 3.** *For-being ignorant of God's righteousness*— Not knowing God's method of saving sinners, which is the only proper and efficient method: and going about to establish their own righteousness-seeking to procure their salvation by means of their own contriving; they have not submitted—they have not bowed to the determinations of the Most High, relative to his mode of saving mankind, viz. through faith in Jesus Christ, as the only available sacrifice for sin—the end to which the law pointed.

**Verse 4. *For Christ is the end of the law***— Where the law ends, Christ begins. The law ends with representative sacrifices; Christ begins with the real offering. The law is our schoolmaster to lead us to Christ; it cannot save, but it leaves us at his door, where alone salvation is to be found. Christ as an atoning sacrifice for sin, was the grand object of the whole sacrificial code of Moses; his passion and death were the fulfillment of its great object and design. Separate this sacrificial death of Christ from the law, and the law has no meaning, for it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins: wherefore the Messiah is represented as saying, Sacrifice and observing thou didst not desire; burnt-offering and sin-offering thou hast not required; then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will; a body hast thou prepared me, Psalm 40:6, 7; Hebrews 10:4-10; which proves that God never designed that the sacrifices of the law should be considered the atonement for sin, but a type or representative of that atonement; and that THE atonement was the sacrifice offered by Christ. Thus he was the END of the law, in respect to its sacrifices. And, as sacrifices were offered merely to procure pardon of sin, righteousness, or justification, Christ is the end of the law for this justification to every one that believeth on him, as dying for their offenses, and rising again for their justification, having made peace through the blood of his cross. Therefore every Jew who rejected Christ rejected salvation, and that very salvation which the law witnessed and required, and which could not be had but through Christ alone.

**Verse 5. *For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law***— The place to which the apostle refers, seems to be Leviticus 18:5: Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments; which if a man do, he shall live in them. These words seem to be spoken in answer to an objection which might be made by a Jew: “Did not Moses give us a law, the observance of which should secure our salvation?” Such a law Moses undoubtedly gave, and that law promises life to those who perform its precepts: but who can plead for life on this ground, who rejects that Christ who is the end of the law? No man ever did, nor ever can, fulfill that law, so as to merit salvation by the performance of it: for, as all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, they are all under the curse of the law, which says: Cursed is every one who continueth not in all the things that are written in the book of the law to do them, Deuteronomy 27:26;

Galatians 3:10; therefore by the deeds of this law none can be justified, because all are in a state of condemnation for transgressions already committed against it. If, therefore, there were not such a provision as is made by the death of Christ, no soul could be saved.

**Verse 6. *But the righteousness which is of faith***— As it is most evident that there can be no justification by works, as all are sinful and all in a guilty state; if God will grant salvation at all, it must be by faith: but faith must have an object and a reason for its exercise; the object is Jesus Christ—the reason is the infinite merit of his passion and death.

***Who shall ascend unto heaven?*** etc.— As Christ is the end of the law for justification to every one that believes, no observance of the law can procure him. Who, by the practice of the law, can bring Christ down from heaven? or, when brought down, and crucified and buried, as a sacrifice for sin, who can bring him up again from the dead? And both his death and resurrection are essentially necessary for the salvation of a lost world. Or the sense of the apostle may be this: They who will not believe in Christ crucified must in effect be seeking another Messiah to come down from heaven with a different revelation; or they who will not credit the doctrine that we preach concerning his resurrection seem in effect to say, Christ yet remains to be raised from the dead, and reign over the Jews as a mighty secular sovereign, subjecting the Gentile world to the sway of his righteous scepter.

**Verse 8. *But what saith it? The word is nigh thee***— There is no occasion to seek high or low for the saving power; the word of reconciliation is nigh. The way of salvation is now both plain and easy. The law is magnified and made honorable by the death of Christ; and the doctrine of faith in his death and resurrection is fully proclaimed, and amply proved to be effectual to the purpose for which it was revealed. By the preaching of the Gospel the doctrine of salvation is nigh thee, and the saving influence is at hand: it is in thy mouth, easy to be understood, easy to be professed: and in thy heart, if thou art upright before God, sincerely desiring to be saved on his own terms, not striving to establish thy own method of justification by the law, which must for ever be ineffectual, but submitting to the method of justification which God has devised.

**Verse 9.** *That if thou shalt confess*, etc.— Acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Savior. Believe in thy heart that he who died for thy offenses has been raised for thy justification; and depend solely on him for that justification, and thou shalt be saved.

**Verse 10.** *For with the heart man believeth*, etc.— And be sincere in this: for with the heart, duly affected with a sense of guilt, and of the sufficiency of the sacrifice which Christ has offered, man believeth unto righteousness, believeth to receive justification; for this is the proper meaning of the term here, and in many other parts of this epistle; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. He who believes aright in Christ Jesus will receive such a full conviction of the truth, and such an evidence of his redemption, that his mouth will boldly confess his obligation to his Redeemer, and the blessed persuasion he has of the remission of all his sins through the blood of the cross. One grand object of the apostle is to show the simplicity of the Gospel scheme of salvation; and at the same time, its great efficacy, it is simple, and very unlike the law, which was full of rites, ordinances, ceremonies, etc., each of which required to be perfectly fulfilled: and yet, after all, even those who had the utmost zeal for God, and, as conscientiously as possible, observed all the precepts of the law, had not attained to justification nor peace of conscience. Whereas both Jews and Gentiles, who had believed on the Lord Jesus according to the simple declarations of the Gospel, were freely justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses: and they had the witness in themselves that they were passed from death to life.

**Verse 11.**

**Verse 12.** *For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek*— All are equally welcome to this salvation. Here the Jew has no exclusive privilege; and from this the Greek is not rejected. One simple way of being saved is proposed to all, viz. faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; because he is the same Lord who has made all and governs all, and is rich in mercy to all that call upon him.

**Verse 13.** *For whosoever shall call*, etc.— Nor shall any one who hears this doctrine of salvation, and credits it as he is commanded, be permitted to pray or supplicate the throne of grace in vain: for the Prophet Joel hath declared, Joel 2:32: Whosoever shall call upon, invoke, the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners, shall be saved—shall have his guilt pardoned, his heart purified; and if he abide in the faith, rooted and grounded in him, showing forth the virtues of him who was called him out of darkness into his marvellous light, he shall be saved with all the power of an eternal life.

“Believing in Christ, or God, Romans 10:11, and calling upon God, Romans 10:12-14, are in effect the same thing; as calling upon God necessarily connects and supposes faith in him: and he who duly believes in Christ has such a sense of his dependence upon Divine grace, that he looks unto God and trusts in his power and goodness alone for happiness: which is the true religion of the Gospel.” Dr. Taylor.

It is evident that St. Paul understood the text of Joel as relating to our blessed Lord; and therefore his word **κατακολουθετε** must answer to the prophet's word **יהוה** Yehovah, which is no mean proof of the Godhead of Jesus Christ. If the text be translated, Whosoever shall invoke in the name of the Lord, which translation **יקרא בשם יהוה** yikra beshem Yehovah will certainly bear, yet still the term Yehovah, the incommunicable name, is given to Christ; because invoking in the name signifies soliciting one in the name or on the account of another. He who is invoked is GOD; he, in whose name he is invoked, is JESUS CHRIST, who is here called Yehovah. He who asks mercy from GOD, in the name and for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, shall get his soul saved.

**Verse 14.** *How then shall they call on him*— As the apostle had laid so much stress on believing in order to salvation, and as this doctrine, without

farther explanation, might be misunderstood, it was necessary to show how this faith was produced; and therefore he lays the whole doctrine down in a beautifully graduated order.

1. There can be no salvation without the Gospel: a dispensation of mercy and grace from God alone, here called, Romans 10:15, the Gospel of peace; glad tidings of good things.
2. This must be preached, proclaimed in the world for the obedience of faith.
3. None can effectually preach this unless he have a Divine mission; for how shall they preach except they be SENT, Romans 10:15. The matter must come from God; and the person who proclaims it must have both authority and unction from on high.
4. This Divinely-commissioned person must be heard: it is the duty of all, to whom this message of salvation is sent, to hear it with the deepest reverence and attention.
5. What is heard must be credited; for they who do not believe the Gospel as the record which God has given of his Son cannot be saved, Romans 10:14.
6. Those who believe must invoke God by Christ, which they cannot do unless they believe in him; and in this way alone they are to expect salvation. Professing to believe in Christ, without earnest, importunate prayer for salvation, can save no man. All these things the apostle lays down as essentially necessary; and they all follow from his grand proposition, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. But, says the apostle, How shall they CALL upon him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they BELIEVE in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they HEAR without a preacher? And how shall they PREACH except they be sent? And with what message which can bring salvation can they be sent, but with the GOSPEL OF PEACE, the GLAD TIDINGS OF GOOD THINGS. When, therefore, there is: 1st, a proper MESSAGE; 2ndly, a proper MESSENGER; 3rdly, the message PREACHED, proclaimed, or properly delivered by him; 4thly, the proclamation properly HEARD and attentively considered by the people; 5thly, the message which they have heard, conscientiously BELIEVED; 6thly, the

name of the Lord Jesus, by whom alone this salvation is provided, most fervently INVOKED; then, 7thly, salvation, or redemption from sin and misery, and the enjoyment of peace and happiness, will be the result of such calling, believing, hearing, preaching, sending, and message sent:-and thus the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith is guarded from abuse.

**Verse 15.** *How beautiful are the feet of them that preach*— Dr. Taylor remarks on this quotation, which is taken from Isaiah 52:7, that “feet are variously used in Scripture, and sometimes have respect to things internal and spiritual. For as the life of man and the practice of piety are compared to walking, Psalm 1:1, so his feet may signify the principles on which he acts, and the dispositions of his mind. Ecclesiastes 5:1: Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God. Agreeably to this, the feet of the messengers in Isaiah and of the apostles in this verse, may signify the validity of their mission—the authority upon which they acted, and any character or qualifications with which they were invested.”

**Verse 16.** *But they have not all obeyed the Gospel.*— This seems to be the objection of a Jew; as if he had said: A Divine mission would be attended with success; whereas there are numbers who pay no attention to the glad tidings you preach. To this the apostle answers, that the Spirit of God, by Isaiah, Isaiah 53:1, foretold it would be so, even in the case of the Jews themselves, where he said, Lord, who hath believed our report? For although God brings the message of salvation to men, he does not oblige them to embrace it.

It is proposed to their understanding and conscience; but it does not become the means of salvation unless it be affectionately credited.

**Verse 17.** *So then faith cometh by hearing*— Preaching the Gospel is the ordinary means of salvation; faith in Christ is the result of hearing the word, the doctrine of God preached. Preaching, God sends; if heard attentively, faith will be produced; and if they believe the report, the arm of the Lord will be revealed in their salvation.

**Verse 18.** *But I say, have they not heard?*— But to return to the objection: You say they have not all BELIEVED; I ask: Have they not all HEARD? Have not the means of salvation been placed within the reach of every Jew in Palestine, and within the reach of all those who sojourn in the

different Gentile countries where we have preached the Gospel, as well to the Jews as to the Gentiles themselves? Yes: for we may say of the preaching of the Gospel what the psalmist has said (Psalm 19:4) of the heavenly bodies: Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. As the celestial luminaries have given testimony of the eternal power and Godhead of the Deity to the habitable world, the Gospel of Christ has borne testimony to his eternal goodness and mercy to all the land of Palestine, and to the whole Roman empire. There is not a part of the promised land in which these glad tidings have not been preached; and there is scarcely a place in the Roman empire in which the doctrine of Christ crucified has not been heard: if, therefore, the Jews have not believed, the fault is entirely their own; as God has amply furnished them with the means of faith and of salvation.

In Psalm 19:4, the psalmist has קוֹם kuuam, their line, which the Septuagint, and the apostle who quotes from them, render φθογγος, sound; and hence some have thought that the word in the Psalm was originally קולם kolam, voice. But that קו kau is used for word or speech is sufficiently evident from Isaiah 28:10, line upon line, precept upon precept, etc., where קו is analogous to word or direction. It is very remarkable that these words of David, quoted by St. Paul, are mentioned in Sohar. Genes. fol. 9, where it is said: עבדע משיחא אינו מלי Abdey mashicha innun millin. “These words are the servants of the Messiah, and measure out both the things above and the things beneath.” To this notion of them the apostle may refer in his use of them in this place, and to a Jew the application would be legitimate.

**Verse 19. *But I say, Did not Israel know?***— You object to this preaching among the Gentiles; but is not this according to the positive declaration of God? He, foreseeing your unbelief and rebellion, said by Moses, Deuteronomy 32:21, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. As you have provoked me to jealousy with worshipping those that are no gods, I will provoke you to jealousy by those which are no people. This most evidently refers to the calling or inviting of the Gentiles to partake of the benefits of the Gospel; and plainly predicts the envy and rage which would be excited in the Jews, in consequence of those offers of mercy made to the Gentiles.



**Verse 20.** *But Esaias (the Greek orthography for Isaiah) is very bold*— Speaks out in the fullest manner and plainest language, Isaiah 65:1, notwithstanding the danger to which such a declaration exposed him, among a crooked, perverse, and dangerous people: I was found of them that sought me not; I put my salvation in the way of those (the Gentiles) who were not seeking for it, and knew nothing of it: thus, the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness have attained to the law of righteousness, Romans 9:30, and they have found that redemption which the Jews have rejected.

**Verse 21.** *But to Israel he saith*— In the very next verse, (Isaiah 65:2,) All day long have I stretched forth my hands, manifesting the utmost readiness and willingness to gather them all together under my protecting care; but I stretched forth my hands in vain, for they are a disobedient and gainsaying people. They not only disobey my command, but they gainsay and contradict my prophets. Thus the apostle proves, in answer to the objection made Romans 10:16, that the infidelity of the Jews was the effect of their own obstinacy; that the opposition which they are now making to the Gospel was foretold and deplored 700 years before; and that their opposition, far from being a proof of the insufficiency of the Gospel, proved that this was the grand means which God had provided for their salvation; and having rejected this, they could expect no other. And this gives the apostle opportunity to speak largely concerning their rejection in the following chapter.

I. IN the preceding chapter are several quotations from the law, the prophets, and the Psalms; and as the apostle seems to take them with considerable latitude of meaning, it has been thought that he only uses their words as being well calculated to express his sense, without paying any attention to their original import. This principle is too lax to be introduced in such solemn circumstances. Dr. Taylor has made some judicious and useful distinctions here. After observing that, if we allow this principle, no argument can be built on any of the apostle's quotations; and that it must have been an indifferent thing with him whether he did or did not understand the Scripture—as, on this supposition, they would serve him as well without as with the true meaning—he adds: the apostle was a strict and close quoter of the Scripture; but he did not always quote them in the same manner, or for the same purpose.

1. Sometimes his intention goes no farther than using the same strong expressions, as being equally applicable to the point in hand. So, Romans 10:6-8, he uses the words of Moses, not to prove any thing, nor as if he thought Moses spoke of the same subject, but only as intimating that the strong and lively expressions which Moses used concerning the doctrine he taught, were equally applicable to the faith of the Gospel. So, in the same manner, Romans 10:18, he quotes Psalm 19:4, though it is likely (see the note in that place) that those expressions were used by the ancient Jews in application to the Messiah as the apostle applies them.

2. Sometimes the design of the quotation is only to show that the cases are parallel: or, that what happened in his times corresponded with what happened in former days. So Romans 2:24; 8:36; 9:27-29; 11:2-5, 8-10; 15:21.

3. Sometimes the quotation is only intended to explain a doctrinal point, as Romans 1:17; 4:6-8, 18-21; 9:20, 21; 10:15; 15:3.

4. Sometimes the quotation is designed to prove a doctrinal point. Romans 3:4, 10-19; 4:3-17; 5:12-14; 9:7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 17; Romans 10:5, 11, 13; 12:19, 20; 13:9; 14:11.

5. Sometimes it is the intention of the quotation to prove that something was predicted, or properly foretold in the prophetic writings, as Romans 9:25, 26, 33; 10:16, 19-21; 11:26, 27; 15:9-13.

These things duly considered, it will appear that the apostle has everywhere shown a just regard to the true sense of the Scripture he quotes, in the view in which he quotes it.

These rules may help to vindicate the quotations in all the apostolic writings. And it is evident that we cannot form a true judgment upon any quotation, unless we take in the intention of the writer, or the view in which he quotes.

II. The apostle here makes a just and proper distinction between the righteousness or justification that is of the law, and that which is by faith in Christ. And, in his view of the former, shows it to be absolutely impossible; for if no man is to live thereby-to have spiritual and eternal life, but he who does these things; then salvation on that ground must be

impossible; for, 1. The law makes no provision for the pardon of sin. 2. It affords no helps for the performance of duty. 3. It makes no allowances for imperfections in duty, or for imperfections in our nature. 4. Its commandments, necessarily, suppose a righteous soul, and a vigorous body; and it does not lower its claims to the fallen state of man. 5. It requires perfect obedience, not only in all things, but in all places and circumstances. The man who comes up to this standard, has ever been in it, and has never swerved from it, shall, by the law, live for ever. But no man, since the fall, ever did so or ever can do so: therefore, salvation by the works of the law is absolutely impossible. But, The righteousness or justification, which is by faith, receives Christ as an atoning sacrifice, by which all past sin is pardoned. Receives continual supplies of grace from Christ by the eternal Spirit, through which the man is enabled to love God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength, and his neighbor as himself. 3. This grace is afforded in sufficient degrees suited to all places, times, and circumstances, so that no trial can happen too great to be borne, as the grace of Christ is ever at hand to support and to save to the uttermost. The law is the letter that killeth; the Gospel is the spirit that giveth life. Reader, let thy whole soul say with the apostle, Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!

## CHAPTER 11.

*God has not universally nor finally rejected Israel; nor are they all at present rejecters of the Gospel, for there is a remnant of true believers now, as there was in the days of the Prophet Elijah, 1-5. These have embraced the Gospel, and are saved by grace, and not by the works of the law, 6. The body of the Israelites, having rejected this, are blinded, according to the prophetic declaration of David, 7-10. But they have not stumbled, so as to be finally rejected; but through their fall, salvation is come to the Gentiles, 11-14. There is hope of their restoration, and that the nation shall yet become a holy people, 15, 16. The converted Gentiles must not exult over the fallen Jews; the latter having fallen by unbelief, the former stand by faith, 17-20. The Jews, the natural branches, were broken off from the true olive, and the Gentiles having been grafted in, in their place, must walk uprightly, else they also shall be cut off, 21, 22. The Jews, if they abide not in unbelief, shall be again grafted in; and when the fullness of the Gentiles is come in, the great Deliverer shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, according to the covenant of God, 23-27. For the sake of their forefathers God loves them, and will again call them, and communicate His gifts to them, 28, 29. The Gospel shall be again sent to them, as it has now been sent to the Gentiles, 30-32. This procedure is according to the immensity of the wisdom, knowledge, and unsearchable judgments of God, who is the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, and to whom all adoration is due, 33-36.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 11.

This chapter is of the prophetic kind. It was by the spirit of prophecy that the apostle foresaw the rejection of the Jews, which he supposes in the two preceding chapters; for when he wrote the epistle they were not in fact, rejected, seeing their polity and Church were then standing. But the event has proved that he was a true prophet; for we know that in about ten or eleven years after the writing of this letter the temple was destroyed, the Jewish polity overthrown, and the Jews expelled out of the

promised land, which they have never been able to recover to the present day.

This, 1. confirms the arguments which the apostle had advanced to establish the calling of the Gentiles. For the Jews are, in fact, rejected; consequently, our calling is, in fact, not invalidated by any thing they suggested, relative to the perpetuity of the Mosaic dispensation. But that dispensation being wholly subverted, our title to the privileges of God's Church and people stands clear and strong; the Jewish constitution only could furnish objections against our claim; and the event has silenced every objection from that quarter.

2. The actual rejection of the Jews proves Paul to be a true apostle of Jesus Christ, and that he spoke by the Spirit of God; otherwise, he could not have argued so fully upon a case which was yet to come, and of which there was no appearance in the state of things when he wrote this epistle. And this very circumstance should induce us to pay great attention to this chapter, in which he discourses concerning the extent and duration of the rejection of his countrymen, to prevent their being insulted and despised by the Gentile Christians. (1) As to the extent of this rejection, it is not absolutely universal; some of the Jews have embraced the Gospel, and are incorporated into the Christian Church with the believing Gentiles. Upon the case of these believing Jews he comments, Romans 11:1-7. (2) As to the duration of it, it is not final and perpetual, for all Israel, or the nation of the Jews, which is now blinded, shall one day be saved or brought again into the kingdom or covenant of God. Upon the state of these blinded Jews he comments, Romans 11:7 to the end of the chapter. His design, in discoursing upon this subject, was not only to make the thing itself known, but partly to engage the attention of the unbelieving Jew; to conciliate his favor, and, if possible, to induce him to come into the Gospel scheme; and partly to dispose the Gentile Christians not to treat the Jews with contempt; (considering that they derived all their present blessings from the patriarchs, the ancestors of the Jewish nation, and were engrafted into the good olive tree, whence the Jews had been broken;) and to admonish them to take warning by the fall of the Jews; to make a good improvement of their religious privileges, lest, through unbelief, any of them should relapse into heathenism, or perish finally at the last day.

The thread of his discourse leads him into a general survey and comparison of the several dispensations of God towards the Gentiles and Jews; and he concludes this survey with adoration of the depths of the Divine knowledge and wisdom exercised in the various constitutions erected in the world, Romans 11:30-36.

**Verse 1.** *I say then, hath God cast away his people?*— Has he utterly and finally rejected them? for this is necessarily the apostle's meaning, and is the import of the Greek word **απωσατο**, which signifies to thrust or drive away, from **απο**, from, and **ωθειω**, to thrust or drive; has he thrust them off, and driven them eternally from him? God forbid—by no means. This rejection is neither universal nor final. For I also am an Israelite—I am a regular descendant from Abraham, through Israel or Jacob, and by his son Benjamin. And I stand in the Church of God, and in the peculiar covenant; for the rejection is only of the obstinate and disobedient; for those who believe on Christ, as I have done, are continued in the Church.

**Verse 2.** *God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.*— God has not finally and irrecoverably rejected a people whom he has loved (or approved) so long, **ον προεγνω**, for this is evidently the meaning of the word in this place, as we have already seen, Romans 8:29, and is a very general meaning of the original verb **יָדָע** yada in Hebrew and **γινωσκω** in Greek; as I have had often occasion to notice in different parts of this work, and what none will deny who consults the original. See Schleusner, Parkhust, etc.

*Wot ye not what the Scripture saith*— **ουκ οιδατε**, Do ye not know what the Scripture saith? The reference is to 1 Kings 19:10, 14. And the apostle's answer to the objecting Jew is to the following effect: God hath not universally thrust away his people, for whom in the promise to Abraham he intended, and to whom decreed, to grant his special favor and blessing; but the case is now much as it was in the days of Elijah: that prophet, in his addresses to God, made his complaint against Israel thus:—

**Verse 3.** *Lord, they have killed thy prophets*— They will not permit any person to speak unto them in thy name; and they murder those who are faithful to the commission which they have received from thee.

***Digged down thine altars***— They are profligate and profane beyond example, and retain not the slightest form of religion.

***I am left alone***— There is no prophet besides myself left, and they seek to destroy me.

**Verse 4. *But what saith the answer of God***— The answer which God made assured him that there were seven thousand, that is, several or many thousands; for so we must understand the word seven, a certain for an uncertain number. These had continued faithful to God; but, because of Jezebel's persecution, they were obliged to conceal their attachment to the true religion; and God, in his providence, preserved them from her sanguinary rage.

***Who have not bowed the knee***— Baal was the god of Jezebel; or, in other words, his worship was then the worship of the state; but there were several thousands of pious Israelites who had not acknowledged this idol, and did not partake in the idolatrous worship.

**Verse 5. *Even so then at this present time***— As in the present day the irreligion of the Jews is very great; yet there is a remnant, a considerable number, who have accepted of the grace of the Gospel.

***According to the election of grace.***— And these are saved just as God has saved all believers from the beginning; they are chosen by his grace, not on account of any worth or excellence in themselves, but through his goodness are they chosen to have a place in his Church, and continue to be his people, entitled to all the privileges of the new covenant. The election of grace simply signifies God's gracious design in sending the Christian system into the world, and saving under it all those who believe in Christ Jesus, and none else. Thus the believers in Christ are chosen to inherit the blessings of the Gospel, while those who seek justification by the works of the law are rejected.

**Verse 6. *And if by grace***— And let this very remnant of pious Jews, who have believed in Christ Jesus, know that they are brought in, precisely in the same way as God has brought in the Gentiles; the one having no more worthiness to plead than the other; both being brought in, and continued in by God's free grace, and not by any observance of the Mosaic law.

And this is done according to the election of grace, or the rule of choosing any persons to be the people of God upon the footing of grace; which takes in all that believe in his Son Jesus Christ: some of the Jewish people did so believe; therefore those believing Jews are a remnant according to the election of grace. They are saved in that way in which alone God will save mankind.

***And if by grace***— Then let these very persons remember, that their election and interest in the covenant of God has no connection with their old Jewish works; for were it of works, grace would lose its proper nature, and cease to be what it is—a free undeserved gift.

***But if it be of works***— On the other hand, could it be made to appear that they are invested in these privileges of the kingdom of Christ only by the observance of the law of Moses, then GRACE would be quite set aside; and if it were not, work, or the merit of obedience, would lose its proper nature, which excludes favor and free gift. But it is not, and cannot be, of WORKS; for those very Jews who now believe, and are happy in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, are so according to the election of grace, which does not mean a particular act of God's sovereignty, which has singled out some of the Jews who deserved to have been cast off as well as the rest; but it is that general scheme of grace, according to which God purposed to take into his Church and kingdom any, among either Jews or Gentiles, who should believe on Christ. And the remnant here mentioned were not selected from their countrymen by such a sovereign act of God's grace as might have taken in the whole if it had so pleased; but they were admitted into and received the privileges of the Messiah's kingdom, because they believed on the Lord Jesus, and received him as their only Savior; and thus came into that scheme of election which God had appointed. And we may observe, farther, that out of this election they as well as the others would have been excluded, had they like the rest remained in unbelief; and into this election of grace all the Jews, to a man, notwithstanding they were all sinners, would have been taken, had they believed in Christ Jesus. This is the true notion of the election of grace. See Taylor.

**Verse 7. *What then?***— What is the real state of the case before us? Israel—the body of the Jewish people, have not obtained that which they so earnestly desire, i.e. to be continued, as they have been hitherto, the



peculiar people of God; but the election hath obtained it—as many of them as have believed in Jesus Christ, and accepted salvation through him: this is the grand scheme of the election by grace; God chooses to make those his peculiar people who believe in his Son, and none other shall enjoy the blessings of his kingdom. Those who would not receive him are blinded; they have shut their eyes against the light, and are in the very circumstances of those mentioned by the Prophet Isaiah, Isaiah 29:10.

**Verse 8.** *God hath given them the spirit of slumber*— As they had wilfully closed their eyes against the light, so God has, in judgment, given them up to the spirit of slumber. The very word and revelation of God, which should have awakened their consciences, and opened their eyes and ears, have had a very different effect; and because they did not receive the truth in the love thereof, that which would otherwise have been the savour of life unto life, has become the savour of death unto death; and this continues to the present day.

**Verse 9.** *And David saith, Let their table*, etc.— And from their present disposition it is reasonable to conclude that the same evils will fall upon them as fell upon the disobedient in former times, as predicted by David, Psalm 69:22, 23, that their very blessings should become curses to them, and their temporal mercies be their only recompense; and yet even these earthly blessings, by not being enjoyed in the Lord, should be a stumbling block over which they should fall, and, instead of being a blessing, should be the means of their punishment. They would have a worldly Messiah, and therefore they rejected him whose kingdom was not of this world.

**Verse 10.** *Let their eyes be darkened*— All these words are declarative, and not imprecatory. God declares what will be the case of such obstinate unbelievers; their table, their common providential blessings, will become a snare, a trap, a stumbling block, and the means of their punishment. Their eyes will be more and more darkened as they persist in their unbelief, and their back shall be bowed down always; far from becoming a great and powerful nation, they shall continue ever in a state of abject slavery and oppression, till they acknowledge Jesus as the promised Messiah, and submit to receive redemption in his blood.

**Verse 11.** *Have they stumbled that they should fall?*— Have the Jews, now for their disobedience and unbelief rejected, so sinned against God as

to be for ever put out of the reach of his mercy? By no means. Are they, as a nation, utterly irrecoverable? This is the sense of the place, and here the prophecy of the restoration of the Jewish nation commences.

***But rather through their fall salvation is come***— The Church of God cannot fail; if the Jews have broken the everlasting covenant, Isaiah 24:5, the Gentiles shall be taken into it; and this very circumstance shall be ultimately the means of exciting them to seek and claim a share in the blessings of the new covenant; and this is what the apostle terms provoking them to jealousy, i.e. exciting them to emulation, for so the word should be understood. We should observe here, that the fall of the Jews was not in itself the cause or reason of the calling of the Gentiles; for whether the Jews had stood or fallen, whether they had embraced or rejected the Gospel, it was the original purpose of God to take the Gentiles into the Church; for this was absolutely implied in the covenant made with Abraham: and it was in virtue of that covenant that the Gentiles were now called, and not BECAUSE of the unbelief of the Jews. And hence we see that their fall was not the necessary means of the salvation of the Gentiles; for certainly the unbelief of the Jews could never produce faith in the Gentiles. The simple state of the case is: the Jews, in the most obstinate and unprincipled manner, rejected Jesus Christ and the salvation offered them in his name; then the apostles turned to the Gentiles, and they heard and believed. The Jews themselves perceived that the Gentiles were to be put in possession of similar privileges to those which they, as

fall, is used in a sense so very emphatical as to signify being slain. So Homer, Il. viii., ver. 475.

ηματι τω, οτ' αν οι μεν επι πρυμνησι μαχωνται,  
στεινει εν αινοτατω, περι πατροκλοιο πεσοντος·  
'ως γαρ θεσφατον εστι.

*And for Patroclus slain, the crowded hosts,  
In narrow space, shall at the ships contend.  
Such the divine decree.*

And again, Il. xi., ver. 84.

οφρα μεν ηως ην και αεξετο ιερον ημαρ,  
τοφρα μαλ' αμφοτερων βελε' ηπτετο, πιπτε δε λαος.

*While morning lasted, and the light of day  
Increased, so long the weapons on both sides  
Flew in thick volllies; and the people fell.*

COWPER.

It is well known, that to fall in battle means to be killed. It is in such a sense as this that St. Paul used the word fall, when he says, Have they stumbled that they should FALL? He means a fall quite destructive and ruinous; whereas by their fall, and the fall of them, he means no more than such a lapse as was recoverable; as in the case of Adam's offense. See Dr. Taylor.

***The riches of the world***— If, in consequence of their unbelief, the riches of God's grace and goodness be poured out on the whole Gentile world, how much more shall that dispensation of grace and mercy enrich and aggrandize the Gentiles, which shall bring the whole body of the Jews to the faith of the Gospel! Here the apostle supposes, or rather predicts, that such a dispensation shall take place; and that, therefore, the Jews have not so stumbled as to be finally irrecoverable.

**Verse 13.** This and the following verse should be read in a parenthesis. St. Paul, as the apostle of the Gentiles, wished to show them the high pitch of glory and blessedness to which they had been called, that they might have a due sense of God's mercy in calling them to such a state of salvation; and that they might be jealous over themselves, lest they should fall as the

Jews had done before them: and he dwells particularly on the greatness of those privileges which the Gentiles had now received, that he might stir up the minds of his countrymen to emulation, and might be the means of saving some of them, as he states in the following verse.

***I magnify mine office***— This is a very improper translation of **την διακονιαν μου δοξαζω**, which is, literally, I honor this my ministry. Dr. Taylor has justly observed that magnify, except when applied to the most High, carries with it, in our language, the idea of stretching beyond the bounds of truth; whereas the apostle simply means that he does justice to his ministry, by stating the glorious things which he was commissioned to preach among the Gentiles: blessings which the Jews by their obstinacy had forfeited.

**Verse 14. *Might save some of them.***— And yet all these were among the reprobate, or rejected; however, the apostle supposed that none of them were irrecoverably shut out from the Divine favor; and that some of them, by his preaching, might be disposed to receive salvation by Christ Jesus.

**Verse 15. *But life from the dead***— If the rejection of the Jews became the occasion of our receiving the Gospel, so that we can even glory in our tribulations, though they themselves became chief instruments of our sufferings; yet so far must we feel from exulting over them that we should esteem their full conversion to God as great and choice a favor as we would the restoration of a most intimate friend to life, who had been at the gates of death.

The restoration of the Jews to a state of favor with God to which the apostle refers, and which is too plainly intimated by the spirit of prophecy to admit of a doubt, will be a most striking event. Their being preserved as a distinct people is certainly a strong collateral proof that they shall once more be brought into the Church of God: and their conversion to Christianity will be an incontestable proof of the truth of Divine revelation; and doubtless will become the means of converting multitudes of deists, who will see the prophecies of God, which had been delivered so long before, so strikingly fulfilled in this great event. We need not wonder, if a whole nation should then be born as in a day.

**Verse 16. *For if the first fruit be holy***— As the consecrating the first fruits to God was the means of drawing down his blessing upon the rest, so the conversion of Abraham to the true faith, and the several Jews who have now embraced Christianity, are pledges that God will, in process of time, admit the whole Jewish nation into his favor again, so that they shall constitute a part of the visible Church of Christ.

***If the root be holy, so are the branches.***— The word holy in this verse is to be taken in that sense which it has so frequently in the Old and New Testaments, viz. consecrated, set apart to sacred uses. It must not be forgotten that the first converts to Christ were from among the Jews; these formed the root of the Christian Church: these were holy, **αγιοι**, consecrated to God, and those who among the Gentiles were converted by their means were also **αγιοι**, consecrated; but the chief reference is to the ancestors of the Jewish people, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and, as these were devoted to God and received into his covenant, all their posterity, the branches which proceeded from this root, became entitled to the same privileges: and as the root still remains, and the branches also, the descendants from that root still remain: they still have a certain title to the blessings of the covenant; though, because of their obstinate unbelief, these blessings are suspended, as they cannot, even on the ground of the old covenant, enjoy these blessings but through faith: for it was when Abraham believed God that it was accounted to him for righteousness; and thus he became an heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

**Verse 17. *And if some of the branches***, etc.— If the present nation of the Jews, because of their unbelief, are cut off from the blessings of the Church of God, and the high honor and dignity of being his peculiar people; and thou, being a wild olive-ye Gentiles, being without the knowledge of the true God, and consequently bringing forth no fruits of righteousness, wert grafted in among them—are now inserted in the original stock, having been made partakers of the faith of Abraham, and consequently of his blessings; and enjoy, as the people did who sprang from him, the fatness of the olive tree—the promises made to the patriarchs, and the spiritual privileges of the Jewish Church:—

**Verse 18. *Boast not against the branches.***— While you are ready to acknowledge that you were included in the covenant made with Abraham,

and are now partakers of the same blessings with him, do not exult over, much less insult, the branches, his present descendants, whose place you now fill up, according to the election of grace: for remember, ye are not the root, nor do ye bear the root, but the root bears you. You have not been the means of deriving any blessing on the Jewish people; but through that very people, which you may be tempted to despise, all the blessing and excellencies which you enjoy have been communicated to you.

**Verse 19. *Thou wilt say then***, etc.— You may think that you have reason to exult over them; because it is a fact that God has been displeased with them, and therefore has broken them off; has cast them out of the Church, and taken you into it in their place.

**Verse 20. *Well; because of unbelief***, etc.— This statement is all true; but then, consider, why is it that they were cast out? Was it not because of their unbelief? And you stand by faith: you were made partakers of these blessings by faith; be not high-minded; let this humble, not exalt you in your own estimation; for if the blessings were received by faith, consequently not by works; and if not by works, you have no merit; and what you have received is through the mere mercy of God. They once stood by faith; they gave place to unbelief, and fell: you stand now by faith; but it is as possible for you to be unfaithful as it was for them, and consequently you may fall under the Divine displeasure, as they have done; be not high-minded, but fear; watch over yourselves with godly jealousy.

**Verse 21. *For if God spared not the natural branches***— If He, in his infinite justice and holiness, could not tolerate sin in the people whom he foreknew, whom he had so long loved, cherished, miraculously preserved and blessed; take heed lest he also spare not thee. Be convinced that the same righteous principle in him will cause him to act towards you as he has acted towards them, if you sin after the similitude of their transgression; and to this, self-sufficiency and self-confidence will soon lead you. Remember, therefore, the rock whence you were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence ye were digged. Depend incessantly on God's free grace, that ye may abide in his favor.

**Verse 22. *Behold therefore the goodness***— The exclamation, Behold the goodness of God! is frequent among the Jewish writers, when they wish

to call the attention of men to particular displays of God's mercy, especially towards those who are singularly unworthy. See several instances in Schoettgen.

**And severity of God**— As **χρηστοτης**, goodness, signifies the essential quality of the Divine nature, the fountain of all good to men and angels, so **αποτομια**, severity, as it is here translated, signifies that particular exercise of his goodness and holiness which leads him to sever from his mystical body whatsoever would injure, corrupt, or destroy it. The apostle in these verses uses a metaphor taken from engrafting, **εγκεντρισις**, from the verb **εγκεντριζω**, from **εν**, in, and **κεντριζω**, to puncture, because engrafting was frequently done by making a puncture in the bark of a tree, and then inserting a bud taken from another. This was the practice in the Roman agriculture, as we learn from Virgil, Georg. ii, ver. 73:—

*Nam qua se medio trudunt de cortice gemmae,  
Et tenues rumpunt tunicas, angustus in ipso  
Fit nodo sinus: huc aliena ex arbore germen  
Includunt, udoque docent inolescere libro.*

*For where the tender rinds of trees disclose  
Their shooting gems, a swelling knot there grows;  
Just in that space a narrow slit we make,  
Then other buds from bearing trees we take;  
Inserted thus, the wounded rind we close,  
In whose moist womb the admitted infant grows.*

DRYDEN.

In all countries the principle is the same, though the mode is various.

The apostle, having adopted this metaphor as the best he could find to express that act of God's justice and mercy by which the Jews were rejected, and the Gentiles elected in their stead, and, in order to show that though the Jewish tree was cut down, or its branches lopped off, yet it was not rooted up, he informs the Gentile believers that, as it is customary to insert a good scion in a bad or useless stock, they who were bad, contrary to the custom in such cases, were grafted in a good stock, and their growth and fruitfulness proclaimed the excellence and vegetative life of the stock in which they were inserted. This was the goodness of the

heavenly gardener to them; but it was severity, **αποτομία**, an act of excision to the Jews.

The reader will observe that this term belongs to engrafting: often, in this operation, a part of a branch is cut off; in that part which remains in connection with the tree a little slit is made, and then a small twig or branch taken from another tree is, at its lower end, shaved thin, wedge-like, and then inserted in the cleft, after which the whole is tied together, clayed round, etc., and the bark unites to bark; and the stock and the scion become thus one tree, the juices of the whole stock circulating through the tubes of the newly-inserted twig; and thus both live, though the branch inserted bears a very different fruit from that which the parent stock bore. I have often performed this operation, and in this very way, with success: and I cannot conceive that the apostle could have chosen a more apt or more elegant metaphor. The Jewish tree does not bring forth proper fruit; but it will answer well to ingraft a proper fruit-bearing tree on. The Gentiles are a wild olive, which is a tree that bears no fruit; but it may be made to bear if grafted on the Jewish stock. Some of the branches were cut off, that the branches of this wild olive might be inserted: the act by which this insertion is made is termed **αποτομία**, goodness, benignity: the act by which the branches of the original stock are broken off is termed **αποτομία**, excision; from **απο**, from, and **τεμνω**, I cut, still keeping the metaphor taken from engrafting in view. Now, let the apostle's mode of reasoning be observed: the tree is cut down, or its branches lopped off; but the tree is not rooted up. The Jews have stumbled, but not so as to fall irrecoverably; for if they abide not still in unbelief, they shall be grafted in, Romans 11:23. The Gentiles which are grafted in on these cut-off branches, like the scion inserted into another stock, partake of the root, which absorbs from the earth the nutritious juices, and the fatness of the Jewish tree, the blessings and privileges which that people have long enjoyed, in consequence of the Abrahamic covenant, Romans 11:17; the root, the Jewish covenant, bears them: not they the root, Romans 11:18. As, therefore, the continuance of the Gentiles as the Church and people of God depends upon their interest in the Abrahamic covenant, the blessings of which they derive through the medium of the Jews, they should be grateful to God, and tolerant to those through whom they have received such blessings. And as, in the case of grafting, the prosperity of the



engrafted scion depends on the existence of the parent stock, so the continuance of the Gentiles in this state of favor, (following the metaphor,) in a certain way depends on the continuance of the Jewish people: and they are preserved, as so many scions which are in process of time to be engrafted on the Gentiles; and thus the Gentiles shall become the means of salvation to the Jews, as the Jews have been the means of salvation to the Gentiles. Following, therefore, the metaphor a little farther, which seems to have been so well chosen in all its parts, the continued existence of the Jews as a distinct people, together with the acknowledgment of the Gentiles, that they have derived their salvation and state of blessedness through them—of which Jesus Christ, born of the stock of David, is the author; and the Jewish Scriptures, which the Gentiles receive as inspired by God, are the evidence—then, the restoration of the Jews to the favor of God is a necessary consequence, and indeed seems to be the principal end in reference to which the apostle reasons. The Gentiles, however, are to take care that the restoration of the Jews be not at their expense; as their calling and election were at the expense of the Jews: the latter being cut off, that the former might be grafted in, Romans 11:19. Of this there is no kind of necessity, for the original stock, the Abrahamic covenant, is sufficient to receive them all; and so Jews and Gentiles become one eternal flock, under one Bishop and Shepherd of all their souls.

**Verse 23.** *If they abide not in unbelief*— So, we find that their rejection took place in consequence of their wilful obstinacy: and, that they may return into the fold, the door of which still stands open.

*For God is able to graft them in again.*— Fallen as they are and degraded, God can, in the course of his providence and mercy, restore them to all their forfeited privileges; and this will take place if they abide not in unbelief: which intimates that God has furnished them with all the power and means necessary for faith, and that they may believe on the Lord Jesus whenever they will. The veil now continues on their heart; but it is not a veil which God has spread there, but a veil occasioned by their own voluntary and obstinate unbelief: and, when they shall turn to the Lord, (Jesus,) the veil shall be taken away. See what the apostle has said, 2 Corinthians 3:6-18.

**Verse 24. *The olive tree, which is wild by nature***— Which is **κατα φυσιν**, naturally, wild and barren; for that the wild olive bore no fruit is sufficiently evident from the testimony of the authors who have written on the subject; hence the proverb, **ακαρποτερος αγριππου**· more unfruitful than the wild olive. **λακωνες γαρ αγριαν ελαιαν αγιππον καλουσι**· for the Lacedemonians term the wild olive **αγριππον**. See SUIDAS. And hence HESYCHIUS interprets **αγριελαιος**, the wild olive, (the word used here by St. Paul,) by **ακαρπος**, unfruitful: and the reason given in DIOGEN. Proverb. Cent. ii. n. 63, is **φυτον γαρ εστιν ο αγριππος ακαρπον**· for the wild olive is an unfruitful tree. On this account the apostle very properly says: Thou wert cut, **εκ της κατα φυσιν αγριελαιου**, out of that olive which is uncultivated, because it is barren: the **κατα φυσιν** does not refer here to its being naturally barren; but to its being commonly or customarily permitted to remain so. And that this is the import of the phrase here is evident from the next clause of the verse.

***And wert grafted contrary to nature***— **παρα φυσιν**, contrary to all custom; for a scion taken from a barren or useless tree is scarcely ever known to be grafted into a good stock; but here the Gentiles, a fruitless and sinful race, are grafted on the ancient patriarchal stock. Now, if it was possible to effect such a change in the state and disposition of the Gentiles, who were **αθεοι εν τω κοσμω**, Ephesians 2:12, without God, ATHEISTS, in the world; how much more possible is it, speaking after the manner of men, to bring about a similar change in the Jews, who acknowledge the one, only, and true God, and receive the law and the prophets as a revelation from him. This seems to be the drift of the apostle's argument.

**Verse 25. *I would not-that ye should be ignorant of this mystery***— Mystery, **μυστηριον**, signifies any thing that is hidden or covered, or not fully made manifest. The Greek word seems to have been borrowed from the Hebrew **מִסְתָּר** mistar, from the root **סָתַר** sathar, to hide, conceal, etc.; though some derive it from **μυεισθαι**, to be initiated into sacred rites, from **μυειν**, to shut up. In the New Testament it signifies, generally, any thing or doctrine that has not, in former times, been fully known to men: or, something that has not been heard of, or which is so deep, profound, and difficult of comprehension, that it cannot be apprehended without special direction and instruction: here it signifies the doctrine of the future

restoration of the Jews, not fully known in itself, and not at all known as to the time in which it will take place. In Romans 16:25 it means the Christian religion, not known till the advent of Christ. The apostle wished the Romans not to be ignorant of this mystery, viz. that such a thing was intended; and, in order to give them as much instruction as possible on this subject, he gives them some characteristic or sign of the times when it was to take place.

***Lest ye should be wise in your own conceits***— It seems from this, and from other expressions in this epistle, that the converted Gentiles had not behaved toward the Jews with that decorum and propriety which the relation they bore to them required. In this chapter the apostle strongly guards them against giving way to such a disposition.

***Blindness in part is happened to Israel***— Partial blindness, or blindness to a part of them; for they were not all unbelievers: several thousands of them had been converted to the Christian faith; though the body of the nation, and especially its rulers, civil and spiritual, continued opposed to Christ and his doctrine.

***Until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.***— And this blindness will continue till the Church of the Gentiles be fully completed—till the Gospel be preached through all the nations of the earth, and multitudes of heathens every where embrace the faith. The words **πληρωμα των εθνων** may be borrowed from the **מלא הגוים מלא** melo haggoyim, a multitude of nations, which the Septuagint translate by **πληθος εθνων**. By the **πληρωμα**, or fullness, a great multitude may be intended, which should be so dilated on every hand as to fill various regions. In this sense the words were understood by Solomon ben Melec, **ארצות הגוים שימלאו מהם**. The nations of the Gentiles shall be filled with them: the apostle, therefore, seems to give this sense of the mystery—that the Jews will continue in a state of blindness till such time as a multitude of nations, or Gentiles, shall be converted to the Christian faith; and the Jews, hearing of this, shall be excited, by a spirit of emulation, to examine and acknowledge the validity of the proofs of Christianity, and embrace the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We should not restrict the meaning of these words too much, by imagining,

1. That the fullness must necessarily mean all the nations of the universe, and all the individuals of those nations: probably, no more than a general spread of Christianity over many nations which are now under the influence of Pagan or Mohammedan superstition may be what is intended.
2. We must not suppose that the coming in here mentioned necessarily means, what most religious persons understand by conversion, a thorough change of the whole heart and the whole life: the acknowledgment of the Divine mission of our Lord, and a cordial embracing of the Christian religion, will sufficiently fulfill the apostle's words. If we wait for the conversion of the Jews till such a time as every Gentile and Mohammedan soul shall be, in this especial sense, converted to God, then-we shall wait for ever.

**Verse 26. *And so all Israel shall be saved***— Shall be brought into the way of salvation, by acknowledging the Messiah; for the word certainly does not mean eternal glory; for no man can conceive that a time will ever come in which every Jew then living, shall be taken to the kingdom of glory. The term saved, as applied to the Israelites in different parts of the Scripture, signifies no more than their being gathered out of the nations of the world, separated to God, and possessed of the high privilege of being his peculiar people. And we know that this is the meaning of the term, by finding it applied to the body of the Israelites when this alone was the sum of their state. See the Preface, page viii, etc.

***As it is written***— The apostle supports what he advances on this head by a quotation from Scripture, which, in the main, is taken from Isaiah 59:20: The Deliverer shall come out of Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob. Now this cannot be understood of the manifestation of Christ among the Jews; or of the multitudes which were converted before, at, and for some time after, the day of pentecost; for these times were all past when the apostle wrote this epistle, which was probably about the 57th or 58th year of our Lord; and, as no remarkable conversion of that people has since taken place, therefore the fulfillment of this prophecy is yet to take place. In what manner Christ is to come out of Zion, and in what way or by what means he is to turn away transgression from Jacob, we cannot tell; and to attempt to conjecture, when the time, occasion, means, etc., are all in mystery, would be more than reprehensible.

**Verse 27. *For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.***— The reader on referring to Isaiah 59:20, 21, will find that the words of the original are here greatly abridged. They are the following:—

And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.

For the manner in which St. Paul makes his quotation from Scripture, see the observations at the end of the preceding chapter. The whole of these two verses should be read in a parenthesis, as I have marked them in the text; for it is evident that the 25th verse should be immediately connected with the 28th.

It may not be amiss to subjoin here a collection of those texts in the Old Testament that seem to point out a restoration of the Jewish commonwealth to a higher degree of excellence than it has yet attained. Isaiah 2:2-5; 19:24, 25; 25:6, etc.; 30:18, 19, 26; Isaiah 60:1-22; 65:17-25; Jeremiah 31:10-12; 46:27, 28; Ezekiel 20:34, 40, etc.; 28:25, 26; 34:20, etc.; 36:8-16; 37:21-28; Ezekiel 39:25, etc.; Joel 3:1, 2, 17, 20, 21; Amos 9:9-15; Obidiah 17, 21; Micah 4:3-7; 7:18-20; Zephaniah 3:19, 20.

**Verse 28. *As concerning the Gospel***— The unbelieving Jews, with regard to the Gospel which they have rejected, are at present enemies to God, and aliens from his kingdom, under his Son Jesus Christ, on account of that extensive grace which has overturned their peculiarity, by admitting the Gentiles into his Church and family: but with regard to the original purpose of election, whereby they were chosen and separated from all the people of the earth to be the peculiar people of God, they are beloved for the fathers' sake; he has still favor in store for them on account of their forefathers the patriarchs.

**Verse 29. *For the gifts and calling of God***, etc.— The gifts which God has bestowed upon them, and the calling—the invitation, with which he has favored them he will never revoke. In reference to this point there is no change of mind in him; and therefore the possibility and certainty of their

restoration to their original privileges, of being the people of God, of enjoying every spiritual blessing with the fullness of the Gentiles, may be both reasonably and safely inferred.

Repentance, when applied to God, signifies simply change of purpose relative to some declarations made subject to certain conditions. See this fully explained and illustrated by himself, Jeremiah 18:7-9.

**Verse 30. *For as ye in times past***— The apostle pursues his argument in favor of the restoration of the Jews. As ye, Gentiles, in times past—for many ages back.

***Have not believed***— Were in a state of alienation from God, yet not so as to be totally and for ever excluded,

***Have now obtained mercy***— For ye are now taken into the kingdom of the Messiah; through their unbelief-by that method which, in destroying the Jewish peculiarity, and fulfilling the Abrahamic covenant, has occasioned the unbelief and obstinate opposition of the Jews.

**Verse 31. *Even so have these also***— In like manner the Jews are, through their infidelity, shut out of the kingdom of God:—

***That through your mercy***— But this exclusion will not be everlasting; but this will serve to open a new scene when, through farther displays of mercy to you Gentiles, they also may obtain mercy—shall be received into the kingdom of God again; and this shall take place whenever they shall consent to acknowledge the Lord Jesus, and see it their privilege to be fellow heirs with the Gentiles of the grace of life.

As sure, therefore, as the Jews were once in the kingdom, and the Gentiles were not; as sure as the Gentiles are now in the kingdom, and the Jews are not; so surely will the Jews be brought back into that kingdom.

**Verse 32. *For God hath concluded them all in unbelief***— **συνεκλεισε γαρ ο θεος**, God hath shut or locked them all up under unbelief. This refers to the guilty state of both Jews and Gentiles. They had all broken God's law—the Jews, the written law; the Gentiles, the law written in their hearts; see Romans 1:19, 20; 2:14, 15. They are represented here as having been accused if their transgressions; tried at God's bar; found guilty on being tried; condemned to the death they had merited; remanded to prison,

till the sovereign will, relative to their execution, should be announced; shut or locked up, under the jailer, unbelief; and there both continued in the same state, awaiting the execution of their sentence: but God, in his own compassion, moved by no merit in either party, caused a general pardon by the Gospel to be proclaimed to all. The Jews have refused to receive this pardon on the terms which God has proposed it, and therefore continue locked up under unbelief. The Gentiles have welcomed the offers of grace, and are delivered out of their prison. But, as the offers of mercy continue to be made to all indiscriminately, the time will come when the Jews, seeing the vast accession of the Gentile world to the kingdom of the Messiah, and the glorious privileges which they in consequence enjoy, shall also lay hold on the hope set before them, and thus become with the Gentiles one flock under one shepherd and bishop of all their souls. The same figure is used Galatians 3:22, 23. But the Scripture hath concluded *συνεκλεισεν*, locked up all under sin, that the promise, by faith of Christ Jesus, might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept, *εφρουρουμεθα*, we were guarded as in a strong hold, under the law; shut up, *συγκεκλεισμενοι*, locked up together unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. It is a fine and well chosen metaphor in both places, and forcibly expresses the guilty, helpless, wretched state of both Jews and Gentiles.

**Verse 33.** *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!*— This is a very proper conclusion of the whole preceding discourse. Wisdom may here refer to the designs of God; knowledge, to the means which he employs to accomplish these designs. The designs are the offspring of infinite wisdom, and therefore they are all right; the means are the most proper, as being the choice of an infinite knowledge that cannot err; we may safely credit the goodness of the design, founded in infinite wisdom; we may rely on the due accomplishment of the end, because the means are chosen and applied by infinite knowledge and skill.

**Verse 34.** *For who hath known the mind of the Lord?*— Who can pretend to penetrate the counsels of God, or fathom the reasons of his conduct? His designs and his counsels are like himself, infinite; and, consequently, inscrutable. It is strange that, with such a scripture as this before their eyes, men should sit down and coolly and positively write about counsels and decrees of God formed from all eternity, of which they

speak with as much confidence and decision as if they had formed a part of the council of the Most High, and had been with him in the beginning of his ways! A certain writer, (Mr. Perkins,) after having entered into all these counsels, and drawn out his black-lined scheme of absolute and eternal reprobation, with all its causes and effects; and then his light-lined scheme of absolute and eternal ELECTION, with all its causes and effects, all deduced in the most regular and graduated order, link by link; concludes with Romans 11:33: O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how UNSEARCHABLE are his judgments, and his ways PAST FINDING OUT! But this writer forgot that he had searched out God's judgments in the one case, and found out his ways in the other: and that he had given, as a proof of the success of his researches, a complete exhibition of the whole scheme! This conduct is worthy of more than mere reprehension; and yet he who differs from such opinions gives, in the apprehension of some, this proof of his being included in some of the links of the black list! We may rest with the conviction, that God is as merciful and good in all his ways, as he is wise and just. But as we cannot comprehend him, neither can we his operations, it is our place, who are the objects of his infinite mercy and kindness, to adore in silence, and to obey with alacrity and delight.

**Verse 35. *Or, who hath first given to him***— Who can pretend to have any demands upon God? To whom is he indebted? Have either Jews or Gentiles any right to his blessings? May not he bestow his favors as he pleases, and to whom he pleases? Does he do any injustice to the Jews in choosing the Gentiles! And was it because he was under obligation to the Gentiles that he has chosen them in the place of the Jews? Let him who has any claim on God prefer it; and he shall be compensated.

But how can the CREATOR be indebted to the creature? How can the CAUSE be dependent on the effect? How can the AUTHOR of providence, and the FATHER of every good and perfect gift, be under obligation to them for whom he provides, and who are wholly dependent on his bounty?

**Verse 36. *For of him***, etc.— This is so far from being the case, for **ἐξ αὐτου**, OF him, as the original designer and author; and **δι' αὐτου**, BY him, as the prime and efficient cause; and **εις αὐτον**, TO him, as the



ultimate end for the manifestation of his eternal glory and goodness, are all things in universal nature, through the whole compass of time and eternity.

The Emperor Marcus Antoninus (*εις εαυτον* lib. iv.), has a saying very much like this of St. Paul, which it is very probable he borrowed from this epistle to the Romans. Speaking of nature, whom he addresses as God, he says, *ω φυσικς εκ σου παντα, εν σοι παντα, εις σε παντα*; O, Nature! OF thee are all things; IN thee are all things; TO thee are all things. Several of the Gentile philosophers had expressions of the same import, as may be seen in Wetstein's quotations.

*To whom be glory*— And let him have the praise of all his works, from the hearts and mouths of all his intelligent creatures, for ever-throughout all the generations of men. Amen-so be it! Let this be established for ever!

I. THE apostle considers the designs of God inscrutable, and his mode of governing the world incomprehensible. His designs, schemes, and ends are all infinite, and consequently unfathomable. It is impossible to account for the dispensations either of his justice or mercy. He does things under both these characters which far surpass the comprehension of men. But though his dispensations are a great deep, yet they are never self-contradictory: though they far surpass our reason, yet they never contradict reason; nor are they ever opposite to those ideas which God has implanted in man, of goodness, justice, mercy, and truth. But it is worthy of remark, that we can more easily account for the dispensations of his justice than we can for the dispensations of his mercy. We can every where see ten thousand reasons why he should display his justice; but scarcely can we find one reason why he should display his mercy. And yet, these displays of mercy for which we can scarcely find a reason, are infinitely greater and more numerous than his displays of justice, for which the reasons are, in a vast variety of cases, as obvious as they are multiplied. The sacrifice of Christ is certainly an infinite reason why God should extend, as he does, his mercy to all men; but Jesus Christ is the gift of God's love: who can account for the love that gave him to redeem a fallen world? The Jews have fallen under the displeasure of Divine justice: why they should be objects of this displeasure is at once seen in their ingratitude, disobedience, unbelief, and rebellion. But a most especial providence has watched over them, and preserved them in all their dispersions for 1700 years: who can

account for this? Again, these very persons have a most positive promise of a future deliverance, both great and glorious: why should this be? The Gentile world was long left without a Divine revelation, while the Jews enjoyed one: who can account for this? The Jews are now cast out of favor, in a certain sense, and the reasons of it are sufficiently obvious; and the Gentiles, without any apparent reason, are taken into favor. In all these things his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out!

II. Once more: Let it be remarked that, although God is every where promising and bestowing the greatest and most ennobling privileges, together with an eternal and ineffable glory, for which we can give no reason but his own endless goodness, through the death of his Son; yet, in no case does he remove those privileges, nor exclude from this glory, but where the reasons are most obvious to the meanest capacity.

III. This epistle has been thought by some to afford proofs that God, by an eternal decree, had predestinated to eternal perdition millions of millions of human souls before they had any existence, except in his own purpose, and for no other reason but his sovereign pleasure! But such a decree can be no more found in this book, than such a disposition in the mind of Him who is the perfection, as he is the model, of wisdom, goodness, justice, mercy, and truth. May God save the reader from profaning his name, by suppositions at once so monstrous and absurd!

## CHAPTER 12.

*Such displays of God's mercy as Jews and Gentiles have received should induce them to consecrate themselves to Him; and not be conformed to the world, 1, 2. Christians are exhorted to think meanly of themselves, 3. And each to behave himself properly in the office which he has received from God, 4-8; Various important moral duties recommended, 9-18. We must not avenge ourselves, but overcome evil with good, 19-21.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 12.

The apostle having now finished the doctrinal part of this epistle, proceeds to the practical; and here it may be necessary to take a view of his arguments in the preceding chapters.

The election, calling, and justification of the believing Gentiles, and their being admitted into the kingdom and covenant of God, and having an interest in all the privileges and honors of his children. (1.) That they have a clear and substantial title to all these he has proved in Romans 1, 2, and 3. (2.) That this right is set on the same footing with Abraham's title to the blessings of the covenant he proves Romans 6. (3.) That it gives us a title to privileges and blessings, as great as any the Jews could glory in, by virtue of that covenant, Romans 5:1-12. (4.) He goes still higher, and shows that our being interested in the gift and grace of God in Christ Jesus is perfectly agreeable to the grace which he has bestowed upon all mankind, in delivering them from that death of the body brought on them by Adams' transgression, Romans 5:12-21. (5.) He fully explains, both with regard to the Gentiles and Jews, the nature of the Gospel constitution in relation to its obligations to holiness, and the advantages it gives for encouragement, obedience, and support, under the severest trials and persecutions, Romans 6, 7, 8. (6.) As to the pretences of the Jews, that "God was bound by express promise to continue them as his only people for ever, and that this was directly inconsistent with the election and calling of the Gentiles, on the condition of faith alone;" he demonstrates that the rejection of the Jews is consistent with the truth of God's word,

and with his righteousness: he shows the true cause and reason of their rejection, and concludes with an admirable discourse upon the extent and duration of it; which he closes with adoration of the Divine wisdom in its various dispensations, Romans 9, 10, 11. Thus, having cleared this important subject with surprising judgment, and the nicest art and skill in writing, he now proceeds, after his usual manner in his epistles and the apostolic method of preaching, to inculcate various Christian duties, and to exhort to that temper of mind and conduct of life which are suitable to the profession of the Gospel, and the enjoyment of its privileges. — Dr. Taylor.

**Verse 1. *I beseech you therefore, brethren***— This address is probably intended both for the Jews and the Gentiles; though some suppose that the Jews are addressed in the first verse, the Gentiles in the second.

***By the mercies of God!***— **διὰ τῶν οἰκτιρῶν τοῦ θεοῦ**· By the tender mercies or compassions of God, such as a tender father shows to his refractory children; who, on their humiliation, is easily persuaded to forgive their offenses. The word **οἰκτιρῶς** comes from **οἰκτος**, compassion; and that from **εἰκῶ**, to yield; because he that has compassionate feelings is easily prevailed on to do a kindness, or remit an injury.

***That ye present your bodies***— A metaphor taken from bringing sacrifices to the altar of God. The person offering picked out the choicest of his flock, brought it to the altar, and presented it there as an atonement for his sin. They are exhorted to give themselves up in the spirit of sacrifice; to be as wholly the Lord's property as the whole burnt-offering was, no part being devoted to any other use.

***A living sacrifice***— In opposition to those dead sacrifices which they were in the habit of offering while in their Jewish state; and that they should have the lusts of the flesh mortified, that they might live to God.

***Holy***— Without spot or blemish; referring still to the sacrifice required by the law.

***Acceptable unto God***— **εὐαρεστον**· The sacrifice being perfect in its kind, and the intention of the offerer being such that both can be acceptable and well pleasing to God, who searches the heart. All these

phrases are sacrificial, and show that there must be a complete surrender of the person—the body, the whole man, mind and flesh, to be given to God; and that he is to consider himself no more his own, but the entire property of his Maker.

***Your reasonable service.***— Nothing can be more consistent with reason than that the work of God should glorify its Author. We are not our own, we are the property of the Lord, by the right of creation and redemption; and it would be as unreasonable as it would be wicked not to live to his glory, in strict obedience to his will. The reasonable service, **λογικην λατρειαν**, of the apostle, may refer to the difference between the Jewish and Christian worship. The former religious service consisted chiefly in its sacrifices, which were **δι' αλογων**, of irrational creatures, i.e. the lambs, rams, kids, bulls, goats, etc., which were offered under the law. The Christian service or worship is **λογικη**, rational, because performed according to the true intent and meaning of the law; the heart and soul being engaged in the service. He alone lives the life of a fool and a madman who lives the life of a sinner against God; for, in sinning against his Maker he wrongs his own soul, loves death, and rewards evil unto himself.

Reasonable service, **λογικην λατρειαν**, “a religious service according to reason,” one rationally performed. The Romanists make this distinction between **λατρεια**, and **δουλεια**, latreia and douleia, (or dulia, as they corruptly write it,) worship and service, which they say signify two kinds of religious worship; the first proper to GOD, the other communicated to the creatures. But **δουλεια**, douleia, services, is used by the Septuagint to express the Divine worship. See Deuteronomy 13:4; Judges 2:7; 1 Samuel 7:3, and 1 Samuel 12:10: and in the New Testament, Matthew 6:24; Luke 6:23; Romans 16:18; Colossians 3:24. The angel refused **δουλειαν**, douleia, Revelation 22:7, because he was **συνδουλος** sundoulos, a fellow servant; and the Divine worship is more frequently expressed by this word **δουλεια**, douleia, service, than by **λατρεια**, latreia, worship. The first is thirty-nine times in the Old and New Testament ascribed unto God, the other about thirty times; and latreia, worship or service, is given unto the creatures, as in Leviticus 23:7, 8, 21; Numbers 28:18; yea, the word signifies cruel and base bondage, Deuteronomy 28:48: once in the New Testament it is taken for the worship of the creatures, Romans 1:25. The worshipping of idols is forbidden under the word **λατρεια**, latreia,

thirty-four times in the Old Testament, and once in the New, as above; and twenty-three times under the term δουλεια, doleia, in the Old Testament; and St. Paul uses δουλευειν θεω, and λατρευειν θεω indifferently, for the worship we owe to God. See Romans 1:9, 25; 12:1, Galatians 4:8, 9; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; Matthew 6:24. And Ludouicus Vives, a learned Romanist, has proved out of Suidas, Xenophon, and Volla, that these two words are usually taken the one for the other, therefore the popish distinction, that the first signifies “the religious worship due only to God,” and the second, “that which is given to angels, saints, and men,” is unlearned and false. — See Leigh’s Crit. Sacra.

**Verse 2. *And be not conformed to this world***— By this world, αιωνι τουτω, may be understood that present state of things both among the Jews and Gentiles; the customs and fashions of the people who then lived, the Gentiles particularly, who had neither the power nor the form of godliness; though some think that the Jewish economy, frequently termed עולם הזה olam hazzeh, this world, this peculiar state of things, is alone intended. And the apostle warns them against reviving usages that Christ had abolished: this exhortation still continues in full force. The world that now is—THIS present state of things, is as much opposed to the spirit of genuine Christianity as the world then was. Pride, luxury, vanity, extravagance in dress, and riotous living, prevail now, as they did then, and are as unworthy of a Christian’s pursuit as they are injurious to his soul, and hateful in the sight of God.

***Be ye transformed***— μεταμορφουσθε, Be ye metamorphosed, transfigured, appear as new persons, and with new habits, as God has given you a new form of worship, so that ye serve in the newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. The word implies a radical, thorough, and universal change, both outward and inward. SENECA, Epis. vi, shows us the force of this word when used in a moral sense. Sentio, says he, non EMENDARI me tantum, sed TRANSFIGURARI; “I perceive myself not to be amended merely, but to be transformed:” i. e. entirely renewed.

***By the renewing of your mind***— Let the inward change produce the outward. Where the spirit, the temper, and disposition of the mind,

Ephesians 4:23, are not renewed, an outward change is of but little worth, and but of short standing.

**That ye may prove**— εἰς το δοκιμαζειν, That ye may have practical proof and experimental knowledge of, the will of God-of his purpose and determination, which is good in itself; infinitely so. Acceptable, ευαπεστον, well pleasing to and well received by every mind that is renewed and transformed.

**And perfect**— τελειον, Finished and complete: when the mind is renewed, and the whole life changed, then the will of God is perfectly fulfilled; for this is its grand design in reference to every human being.

These words are supposed by Schoettgen to refer entirely to the Jewish law. The Christians were to renounce this world-the Jewish state of things; to be transformed, by having their minds enlightened in the pure and simple Christian worship, that they might prove the grand characteristic difference between the two covenants: the latter being good in opposition to the statutes which were not good, Ezekiel 20:25; acceptable, in opposition to those sacrifices and offerings which God would not accept, as it is written, Psalm 40:6-8; and perfect, in opposition to that system which was imperfect, and which made nothing perfect, and was only the shadow of good things to come. There are both ingenuity and probability in this view of the subject.

**Verse 3. Through the grace given unto me**— By the grace given St. Paul most certainly means his apostolical office, by which he had the authority, not only to preach the Gospel, but also to rule the Church of Christ. This is the meaning of the word, η χαρις, in Ephesians 3:8: Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given-is conceded this office or employment immediately by God himself; that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

**Not to think-more highly**— μη υπερφρονειν, Not to act proudly; to arrogate nothing to himself on account of any grace he had received, or of any office committed to him.

**But to think soberly**— αλλα φρονειν εις το σωφρονειν. The reader will perceive here a sort of paronomasia, or play upon words: φρονειν, from φρην, the mind, signifies to think, mind, relish, to be of opinion, etc.;

and **σωφρονειν** from **σοος**, sound, and **φρην**, the mind, signifies to be of a sound mind; to think discreetly, modestly, humbly. Let no man think himself more or greater than God has made him; and let him know that what ever he is or has of good or excellence, he has it from God; and that the glory belongs to the giver, and not to him who has received the gift.

**Measure of faith.**— **μετρον πιστεως**. It is very likely, as Dr. Moore has conjectured, that the **πιστις**, faith, here used, means the Christian religion; and the measure, the degree of knowledge and experience which each had received in it, and the power this gave him of being useful in the Church of God. See Romans 12:6.

**Verse 4. *For as we have many members***— As the human body consists of many parts, each having its respective office, and all contributing to the perfection and support of the whole; each being indispensably necessary in the place which it occupies, and each equally useful though performing a different function;

**Verse 5. *So we, being many***— We who are members of the Church of Christ, which is considered the body of which he is the head, have various offices assigned to us, according to the measure of grace, faith and religious knowledge which we possess; and although each has a different office, and qualifications suitable to that office, yet all belong to the same body; and each has as much need of the help of another as that other has of his; therefore, let there be neither pride on the one hand, nor envy on the other. The same metaphor, in nearly the same words, is used in Synopsis Sohar, page 13. “As man is divided into various members and joints, united among themselves, and raised by gradations above each other, and collectively compose one body; so all created things are members orderly disposed, and altogether constitute one body. In like manner the law, distributed into various articulations, constitutes but one body.” See Schoettgen.

**Verse 6. *Having then gifts differing***, etc.— As the goodness of God, with this view of our mutual subserviency and usefulness, has endowed us with different gifts and qualifications, let each apply himself to the diligent improvement of his particular office and talent, and modestly keep within the bounds of it, not exalting himself or despising others.



**Whether prophecy**— That prophecy, in the New Testament, often means the gift of exhorting, preaching, or of expounding the Scriptures, is evident from many places in the Gospels, Acts, and St. Paul’s Epistles, see 1 Corinthians 11:4, 5; and especially 1 Corinthians 14:3: He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. This was the proper office of a preacher; and it is to the exercise of this office that the apostle refers in the whole of the chapter from which the above quotations are made. See also Luke 1:76; 7:28; Acts 15:32; 1 Corinthians 14:29. I think the apostle uses the term in the same sense here—Let every man who has the gift of preaching and interpreting the Scriptures do it in proportion to the grace and light he has received from God, and in no case arrogate to himself knowledge which he has not received; let him not esteem himself more highly on account of this gift, or affect to be wise above what is written, or indulge himself in fanciful interpretations of the word of God.

Dr. Taylor observes that the measure of faith, Romans 12:3, and the proportion of faith, Romans 12:6, seem not to relate to the degree of any gift considered in itself, but rather in the relation and proportion which it bore to the gifts of others; for it is plain that he is here exhorting every man to keep soberly within his own sphere. It is natural to suppose that the new converts might be puffed up with the several gifts that were bestowed upon them; and every one might be forward to magnify his own to the disparagement of others: therefore the apostle advises them to keep each within his proper sphere; to know and observe the just measure and proportion of the gift intrusted to him, not to gratify his pride but to edify the Church.

The *αναλογια της πιστεως*, which we here translate the proportion of faith, and which some render the analogy of faith, signifies in grammar “the similar declension of similar words;” but in Scriptural matters it has been understood to mean the general and consistent plan or scheme of doctrines delivered in the Scriptures; where every thing bears its due relation and proportion to another. Thus the death of Christ is commensurate in its merits to the evils produced by the fall of Adam. The doctrine of justification by faith bears the strictest analogy or proportion to the grace of Christ and the helpless, guilty, condemned state of man: whereas the doctrine of justification by WORKS is out of all analogy to the demerit of

sin, the perfection of the law, the holiness of God, and the miserable, helpless state of man. This may be a good general view of the subject; but when we come to inquire what those mean by the analogy of faith who are most frequent in the use of the term, we shall find that it means neither more nor less than their own creed; and though they tell you that their doctrines are to be examined by the Scriptures, yet they give you roundly to know that you are to understand these Scriptures in precisely the same way as they have interpreted them. “To the law and to the testimony,” says Dr. Campbell, “is the common cry; only every one, the better to secure the decision on the side he has espoused, would have you previously resolve to put no sense whatever on the law and the testimony but what his favourite doctrine will admit. Thus they run on in a shuffling, circular sort of argument, which, though they studiously avoid exposing, is, when dragged into the open light, neither more nor less than this; ‘you are to try our doctrine by the Scriptures only; but then you are to be very careful that you explain the Scripture solely by our doctrine.’ A wonderful plan of trial, which begins with giving judgment, and ends with examining the proof, wherein the whole skill and ingenuity of the judges are to be exerted in wresting the evidence so as to give it the appearance of supporting the sentence pronounced before hand.” See Dr. Campbell’s Dissertations on the Gospels, Diss. iv. sect. 14, vol. i, page 146, 8vo. edit., where several other sensible remarks may be found.

**Verse 7. *Or ministry***— **διακονια** simply means the office of a deacon; and what this office was, see in the note on Acts 6:4, where the subject is largely discussed.

***Or he that teacheth***— The teacher, **διδασκαλος**, was a person whose office it was to instruct others, who thereby catechizing, or simply explaining the grand truths of Christianity.

**Verse 8. *Or he that exhorteth***— **ὁ παρακαλων**, The person who admonished and reprehended the unruly or disorderly; and who supported the weak and comforted the penitents, and those who were under heaviness through manifold temptations.

***He that giveth***— He who distributeth the alms of the Church, with simplicity-being influenced by no partiality, but dividing to each according to the necessity of his case.

**He that ruleth**— ὁ προϊσταμενος, He that presides over a particular business; but as the verb **προισταμαι** also signifies to defend or patronize, it is probably used here to signify receiving and providing for strangers, and especially the persecuted who were obliged to leave their own homes, and were destitute, afflicted, and tormented. It might also imply the persons whose business it was to receive and entertain the apostolical teachers who traveled from place to place, establishing and confirming the Churches. In this sense the word **προστατις** is applied to Phoebe, Romans 16:2: She hath been a SUCCORER of many, and of myself also. The apostle directs that this office should be executed with diligence, that such destitute persons should have their necessities as promptly and as amply supplied as possible.

**He that showeth mercy**— Let the person who is called to perform any act of compassion or mercy to the wretched do it, not grudgingly nor of necessity, but from a spirit of pure benevolence and sympathy. The poor are often both wicked and worthless: and, if those who are called to minister to them as stewards, overseers, etc., do not take care, they will get their hearts hardened with the frequent proofs they will have of deception, lying, idleness, etc. And on this account it is that so many of those who have been called to minister to the poor in parishes, workhouses, and religious societies, when they come to relinquish their employment find that many of their moral feelings have been considerably blunted; and perhaps the only reward they get for their services is the character of being hard-hearted. If whatever is done in this way be not done unto the Lord, it can never be done with cheerfulness.

**Verse 9. Let love be without dissimulation.**— ἡ ἀγαπη ἀνυποκριτος· Have no hypocritical love; let not your love wear a mask; make no empty professions. Love God and your neighbor; and, by obedience to the one and acts of benevolence to the other, show that your love is sincere.

**Abhor that which is evil**— ἀποστύγουντες το πονηρον· Hate sin as you would hate that hell to which it leads. **στύγω** signifies to hate or detest with horror; the preposition **απο** greatly strengthens the meaning. **στύξ**, Styx, was a feigned river in hell by which the gods were wont to swear, and if any of them falsified this oath he was deprived of his nectar and ambrosia for a hundred years; hence the river was reputed to be hateful,

and **στυγεω** signified to be as hateful as hell. Two MSS. read **μισουντες**, which signifies hating in the lowest sense of the term. The word in the text is abundantly more expressive, and our translation is both nervous and appropriate.

*Cleave to that which is good.*— **κολλωμενοι τω αγαθω**. Be CEMENTED or GLUED to that which is good; so the word literally signifies. Have an unalterable attachment to whatever leads to God, and contributes to the welfare of your fellow creatures.

**Verse 10.** *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love*— It is difficult to give a simple translation of the original: **τη φιλαδελφια εις αλληλους φιλοστοργοι**. The word **φιλαδελφια** signifies that affectionate regard which every Christian should feel for another, as being members of the same mystical body: hence it is emphatically termed the love of the brethren. When William Penn, of deservedly famous memory, made a treaty with the Indians in North America, and purchased from them a large woody tract, which, after its own nature and his name, he called Pennsylvania, he built a city on it, and peopled it with Christians of his own denomination, and called the city from the word in the text, **φιλαδελφια**, PHILADELPHIA; an appellation which it then bore with strict propriety: and still it bears the name.

The word **φιλοστοργος**, which we translate kindly affectioned, from **φιλος** and **στοργη**, signifies that tender and indescribable affection which a mother bears to her child, and which almost all creatures manifest towards their young; and the word **φιλος**, or **φιλεω**, joined to it, signifies a delight in it. Feel the tenderest affection towards each other, and delight to feel it. “Love a brother Christian with the affection of a natural brother.”

*In honor preferring one another*— The meaning appears to be this: Consider all your brethren as more worthy than yourself; and let neither grief nor envy affect your mind at seeing another honored and yourself neglected. This is a hard lesson, and very few persons learn it thoroughly. If we wish to see our brethren honored, still it is with the secret condition in our own minds that we be honored more than they. We have no objection to the elevation of others, providing we may be at the head. But who can bear even to be what he calls neglected? I once heard the following conversation between two persons, which the reader will pardon my

relating in this place, as it appears to be rather in point, and is worthy of regard. “I know not,” said one, “that I neglect to do any thing in my power to promote the interest of true religion in this place, and yet I seem to be held in very little repute, scarcely any person even noticing me.” To which the other replied: “My good friend, set yourself down for nothing, and if any person takes you for something it will be all clear gain.” I thought this a queer saying; but how full of meaning and common sense! Whether the object of this good counsel was profited by it I cannot tell; but I looked on it and received instruction.

**Verse 11. *Not slothful in business***— That God, who forbade working on the seventh day, has, by the same authority, enjoined it on the other six days. He who neglects to labor during the week is as culpable as he is who works on the Sabbath. An idle, slothful person can never be a Christian.

***Fervent in spirit***— *τω πνευματι ζεοντες*. Do nothing at any time but what is to the glory of God, and do every thing as unto him; and in every thing let your hearts be engaged. Be always in earnest, and let your heart ever accompany your hand.

***Serving the Lord***— Ever considering that his eye is upon you, and that you are accountable to him for all that you do, and that you should do every thing so as to please him. In order to this there must be simplicity in the INTENTION, and purity in the AFFECTIONS.

Instead of *τω κυριω δουλευοντες*, serving the Lord, several MSS., as DFG, and many editions, have *καιρω δουλευοντες*, serving the time—embracing the opportunity. This reading Griesbach has received into the text, and most critics contend for its authenticity. Except the Codes Claromontanus, the Codex Augiensis, and the Codex Boernerianus, the first a MS. of the seventh or eighth century, the others of the ninth or tenth, marked in Griesbach by the letters DFG, all the other MSS. of this epistle have *κυριω*, the Lord; a reading in which all the versions concur. *καιρω*, the time, is not found in the two original editions; that of Complutum, in 1514, which is the first edition of the Greek Testament ever printed; and that of Erasmus, in 1516, which is the first edition published; the former having been suppressed for several years after it was finished at the press. As in the ancient MSS. the word *κυριω* is written contractedly, \_\_ *κω*, some appear to have read it *καιρω* instead of

κυριω; but I confess I do not see sufficient reason after all that the critics have said, to depart from the common reading.

**Verse 12. *Rejoicing in hope***— Of that glory of God that to each faithful follower of Christ shall shortly be revealed.

***Patient in tribulation***— Remembering that what you suffer as Christians you suffer for Christ's sake; and it is to his honor, and the honor of your Christian profession, that you suffer it with an even mind.

***Continuing instant in prayer***— ηροσκαρτερουντες· Making the most fervent and intense application to the throne of grace for the light and power of the Holy Spirit; without which you can neither abhor evil, do good, love the brethren, entertain a comfortable hope, nor bear up patiently under the tribulations and ills of life.

**Verse 13. *Distributing to the necessity of saints***— Relieve your poor brethren according to the power which God has given you. Do good unto all men, but especially to them which are of the household of faith. Instead of χρειαις, necessities, some ancient MSS. have μνειαις, memorials; distributing to the memorials of the saints, which some interpret as referring to saints that were absent; as if he had said: Do not forget those in other Churches who have a claim on your bounty. But I really cannot see any good sense which this various reading can make in the text; I therefore follow the common reading.

***Given to hospitality***.— την φιλοξενιαν διωκοντες, pursuing hospitality, or the duty of entertaining strangers. A very necessary virtue in ancient times, when houses of public accommodation were exceedingly scarce. This exhortation might have for its object the apostles, who were all itinerants; and in many cases the Christians, flying before the face of persecution. This virtue is highly becoming in all Christians, and especially in all Christian ministers, who have the means of relieving a brother in distress, or of succouring the poor wherever he may find them. But providing for strangers in distress is the proper meaning of the term; and to be forward to do this is the spirit of the duty.

**Verse 14. *Bless them which persecute you***— ευλογειτε, Give good words, or pray for them that give you bad words, καταρασθε, who make dire imprecations against you. Bless them, pray for them, and on no

account curse them, whatever the provocation may be. Have the loving, forgiving mind that was in your Lord.

**Verse 15. *Rejoice with them that do rejoice***— Take a lively interest in the prosperity of others. Let it be a matter of rejoicing to you when you hear of the health, prosperity, or happiness of any brother.

***Weep with them that weep.***— Labour after a compassionate or sympathizing mind. Let your heart feel for the distressed; enter into their sorrows, and bear a part of their burdens. It is a fact, attested by universal experience, that by sympathy a man may receive into his own affectionate feelings a measure of the distress of his friend, and that his friend does find himself relieved in the same proportion as the other has entered into his griefs. “But how do you account for this?” I do not account for it at all, it depends upon certain laws of nature, the principles of which have not been as yet duly developed.

**Verse 16. *Be of the same mind***— Live in a state of continual harmony and concord, and pray for the same good for all which you desire for yourselves.

***Mind not high things***— Be not ambitious; affect nothing above your station; do not court the rich nor the powerful; do not pass by the poor man to pay your court to the great man; do not affect titles or worldly distinctions; much less sacrifice your conscience for them. The attachment to high things and high men is the vice of little, shallow minds. However, it argues one important fact, that such persons are conscious that they are of no worth and of no consequence in THEMSELVES, and they seek to render themselves observable and to gain a little credit by their endeavors to associate themselves with men of rank and fortune, and if possible to get into honorable employments; and, if this cannot be attained, they affect honorable TITLES.

***But condescend to men of low estate.***— Be a companion of the humble, and pass through life with as little noise and show as possible. Let the poor, godly man be your chief companion; and learn from his humility and piety to be humble and godly. The term *συναπαγομενοι*, which we translate condescend, from *συν*, together, and *απαγω*, to lead, signifies to be led, carried, or dragged away to prison with another; and points out the

state in which the primitive Christians were despised and rejected of men, and often led forth to prison and death. False or man-pleasing professors would endeavor to escape all this disgrace and danger by getting into the favor of the great, the worldly, and the irreligious. There have not been wanting, in all ages of the Church, persons who, losing the savour of Divine things from their own souls by drinking into a worldly spirit, have endeavored to shun the reproach of the cross by renouncing the company of the godly, speaking evil of the way of life, and perhaps sitting down in the chair of the scorner with apostates like themselves. And yet, strange to tell, these men will keep up a form of godliness! for a decent outside is often necessary to enable them to secure the ends of their ambition.

***Be not wise in your own conceits.***— Be not puffed up with an opinion of your own consequence; for this will prove that the consequence itself is imaginary. Be not wise, **παρ' εαυτοις**, by yourselves—do not suppose that wisdom and discernment dwell alone with you. Believe that you stand in need both of help and instruction from others.

**Verse 17. *Recompense*,** etc.— Do not take notice of every little injury you may sustain. Do not be litigious. Beware of too nice a sense of your own honor; intolerable pride is at the bottom of this. The motto of the royal arms of Scotland is in direct opposition to this Divine direction—*Nemo me impune lacesset*, of which “I render evil for evil to every man,” is a pretty literal translation. This is both antichristian and abominable, whether in a state or in an individual.

***Provide things honest***— Be prudent, be cautious, neither eat, drink, nor wear, but as you pay for every thing. “Live not on trust, for that is the way to pay double;” and by this means the poor are still kept poor. He who takes credit, even for food or raiment, when he has no probable means of defraying the debt, is a dishonest man. It is no sin to die through lack of the necessaries of life when the providence of God has denied the means of support; but it is a sin to take up goods without the probability of being able to pay for them. Poor man! suffer poverty a little; perhaps God is only trying thee for a time; and who can tell if he will not turn again thy captivity. Labour hard to live honestly; if God still appear to withhold his providential blessing, do not despair; leave it all to him; do not make a



sinful choice; he cannot err. He will bless thy poverty, while he curses the ungodly man's blessings.

**Verse 18. *If it be possible***— To live in a state of peace with one's neighbors, friends, and even family, is often very difficult. But the man who loves God must labor after this, for it is indispensably necessary even for his own sake. A man cannot have broils and misunderstandings with others, without having his own peace very materially disturbed: he must, to be happy, be at peace with all men, whether they will be at peace with him or not. The apostle knew that it would be difficult to get into and maintain such a state of peace, and this his own words amply prove: And if it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably. Though it be but barely possible, labor after it.

**Verse 19. *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves***— Ye are the children of God, and he loves you; and because he loves you he will permit nothing to be done to you that he will not turn to your advantage. Never take the execution of the law into your own hands; rather suffer injuries. The Son of man is come, not to destroy men's lives, but to save: be of the same spirit. When he was reviled, he reviled not again. It is the part of a noble mind to bear up under unmerited disgrace; little minds are litigious and quarrelsome.

***Give place unto wrath***— *δοτε τοπον τη οργη*. Leave room for the civil magistrate to do his duty, he holds the sword for this purpose; and if he be unfaithful to the trust reposed in him by the state, leave the matter to God, who is the righteous judge: for by avenging yourselves you take your cause both out of the hands of the civil magistrate and out of the hands of God. I believe this to be the meaning of give place to wrath, *οργη*, punishment; the penalty which the law, properly executed, will inflict. This is well expressed by the author of the book of Ecclesiasticus, Ecclesiastes 19:17: Admonish thy neighbor before thou threaten him, and, not being, angry, GIVE PLACE TO THE LAW OF THE MOST HIGH.

***Vengeance is mine***— This fixes the meaning of the apostle, and at once shows that the exhortation, Rather give place to wrath or punishment, means, Leave the matter to the judgment of God; it is his law that in this case is broken; and to him the infliction of deserved punishment belongs.

Some think it means, “Yield a little to a man when in a violent passion, for the sake of peace, until he grow cooler.”

***I will repay***— In my own time and in my own way. But he gives the sinner space to repent, and this longsuffering leads to salvation. Dr. Taylor, after Dr. Benson, conjectures that the apostle in these directions had his eye upon the indignities which the Jews, and probably the Christians too, (for they were often confounded by the heathen,) suffered by the edict of Claudius, mentioned Acts 18:2, which “commanded all Jews to depart from Rome.” Upon this occasion Aquila and Priscilla removed to Corinth, where Paul found them, and dwelt with them a considerable time. No doubt they gave him a full account of the state of the Christian Church at Rome, and of every thing relating to the late persecution under Claudius. That emperor’s edict probably died with him, if it were not repealed before, and then the Jews and Christians (if the Christians were also expelled) returned again to Rome; for Aquila and Priscilla were there when Paul wrote this epistle, Romans 16:3, which was in the fourth year of Nero, successor to Claudius.

**Verse 20. *If thine enemy hunger, feed him***— Do not withhold from any man the offices of mercy and kindness; you have been God’s enemy, and yet God fed, clothed, and preserved you alive: do to your enemy as God has done to you. If your enemy be hungry, feed him; if he be thirsty, give him drink: so has God dealt with you. And has not a sense of his goodness and long-suffering towards you been a means of melting down your heart into penitential compunction, gratitude, and love towards him? How know you that a similar conduct towards your enemy may not have the same gracious influence on him towards you? Your kindness may be the means of begetting in him a sense of his guilt; and, from being your fell enemy, he may become your real friend! This I believe to be the sense of this passage, which many have encumbered with difficulties of their own creating. The whole is a quotation from Proverbs 25:21, 22, in the precise words of the Septuagint; and it is very likely that the latter clause of this verse, Thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, is a metaphor taken from smelting metals. The ore is put into the furnace, and fire put both under and over, that the metal may be liquefied, and, leaving the scoriae and dross, may fall down pure to the bottom of the furnace. This is

beautifully expressed by one of our own poets, in reference to this explanation of this passage:—

*“So artists melt the sullen ore of lead,  
By heaping coals of fire upon its head.  
In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,  
And pure from dross the silver runs below.”*

It is most evident, from the whole connection of the place and the apostle’s use of it, that the heaping of the coals of fire upon the head of the enemy is intended to produce not an evil, but the most beneficial effect; and the following verse is an additional proof of this.

**Verse 21. *Be not overcome of evil***— Do not, by giving place to evil, become precisely the same character which thou condemnest in another. Overcome evil with good—however frequently he may grieve and injure thee, always repay him with kindness; thy good-will, in the end, may overcome his evil.

1. THOMAS AQUINAS has properly said: Vincitur a malo qui vult peccare in alium, quia ille peccavit in ipsum. “He is overcome of evil who sins against another, because he sins against him.” A moral enemy is more easily overcome by kindness than by hostility. Against the latter he arms himself; and all the evil passions of his heart concentrate themselves in opposition to him who is striving to retaliate, by violence, the injurious acts which he has received from him. But where the injured man is labouring to do him good for his evil—to repay his curses with blessings and prayers, his evil passions have no longer any motive, any incentive; his mind relaxes; the turbulence of his passions is calmed; reason and conscience are permitted to speak; he is disarmed, or, in other words, he finds that he has no use for his weapons; he beholds in the injured man a magnanimous friend whose mind is superior to all the insults and injuries which he has received, and who is determined never to permit the heavenly principle that influences his soul to bow itself before the miserable, mean, and wretched spirit of revenge. This amiable man views in his enemy a spirit which he beholds with horror, and he cannot consent to receive into his own bosom a disposition which he sees to be so destructive to another; and he knows that as soon as he begins to avenge himself, he places himself on a par with the unprincipled man whose conduct he has so much

reason to blame, and whose spirit he has so much cause to abominate. He who avenges himself receives into his own heart all the evil and disgraceful passions by which his enemy is rendered both wretched and contemptible. There is the voice of eternal reason in “Avenge not yourselves:-overcome evil with good;” as well as the high authority and command of the living God.

2. The reader will, no doubt, have observed with pleasure the skill and address, as well as the Divine wisdom, with which the apostle has handled the important subjects which he has brought forth to view in the preceding chapters. Nothing can be more regular or judicious than his plan of proceeding. He first shows the miserable, wretched, fallen, degraded state of man; next, the merciful provision which God has made for his salvation, and lastly, the use which man should make of the mercies of his God. He shows us, in a most pointed manner, the connection that subsists between the doctrines of the Gospel and practical piety. From the beginning of the first to the end of the eleventh chapter he states and defends the grand truths of Christianity, and from the beginning of the twelfth to the end of the epistle he shows the practical use of these doctrines. This is a point which is rarely considered by professors; multitudes run to the Epistle to the Romans for texts to prop up their peculiar system of doctrine, but how few go to this sacred book for rules relative to holy life! They abound in quotations from the doctrinal parts, but seldom make that use of them which the apostle makes in this chapter. “I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service, and be not conformed to this world, etc.” Now we learn from the use which the apostle makes of his doctrines, that whatsoever teaching comes from God leads to a holy and useful life. And if we hold any doctrine that does not excite us to labor after the strictest conformity to the will of God in all our tempers, spirit, and actions, we may rest assured that either that doctrine is not of God, or we make an improper use of it. He that knows God best, loves and resembles him most.

## CHAPTER 13.

*Subjection to civil governors inculcated, from the consideration that civil government is according to the ordinance of God; and that those who resist the lawfully constituted authorities shall receive condemnation, 1, 2. And those who are obedient shall receive praise, 3. The character of a lawful civil governor, 4. The necessity of subjection, 5. The propriety of paying lawful tribute, 6, 7. Christians should love one another, 8-10. The necessity of immediate conversion to God proved from the shortness and uncertainty of time, 11, 12. How the Gentiles should walk so as to please God, and put on Christ Jesus in order to their salvation, 13, 14.*

### NOTES ON CHAP 13.

To see with what propriety the apostle introduces the important subjects which he handles in this chapter, it is necessary to make a few remarks on the circumstances in which the Church of God then was.

It is generally allowed that this epistle was written about the year of our Lord 58, four or five years after the edict of the Emperor Claudius, by which all the Jews were banished from Rome. And as in those early times the Christians were generally confounded with the Jews, it is likely that both were included in this decree.

For what reason this edict was issued does not satisfactorily appear. Suetonius tells us that it was because the Jews were making continual disturbances under their leader Christus. (See the note on Acts 18:2.) That the Jews were in general an uneasy and seditious people is clear enough from every part of their own history. They had the most rooted aversion to the heathen government; and it was a maxim with them that the world was given to the Israelites; that they should have supreme rule every where, and that the Gentiles should be their vassals. With such political notions, grounded on their native restlessness, it is no wonder if in several instances they gave cause of suspicion to the Roman government, who would be glad of an opportunity to expel from the city persons whom they considered dangerous to its peace and security; nor is it unreasonable

on this account to suppose, with Dr. Taylor, that the Christians, under a notion of being the peculiar people of God, and the subjects of his kingdom alone, might be in danger of being infected with those unruly and rebellious sentiments: therefore the apostle shows them that they were, notwithstanding their honors and privileges as Christians, bound by the strongest obligations of conscience to be subject to the civil government. The judicious commentator adds: “I cannot forbear observing the admirable skill and dexterity with which the apostle has handled the subject. His views in writing are always comprehensive on every point; and he takes into his thoughts and instructions all parties that might probably reap any benefit by them. As Christianity was then growing, and the powers of the world began to take notice of it, it was not unlikely that this letter might fall into the hands of the Roman magistrates. And whenever that happened it was right, not only that they should see that Christianity was no favourer of sedition, but likewise that they should have an opportunity of reading their own duty and obligations. But as they were too proud and insolent to permit themselves to be instructed in a plain, direct way, therefore the apostle with a masterly hand, delineates and strongly inculcates the magistrate’s duty; while he is pleading his cause with the subject, and establishing his duty on the most sure and solid ground, he dexterously sides with the magistrate, and vindicates his power against any subject who might have imbibed seditious principles, or might be inclined to give the government any disturbance; and under this advantage he reads the magistrate a fine and close lecture upon the nature and ends of civil government. A way of conveyance so ingenious and unexceptionable that even Nero himself, had this epistle fallen into his hands, could not fail of seeing his duty clearly stated, without finding any thing servile or flattering on the one hand, or offensive or disgusting on the other.

“The attentive reader will be pleased to see with what dexterity, truth, and gravity the apostle, in a small compass, affirms and explains the foundation, nature, ends, and just limits of the magistrate’s authority, while he is pleading his cause, and teaching the subject the duty and obedience he owes to the civil government.”—Dr. Taylor’s Notes, page 352.

**Verse 1.** *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.*— This is a very strong saying, and most solemnly introduced; and we must consider

the apostle as speaking, not from his own private judgment, or teaching a doctrine of present expediency, but declaring the mind of God on a subject of the utmost importance to the peace of the world; a doctrine which does not exclusively belong to any class of people, order of the community, or official situations, but to every soul; and, on the principles which the apostle lays down, to every soul in all possible varieties of situation, and on all occasions. And what is this solemn doctrine? It is this: Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. Let every man be obedient to the civil government under which the providence of God has cast his lot.

*For there is no power but of God*— As God is the origin of power, and the supreme Governor of the universe, he delegates authority to whomsoever he will; and though in many cases the governor himself may not be of God, yet civil government is of him; for without this there could be no society, no security, no private property; all would be confusion and anarchy, and the habitable world would soon be depopulated. In ancient times, God, in an especial manner, on many occasions appointed the individual who was to govern; and he accordingly governed by a Divine right, as in the case of Moses, Joshua, the Hebrew judges, and several of the Israelitish kings. In after times, and to the present day, he does that by a general superintending providence which he did before by especial designation. In all nations of the earth there is what may be called a constitution—a plan by which a particular country or state is governed; and this constitution is less or more calculated to promote the interests of the community. The civil governor, whether he be elective or hereditary, agrees to govern according to that constitution. Thus we may consider that there is a compact and consent between the governor and the governed, and in such a case, the potentate may be considered as coming to the supreme authority in the direct way of God's providence; and as civil government is of God, who is the fountain of law, order, and regularity, the civil governor, who administers the laws of a state according to its constitution, is the minister of God. But it has been asked: If the ruler be an immoral or profligate man, does he not prove himself thereby to be unworthy of his high office, and should he not be deposed? I answer, No: if he rule according to the constitution, nothing can justify rebellion against his authority. He may be irregular in his own private life; he may be an immoral man, and disgrace himself by an improper conduct: but if he rule

according to the law; if he make no attempt to change the constitution, nor break the compact between him and the people; there is, therefore, no legal ground of opposition to his civil authority, and every act against him is not only rebellion in the worst sense of the word, but is unlawful and absolutely sinful.

Nothing can justify the opposition of the subjects to the ruler but overt attempts on his part to change the constitution, or to rule contrary to law. When the ruler acts thus he dissolves the compact between him and his people; his authority is no longer binding, because illegal; and it is illegal because he is acting contrary to the laws of that constitution, according to which, on being raised to the supreme power, he promised to govern. This conduct justifies opposition to his government; but I contend that no personal misconduct in the ruler, no immorality in his own life, while he governs according to law, can justify either rebellion against him or contempt of his authority. For his political conduct he is accountable to his people; for his moral conduct he is accountable to God, his conscience, and the ministers of religion. A king may be a good moral man, and yet a weak, and indeed a bad and dangerous prince. He may be a bad man, and stained with vice in his private life, and yet be a good prince. SAUL was a good moral man, but a bad prince, because he endeavored to act contrary to the Israelitish constitution: he changed some essential parts of that constitution, as I have elsewhere shown; (see the note on Acts 13:22;) he was therefore lawfully deposed. James the Second was a good moral man, as far as I can learn, but he was a bad and dangerous prince; he endeavored to alter, and essentially change the British constitution, both in Church and state, therefore he was lawfully deposed. It would be easy, in running over the list of our own kings, to point out several who were deservedly reputed good kings, who in their private life were very immoral. Bad as they might be in private life, the constitution was in their hands ever considered a sacred deposit, and they faithfully preserved it, and transmitted it unimpaired to their successors; and took care while they held the reins of government to have it impartially and effectually administered.

It must be allowed, notwithstanding, that when a prince, howsoever heedful to the laws, is unrighteous in private life, his example is contagious; morality, banished from the throne, is discountenanced by the



community; and happiness is diminished in proportion to the increase of vice. On the other hand, when a king governs according to the constitution of his realms and has his heart and life governed by the laws of his God, he is then a double blessing to his people; while he is ruling carefully according to the laws, his pious example is a great means of extending and confirming the reign of pure morality among his subjects. Vice is discredited from the throne, and the profligate dare not hope for a place of trust and confidence, (however in other respects he may be qualified for it,) because he is a vicious man.

As I have already mentioned some potentates by name, as apt examples of the doctrines I have been laying down, my readers will naturally expect that, on so fair an opportunity, I should introduce another; one in whom the double blessing meets; one who, through an unusually protracted reign, during every year of which he most conscientiously watched over the sacred constitution committed to his care, not only did not impair this constitution, but took care that its wholesome laws should be properly administered, and who in every respect acted as the father of his people, and added to all this the most exemplary moral conduct perhaps ever exhibited by a prince, whether in ancient or modern times; not only tacitly discountenancing vice by his truly religious conduct, but by his frequent proclamations most solemnly forbidding Sabbath-breaking, profane swearing, and immorality in general. More might be justly said, but when I have mentioned all these things, (and I mention them with exultation; and with gratitude to God,) I need scarcely add the venerable name of GEORGE the Third, king of Great Britain; as every reader will at once perceive that the description suits no potentate besides. I may just observe, that notwithstanding his long reign has been a reign of unparalleled troubles and commotions in the world, in which his empire has always been involved, yet, never did useful arts, ennobling sciences, and pure religion gain a more decided and general ascendancy: and much of this, under God, is owing to the manner in which this king has lived, and the encouragement he invariably gave to whatever had a tendency to promote the best interests of his people. Indeed it has been well observed, that, under the ruling providence of God, it was chiefly owing to the private and personal virtues of the sovereign that the house of Brunswick remained firmly seated on the throne amidst the storms arising from democratical agitations

and revolutionary convulsions in Europe during the years 1792-1794. The stability of his throne amidst these dangers and distresses may prove a useful lesson to his successors, and show them the strength of a virtuous character, and that morality and religion form the best bulwark against those great evils to which all human governments are exposed. This small tribute of praise to the character and conduct of the British king, and gratitude to God for such a governor, will not be suspected of sinister motive; as the object of it is, by an inscrutable providence, placed in a situation to which neither envy, flattery, nor even just praise can approach, and where the majesty of the man is placed in the most awful yet respectable ruins. I have only one abatement to make: had this potentate been as adverse from WAR as he was from public and private vices, he would have been the most immaculate sovereign that ever held a scepter or wore a crown.

But to resume the subject, and conclude the argument: I wish particularly to show the utter unlawfulness of rebellion against a ruler, who, though he may be incorrect in his moral conduct, yet rules according to the laws; and the additional blessing of having a prince, who, while his political conduct is regulated by the principles of the constitution, has his heart and life regulated by the dictates of eternal truth, as contained in that revelation which came from God.

**Verse 2. *Whosoever resisteth the power***— ὁ ἀντιτασσομενος, He who sets himself in order against this order of God; τῆ τοῦ θεοῦ διαταγῆ, and they who resist, οἱ ἀνθεστηκοτες, they who obstinately, and for no right reason, oppose the ruler, and strive to unsettle the constitution, and to bring about illegal changes,

***Shall receive to themselves damnation***.— κριμα, condemnation; shall be condemned both by the spirit and letter of that constitution, which, under pretense of defending or improving, they are indirectly labouring to subvert.

**Verse 3. *For rulers are not a terror to good works***— Here the apostle shows the civil magistrate what he should be: he is clothed with great power, but that power is entrusted to him, not for the terror and oppression of the upright man, but to overawe and punish the wicked. It is, in a word, for the benefit of the community, and not for the

aggrandizement of himself, that God has entrusted the supreme civil power to any man. If he should use this to wrong, rob, spoil, oppress, and persecute his subjects, he is not only a bad man, but also a bad prince. He infringes on the essential principles of law and equity. Should he persecute his obedient, loyal subjects, on any religious account, this is contrary to all law and right; and his doing so renders him unworthy of their confidence, and they must consider him not as a blessing but a plague. Yet, even in this case, though in our country it would be a breach of the constitution, which allows every man to worship God according to his conscience, the truly pious will not feel that even this would justify rebellion against the prince; they are to suffer patiently, and commend themselves and their cause to him that judgeth righteously. It is an awful thing to rebel, and the cases are extremely rare that can justify rebellion against the constituted authorities. See the doctrine on Romans 13:1.

***Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power?***— If thou wouldst not live in fear of the civil magistrate, live according to the laws; and thou mayest expect that he will rule according to the laws, and consequently instead of incurring blame thou wilt have praise. This is said on the supposition that the ruler is himself a good man: such the laws suppose him to be; and the apostle, on the general question of obedience and protection, assumes the point that the magistrate is such.

**Verse 4. *For he is the minister of God to thee for good***— Here the apostle puts the character of the ruler in the strongest possible light. He is the minister of God—the office is by Divine appointment: the man who is worthy of the office will act in conformity to the will of God: and as the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears open to their cry, consequently the ruler will be the minister of God to them for good.

***He beareth not the sword in vain***— His power is delegated to him for the defense and encouragement of the good, and the punishment of the wicked; and he has authority to punish capitally, when the law so requires: this the term sword leads us to infer.

***For he is the minister of God, a revenger***— θεου διακονος εστιν εκδικος, For he is God's vindictive minister, to execute wrath; εις οργην, to inflict punishment upon the transgressors of the law; and this according to the statutes of that law; for God's civil ministers are never

allowed to pronounce or inflict punishment according to their own minds or feeling, but according to the express declarations of the law.

**Verse 5. *Ye must needs be subject***— *ανάγκη*, There is a necessity that ye should be subject, not only for wrath, *δια την οργην*, on account of the punishment which will be inflicted on evil doers, but also for conscience' sake; not only to avoid punishment, but also to preserve a clear conscience. For, as civil government is established in the order of God for

***Tribute to whom tribute***— φορον· This word probably means such taxes as were levied on persons and estates.

***Custom to whom custom***— τελος· This word probably means such duties as were laid upon goods, merchandise, etc., on imports and exports; what we commonly call custom. Kypke on this place has quoted some good authorities for the above distinction and signification. Both the words occur in the following quotation from Strabo: *αναγκη γαρ μειουσθαι τα τελη, φορων επιβαλλομενων*· It is necessary to lessen the CUSTOMS, if TAXES be imposed. Strabo, lib. ii., page 307. See several other examples in Kypke.

***Fear to whom fear***— It is likely that the word φοβον, which we translate fear, signifies that reverence which produces obedience. Treat all official characters with respect, and be obedient to your superiors.

***Honour to whom honor***.— The word τιμην may here mean that outward respect which the principle reverence, from which it springs, will generally produce. Never behave rudely to any person; but behave respectfully to men in office: if you cannot even respect the man—for an important office may be filled by an unworthy person—respect the office, and the man on account of his office. If a man habituate himself to disrespect official characters, he will soon find himself disposed to pay little respect or obedience to the laws themselves.

**Verse 8. *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another***— In the preceding verses the apostle has been showing the duty, reverence, and obedience, which all Christians, from the highest to the lowest, owe to the civil magistrate; whether he be emperor, king, proconsul, or other state officer; here he shows them their duty to each other: but this is widely different from that which they owe to the civil government: to the first they owe subjection, reverence, obedience, and tribute; to the latter they owe nothing but mutual love, and those offices which necessarily spring from it. Therefore, the apostle says, *Owe no man*; as if he had said: *Ye owe to your fellow brethren nothing but mutual love, and this is what the law of God requires, and in this the law is fulfilled. Ye are not bound in obedience to them as to the civil magistrate; for to him ye must needs be subject, not merely for fear of punishment, but for conscience sake: but to these ye are bound by love; and by that love especially which utterly*

prevents you from doing any thing by which a brother may sustain any kind of injury.

**Verse 9. *For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery***— He that loves another will not deprive him of his wife, of his life, of his property, of his good name; and will not even permit a desire to enter into his heart which would lead him to wish to possess any thing that is the property of another: for the law—the sacred Scripture, has said: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

It is remarkable that *ου ψευδομαρτυρησεις*, thou shalt not bear false witness, is wanting here in ABDEFG, and several other MSS. Griesbach has left it out of the text. It is wanting also in the Syriac, and in several of the primitive fathers. The generality of the best critics think it a spurious reading.

**Verse 10. *Love worketh no ill***— As he that loves another will act towards that person as, on a reverse of circumstances, he would that his neighbor should act towards him; therefore, this love can never work ill towards another: and, on this head, i.e. the duty we owe to our neighbor, love is the fulfilling of the law.

**Verse 11. *And that, knowing the time***— Dr. Taylor has given a judicious paraphrase of this and the following verses: “And all the duties of a virtuous and holy life we should the more carefully and zealously perform, considering the nature and shortness of the present season of life; which will convince us that it is now high time to rouse and shake off sleep, and apply with vigilance and vigor to the duties of our Christian life; for that eternal salvation, which is the object of our Christian faith and hope, and the great motive of our religion, is every day nearer to us than when we first entered into the profession of Christianity.”

Some think the passage should be understood thus: We have now many advantages which we did not formerly possess. Salvation is nearer—the whole Christian system is more fully explained, and the knowledge of it more easy to be acquired than formerly; on which account a greater progress in religious knowledge and in practical piety is required of us: and we have for a long time been too remiss in these respects. Deliverance

from the persecutions, etc., with which they were then afflicted, is supposed by others to be the meaning of the apostle.

**Verse 12. *The night is far spent***— If we understand this in reference to the heathen state of the Romans, it may be paraphrased thus: The night is far spent—heathenish darkness is nearly at an end. The day is at hand—the full manifestation of the Sun of righteousness, in the illumination of the whole Gentile world approaches rapidly. The manifestation of the Messiah is regularly termed by the ancient Jews יוֹם yom, day, because previously to this all is night, Bereshith rabba sect. 91, fol. 89. Cast off the works of darkness—prepare to meet this rising light, and welcome its approach, by throwing aside superstition, impiety, and vice of every kind: and put on the armor of light—fully receive the heavenly teaching, by which your spirits will be as completely armed against the attacks of evil as your bodies could be by the best weapons and impenetrable armor. This sense seems most suitable to the following verses, where the vices of the Gentiles are particularly specified; and they are exhorted to abandon them, and to receive the Gospel of Christ. The common method of explanation is this: The night is far spent—our present imperfect life, full of afflictions, temptations, and trials, is almost run out; the day of eternal blessedness is at hand—is about to dawn on us in our glorious resurrection unto eternal life. ‘Therefore, let us cast off—let us live as candidates for this eternal glory. But this sense cannot at all comport with what is said below, as the Gentiles are most evidently intended.

**Verse 13. *Let us walk honestly, as in the day***— Let us walk, ευσχημονες, decently, from εν, well, and σχημα, mien, habit, or dress. Let our deportment be decent, orderly, and grave; such as we shall not be ashamed of in the eyes of the whole world.

***Not in rioting, and drunkenness***— μη κωμοις και μεθαις: κωμος, rioting, according to Hesychius, signifies ασεληγη ασματα, πορνικα συμποσια, ωδαι, unclean and dissolute songs, banquets, and such like. μεθαις signifies drunken festivals, such as were celebrated in honor of their gods, when after they had sacrificed (μετα το θυειν, SUIDAS) they drank to excess, accompanied with abominable acts of every kind. See Suidas and Hesychius, under this word.

**Not in chambering**— This is no legitimate word, and conveys no sense till, from its connection in this place, we force a meaning upon it. The original word, **κοιταις**, signifies whoredoms and prostitution of every kind.

**And wantonness**— **ασελγειαις**, All manner of uncleanness and sodomitical practices.

**Not in strife and envying**.— **μη εριδι και ζηλω**, Not in contentions and furious altercations, which must be the consequence of such practices as are mentioned above. Can any man suppose that this address is to the Christians at Rome? That they are charged with practices almost peculiar to the heathens? And practices of the most abandoned and dissolute sort? If those called Christians at Rome were guilty of such acts, there could be no difference except in profession, between them and the most abominable of the heathens. But it is impossible that such things should be spoken to the followers of Christ; for the very grace that brings repentance enables the penitent to cast aside and abominate all such vicious and abominable conduct.

The advices to the Christians may be found in the preceding chapter; those at the conclusion of this chapter belong solely to the heathens.

**Verse 14. Put ye on the Lord Jesus**— This is in reference to what is said, Romans 13:13: Let us put on decent garments-let us make a different profession, unite with other company, and maintain that profession by a suitable conduct. Putting on, or being clothed with Jesus Christ, signifies receiving and believing the Gospel; and consequently taking its maxims for the government of life, having the mind that was in Christ. The ancient Jews frequently use the phrase putting on the shechinah, or Divine majesty, to signify the soul's being clothed with immortality, and rendered fit for glory.

To be clothed with a person is a Greek phrase, signifying to assume the interests of another-to enter into his views, to imitate him, and be wholly on his side. St. Chrysostom particularly mentions this as a common phrase, **ο δεινα τον δεινα ενεδυσατο**, such a one hath put on such a one; i.e. he closely follows and imitates him. So Dionysius Hal., Antiq., lib. xi., page 689, speaking of Appius and the rest of the Decemviri, says:



ουκετι μετριαζοντες, αλλα τον ταρκυνιον εκεινον ενδυομενοι,

They were no longer the servants of Tarquin, but they CLOTHED THEMSELVES WITH HIM—they imitated and aped him in every thing.

Eusebius, in his life of Constantine, says the same of his sons, they put on their father—they seemed to enter into his spirit and views, and to imitate him in all things. The mode of speech itself is taken from the custom of stage players: they assumed the name and garments of the person whose character they were to act, and endeavored as closely as possible to imitate him in their spirit, words, and actions. See many pertinent examples in Kypke.

***And make not provision for the flesh***— By flesh we are here to understand, not only the body, but all the irregular appetites and passions which led to the abominations already recited. No provision should be made for the encouragement and gratification of such a principle as this.

***To fulfill the lusts thereof.***— εις επιθυμιας, in reference to its lusts; such as the κωμοι, κοιται, μεθαι, and ασελγειαι, rioting, drunkenness, prostitutions, and uncleanness, mentioned, Romans 13:13, to make provision for which the Gentiles lived and labored, and bought and sold, and schemed and planned; for it was the whole business of their life to gratify the sinful lusts of the flesh. Their philosophers taught them little else; and the whole circle of their deities, as well as the whole scheme of their religion, served only to excite and inflame such passions, and produce such practices.

I. IN these four last verses there is a fine metaphor, and it is continued and well sustained in every expression. 1. The apostle considers the state of the Gentiles under the notion of night, a time of darkness and a time of evil practices. 2. That this night is nearly at an end, the night is far spent. 3. He considers the Gospel as now visiting the Gentiles, and the light of a glorious day about to shine forth on them. 4. He calls those to awake who were in a stupid, senseless state concerning all spiritual and moral good; and those who were employed in the vilest practices that could debase and degrade mankind. 5. He orders them to cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armor οπλα, the habiliments of light-of righteousness: to cease to do evil; to learn to do well. Here is an allusion to laying aside their night clothes, and putting on their day clothes. 6. He exhorts them to this that

they may walk honestly, decently habited; and not spend their time, waste their substance, destroy their lives, and ruin their souls in such iniquitous practices as those which he immediately specifies. 7. That they might not mistake his meaning concerning the decent clothing which he exhorts them to walk in, he immediately explains himself by the use of a common form of speech, and says, still following his metaphor, Put on the Lord Jesus Christ—receive his doctrine, copy his example, and seek the things which belong to another life; for the Gentiles thought of little else than making provision for the flesh or body, to gratify its animal desires and propensities.

II. These last verses have been rendered famous in the Christian Church for more than 1400 years, as being the instrument of the conversion of St. Augustine. It is well known that this man was at first a Manichean, in which doctrine he continued till the 32<sup>nd</sup> year of his age. He had frequent conferences and controversies on the Christian religion with several friends who were Christians; and with his mother Monica, who was incessant in her prayers and tears for his conversion. She was greatly comforted by the assurance given her by St. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, where her son Augustine was then professor of rhetoric: that a child of so many prayers and fears could not perish. He frequently heard St. Ambrose preach, and was affected, not only by his eloquence, but by the important subjects which he discussed; but still could not abandon his Manicheanism.

Walking one day in a garden with his friend Alypius, who it appears had been reading a copy of St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, and had left it on a bank near which they then were, (though some say that Augustine was then alone,) he thought he heard a musical voice calling out distinctly, TOLLE ET LEGE! TOLLE ET LEGE! take up and read! take up and read! He looked down, saw the book, took it up, and hastily opening it, the first words that met his eye were these—*μη κωμοις και μεθαις*, etc., Not in rioting and drunkenness, etc., but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. He felt the import and power of the words, and immediately resolved to become a follower of Christ: he in consequence instantly embraced Christianity; and afterwards boldly professed and wrote largely in its defense, and became one of the most eminent of all the Latin fathers. Such is the substance of the story handed down to us from antiquity concerning the conversion of St. Augustine. He was made bishop of Hippo in Africa, in the year 395,

and died in that city, Aug. 28th, 430, at the very time that it was besieged by the Vandals.

III. After what I have said in the notes, I need add nothing on the great political question of subordination to the civil powers; and of the propriety and expediency of submitting to every ordinance of man for the Lords sake. I need only observe, that it is in things civil this obedience is enjoined; in things religious, God alone is to be obeyed. Should the civil power attempt to usurp the place of the Almighty, and forge a new creed, or prescribe rites and ceremonies not authorized by the word of God, no Christian is bound to obey. Yet even in this case, as I have already noted, no Christian is authorized to rebel against the civil power; he must bear the persecution, and, if needs be, seal the truth with his blood, and thus become a martyr of the Lord Jesus. This has been the invariable practice of the genuine Church of Christ. They committed their cause to him who judgeth righteously. See farther on this subject on Matthew 22:20, etc.

## CHAPTER 14.

*In things indifferent, Christians should not condemn each other, 1. Particularly with respect to different kinds of food, 2-4. And the observation of certain days, 5, 6. None of us should live unto himself, but unto Christ, who lived and died for us, 7-9. We must not judge each other; for all judgment belongs to God, 10-13. We should not do any thing by which a weak brother may be stumbled or grieved; lest we destroy him for whom Christ died, 14-16. The kingdom of God does not consist in outward things, 17, 18. Christians should endeavor to cultivate peace and brotherly affection, and rather deny themselves of certain privileges than be the means of stumbling a weak brother, 19-21. The necessity of doing all in the spirit of faith, 22, 23.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 14.

It seems very likely, from this and the following chapter, that there were considerable misunderstandings between the Jewish and Gentile Christians at Rome, relative to certain customs which were sacredly observed by the one and disregarded by the other. The principal subject of dispute was concerning meats and days. The converted Jew, retaining a veneration for the law of Moses, abstained from certain meats, and was observant of certain days; while the converted Gentile, understanding that the Christian religion laid him under no obligations to such ceremonial points, had no regard to either. It appears, farther, that mutual censures and uncharitable judgments prevailed among them, and that brotherly love and mutual forbearance did not generally prevail. The apostle, in this part of his epistle, exhorts that in such things, not essential to religion, and in which both parties, in their different way of thinking, might have an honest meaning, and serious regard to God, difference of sentiments might not hinder Christian fellowship and love; but that they would mutually forbear each other, make candid allowance, and especially not carry their Gospel liberty so far as to prejudice a weak brother, a Jewish Christian, against the Gospel itself, and tempt him to renounce Christianity. His rules and

exhortations are still of great use, and happy would the Christian world be if they were more generally practised. See Dr. Taylor, who farther remarks, that it is probable St. Paul learned all these particulars from Aquila and Priscilla, who were lately come from Rome, Acts 18:2, 3, and with whom the apostle was familiar for a considerable time. This is very likely, as there is no evidence that he had any other intercourse with the Church at Rome.

**Verse 1.** *Him that is weak in the faith*— By this the apostle most evidently means the converted Jew, who must indeed be weak in the faith, if he considered this distinction of meats and days essential to his salvation. See on Romans 14:21.

*Receive ye*— Associate with him; receive him into your religious fellowship; but when there, let all religious altercations be avoided.

*Not to doubtful disputations.*— μη εις διακρισεις δια λογισμων. These words have been variously translated and understood. Dr. Whitby thinks the sense of them to be this; Not discriminating them by their inward thoughts. Do not reject any from your Christian communion because of their particular sentiments on things which are in themselves indifferent. Do not curiously inquire into their religious scruples, nor condemn them on that account. Entertain a brother of this kind rather with what may profit his soul, than with curious disquisitions on speculative points of doctrine. A good lesson for modern Christians in general.

**Verse 2.** *One believeth that he may eat all things*— He believes that whatsoever is wholesome and nourishing, whether herbs or flesh—whether enjoined or forbidden by the Mosaic law—may be safely and conscientiously used by every Christian.

*Another, who is weak, eateth herbs.*— Certain Jews, lately converted to the Christian faith, and having as yet little knowledge of its doctrines, believe the Mosaic law relative to clean and unclean meats to be still in force; and therefore, when they are in a Gentile country, for fear of being defiled, avoid flesh entirely and live on vegetables. And a Jew when in a heathen country acts thus, because he cannot tell whether the flesh which is sold in the market may be of a clean or unclean beast; whether it may

not have been offered to an idol; or whether the blood may have been taken properly from it.

**Verse 3. *Let not him that eateth***— The Gentile, who eats flesh, despise him, the Jew, who eateth not flesh, but herbs. And let not him, the Jew, that eateth not indiscriminately, judge-condemn him, the Gentile, that eateth indiscriminately flesh or vegetables.

***For God hath received him.***— Both being sincere and upright, and acting in the fear of God, are received as heirs of eternal life, without any difference on account of these religious scruples or prejudices.

**Verse 4. *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?***— Who has ever given thee the right to condemn the servant of another man, in things pertaining to his own master? To his own master he standeth or falleth. He is to judge him, not thou; thy intermeddling in this business is both rash and uncharitable.

***Yea, he shall be holden up***— He is sincere and upright, and God, who is able to make him stand, will uphold him; and so teach him that he shall not essentially err. And it is the will of God that such upright though scrupulous persons should be continued members of his Church.

**Verse 5. *One man esteemeth one day above another***— Perhaps the word *ἡμέραν*, day, is here taken for time, festival, and such like, in which sense it is frequently used. Reference is made here to the Jewish institutions, and especially their festivals; such as the passover, pentecost, feast of tabernacles, new moons, jubilee, etc. The converted Jew still thought these of moral obligation; the Gentile Christian not having been bred up in this way had no such prejudices. And as those who were the instruments of bringing him to the knowledge of God gave him no such injunctions, consequently he paid to these no religious regard.

***Another***— The converted Gentile esteemeth every day—considers that all time is the Lord's, and that each day should be devoted to the glory of God; and that those festivals are not binding on him.

We add here alike, and make the text say what I am sure was never intended, viz. that there is no distinction of days, not even of the Sabbath:

and that every Christian is at liberty to consider even this day to be holy or not holy, as he happens to be persuaded in his own mind.

That the Sabbath is of lasting obligation may be reasonably concluded from its institution (see the note on Genesis 2:3) and from its typical reference. All allow that the Sabbath is a type of that rest in glory which remains for the people of God. Now, all types are intended to continue in full force till the antitype, or thing signified, take place; consequently, the Sabbath will continue in force till the consummation of all things. The word alike should not be added; nor is it acknowledged by any MS. or ancient version.

***Let every man be fully persuaded***— With respect to the propriety or non-propriety of keeping the above festivals, let every man act from the plenary conviction of his own mind; there is a sufficient latitude allowed: all may be fully satisfied.

**Verse 6. *He that regardeth the day***— A beautiful apology for mistaken sincerity and injudicious reformation. Do not condemn the man for what is indifferent in itself: if he keep these festivals, his purpose is to honor God by the religious observance of them. On the other hand, he who finds that he cannot observe them in honor of God, not believing that God has enjoined them, he does not observe them at all. In like manner, he that eateth any creature of God, which is wholesome and proper food, gives thanks to God as the author of all good. And he who cannot eat of all indiscriminately, but is regulated by the precepts in the Mosaic law relative to clean and unclean meats, also gives God thanks. Both are sincere; both upright; both act according to their light; God accepts both; and they should bear with each other.

**Verse 7. *None of us liveth to himself***— The Greek writers use the phrase, *εαυτω ζην*, to signify acting according to one's own judgment, following one's own opinion. Christians must act in all things according to the mind and will of God, and not follow their own wills. The apostle seems to intimate that in all the above cases each must endeavor to please God, for he is accountable to him alone for his conduct in these indifferent things. God is our master, we must live to him, as we live under his notice and by his bounty; and when we cease to live among men, we are still in

his hand. Therefore, what we do, or what we leave undone, should be in reference to that eternity which is ever at hand.

**Verse 9. *Christ both died and rose***— That we are not our own, but are the Lord's both in life and death, is evident from this—that Christ lived, and died, and rose again, that he might be the Lord of the dead and the living; for his power extends equally over both worlds: separate, as well as embodied spirits, are under his authority; and he it is who is to raise even the dead to life: and thus all throughout eternity shall live under his dominion.

The clause **καὶ ἀνεστή**, and rose, is wanting in several reputable MSS., and certainly is not necessary to the text. Griesbach omits the words, and reads **ἀπεθάνε καὶ ἐζήσεν**, died and lived; of which Professor White says, *lectio indubie genuina*: “this reading is indisputably genuine.”

**Verse 10. *But why dost thou***— Christian Jew, observing the rites of the Mosaic law, judge-condemn thy brother—the Christian Gentile, who does not think himself bound by this law?

***Or why dost thou***— Christian Gentile, set at nought thy Christian Jewish brother, as if he were unworthy of thy regard, because he does not yet believe that the Gospel has set him free from the rites and ceremonies of the law?

It is a true saying of Mr. Heylin, on this verse: The superstitious are prone to judge, and those who are not superstitious are prone to despise.

***We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.***— Why should we then judge and condemn each other? We are accountable to God for our conduct, and shall be judged at his bar; and let us consider that whatever measure we mete, the same shall be measured unto us again.

**Verse 12. *Every one of us shall give account of himself***— We shall not, at the bar of God, be obliged to account for the conduct of each other—each shall give account of himself: and let him take heed that he be prepared to give up his accounts with joy.

**Verse 13. *Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more***— Let us abandon such rash conduct; it is dangerous, it is uncharitable: judgment



belongs to the Lord, and he will condemn those only who should not be acquitted.

***That no man put a stumbling block***— Let both the converted Jew and Gentile consider that they should labor to promote each other's spiritual interests, and not be a means of hindering each other in their Christian course; or of causing them to abandon the Gospel, on which, and not on questions of rites and ceremonies, the salvation of their soul depends.

**Verse 14. *I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus***— After reasoning so long and so much with these contending parties on the subject of their mutual misunderstandings, without attempting to give any opinion, but merely to show them the folly and uncharitableness of their conduct, he now expresses himself fully, and tells them that nothing is unclean of itself, and that he has the inspiration and authority of Jesus Christ to say so; for to such an inspiration he must refer in such words as, I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus. And yet, after having given them this decisive judgment, through respect to the tender, mistaken conscience of weak believers, he immediately adds: But to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean; because if he act contrary to his conscience, he must necessarily contract guilt; for he who acts in opposition to his conscience in one case may do it in another, and thus even the plain declarations of the word of God may be set aside on things of the utmost importance, as well as the erroneous though well-intentioned dictates of his conscience, on matters which he makes of the last consequence; though others who are better taught know them to be indifferent.

It is dangerous to trifle with conscience, even when erroneous; it should be borne with and instructed; it must be won over, not taken by storm. Its feelings should be respected because they ever refer to God, and have their foundation in his fear. He who sins against his conscience in things which every one else knows to be indifferent, will soon do it in those things in which his salvation is most intimately concerned. It is a great blessing to have a well-informed conscience; it is a blessing to have a tender conscience; and even a sore conscience is infinitely better than none.

**Verse 15. *If thy brother be grieved***— If he think that thou doest wrong, and he is in consequence stumbled at thy conduct.

***Now walkest thou not charitably.***— **κατα αγαπην**, According to love; for love worketh no ill to its neighbor; but by thy eating some particular kind of meat, on which neither thy life nor well-being depends, thou workest ill to him by grieving and distressing his mind; and therefore thou breakest the law of God in reference to him, while pretending that thy Christian liberty raises thee above his scruples.

***Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.***— This puts the uncharitable conduct of the person in question in the strongest light, because it supposes that the weak brother may be so stumbled as to fall and perish finally; even the man for whom Christ died. To injure a man in his circumstances is bad; to injure him in his person is worse; to injure him in his reputation is still worse; and to injure his soul is worst of all. No wickedness, no malice, can go farther than to injure and destroy the soul: thy uncharitable conduct may proceed thus far; therefore thou art highly criminal before God.

From this verse we learn that a man for whom Christ died may perish, or have his soul destroyed; and destroyed with such a destruction as implies perdition; the original is very emphatic, **μη-εκεινον απολλυε, υπερ ου χριστος απεθανε**. Christ died in his stead; do not destroy his soul. The sacrificial death is as strongly expressed as it can be, and there is no word in the New Testament that more forcibly implies eternal ruin than the verb **απολλω**, from which is derived that most significant name of the Devil, **ο απολλων**, the DESTROYER, the great universal murderer of souls.

**Verse 16. *Let not then your good be evil spoken of***— Do not make such a use of your Christian liberty as to subject the Gospel itself to reproach. Whatsoever you do, do it in such a manner, spirit, and time, as to make it productive of the greatest possible good. There are many who have such an unhappy method of doing their good acts, as not only to do little or no good by them, but a great deal of evil. It requires much prudence and watchfulness to find out the proper time of performing even a good action.

**Verse 17. *For the kingdom of God***— That holy religion which God has sent from heaven, and which he intends to make the instrument of establishing a counterpart of the kingdom of glory among men: see on Matthew 3:2.

***Is not meat and drink***— It consists not in these outward and indifferent things. It neither particularly enjoins nor particularly forbids such.

***But righteousness***— Pardon of sin, and holiness of heart and life.

***And peace***— In the soul, from a sense of God's mercy; peace regulating, ruling, and harmonizing the heart.

***And joy in the Holy Ghost.***— Solid spiritual happiness; a joy which springs from a clear sense of God's mercy; the love of God being shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. In a word, it is happiness brought into the soul by the Holy Spirit, and maintained there by the same influence. This is a genuine counterpart of heaven; righteousness without sin, PEACE without inward disturbance, JOY without any kind of mental agony or distressing fear. See the note on Matthew 3:2.

**Verse 18. *For he***

thy Christian brother, Romans 14:15, by offending him so as to induce him to apostatize.

**All things indeed are pure**— This is a repetition of the sentiment delivered, Romans 14:14, in different words. Nothing that is proper for aliment is unlawful to be eaten; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offense—the man who either eats contrary to his own conscience, or so as to grieve and stumble another, does an evil act; and however lawful the thing may be in itself, his conduct does not please God.

**Verse 21. It is good neither to eat flesh**, etc.— The spirit and self-denying principles of the Gospel teach us, that we should not only avoid every thing in eating or drinking which may be an occasion of offense or apostasy to our brethren, but even to lay down our lives for them should it be necessary.

**Whereby thy brother stumbleth**— **προσκοπτει**, from **προς**, against, and **κοπτω**, to strike, to hit the foot against a stone in walking, so as to halt, and be impeded in one's journey. It here means, spiritually, any thing by which a man is so perplexed in his mind as to be prevented from making due progress in the Divine life. Any thing by which he is caused to halt, to be undecisive, and undetermined; and under such an influence no man has ever yet grown in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

**Or is offended**— **η σκανδαλιζεται**, from **σκανδαλον**, a stumbling-block; any thing by which a person is caused to fall, especially into a snare, trap, or gin. Originally the word signified the piece of wood or key in a trap, which being trodden on caused the animal to fall into a pit, or the trap to close upon him. In the New Testament it generally refers to total apostasy from the Christian religion; and this appears to be its meaning in this place.

**Or is made weak**.— **η ασθενει**, from **α**, negative, and **σθενος**, strength; without mental vigor; without power sufficiently to distinguish between right and wrong, good and evil, lawful and unlawful. To get under the dominion of an erroneous conscience, so as to judge that to be evil or unlawful which is not so. The two last terms are omitted by two excellent MSS. (the Codex Alexandrinus and the Codex Ephraim,) by the Syriac of Erpen, the Coptic and the Ethiopic, and by some of the primitive fathers.

It is very likely that they were added by some early hand by way of illustration. Griesbach has left them in the text with a note of doubtfulness.

**Verse 22. *Hast thou faith?***— The term faith seems to signify in this place a full persuasion in a man's mind that he is right, that what he does is lawful, and has the approbation of God and his conscience. Dr. Taylor has a judicious note on this passage. "There is no necessity," says he, "for reading the first clause interrogatively; and it seems to be more agreeable to the structure of the Greek to render it, Thou hast faith; as if he had said: 'I own thou hast a right persuasion.' Farther, there is an anadiplosis in *εχεις*, and *εχε* the first simply signifies thou hast, the latter, hold fast. Thou hast a right persuasion concerning thy Christian liberty; and I advise thee to hold that persuasion steadfastly, with respect to thyself in the sight of God. *εχω* have, has frequently this emphatical signification. See Matthew 25:29, etc."

***HAPPY is he that condemneth not***, etc.— That man only can enjoy peace of conscience who acts according to the full persuasion which God has given him of the lawfulness of his conduct: whereas he must be miserable who allows himself in the practice of any thing for which his conscience upbraids and accuses him. This is a most excellent maxim, and every genuine Christian should be careful to try every part of his conduct by it. If a man have not peace in his own bosom, he cannot be happy; and no man can have peace who sins against his conscience. If a man's passions or appetite allow or instigate him to a particular thing, let him take good heed that his conscience approve what his passions allow, and that he live not the subject of continual self-condemnation and reproach. Even the man who has the too scrupulous conscience had better, in such matters as are in question, obey its erroneous dictates than violate this moral feeling, and live only to condemn the actions he is constantly performing.

**Verse 23. *And he that doubteth***— This verse is a necessary part of the preceding, and should be read thus: But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith. The meaning is sufficiently plain. He that feeds on any kind of meats prohibited by the Mosaic law, with the persuasion in his mind that he may be wrong in so doing, is condemned by

his conscience for doing that which he has reason to think God has forbidden.

*For whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*— Whatever he does, without a full persuasion of its lawfulness, (see Romans 14:22) is to him sin; for he does it under a conviction that he may be wrong in so doing. Therefore, if he makes a distinction in his own conscience between different kinds of meats, and yet eats of all indifferently, he is a sinner before God; because he eats either through false shame, base compliance, or an unbridled appetite; and any of these is in itself a sin against the sincerity, ingenuousness, and self-denying principles of the Gospel of Christ.

Some think that these words have a more extensive signification, and that they apply to all who have not true religion, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; every work of such persons being sinful in the sight of a holy God, because it does not proceed from a pure motive. On this ground our Church says, Art. xiii, “Works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of his Spirit are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they are not of faith in Jesus Christ; yes, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.” To this we may add, that without faith it is impossible to please God; every thing is wrong where this principle is wanting.

There are few readers who have not remarked that the last three verses of this epistle (Romans 16:25-27) appear to stand in their present place without any obvious connection; and apparently after the epistle is concluded. And it is well known to critics, that two MSS. in uncial letters, the Cod. A and I, with upwards of 100 others, together with the Slavonic, the later Syriac and Arabic, add those verses at the end of the fourteenth chapter. The transposition is acknowledged by Cyril, Chrysostom, Theodoret, OEcumenius, Theophylact, Theodulus, Damascenus, and Tertullian; see Wetstein. Griesbach inserts them at the end of this chapter as their proper place; and most learned men approve of this transposition. It may be necessary to repeat the words here that the reader may see with what propriety they connect with the subject which terminates the fourteenth chapter as it now stands.

Romans 14:23: And he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

Romans 16:25: Now, to him that is of power to stablish you according to my Gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, (according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began,

Romans 16:26: But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith;)

Romans 16:27: To God only wise be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

Romans 15:1: We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, etc.

These words certainly connect better with the close of the fourteenth chapter and the beginning of the fifteenth than they do with the conclusion of the sixteenth, where they are now generally found; but I shall defer my observations upon them till I come to that place, with only this remark, that the stablishing mentioned Romans 16:25, corresponds well with the doubting, Romans 14:23, and indeed the whole matter of these verses agrees so well with the subject so largely handled in the preceding chapter, that there can be very little doubt of their being in their proper place if joined to the end of this chapter, as they are in the preceding MSS. and versions.

## CHAPTER 15.

*The strong should bear the infirmities of the weak, and each strive to please, not himself, but his neighbor, after the example of Christ, 1-3. Whatsoever was written in old times was written for our learning, 4. We should be of one mind, that we might with one mouth glorify God, 5, 6. We should accept each other as Christ has accepted us, 7. Scriptural proofs that Jesus Christ was not only the minister of the circumcision, but came also for the salvation of the Gentiles, 8-12. The God of hope can fill us with all peace and joy in believing, 13. Character of the Church of Rome, 14. The reason why the apostle wrote so boldly to the Church in that city-what God had wrought by him, and what he purposed to do, 15-24. He tells them of his intended journey to Jerusalem, with a contribution to the poor saints-a sketch of this journey, 25-29. He commends himself to their prayers, 30-33.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 15.

**Verse 1.** *We then that are strong*— The sense of this verse is supposed to be the following: We, Gentile Christians, who perfectly understand the nature of our Gospel liberty, not only lawfully may, but are bound in duty to bear any inconveniences that may arise from the scruples of the weaker brethren, and to ease their consciences by prudently abstaining from such indifferent things as may offend and trouble them; and not take advantage from our superior knowledge to make them submit to our judgment.

**Verse 2.** *Let every one of us please his neighbor*— For it should be a maxim with each of us to do all in our power to please our brethren; and especially in those things in which their spiritual edification is concerned. Though we should not indulge men in mere whims and caprices, yet we should bear with their ignorance and their weakness, knowing that others had much to bear with from us before we came to our present advanced state of religious knowledge.

**Verse 3.** *For even Christ pleased not himself*— Christ never acted as one who sought his own ease or profit; he not only bore with the weakness,



but with the insults, of his creatures; as it is written in Psalm 69:9: The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me-I not only bore their insults, but bore the punishment due to them for their vicious and abominable conduct. That this Psalm refers to the Messiah and his sufferings for mankind is evident, not only from the quotation here, but also from John 19:28, 29, when our Lord's receiving the vinegar during his expiatory suffering is said to be a fulfilling of the scripture, viz. of verse 21 of this very Psalm; {Psalm 69:21} and his cleansing the temple, John 2:15-17, is said to be a fulfillment of Psalm 69:9: For the zeal of thy house hath eaten me up, the former part of which verse the apostle quotes here.

**Verse 4. *For whatsoever things were written aforetime***— This refers not only to the quotation from the 69th Psalm, but to all the Old Testament scriptures; for it can be to no other scriptures that the apostle alludes. And, from what he says here of them, we learn that God had not intended them merely for those generations in which they were first delivered, but for the instruction of all the succeeding generations of mankind. That we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures—that we, through those remarkable examples of patience exhibited by the saints and followers of God, whose history is given in those scriptures, and the comfort which they derived from God in their patient endurance of sufferings brought upon them through their faithful attachment to truth and righteousness, might have hope that we shall be upheld and blessed as they were, and our sufferings become the means of our greater advances in faith and holiness, and consequently our hope of eternal glory be the more confirmed. Some think that the word *παρακλησις*, which we translate comfort, should be rendered exhortation; but there is certainly no need here to leave the usual acceptance of the term, as the word comfort makes a regular and consistent sense with the rest of the verse.

**Verse 5. *Now the God of patience and consolation***— May that God who endued them with patience, and gave them the consolation that supported them in all their trials and afflictions, grant you to be like-minded—give you the same mode of thinking, and the same power of acting towards each other, according to the example of Christ.

**Verse 6. *That ye-Jews and Gentiles-may with one mind***— Thinking the same things, and bearing with each other, after the example of Christ; and

one mouth, in all your religious assemblies, without jarring or contentions, glorify God for calling you into such a state of salvation, and showing himself to be your loving compassionate Father, as he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is very likely that the apostle refers here to religious acts in public worship, which might have been greatly interrupted by the dissensions between the converted Jews and the converted Gentiles; these differences he labors to compose; and, after having done all that was necessary in the way of instruction and exhortation, he now pours out his soul to God, who alone could rule and manage the heart, that he would enable them to think the same things, to be of the same judgment, and that all, feeling their obligation to him, might join in the sweetest harmony in every act of religious worship.

**Verse 7. *Wherefore receive ye one another***— *προσλαμβανεσθε*. Have the most affectionate regard for each other, and acknowledge each other as the servants and children of God Almighty.

***As Christ also received us***— *καθως και ο χριστος προσελαβετο ημας*. In the same manner, and with the same cordial affection, as Christ has received us into communion with himself, and has made us partakers of such inestimable blessings, condescending to be present in all our assemblies. And as Christ has received us thus to the glory of God, so should we, Jews and Gentiles, cordially receive each other, that God's glory may be promoted by our harmony and brotherly love.

**Verse 8. *Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision***— To show the Gentiles the propriety of bearing with the scrupulous Jews, he shows them here that they were under the greatest obligations to this people; to whom, in the days of his flesh, Jesus Christ confined his ministry; giving the world to see that he allowed the claim of the Jews as having the first right to the blessings of the Gospel. And he confined his ministry thus to the Jews, to confirm the truth of God, contained in the promises made unto the patriarchs; for God had declared that thus it should be; and Jesus Christ, by coming according to the promise, has fulfilled this truth, by making good the promises: therefore, salvation is of the Jews, as a kind of right conveyed to them through the promises made to their fathers. But

this salvation was not exclusively designed for the Jewish people; as God by his prophets had repeatedly declared.

**Verse 9. *And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy***— As the Jews were to glorify God for his truth, so the Gentiles were to glorify God for his mercy. The Jews received the blessings of the Gospel by right of promise, which promise God had most punctually and circumstantially fulfilled. The Gentiles had received the same Gospel as an effect of God's mere mercy, having no right in consequence of any promise or engagement made with any of their ancestors, though they were originally included in the covenant made with Abraham; and the prophets had repeatedly declared that they should be made equal partakers of those blessings with the Jews themselves; as the apostle proceeds to prove.

***I will confess to thee among the Gentiles***— This quotation is taken from Psalm 18:49, and shows that the Gentiles had a right to glorify God for his mercy to them; and we shall see the strength of this saying farther, when we consider a maxim of the Jews delivered in Megillah, fol. 14: "From the time that the children of Israel entered into the promised land, no Gentile had any right to sing a hymn of praise to God. But after that the Israelites were led into captivity, then the Gentiles began to have a right to glorify God." Thus the Jews themselves confess that the Gentiles have a right to glorify God; and this on account of being made partakers of his grace and mercy. And if, says Schoettgen, we have a right to glorify God, then it follows that our worship must be pleasing to him; and if it be pleasing to him, then it follows that this worship must be good, otherwise God could not be pleased with it.

Dr. Taylor gives a good paraphrase of this and the three following verses: As you Jews glorify God for his truth, so the Gentiles have a right to join with you in glorifying God for his mercy. And you have Scripture authority for admitting them to such fellowship; for instance, David says, Psalm 18:49, Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the Gentiles, and sing praises unto thy name. And again, Moses himself says, Deuteronomy 32:43, Rejoice, O ye Gentiles, with his people. And again, it is evident, from Psalm 117:1, 2, that praise to God is not to be confined to the Jews only, but that all people, as they all share in his goodness, should also join in thanks to their common benefactor: O praise the Lord, all ye

nations, (Gentiles,) praise him all ye people; for his merciful kindness is great towards us; and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Again the Prophet Isaiah expressly and clearly declares, Isaiah 11:10, There shall be a root of Jesse, (that is, the Messiah,) and he shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, and in him shall the Gentiles hope: *ελπιουσιν*. And thus the apostle proves, both to the Jews and to the Gentiles, who were probably unwilling to join with each other in religious fellowship, that they had both an equal right to glorify God, being equally interested in his mercy, goodness, and truth; and that, from the evidence of the above scriptures, the Gentiles had as much right to hope in Christ, for the full enjoyment of his kingdom, as the Jews had: and, taking occasion from the last word hope, *ελπιουσιν*, which we improperly translate trust, he pours out his heart in the following affectionate prayer.

**Verse 13.** *Now the God of hope*, etc.— *ὁ δε θεος της ελπιδος*, May the God of this hope—that God who caused both Jews and Gentiles to hope that the gracious promises which he made to them should be fulfilled; and who, accordingly, has fulfilled them in the most punctual and circumstantial manner;

*Fill you with all joy*— Give you true spiritual happiness; peace in your own hearts, and unity among yourselves; in believing not only the promises which he has given you, but believing in Christ Jesus, in whom all the promises are yea and amen.

*That ye may abound in hope*— That ye may be excited to take more enlarged views of the salvation which God has provided for you, and have all your expectations fulfilled by the power of the Holy Ghost, enabling you to hope and believe; and then sealing the fulfillment of the promises upon your hearts.

**Verse 14.** *And I-am persuaded of you*— This is supposed to be an address to the Gentiles; and it is managed with great delicacy: he seems to apologize for the freedom he had used in writing to them; which he gives them to understand proceeded from the authority he had received by his apostolical office, the exercise of which office respected them particularly. So they could not be offended when they found themselves so particularly distinguished.

***Ye are full of goodness***— Instead of *αγαθωσυνης*, goodness, some MSS. of good repute have *αγαπης*, love. In this connection both words seem to mean nearly the same thing. They were so full of goodness and love that they were disposed, of themselves, to follow any plan that might be devised, in order to bring about the most perfect understanding between them and their Jewish brethren.

***Filled with all knowledge***— So completely instructed in the mind and design of God, relative to their calling, and the fruit which they were to bring forth to the glory of God, that they were well qualified to give one another suitable exhortations on every important point.

Instead of *αλληλους*, one another, several MSS. have *αλλους*, others, which gives a clearer sense: for, if they were all filled with knowledge, there was little occasion for them to admonish one another; but by this they were well qualified to admonish others-to impart the wisdom they had to those who were less instructed.

**Verse 15. *Nevertheless-I have written***— Not withstanding I have this conviction of your extensive knowledge in the things of God, I have made bold to write to you in some sort, *απο μερους*, to a party among you, as some learned men translate the words, who stand more in need of such instructions than the others; and I do this, because of the grace, *δια την χαριν*-because of the office which I have received from God, namely, to be the apostle of the Gentiles. This authority gave him full right to say, advise, or enjoin any thing which he judged to be of importance to their spiritual interests. This subject he pursues farther in the following verse.

**Verse 16. *Ministering the Gospel of God***— *ἱερουργουντα*, Acting as a priest. Here is a plain allusion, says Dr. Whitby, to the Jewish sacrifices offered by the priest, and sanctified or made acceptable by the libamen offered with them; for he compares himself, in preaching the Gospel, to the priest performing his sacred functions-preparing his sacrifice to be offered. The Gentiles, converted by him and dedicated to the service of God, are his sacrifices and oblation. The Holy Spirit is the libamen poured upon this sacrifice, by which it was sanctified and rendered acceptable to God. The words of Isaiah, Isaiah 66:20, And they shall bring all your brethren for an OFFERING unto the Lord, out of all NATIONS, might have suggested the above idea to the mind of the apostle.

**Verse 17. *I here therefore whereof I may glory***— Being sent of God on this most honorable and important errand, I have matter of great exultation, not only in the honor which he has conferred upon me, but in the great success with which he has crowned my ministry.

**Verse 18. *For I will not dare to speak***— If the thing were not as I have stated it, I would not dare to arrogate to myself honors which did not belong to me. But God has made me the apostle of the Gentiles; and the conversion of the Gentiles is the fruit of my ministry, Christ having wrought by me for this purpose.

***By word and deed***— *λογω και εργω*. These words may refer to the doctrines which he taught and to the miracles which he wrought among them. So they became obedient to the doctrines, on the evidence of the miracles with which they were accompanied.

**Verse 19. *Through mighty signs and wonders***— This more fully explains the preceding clause: through the power of the Holy Ghost he was enabled to work among the Gentiles mighty signs and wonders; so that they were fully convinced that both his doctrine and mission were Divine; and therefore they cheerfully received the Gospel of the Lord Jesus.

***Round about unto Illyricum***— Among ancient writers this place has gone by a great variety of names, Illyria, Illyrica, Illyricum, Illyris, and Illyrium. It is a country of Europe, extending from the Adriatic gulf to Pannonia: according to Pliny, it extended from the river Arsia to the river Drinius, thus including Liburnia on the west, and Dalmatia on the east. Its precise limits have not been determined by either ancient or modern geographers. It seems, according to an inscription in Gruter, to have been divided by Augustus into two provinces, the upper and lower. It now forms part of Croatia, Bosnia, Istria, and Slavonia. When the apostle says that he preached the Gospel from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum, he intends his land journeys chiefly; and, by looking at the map annexed to the Acts of the Apostles, the reader will see that from Jerusalem the apostle went round the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and that he passed through Syria, Phoenicia, Arabia, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Pisidia, Lycaonia, Galatia, Pontus, Paphlagonia, Phrygia, Troas, Asia, Caria, Lycia, Ionia, Lydia, Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, and Achaia; besides the isles of

Cyprus and Crete. And no doubt he visited many other places which are not mentioned in the New Testament.

***I have fully preached the Gospel***— πεπληρωκεναι το ευαγγελιον, I have successfully preached-I have not only proclaimed the word, but made converts and founded Churches. See the note on Matthew 5:17, where this sense of the word πληρουν is noticed; for it signifies not only fully or perfectly, but also to teach with prosperity and success.

**Verse 20. *So have I strived to preach the Gospel***— ουτω δε φιλοτιμουμενον· For I have considered it my honor to preach the Gospel where that Gospel was before unknown. This is the proper import of the word φιλοτιμεισθαι; from φιλος, a friend, and τιμη, honor. As I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, so I esteem it an honor to preach it, and especially to proclaim it among the heathen; not building on another man's foundation-not watering what another apostle had planted; but cheerfully exposing myself to all kinds of dangers and hardships, in order to found new Churches.

**Verse 21. *But as it is written***— These words, quoted from Isaiah 52:15, the apostle applies to his own conduct; not that the words themselves predicted what Paul had done, but that he endeavored to fulfill such a declaration by his manner of preaching the Gospel to the heathen.

**Verse 22. *For which cause***, etc.— My considering it a point of honor to build on no other man's foundation; and, finding that the Gospel has been long ago planted at Rome, I have been prevented from going thither, purposing rather to spend my time and strength in preaching where Christ has not, as yet, been proclaimed.

**Verse 23. *But-having no more place in these parts***— Having nothing farther at present that I can do-for τοπον εχειν signifies not merely to have a place of residence, or the like, but convenience, opportunity; which is a frequent meaning of the phrase among the best Greek writers-having no large place or city, where Christianity has not yet been planted, in which I can introduce the Gospel. The apostle was then at Corinth; and having evangelized all those parts, he had no opportunity of breaking up any new ground.

**Verse 24. *Whensoever I take my journey into Spain***— Where it is very likely the Gospel had not yet been planted; though legendary tales inform us that St. James had planted the Gospel there long before this time, and had founded many bishoprics! But this is as unfounded as it is ridiculous and absurd; for nothing like what is now termed a bishopric, nor even a parish, was founded for many years after this. An itinerant preacher, might, with more propriety, say travelling circuits were formed, rather than bishoprics. Whether the apostle ever fulfilled his design of going to Spain is unknown; but there is no evidence whatever that he did, and the presumption is that he did not undertake this voyage. Antiquity affords no proof that he fulfilled his intention.

***I will come to you***— *ελευσο μαιπρος υμας*. These words are wanting in almost every MS. of note, and in the Syriac of Erpen, Coptic, Vulgate, Ethiopic, Armenian, and Itala. If the first clause of this verse be read in connection with the latter clause of the preceding, it will fully appear that this rejected clause is useless. Having a great desire, these many years to come unto you whensoever I take my journey into Spain: for I trust to see you in my journey, etc.

***Somewhat filled with your company***.— The word *εμπλησθω*, which we translate filled, would be better rendered gratified; for *εμπλησθηναί* signifies to be satisfied, to be gratified, and to enjoy. AELIAN., Hist. Anim., lib. v., c. 21, speaking of the peacock spreading out his beautiful plumage, says: *εα γαρ εμπλησθηναί της θεος τον παρεστωτα*. “He readily permits the spectator to gratify himself by viewing him.” And MAXIMUS TYRIUS, Dissert. 41, page 413: “That he may behold the heavens, *και εμπλησθη λαμπρου φωτος*, and be gratified with the splendor of the light.” HOMER uses the word in the same sense:—

*ἦ δ' ἔμῃ οὐδε περ υἱος ἐνιπλησθηναί ἀκοιτις  
οφθαλμοισιν εἶασε.* Odyss., lib. xi., ver. 451.

“But my wife never suffered my eyes to be delighted with my son.”

The apostle, though he had not the honor of having planted the Church at Rome, yet expected much gratification from the visit which he intended to pay them.



**Verse 25. *Now I go unto Jerusalem***— From this and the two following verses we learn that the object of his journey to Jerusalem was, to carry a contribution made among the Gentile Christians of Macedonia and Achaia for the relief of the poor Jewish Christians at Jerusalem. About this affair he had taken great pains, as appears from 1 Corinthians 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8, and 9. His design in this affair is very evident from 2 Corinthians 9:12, 13, where he says: The administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; whiles, by the experiment of this ministration, they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the Gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them and unto all men. The apostle was in hopes that this liberal contribution, sent by the Gentile Christians who had been converted by St. Paul's ministry, would engage the affections of the Jewish Christians, who had been much prejudiced against the reception of the Gentiles into the Church, without being previously obliged to submit to the yoke of the law. He wished to establish a coalition between the converted Jews and Gentiles, being sensible of its great importance to the spread of the Gospel; and his procuring this contribution was one laudable device to accomplish this good end. And this shows why he so earnestly requests the prayers of the Christians at Rome, that his service which he had for Jerusalem might be accepted of the saints. See Dr. Taylor.

**Verse 27. *For if the Gentiles have been made partakers***, etc.— It was through and by means of the Jews that the Gentiles were brought to the knowledge of God and the Gospel of Christ. These were the spiritual things which they had received; and the pecuniary contribution was the carnal things which the Gentiles were now returning.

**Verse 28. *When, therefore, I have performed this***— Service, and have sealed-faithfully delivered up, to them this fruit, of the success of my ministry and of your conversion to God, I will come by you into Spain: this was in his desire; he had fully purposed it, if God should see meet to permit him; but it does not appear that he ever went. See Romans 15:24.

**Verse 29. *In the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ***.— The words *του ευαγγελιου του*, of the Gospel, are wanting in almost every MS. of importance. Griesbach has left them out of the text. There is no

doubt they should be omitted. The fullness of the blessing of Christ is really more than the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. He hoped to come to them not only with the blessing of the Gospel, but endued with the gifts and graces of the Lord Jesus himself; which he was now a constant instrument, in the hand of God, to dispense among those who were converted to the Christian faith.

**Verse 30. *For the love of the Spirit***— By that love of God which the Holy Spirit sheds abroad in your hearts.

***That ye strive together***— **συναγωνισασθαι** That ye agonize with me. He felt that much depended on the success of his present mission to the Christians at Jerusalem, and their acceptance of the charitable contribution which he was bringing with him, in order to conciliate them to the reception of the Gentiles into the Church of God without obliging them to submit to circumcision.

**Verse 31. *That I may be delivered from them that do not believe***— He knew that his countrymen, who had not received the Gospel, lay in wait for his life; and, no doubt, they thought they should do God service by destroying him, not only as an apostate, in their apprehension, from the Jewish religion, but as one who was labouring to subvert and entirely destroy it.

***And that my service***— **διακονια**. But several eminent MSS. read **δωροφορια**, the gift which I bear. This probably was a gloss, which in many MSS. subverted the word in the text; for **διακονια**, service, in its connection here, could refer to nothing else but the contribution which he was carrying to the poor saints at Jerusalem.

**Verse 32. *That I may come unto you with joy***— That his apprehensions of ill usage were not groundless, and the danger to which his life was exposed, real, we have already seen in the account given of this visit, Acts 21, 22, 23, and 24; and that he had such intimations from the Holy Spirit himself appears from Acts 20:23; 21:11; 20:38. Should his journey to Jerusalem be prosperous, and his service accepted, so that the converted Jews and Gentiles should come to a better understanding, he hoped to see them at Rome with great joy: and if he got his wishes gratified through

their prayers, it would be the full proof that this whole business had been conducted according to the will of God.

**Verse 33. *The God of peace be with you***— The whole object of the epistle is to establish peace between the believing Jews and Gentiles, and to show them their mutual obligations, and the infinite mercy of God to both; and now he concludes with praying that the God of peace—he from whom it comes, and by whom it is preserved—may be for ever with them. The word Amen, at the end, does not appear to have been written by the apostle: it is wanting in some of the most ancient MSS.

1. In the preceding chapters the apostle enjoins a very hard, but a very important and necessary, duty—that of bearing with each other, and endeavoring to think and let think, in those religious matters which are confessedly not essential to the salvation of the soul. Most of the disputes among Christians have been concerning non-essential points. Rites and ceremonies, even in the simple religion of Christ, have contributed their part in promoting those animosities by which Christians have been divided. Forms in worship and sacerdotal garments have not been without their influence in this general disturbance. Each side has been ready to take out of the 14th and 15th chapters of this epistle such expressions as seemed suitable to their own case; but few have been found who have taken up the whole. You believe that a person who holds such and such opinions is wrong: pity him and set him right, lovingly, if possible. He believes you to be wrong because you do not hold those points; he must bear with you. Both of you stand precisely on the same ground, and are mutually indebted to mutual forbearance.

2. Beware of contentions in religion, if you dispute concerning any of its doctrines, let it be to find out truth; not to support a preconceived and pre-established opinion. Avoid all polemical heat and rancour; these prove the absence of the religion of Christ. Whatever does not lead you to love God and man more, is most assuredly from beneath. The God of peace is the author of Christianity; and the Prince of peace, the priest and sacrifice of it: therefore love one another, and leave off contention before it be meddled with. On this subject the advice of the pious Mr. Herbert is good:—

*Be calm in arguing; for fierceness makes  
Error a fault, and truth discourtesy.  
Why should I feel another man's mistakes  
More than his sickness or his poverty?  
In love I should; but anger is not love;  
Nor wisdom neither:-therefore g-e-n-t-l-y m-o-v-e.*

## CHAPTER 16.

The apostle commends to the Christians at Rome Phoebe, a deaconess of the Church at Cenchrea, 1, 2. Sends greetings to Aquila and Priscilla, of whom he gives a high character; and greets also the Church at their house, 3-5. Mentions several others by name, both men and women, who were members of the Church of Christ at Rome, 6-16. Warns them to beware of those who cause dissensions and divisions, of whom he gives an awful character, 17, 18. Extols the obedience of the Roman Christians, and promises them a complete victory over Satan, 19, 20. Several persons send their salutations, 21-23. To whose good wishes he subjoins the apostolic blessing; commends them to God; gives own abstract of the doctrines of the Gospel: and concludes with ascribing glory to the only wise God, through Christ Jesus, 24-27.

### NOTES ON CHAP. 16.

**Verse 1. *I commend unto you Phoebe***— As the apostle had not been at Rome previously to his writing this epistle, he could not have had a personal acquaintance with those members of the Church there to whom he sends these friendly salutations. It is likely that many of them were his own converts, who, in different parts of Asia Minor and Greece, had heard him preach the Gospel, and afterwards became settlers at Rome.

Phoebe is here termed a servant, **δῆακονον**, a deaconess of the Church at Cenchrea. There were deaconesses in the primitive Church, whose business it was to attend the female converts at baptism; to instruct the catechumens, or persons who were candidates for baptism; to visit the sick, and those who were in prison, and, in short, perform those religious offices for the female part of the Church which could not with propriety be performed by men. They were chosen in general out of the most experienced of the Church, and were ordinarily widows, who had borne children. Some ancient constitutions required them to be forty, others fifty, and others sixty years of age. It is evident that they were ordained to their office by the imposition of the hands of the bishop; and the form of

prayer used on the occasion is extant in the apostolical constitutions. In the tenth or eleventh century the order became extinct in the Latin Church, but continued in the Greek Church till the end of the twelfth century. See Broughton's Dictionary, article deaconess.

Cenchrea was a sea-port on the east side of the isthmus which joined the Morea to Greece, as the Lechaem was the sea-port on the west side of the same isthmus. These were the only two havens and towns of any note, next to Corinth, that belonged to this territory. As the Lechaem opened the road to the Ionian sea, so Cenchrea opened the road to the AEgean; and both were so advantageously situated for commerce that they were very rich. These two places are now usually denominated the Gulf of Lepanto, and the Gulf of Ingia or Egina. It was on the isthmus, between these two ports, which was about six miles wide, that the Isthmian games were celebrated; to which St. Paul makes such frequent allusions.

**Verse 2. *Succourer of many***— One who probably entertained the apostles and preachers who came to minister at Cenchrea, and who was remarkable for entertaining strangers. See on Romans 12:8.

**Verse 3. *Greet Priscilla and Aquila***— This pious couple had been obliged to leave Rome, on the edict of Claudius, see Acts 18:2, and take refuge in Greece. It is likely that they returned to Rome at the death of Claudius, or whenever the decree was annulled. It seems they had greatly contributed to assist the apostle in his important labors. Instead of Priscilla, the principal MSS. and versions have Prisca, which most critics suppose to be the genuine reading.

**Verse 4. *Who have for my life laid down their own necks***— What transaction this refers to we know not; but it appears that these persons had, on some occasion, hazarded their own lives to save that of the apostle; and that the fact was known to all the Churches of God in that quarter, who felt themselves under the highest obligations to these pious persons, for the important service which they had thus rendered.

**Verse 5. *The Church that is in their house***.— In these primitive times no such places existed as those which we now term churches; the word always signifying the congregation or assembly of believers, and not the

place they assembled in. See the term defined at the end of the notes, Matthew 16:28.

***Epenetus—the first fruits of Achaia***— In 1 Corinthians 16:15, the house or family of Stephanas is said to be the first fruits of Achaia: how then can it be said here, that Epenetus was the first fruits, or first person who had received the Gospel in that district? Ans. — Epenetus might have been one of the family of Stephanas; for it is not said that Stephanas was the first fruits, but his house or family; and there can be no impropriety in supposing that one of that house or family was called Epenetus; and that this person, being the only one of the family now at Rome, might be mentioned as the first fruits of Achaia; that is, one of that family which first received the Gospel in that country. This would rationally account for the apparent difficulty, were we sure that *αχαιας*, of Achaia, was the true reading: but this is more than doubtful, for *ασιας*, of Asia, is the reading of ABCDEFG, some others; the Coptic, Aethiopic, Armenian, Vulgate, and Itala; and some of the chief of the fathers. On this evidence Griesbach has admitted it into the text. Yet the other reading is sufficiently natural, for the reasons already assigned.

**Verse 6. *Greet Mary, who bestowed much labor on us.***— Who this Mary was, or what the labor was which she bestowed upon the apostles, we know not. Her works, though hidden from man, are with God; and her name is recorded with honor in this book of life.

**Verse 7. *Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen***— As the word *συγγενεις* signifies relatives, whether male or female, and as Junia may probably be the name of a woman, the wife of Andronicus, it would be better to say relatives than kinsmen. But probably St. Paul means no more than that they were Jews; for, in Romans 9:3, he calls all the Jews his kinsmen according to the flesh.

***My fellow prisoners***— As Paul was in prison often, it is likely that these persons shared this honor with him on some occasion, which is not distinctly marked.

***Of note among the apostles***— Whether this intimates that they were noted apostles or only highly reputed by the apostles, is not absolutely

clear; but the latter appears to me the most probable. They were not only well known to St. Paul, but also to the rest of the apostles.

***In Christ before me.***— That is, they were converted to Christianity before Paul was; probably at the day of pentecost, or by the ministry of Christ himself, or by that of the seventy disciples.

**Verse 8. *Amplias, my beloved in the Lord.***— One who is my particular friend, and also a genuine Christian.

**Verse 9. *Urbane, our helper***— Who this Urbanus was we know not; what is here stated is, that he had been a fellow laborer with the apostles.

***Stachys, my beloved.***— One of my particular friends.

**Verse 10. *Apelles, approved in Christ***— A man who, on different occasions, had given the highest proofs of the sincerity and depth of his religion. Some suppose that Apelles was the same with Apollos: whoever he was, he had given every demonstration of being a genuine Christian.

***Of Aristobulus' household.***— It is doubted whether this person was converted, as the apostle does not salute him, but his household; or as the margin reads, his friends. He might have been a Roman of considerable distinction, who, though not converted himself, had Christians among his servants or his slaves. But, whatever he was, it is likely that he was dead at this time, and therefore those of his household only are referred to by the apostle.

**Verse 11. *Herodion, my kinsman.***— Probably another converted Jew. See on Romans 16:7.

***Of the household of Narcissus***— Probably dead also, as we have supposed Aristobulus to have been at this time.

***Which are in the Lord.***— This might intimate that some of this family were not Christians; those only of that family that were converted to the Lord being saluted. There was a person of the name of Narcissus, who was a freed man of the Emperor Claudius, mentioned by Suetonius in his life of that prince, cap. 37; and by Tacitus, An., lib. xii. cap. 57: but there does not seem any reason to suppose that this was the person designed by St. Paul.



**Verse 12. *Tryphena and Tryphosa***— Two holy women, who it seems were assistants to the apostle in his work, probably by exhorting, visiting the sick, etc. Persis was another woman, who it seems excelled the preceding; for, of her it is said, she labored much in the Lord. We learn from this, that Christian women, as well as men, labored in the ministry of the word. In those times of simplicity all persons, whether men or women, who had received the knowledge of the truth, believed it to be their duty to propagate it to the uttermost of their power. Many have spent much

*Natura tu illi pater es, consiliis ego.  
Adelphi, Act. i. scen. 2, ver. 47.*

*Thou art his father by nature, I by instruction.*

**Verse 14. *Salute Asyncritus***, etc.— Who these were we know not. Hermas was probably the same to whom a work called the Shepherd is attributed; a work with this title is still extant, and may be found among the writings of the apostolical fathers. But it is in vain to look for identity of persons in similarity of names; for, among the Greeks and Romans at this time there were many persons who bore the same names mentioned in this chapter.

**Verse 15. *Salute Philologus***, etc.— Of these several persons, though much has been conjectured, nothing certain is known. Even the names of some are so ambiguous that we know not whether they were men or women. They were persons well known to St. Paul, and undoubtedly were such as had gone from different places where the apostle had preached to sojourn or settle at Rome. One thing we may remark, that there is no mention of St. Peter, who, according to the Roman and papistical catalogue of bishops, must have been at Rome at this time; if he were not now at Rome, the foundation stone of Rome's ascendancy, of Peter's supremacy, and of the uninterrupted succession, is taken away, and the whole fabric falls to the ground. But if Peter were at Rome at this time, Paul would have sent his salutations to him in the first place; and if Peter were there, he must have been there, according to the papistical doctrine, as bishop and vicar of Jesus Christ; but if he were there, is it likely that he should have been passed by, while Andronicus and Junia are mentioned as of note among the apostles, Romans 16:7, and that St. Paul should call on the people to remedy the disorders that had crept in among themselves; should not these directions have been given to Peter, the head of the Church? And if there were a Church, in the papistical sense of the word, founded there, of which Peter was the head, is it likely that that Church should be in the house of Priscilla and Aquila, Romans 16:5. But it is a loss of time to refute such ridiculous and groundless pretensions. It is very likely that Peter, so far from being universal bishop at Rome, never saw the city in his life.

**Verse 16. *Salute one another with a holy kiss.***— In those early times the kiss, as a token of peace, friendship, and brotherly love, was frequent among all people; and the Christians used it in their public assemblies, as well as in their occasional meetings. This was at last laid aside, not because it was abused, but because, the Church becoming very numerous, the thing was impossible. In some countries the kiss of friendship is still common; and in such countries it is scarcely ever abused, nor is it an incentive to evil, because it is customary and common. Shaking of hands is now substituted for it in almost all Christian congregations.

***The Churches of Christ salute you.***— The word *πασαι*, ALL, is added here by some of the most reputable MSS. and principal versions; and Griesbach has received it into his text. St. Paul must mean, here, that all the Churches in Greece and Asia, through which he had passed, in which the faith of the Christians at Rome was known, spoke of them affectionately and honourably; and probably knowing the apostle's design of visiting Rome, desired to be kindly remembered to the Church in that city.

**Verse 17. *Mark them which cause divisions***— Several MSS. read *ασφαλως σκοπειτε*, look sharply after them; let them have no kiss of charity nor peace, because they strive to make divisions, and thus set the flock of Christ at variance among themselves; and from these divisions, offenses (*σκανδαλα*, scandals) are produced; and this is contrary to that doctrine of peace, unity, and brotherly love which you have learned. Look sharply after such that they do you no evil, and avoid them—give them no countenance, and have no religious fellowship with them.

**Verse 18. *They-serve not our Lord Jesus***— They profess to be apostles, but they are not apostles of CHRIST; they neither do his will, nor preach his doctrine; they serve their own belly—they hate intruded themselves into the Church of Christ that they might get a secular support; it is for worldly gain alone that they take up the profession of the ministry: they have no Divine credentials; they convert not the heathen nor the ungodly, for they have no Divine unction; but by good words and fair speeches (for they have no miraculous nor saving powers) deceive the hearts of the simple, perverting Christian converts, that they may get their property, and thus secure a maintenance for themselves. The Church of God has ever

been troubled with such pretended pastors-men who FEED themselves, not the flock; men who are too proud to beg, and too lazy to work; who have neither grace nor gifts to plant the standard of the cross on the devil's territories, and by the power of Christ make inroads upon his kingdom, and spoil him of his subjects. On the contrary, by sowing the seeds of dissension, by means of doubtful disputations, and the propagation of scandals; by glaring and insinuating speeches, *χρηστολογιας*, for they affect elegance and good breeding, they rend Christian congregations, form a party for themselves, and thus live on the spoils of the Church of God.

Should it be asked, Whom do you intend by this description? I answer: No soul, nor party, but such as the description suits. Irasceris.?-De TE fabula narratur. O, you are angry, are you? O, then, the cap fits you-put it on.

**Verse 19. *For your obedience is come abroad***— The apostle gives this as a reason why they should continue to hear and heed those who had led them into the path of truth, and avoid those false teachers whose doctrines tended to the subversion of their souls.

***Yet I would have you wise***— I would wish you carefully to discern the good from the evil, and to show your wisdom, by carefully avoiding the one and cleaving to the other.

**Verse 20. *The God of peace***— Who neither sends nor favors such disturbers of the tranquillity of his Church.

***Shall bruise Satan***— Shall give you the dominion over the great adversary of your souls, and over all his agents who, through his influence, endeavor to destroy your peace and subvert your minds.

Several critics suppose that the word Satan is a sort of collective term here, by which all opposers and adversaries are meant; and especially those false teachers to whom he refers above.

***The grace of our Lord***— That you may be truly wise simple, obedient, and steady in the truth, may the favor or gracious influence of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you! without which you cannot be preserved from evil, nor do any thing that is good.

Here the apostle appears to have intended to conclude his epistle; but afterwards he added a postscript, if not two, as we shall see below. Several

ancient MSS. omit the whole of this clause, probably thinking that it had been borrowed from Romans 16:24; but on the ground that the apostle might have added a postscript or two, not having immediate opportunity to send the epistle there is no need for this supposition.

**Verse 21. *Timotheus my workfellow***— This is on all hands allowed to be the same Timothy to whom St. Paul directs the two epistles which are still extant. See some account of him in the notes on Acts 16:1, etc.

***Lucius***— This was probably Luke the evangelist, and writer of the book called The Acts of the Apostles. For a short account of him see the Preface to that book.

***Jason***— It is likely that this is the same person mentioned Acts 17:7, who at Thessalonica received the apostles into his house, and befriended them at the risk both of his property and life.

***Sosipater***— He was a Berean, the son of one Pyrrhus, a Jew, by birth, and accompanied St. Paul from Greece into Asia, and probably into Judea. See Acts 20:4.

**Verse 22. *I Tertius, who wrote this epistle***— Some eminent commentators suppose Tertius to be the same with Silas—the companion of St. Paul. If this were so, it is strange that the name which is generally given him elsewhere in Scripture should not be used in this place. I have already noticed (Preface, page v.) that some learned men have supposed that St. Paul wrote this epistle in Syriac, and that Tertius translated it into Greek; but this can never agree with the declaration here: I Tertius, who wrote, *γραψας την επιστολην*, this epistle; not translated or interpreted it. It appears that St. Paul dictated it to him, and he wrote it down from the apostle's mouth; and here introduces himself as joining with St. Paul in affectionate wishes for their welfare.

***Salute you in the Lord.***— I wish you well in the name of the Lord: or, I feel for you that affectionate respect which the grace of the Lord Jesus inspires. It is not clear whether the two following verses be the words of Tertius or St. Paul.

**Verse 23. *Gaius mine host***— Gaius in Greek is the same as Caius in Latin, which was a very common name among the Romans. St. Luke (Acts

19:29) mentions one Gaius of Macedonia, who was exposed to much violence at Ephesus in the tumult excited by Demetrius the silversmith against St. Paul and his companions; and it is very possible that this was the same person. He is here called not only the host *ξενος*, the entertainer of St. Paul, or Tertius, (if he wrote this and the following verse,) but also of the whole Church: that is, he received and lodged the apostles who came from different places, as well as the messengers of the Churches. All made his house their home; and he must have been a person of considerable property to be able to bear this expense; and of much piety and love to the cause of Christ, else he had not employed that property in this way.

*Erastus the chamberlain of the city*— Treasurer of the city of Corinth, from which St. Paul wrote this epistle. This is supposed to be the same person as is mentioned Acts 19:22. He was one of St. Paul's companions, and, as appears from 2 Timothy 4:20, was left about this time by the apostle at Corinth. He is called the chamberlain *οικονομος*, which signifies the same as treasurer; he to whom the receipt and expenditure of the public money were intrusted. He received the tolls, customs, etc., belonging to the city, and out of them paid the public expenses. Such persons were in very high credit; and if Erastus was at this time treasurer, it would appear that Christianity was then in considerable repute in Corinth. But if the Erastus of the Acts was the same with the Erastus mentioned here, it is not likely that he now held the office, for this could not at all comport with his travelling with St. Paul. Hence several, both ancients and moderns, who believe the identity of the persons, suppose that Erastus was not now treasurer, but that having formerly been so he still retained the title. Chrysostom thought that he still retained the employment.

*Quartus a brother.*— Whether the brother of Erastus or of Tertius we know not; probably nothing more is meant than that he was a Christian—one of the heavenly family, a brother in the Lord.

**Verse 24. *The grace of our Lord***— This is the conclusion of Tertius, and is similar to what St. Paul used above. Hence it is possible that Tertius wrote the whole of the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th verses, {Romans 16:22-24} without receiving any particular instructions from St. Paul, except the bare permission to add his own salutations with those of his particular friends.

There is a great deal of disagreement among the MSS. and versions relative to this verse; some rejecting it entirely, and some of those which place the following verses at the end of Romans 14:23, inserting it at the end of the 27th verse in that place. The reader who chooses may consult Wetstein and Griesbach on these discordances.

**Verse 25. *Now to him***— In the note at Romans 14:23. I have shown that this and the following verses are by the most reputable MSS. and versions placed at the end of that chapter, which is supposed by most critics to be their proper place. Some of the arguments adduced in favor of this transposition may be found in the note above mentioned. I shall therefore refer to Griesbach, and proceed to make a few short remarks on the verses as they occur here.

***Of power to stablish you***— To that God, without whom nothing is wise, nothing strong; who is as willing to teach as he is wise; as ready to help as he is strong.

***According to my Gospel***— That Gospel which explains and publishes God's purpose of taking the Gentiles to be his people under the Messiah, without subjecting them to the law of Moses. This is what he here calls the preaching of Jesus Christ; for without this he did not think, as Mr. Locke observes, that Christ was preached to the Gentiles as he ought to be; and therefore in several places of his epistle to the Galatians he calls it the truth, and the truth of the Gospel, and uses the like expressions to the Ephesians and Colossians. This is that mystery which he is so much concerned that the Ephesians should understand and adhere to firmly, and which was revealed to him according to that Gospel whereof he was made a minister. And it is probable that this grand mystery of bringing the Gentiles into the kingdom of God, without passing through the rites of the Mosaic law, was revealed more particularly to St. Paul than to any other of the apostles, and that he preached it more pointedly, and certainly with more success. See Taylor and Locke.

***Which was kept secret***— This purpose of calling the Gentiles, and giving them equal privileges to the Jews, without obliging them to submit to circumcision, etc.

**Verse 26. *But now is made manifest***— Now, under the New Testament dispensation, and by my preaching.

***By the scriptures of the prophets***— Hints relative to this important work being scattered up and down through all their works, but no clear revelation that the Gentiles, who should be admitted into the Church, should be admitted without passing under the yoke of the Mosaic law. This was the point which was kept secret: as to the calling of the Gentiles, this was declared in general terms by the prophets, and the apostle quotes and makes a most important use of their predictions; but the other was a point on which the prophets gave no information, and it seems to have been peculiarly revealed to St. Paul, who received the commandment of the everlasting God to make it known *εις παντα τα εθνη*, to all the Gentiles—all the people of the earth that were not of Jewish extraction. And it was to be made known for the obedience of faith, that they might believe its doctrines and obey its precepts; its universal voice requiring repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and circumcision of the heart, in the place of all Jewish rites and ceremonies.

**Verse 27. *To God only wise***— This comes in with great propriety. He alone who is the fountain of wisdom and knowledge, had all this mystery in himself; and he alone who knew the times, places, persons, and circumstances, could reveal the whole; and he has revealed all in such a way as not only to manifest his unsearchable wisdom, but also his infinite goodness: therefore, to him be glory for his wisdom in devising this most admirable plan; and his goodness in sending Christ Jesus to execute it; to Him, through Christ Jesus, be glory for ever! Because this plan is to last for ever; and is to have no issue but in eternal glory.

***Written to the Romans from Corinthus***, etc.— That this epistle was written from Corinth is almost universally believed. That Phoebe was a deaconess of the Church at Cenchrea, we have seen in the first verse of this chapter; and that the epistle might have been sent by her to Rome is possible; but that she should have been the writer of the epistle, as this subscription states, *εγραφη δια φοιβης*, is false, for Romans 16:22 shows that Tertius was the writer, though by inserting the words and sent, we represent her rather as the carrier than the writer. This subscription, however, stands on very questionable grounds. It is wanting in almost all



the ancient MSS.; and even of those which are more modern, few have it entirely, as in our common editions. It has already been noted that the subscriptions to the sacred books are of little or no authority, all having been added in latter times, and frequently by injudicious hands. The most ancient have simply To the Romans, or the Epistle to the Romans is finished. The word Amen was seldom added by the inspired writers, and here it is wanting in almost all the ancient MSS. As this was a word in frequent use in religious services, pious people would naturally employ it in finishing the reading or copying of this epistle, as they would thereby express their conviction of the truth of its contents, and their desire that the promises contained in it might be fulfilled to them and to the Church at large; and in this sense the word is not only harmless but useful. May the fullness of the Gentiles be brought in, and may all Israel be saved! This is treated of at large in this epistle; and to this prayer let every pious reader say AMEN! Often this word seems to be used as we use the word finis, i.e. the end. See the observations on this word at the end of the Gospel of John.

BEFORE I conclude this work, I shall beg leave to add several important observations, chiefly extracted from Dr. Taylor.

1. Paul, the apostle, writes to all the Christians at Rome, without distinction, as being called of Jesus Christ, beloved of God, called saints; as justified by faith and having peace with God; as standing in the grace of the Gospel, Romans 5:1, 2; as alive from the dead, Romans 6:13, etc. He gives them various exhortations: Walk in newness of life. Let not sin reign in your mortal body. Yield yourselves unto God. Romans 12:1, etc.: I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Romans 14:10, 12: We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Romans 13:11-14: It is high time to awake out of sleep; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness; let us not walk in rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness, in strife and envying; make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. Romans 8:13: For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; *μελλετε αποθνησκειν*, ye shall hereafter die, meaning, in the world to come. But if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

2. The rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses were incorporated into the civil state of the Jews, and so might be considered as national and political usages. Now, as the Gospel did not interfere with or subvert any national polity upon earth, but left all men in all the several countries of the globe to live, in all things not sinful, according to the civil constitution under which it found them; so it left the Jews also at liberty to observe all the rites and injunctions of the law of Moses, considered as a part of the civil and political usages of the nation. And in this respect they remained in force so long as the Jews were a nation, having the temple, the token of God's presence and evidence among them. But when the temple was destroyed, and they were expelled from the land of Canaan, their polity was dissolved, and the Mosaic rites were quite laid aside. And as the time in which this happened was near when the epistle to the Hebrews was written, therefore the apostle saith: The first covenant, or Mosaical dispensation, was then decaying and waxing old, and ready to vanish away, Hebrews 8:13.

3. But though the Gospel was not in itself intended to unchurch the Jews, yet the Jews every where warmly opposed the preaching of it, though not for the same reasons. Some Jews opposed it totally, and rejected the whole Gospel as unnecessary, judging the Mosaical constitution, and their conformity to the law there delivered, completely sufficient for justification or salvation, without any farther provision made by the grace of God. These accounted Christ our Lord an impostor, and the Gospel a forgery; and therefore persecuted the apostles with the utmost assiduity and outrage, as deceivers who had no Divine mission. Such were the Jews who put Stephen to death, Acts 6, and 7. Such were they at Antioch, in Pisidia, who were filled with envy, and spake against the things that were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming, Acts 13:45, 50. Such were the Jews at Iconium, Acts 14:2, 19; at Thessalonica, Acts 17:5; at Corinth, Acts 18:5, 6, and in other places. And such a Jew was Paul himself before his conversion. He consented to the death of Stephen, made havoc of the Church, (Acts 8:3,) and breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, Acts 9:1; 22:4; 26:9-11.

4. What Paul's principles, and those of the unbelieving Jews, were, we may learn if we observe that the first persecution raised against the apostles at Jerusalem was partly on account of their preaching through

Jesus the resurrection from the dead, Acts 4:1, 2. This gave great offense to the Sadducees; and partly because they openly affirmed that Jesus, whom the rulers of the Jews slew and hanged on a tree, was the Messiah, whom God had exalted to be a prince and a Savior. This disgusted all the council and senate of the Jews, Acts 5:21, 28-31. But with regard to these two particulars, the indignation of the Jews seems for some time abated, till the doctrine the apostles taught was better understood; and Stephen, in his dispute with some learned Jews, had suggested that the Gospel was intended to abrogate the Mosaical constitution, Acts 6:9-15. This irritated the Jews afresh, especially the Pharisees, the strictest and most numerous sect among them. And Saul, one of that sect, (Acts 26:5; 23:6,) being then a young man, just come out of Gamaliel's school, having finished his studies in the law, and being fully persuaded that the Jewish dispensation was instituted by God, never to be altered, but to abide for ever, he really believed that Jesus and his followers were deceivers, and that it was his

Divine favor and eternal life, as quite lost and hopeless. Against us Gentiles, they had the strongest prejudices, accounting us as perfectly vile, as nothing, as abandoned of God, only because we were not included in their peculiarity; while they imagined themselves to be vastly superior to us, and the only people beloved of God, purely on account of their external privileges and relation to God as the seed of Abraham; being circumcised, enjoying the law, the promises, and ordinances of worship, etc.

5. And this was another ground of their opposition to the Gospel when it was preached to the Gentiles. Indeed the apostles themselves, and the first Christians among the Jews, had for some time no notion of the Gospel's being preached to the Gentiles, till God in a vision convinced Peter it was his will that it should, Acts 10:9-45. But the unbelieving Jews regarded the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, or the declaring that they were, upon their faith in Christ, pardoned and admitted into the Church of God, and to the hopes of eternal life, almost in the same manner as we should regard the preaching of the Gospel to brute creatures. They could not bear the thought that the Gentiles-any barbarous nations, should, only by faith, have an equal interest in God and the blessings of his covenant with themselves. They did not indeed deny the possibility of their being taken into the Church, and of obtaining salvation. But it must be only by their becoming Jews; they must first submit to the law, and yield obedience to its precepts and obligations, before they could be qualified objects of God's mercy. There was no grace, no part in the kingdom of God either here or hereafter, for a Gentile, unless he first became a Jew, and performed the works of the Mosaical law. By these sentiments they were led to do all they could to oppose the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, and became very bitter enemies to Paul, who was the apostle particularly selected and commissioned for that purpose. They could not allow the Gentiles to have any access to the privileges of God's Church and people, but through the door of the law; and to introduce them any other way was, not only to overthrow their law and peculiarity, but to deceive the Gentiles. Therefore they did all in their power to withstand the apostle, and to persuade the Gentiles every where that he was an odious impostor; that his Gospel was a forgery, destitute of Divine authority; that he proposed admitting them into the Church and covenant of God in a

way which had no foundation in the declared will of God. Their law was the only Divine establishment, and obedience to it the only means to introduce them into the kingdom of God; and Paul could have no commission from heaven to teach otherwise, whatever he might pretend, or what miracles soever he might work. Of this sort of Jews the apostle speaks, 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16.

Other Jews there were who believed the Gospel, and agreed that it ought to be preached to the Gentiles; but so that the Gentiles, at the same time they accepted the Gospel, were obliged to submit to the law of Moses in every part, otherwise they could not be saved or have any interest in the kingdom and covenant of God, Acts 15:1. These taught that the Gospel was insufficient without the law. They differed from the forementioned Jews in that they embraced the faith of Jesus Christ; but agreed with them in this, that the law of Moses was to be in force for ever, and the observance of all its rituals absolutely necessary to a standing in the Church of God, and the hopes of eternal life. And for this reason they were upon pretty good terms with the unbelieving Jews, and avoided the persecution to which those who adhered to the pure and unmixed Gospel were exposed, Galatians 6:12. These Jews, who were for joining law and Gospel together, were also great enemies to our apostle. He speaks of them, Philippians 3:2, 3, etc.

6. Now against the mistakes of the infidel Jews the apostle thus argues in the epistle to the Romans: Jews, as well as Gentiles, have corrupted themselves, and are become obnoxious to the Divine wrath, and, if they repent not, will certainly fall under the wrath of God in the last day: consequently, as both are obnoxious to wrath, both must be indebted to grace and mercy for any favor shown them. The continuance of the Jews in the Church, as well as the admittance of the Gentiles into it, is wholly of grace; mere grace or favor. Upon which footing, the Gentiles must have as good a right to the blessings of God's covenant as the Jews themselves. And why not? Is not God the creator and governor of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews? And if both Jews and Gentiles have corrupted themselves by wicked works, it is impossible that either should have a right to the privileges of God's Church and people on account of WORKS, or obedience to the law of God, whether natural or revealed. It must be pure mercy, accepted by faith through Christ, or a persuasion of that mercy on their

part, which gives that right. All must be indebted to grace. The works of the law never gave the Jews themselves a right to the privileges and promises of the covenant. Even Abraham himself, (the head of the nation, who was first taken into God's covenant, and from whom the Jews derive all their peculiar blessings and advantages,) was not justified by works of the law. It was free grace, or favor, which at once admitted him and his posterity into the covenant and Church of God. And that the grace of the Gospel actually extends to all mankind, appears from the universality of the resurrection; which is the effect of God's grace or favor in a Redeemer, and is the first and fundamental part of the new dispensation with regard to the gift of eternal life. For, as all were involved in death in consequence of Adam's sin, so shall all be restored to life at the last day in consequence of Christ's obedience; and therefore it is certain that all men actually have a share in the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. — Thus the apostle argues.

7. And we ought particularly to observe how he combats the engrossing temper of the Jews in his arguments. They could not engross all virtue to themselves, for they were as bad as other people; they could not engross God and his favor to themselves, for he was the governor and creator of Gentiles as well as Jews; they could not engross Abraham and the promise made to him to themselves, for he is the father of many nations, and the believing Gentiles are his seed as well as the Jews; they could not engross the resurrection, the necessary introduction to eternal life, to themselves, because it is known and allowed to be common to all mankind.

8. And he had good reason to be so large and particular in confuting the mistakes of the infidel Jews. For had their principles prevailed, the Gospel could not have maintained its ground. For if we must have performed the works of the law, before we could have been interested in the blessings of the covenant, then the Gospel would have lost its nature and force; for then it would not have been a motive to obedience, but the result of obedience; and we could have had no hope towards God prior to obedience. Therefore the apostle has done a singular and eminent piece of service to the Church of God, in asserting and demonstrating the free grace and covenant of God as a foundation to stand upon, prior to any obedience of ours, and as the grand spring and motive of obedience. This sets our interest in the covenant, or promise of God, upon a foundation very clear and solid.

9. To understand rightly the epistle to the Romans, it is farther necessary to observe, that the apostle considers mankind as obnoxious to the Divine wrath, and as standing before God, the Judge of all. Hence it is that he uses forensic or law terms, usual in Jewish courts: such as the LAW, RIGHTEOUSNESS or JUSTIFICATION, being JUSTIFIED, JUDGMENT to CONDEMNATION, JUSTIFICATION of LIFE, being made SINNERS, and being made RIGHTEOUS. These I take to be forensic or court terms; and the apostle by using them naturally leads our thoughts to suppose a court held, a judgment seat to be erected by the most high God, in the several cases whence he draws his arguments. For instance, Romans 5:12-20, he supposes Adam standing in the court of God after he had committed the first transgression; when the judgment passed upon him for his offense, came upon all men to condemnation; and when he and his posterity, by the favor and in the purpose of God, were again made righteous, or obtained the justification of life. Again, Romans 4:1-18, he supposes Abraham standing before the bar of the supreme Judge; when, as an idolater, he might have been condemned, but through the pure mercy of God he was justified, pardoned, and taken into God's covenant, on account of his faith. He also supposes, Romans 3:19-29, all mankind standing before the universal Judge, when Christ came into the world. At that time neither Jew nor Gentile could pretend to justification upon the foot of their own works of righteousness, having both corrupted themselves, and come short of the glory of God. But at that time both had righteousness or salvation prepared for them in a Redeemer; namely, the righteousness which results from the pure mercy or grace of God, the lawgiver and judge. And so both (instead of being destroyed) had admittance into the Church and covenant of God, by faith, in order to their eternal salvation.

10. But besides these three instances, in which he supposes a court to be held by the supreme Judge, there is a fourth to which he points, Romans 2:1-17, and that is the final judgment, or the court which will be held in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. And it is with regard to that future court of judicature that he argues Romans 2:1-17. But in the other cases, whence he draws his arguments, he supposes the courts of judicature to be already held; and, consequently, argues in relation to the economy, constitution, or dispensation of things

to this present world. This is very evident with regard to the court which he supposes to be held when our Lord came into the world, or when the Gospel constitution was erected in its full glory; for, speaking of the justification which mankind then obtained through the grace of God in Christ, he expressly confines that justification to the present time, Romans 3:26, To demonstrate, I say, his righteousness, **ΕΝ ΤΩ ΝΥΝ ΚΑΙΡΩ**, at the PRESENT TIME. This plainly distinguishes the righteousness or salvation, which God then exhibited, from that righteousness or justification which he will vouchsafe in the day of judgment to pious and faithful souls.

11. Before the coming of our Lord, the peculiar kingdom of God was confined to the Jewish nation, and to such only of the heathens as were incorporated among them by becoming Jews, and observing the whole law of Moses. And the Jews firmly believed it would always continue in the same state.

But when our Lord came, the mystery of God, which had been concealed both from Jews and Gentiles, was revealed; namely, that the Gentiles also, even men of all nations, should be freely admitted into it. This was an act of great favor, considering the darkness, idolatry, and wickedness into which the heathen world was then sunk.

But God mercifully passed over their former sins; and our Lord commissioned his apostles, and particularly St. Paul, to promulge a general pardon; and to call or invite all who repented, and accepted of the grace, to all the blessings and privileges of his kingdom; confirming their interests in those blessings by pouring out the Holy Ghost upon them, in various miraculous gifts, or endowments, above the ordinary capacity of men. This was a very evident seal to them (and to us too) of a title to the blessings of God's Kingdom and covenant, Galatians 3:2-5.

And it had such an effect upon the Christian Jews at Jerusalem that, though they were at first greatly disgusted at Peter for treating the first uncircumcised Gentile converts as members of the kingdom of God, (Acts 11:2, 3,) yet, when they heard that the Holy Ghost was fallen upon those converts, they were much surprised and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted (the benefit of) repentance unto (eternal)



life; which, before this, they verily believed could not have been granted unto them without obedience to the law of Moses by being circumcised.

But the unbelieving Jews paid no regard to this or any other argument in favor of the uncircumcised Gentiles. The notion of admitting them into the kingdom and congregation of God, only upon faith in Christ, they opposed and persecuted every where with great zeal and bitterness. And it was not long before good impressions wore off, and old prejudices revived among even the believing Jews. Numbers of them very stiffly, and with much warmth and contention, endeavored to persuade the Gentile converts that, except they were circumcised after the manner of Moses, they could not be saved, or admitted to the privileges of the kingdom of God and the hope of eternal life, Acts 15:1, 2.

The Gentiles, even the most learned and wise amongst them, were wholly ignorant in the affair. They were perfect strangers to the Gospel scheme: they had no notion or expectation of being received into the kingdom and covenant of God, and could have no knowledge of it but what they received from some or other of the Jews: nor could they have any objection against it worth regarding but what came from that quarter. And the Jews had a considerable influence among them, having synagogues in most, if not all, the great towns in the empire, from the Euphrates, as far as Rome itself, which numbers of the Gentiles frequented, and so had received impressions in favor of the Jewish religion.

But had the Jewish notion prevailed, that no part of mankind could have any share in the blessings of God's covenant, the pardon of sins and the hope of eternal life, but only such as were circumcised and brought themselves under obligations to the whole law of Moses; had this notion prevailed, the extensive scheme of the Gospel would have been ruined, and the gracious design of freeing the Church from the embarrassments of the law of Moses would have been defeated. The Gospel, or glad tidings of salvation, must not only have been confined to the narrow limits of the Jewish peculiarity, and clogged with all the ceremonial observances belonging to it, which to the greatest part of mankind would have been either impracticable, or excessively incommodious, but, which is still worse, must have sunk and fallen with that peculiarity. Had the Gospel been built upon the foundation of the Jewish polity, it must have been

destroyed when that was demolished, and the whole kingdom of God in the world would have been overthrown and extinct at the same time; and so all the noble principles it was intended to inspire, to animate and comfort our hearts, would have been lost; and all the light it was calculated to diffuse throughout the world would have been quite extinguished.

It was therefore the apostle's duty to vindicate and assert the truth of the Gospel which he was commissioned to preach to the Gentiles; and of very great consequence to prove that we Gentiles are called to be the children of God, and are interested in his covenant, and all the honors, blessings, and privileges of his family and kingdom here upon earth, only by faith in Christ, without coming under any obligations to the law of Moses, as such: which is the main drift and subject of this epistle.

12. It is worth notice that there is this difference in one respect between the gospels and epistles, namely, that our Lord, in the gospels, represents the doctrines and principles of the Christian religion chiefly in an absolute sense, or as they are in themselves: but, in the epistles, those doctrines and principles are chiefly considered in a relative view; as they respect partly the foregoing Jewish dispensation, and partly the future corruption of the Christian Church; but principally, as they respect the different state of Jews and heathens; showing how just, true, and necessary they are with reference to both, and directing and exhorting both to value them and to make a right use of them. This was absolutely necessary to a full explication of the Gospel, to guard it against all objections, and to give it a solid establishment in the world.

And we must not forget that in the epistle to the Romans, the Gospel is presented in this relative view, as adapted to the circumstances of us Gentiles, and obliging us to all virtue and piety.

13. Farther, we can neither duly value this epistle, nor be sensible how much we are indebted to the author of it, unless we make this sentiment familiar to our thoughts; namely, That St. Paul is the patron and defender of all that is by far the most valuable and important to us in the world, against the only opposition that could be made to our title and claim. Give me leave to explain this by an easy comparison. — A person, to me unknown, leaves me at his death 1000 ú. a-year: I myself can have no objection against the noble donative; and the good pleasure of the donor,

who had an undoubted right to dispose of his own, may silence any of the caviller's surmises. But a person claiming, as heir at law, gives me the greatest uneasiness. He alleges the estate was entailed, and that he has a prior title, which renders the donation to me invalid. Here I want an able advocate to prove that his pretensions are ill grounded, and that my title is perfectly good and firm. St. Paul is that advocate: he argues, and strongly proves, that we, believing Gentiles, have a just and solid title to all the blessings of God's covenant; and effectually establishes us in possession of all the noble principles, motives, comfort, hope and joy of the Gospel. The sum of what he demonstrates is comprehended in 1 Peter 2:8-10; They, the Jews, stumble, and lose their ancient honors and privileges; but ye, Gentiles, are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of heathenish darkness into his marvellous light. Thus, on the authority of God, we Gentiles have an indisputable right to all the blessings of the Gospel; and, if we receive by Christ Jesus that grace which pardons and cleanses the soul, we shall pass from the Church militant into the Church triumphant.

At the conclusion of my notes on this very important epistle I feel it necessary to make a few additional remarks. I have sincerely and conscientiously given that view of the apostle's work which I believe to be true and correct. I am well aware that many great and good men have understood this portion of Divine revelation differently, in many respects, from myself: they have the same right of private judgment which I claim, and to publish those opinions which they judge to accord best with their views of the Gospel. My business is to give what I think to be the mind of my author; and every where I have labored to do this without even consulting any pre-established creed. I hope my readers will take in good part what is honestly intended. I wish to avoid controversy; I give my own views of Divine truth. The plan on which I have endeavored to expound this epistle shows it a beautiful, highly important, and consistent whole; a work which casts the clearest light on the grand original designs of God relative to the diffusion of the Gospel and its blessings over the face of the earth; illustrating many apparently dark and unaccountable providences; fully proving that though clouds and darkness are often round the supreme Being, yet, righteousness and judgment are the

habitation of his throne. Where this grand view of this epistle is not taken, the major part of its beauties are lost. God, who is not the God of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, shows by his apostle in this admirable epistle, that from the beginning he had purposed to call the whole Gentile world to that salvation which he appeared for a time to restrain to the Jews alone, and which they imagined should be exclusively theirs for ever. This prejudice the apostle overturns, and shows that the Gentiles also had an equal share in the election of grace. We should be careful how we make that partial and exclusive which shows the Fountain of goodness to be no respecter of persons, or even ultimately of nations, who like the sun, the faint though brightest image of his glory in this lower world, shines equally upon the just and the unjust. God, with the same benevolent design, orders his Gospel to be preached to every creature under heaven.

The peculiar phraseology of this epistle I have also endeavored to explain, and where this could not be conveniently done in the notes, I have generally stated it at the end of the chapters. And, for the explanations of difficult points, or articles which may have been but slightly handled in the notes, I beg to refer to those concluding observations; and particularly to those at the end of chapters 8 and 9. But it is necessary to make some remarks on this epistle, as an epistle directed to the Romans; that is, to the Church of God founded at Rome. Though the Gospel was preached and established there long before either the apostle had visited this city, or written this epistle, yet we may rest assured that the doctrine contained here was the doctrine of the Church of Rome, and therefore that Church was holy and apostolic. If it do not continue to walk by the same rule, and mind the same things it is no longer so: in a time then when the Roman Church that now is invites the attention of the Christian world, by making great and bold pretensions—assuming to itself the titles of holy, catholic, and apostolic; representing Rome as the fountain whence pure truth and apostolical authority emanate—it may be useful to examine whether such pretensions are well founded, and not permit confident assumption, noise and parade, to carry away our understandings, and occupy the place of reason, argument, and truth. This however cannot be done to any extent in this place; only it may be necessary to state, that, as the doctrines. etc. of the Roman Church profess to be apostolic, they must be found in the epistle to the ROMANS, this being the only apostolic work directed to that

Church. If they are not to be met with here, it would be absurd to look for them anywhere else. But there is not one distinguishing doctrine or practice of the Romish Church found in this epistle. Here is no pope, no exclusive churchship, no Peter-pence, first fruits, legatine levies, dispensations, pardons, indulgences, reliques, Agnus Dei's, jubilees, pilgrimages, crusades, carnivals, canonizations, abbeys, monasteries, cells, shrines, privileged altars, auricular confessions, purgatories, masses, prayers for the dead, requiems, placebos, dirges, lamps, processions, holy water, chrisms, baptism of bells, justification by works, penances, transubstantiation, works of supererogation, extreme unction, invocation of saints and angels, worship of images, crossings of the body, rosaries, albs, stoles, etc.; nor the endless orders of priests, abbots, monks, friars, nuns, anchores, hermits, capuchins, etc., etc. Here are no inquisitions, no writs de haeretico comburendo, no auto da fe's, no racks, gibbets, tortures, nor death in all variable and horrid forms, for those who may differ from this mother Church in any part of their religious creed. In vain will the reader look into this epistle for any thing that is not consistent with sound sense, inflexible reason, and the justice, purity, and endless benevolence of the great God, the equal Father of the spirits of all flesh. Here, indeed, he will see the total fall and degeneracy of all mankind strongly asserted and proved; the utter helplessness of the human race to rescue itself from this state of corruption; the endless mercy of God, in sending Christ Jesus into the world to die for sinners; the doctrine of justification by faith in the blood of the Lamb; regeneration by the energy of the Divine Spirit producing that holiness without which no man can see God. Here the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ takes place of all Jewish sacrifices, and works or sufferings, of man, in reference to justification. Here is nothing puerile, nugatory, or superstitious; no dogma degrading to the understanding; no religious act unworthy of the spirit and dignity of the Gospel; nothing that has not the most immediate tendency to enlighten the mind, and mend the heart of man; in a word, every thing is suitable to the state of man, and worthy of the majesty, justice, and benevolence of that God from whom this epistle came. Here, indeed, is the model of a pure Church. What a pity it is not more closely followed by all, whether Protestant or popish, that profess the faith of Christ crucified! Alas! that a Church which was once pure and apostolic, and still retains all the essential doctrines of the Gospel, should compound them with others

which are not only the commandments and inventions of men, but which so counteract the influence of the truths still retained, as to destroy their efficacy; and no wonder, when this foreign admixture is an assemblage of rites and ceremonies borrowed partly from the Jews and partly from the ancient heathens; rendered palatable by a small proportion of Christianity.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EPISTLE

## TO THE

### CORINTHIANS.

IN my preface to the Epistle to the Romans I have made several extracts from Dr. Paley's *Horae Paulinae*, in which, from internal evidence, he demonstrates the authenticity of that epistle. His observations on the first Epistle to the Corinthians are distinguished by the same profound learning and depth of thought: and as, in an age in which skepticism has had an unbridled range, it may be of great consequence to a sincere inquirer after truth to have all his doubts removed relative to the authenticity of the epistle in question; and as Dr. Paley's observations cast considerable light on several passages in the work, I take the liberty to introduce them, as something should be said on the subject; and I do not pretend to have any thing equal to what is here prepared to my hands. I have scarcely made any other change than to introduce the word section for number.

#### SECTION 1.

Before we proceed to compare this epistle with the history, says Dr. Paley, or with any other epistle, we will employ one section in stating certain remarks applicable to our argument, which arise from a perusal of the epistle itself.

By an expression in the first verse of the seventh chapter, "Now, concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me," it appears that this letter to the Corinthians was written by St. Paul in answer to one which he had received from them; and that the seventh and some of the following chapters are taken up in resolving certain doubts, and regulating certain points of order, concerning which the Corinthians had in their letter consulted him. This alone is a circumstance considerably in favor of the authenticity of the epistle; for it must have been a far-fetched contrivance in a forgery, first to have feigned the receipt of a letter from the Church of Corinth, which letter does not appear, and then to have drawn up a

fictitious answer to it, relative to a great variety of doubts and inquiries, purely economical and domestic; and which, though likely enough to have occurred to an infant society, in a situation and under an institution so novel as that of a Christian Church then was, it must have very much exercised the author's invention, and could have answered no imaginable purpose of forgery, to introduce the mention of it at all. Particulars of the kind we refer to are such as the following: the rule of duty and prudence relative to entering into marriage, as applicable to virgins and to widows; the case of husbands married to unconverted wives, of wives having unconverted husbands; that case where the unconverted party chooses to separate, or where he chooses to continue the union; the effect which their conversion produced upon their prior state; of circumcision; of slavery; the eating of things offered to idols, as it was in itself, or as others were affected by it; the joining in idolatrous sacrifices; the decorum to be observed in their religious assemblies, the order of speaking, the silence of women, the covering, or uncovering of the head, as it became men, as it became women. These subjects, with their several subdivisions, are so particular, minute, and numerous, that though they be exactly agreeable to the circumstances of the persons to whom the letter was written, nothing I believe but the existence and the reality of those circumstances could have suggested them to the writer's thoughts.

But this is not the only nor the principal observation upon the correspondence between the Church of Corinth and their apostle which I wish to point out. It appears, I think, in this correspondence, that although the Corinthians had written to St. Paul, requesting his answer and his directions in the several points above enumerated; yet that they had not said one syllable about the enormities and disorders which had crept in amongst them, and in the blame of which they all shared; but that St. Paul's information concerning the irregularities then prevailing at Corinth had come round to him from other quarters. The quarrels and disputes excited by their contentious adherence to their different teachers, and by their placing of them in competition with one another, were not mentioned in their letter, but communicated to St. Paul by more private intelligence: "It hath been declared unto me, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas,



and I of Christ.” (1 Corinthians 1:11, 12.) The incestuous marriage “of a man with his father’s wife,” which St. Paul reprehends with so much severity in the fifth chapter of this epistle, and which was not the crime of an individual only, but a crime in which the whole Church, by tolerating and conniving at it, had rendered themselves partakers, did not come to St. Paul’s knowledge by the letter, but by a rumor which had reached his ears: “It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife; and ye are puffed up and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.” (1 Corinthians 5:1, 2.) Their going to law before the judicature of the country rather than arbitrate and adjust their disputes among themselves, which St. Paul animadverts upon with his usual plainness, was not intimated to him in the letter, because he tells them his opinion of this conduct before he comes to the contents of the letter. Their litigiousness is censured by St. Paul in the sixth chapter of his epistle: and it is only at the beginning of the seventh chapter that he proceeds upon the articles which he found in their letter; and he proceeds upon them with this preface: “Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me,” (1 Corinthians 7:1;) which introduction he would not have used if he had been already discussing any of the subjects concerning which they had written. Their irregularities in celebrating the Lord’s Supper, and the utter perversion of the institution which ensued, were not in the letter, as is evident from the terms in which St. Paul mentions the notice he had received of it: “Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse; for first of all, when ye come together in the Church, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it.” Now that the Corinthians should, in their own letter, exhibit the fair side of their conduct to the apostle, and conceal from him the faults of their behavior, was extremely natural and extremely probable: but it was a distinction which would not, I think, have easily occurred to the author of a forgery; and much less likely is it, that it should have entered into his thoughts to make the distinction appear in the way in which it does appear, viz. not by the original letter, not by any express observation upon it in the answer, but distantly by marks perceivable in the manner, or in the order in which St. Paul takes notice of their faults.

## SECTION 2.

This epistle purports to have been written after St. Paul had already been at Corinth: "I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom," (1 Corinthians 2:1:) and in many other places to the same effect. It purports also to have been written upon the eve of another visit to that Church: "I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will," (1 Corinthians 4:19;) and again: "I will come to you when I shall pass through Macedonia," (1 Corinthians 16:5.) Now the history relates that St. Paul did in fact visit Corinth twice; once as recorded at length in the eighteenth, and a second time as mentioned briefly in the twentieth chapter of the Acts. The same history also informs us (Acts 20:1) that it was from Ephesus St. Paul proceeded upon his second journey into Greece. Therefore, as the epistle purports to have been written a short time preceding that journey and as St. Paul, the history tells us, had resided more than two years at Ephesus before he set out upon it, it follows that it must have been from Ephesus, to be consistent with the history, that the epistle was written; and every note of place in the epistle agrees with this supposition. "If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?" (1 Corinthians 15:32.) I allow that the apostle might say this wherever he was; but it was more natural and more to the purpose to say it if he was at Ephesus at the time, and in the midst of those conflicts to which the expression relates. "The Churches of Asia salute you," (1 Corinthians 16:19.) Asia, throughout the Acts of the Apostles and the epistles of St. Paul, does not mean the whole of Asia Minor or Anatolia, nor even the whole of the proconsular Asia, but a district in the anterior part of that country called Lydian Asia, divided from the rest much as Portugal is from Spain, and of which district Ephesus was the capital. "Aquila and Priscilla salute you," (1 Corinthians 16:19.) Aquila and Priscilla were at Ephesus during the period within which this epistle was written. (Acts 18:18, 26.)

"I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost," (1 Corinthians 16:8.) This, I apprehend, is in terms almost asserting that he was at Ephesus at the time of writing the epistle. — "A great and effectual door is opened unto me," (1 Corinthians 16:9.) How well this declaration corresponded with the

state of things at Ephesus and the progress of the Gospel in these parts, we learn from the reflection with which the historian concludes the account of certain transactions which passed there: "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed," (Acts 19:20;) as well as from the complaint of Demetrius, "that not only at Ephesus, but also throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people." (Acts 19:26.) "And there are many adversaries," says the epistle. (1 Corinthians 16:9.) Look into the history of this period: "When divers were hardened and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them and separated the disciples." The conformity therefore upon this head of comparison is circumstantial and perfect. If any one think that this is a conformity so obvious, that any forger of tolerable caution and sagacity would have taken care to preserve it, I must desire such a one to read the epistle for himself; and when he has done so, to declare whether he has discovered one mark of art or design; whether the notes of time and place appear to him to be inserted with any reference to each other, with any view of their being compared with each other, or for the purpose of establishing a visible agreement with the history in respect of them.

### SECTION 3.

1 Corinthians 4:17-19: "For this cause I have sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord; who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every Church. Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come unto you; but I will come unto you shortly, if the Lord will."

With this I compare Acts 19:21, 22: "After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem; saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome; so he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus."

Though it be not said, it appears I think with sufficient certainty, I mean from the history, independently of the epistle, that Timothy was sent upon this occasion into Achaia, of which Corinth was the capital city, as well as into Macedonia: for the sending of Timothy and Erastus is, in the

passage where it is mentioned, plainly connected with St. Paul's own journey: he sent them before him. As he therefore purposed to go into Achaia himself, it is highly probable that they were to go thither also. Nevertheless, they are said only to have been sent into Macedonia, because Macedonia was in truth the country to which they went immediately from Ephesus; being directed, as we suppose, to proceed afterwards from thence into Achaia. If this be so, the narrative agrees with the epistle; and the agreement is attended with very little appearance of design. One thing at least concerning it is certain; that if this passage of St. Paul's history had been taken from his letter, it would have sent Timothy to Corinth by name, or expressly however into Achaia.

But there is another circumstance in these two passages much less obvious, in which an agreement holds without any room for suspicion that it was produced by design. We have observed that the sending of Timothy into the peninsula of Greece was connected in the narrative with St. Paul's own journey thither; it is stated as the effect of the same resolution. Paul purposed to go into Macedonia; "so he sent two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus." Now in the epistle also you remark, that when the apostle mentions his having sent Timothy unto them, in the very next sentence he speaks of his own visit: "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, etc. Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you; but I will come to you shortly, if God will." Timothy's journey, we see, is mentioned, in the history and in the epistle, in close connection with St. Paul's own. Here is the same order of thought and intention; yet conveyed under such diversity of circumstances and expression, and the mention of them in the epistle so allied to the occasion which introduces it, viz. the insinuation of his adversaries that he would come to Corinth no more, that I am persuaded no attentive reader will believe that these passages were written in concert with one another, or will doubt that the agreement is unsought and uncontrived.

But in the Acts, Erastus accompanied Timothy in this journey, of whom no mention is made in the epistle. From what has been said in our observations upon the Epistle to the Romans, it appears probable that Erastus was a Corinthian. If so, though he accompanied Timothy to Corinth, he was only returning home, and Timothy was the messenger

charged with St. Paul's orders. At any rate, this discrepancy shows that the passages were not taken from one another.

#### SECTION 4.

1 Corinthians 16:10, 11: "Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear; for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do: let no man therefore despise him, but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me, for I look for him with the brethren."

From the passage considered in the preceding section, it appears that Timothy was sent to Corinth, either with the epistle, or before it: "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus." From the passage now quoted we infer that Timothy was not sent with the epistle; for had he been the bearer of the letter, or accompanied it, would St. Paul in that letter have said, "If Timothy come?" Nor is the sequel consistent with the supposition of his carrying the letter; for if Timothy was with the apostle when he wrote the letter, could he say as he does, "I look for him with the brethren?" I conclude therefore that Timothy had left St. Paul to proceed upon his journey before the letter was written. Farther, the passage before us seems to imply that Timothy was not expected by St. Paul to arrive at Corinth till after they had received the letter. He gives them directions in the letter how to treat him when he should arrive: "If he come," act towards him so and so. Lastly, the whole form of expression is most naturally applicable to the supposition of Timothy's coming to Corinth, not directly from St. Paul, but from some other quarter; and that his instructions had been when he should reach Corinth, to return. Now how stands this matter in the history? Turn to the nineteenth chapter and twenty-first verse of the Acts, {Acts 19:21} and you will find that Timothy did not, when sent from Ephesus, where he left St. Paul, and where the present epistle was written, proceed by straight course to Corinth, but that he went round through Macedonia. This clears up every thing; for although Timothy was sent forth upon his journey before the letter was written, yet he might not reach Corinth till after the letter arrived there; and he would come to Corinth when he did come, not directly from St. Paul at Ephesus, but from some part of Macedonia. Here therefore is a circumstantial and critical agreement, and unquestionably

without design; for neither of the two passages in the epistle mentions Timothy's journey into Macedonia at all, though nothing but a circuit of that kind can explain and reconcile the expression which the writer uses.

## SECTION 5.

1 Corinthians 1:12: "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ."

Also 1 Corinthians 3:6: "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."

This expression, "I have planted, Apollos watered," imports two things; first, that Paul had been at Corinth before Apollos; secondly, that Apollos had been at Corinth after Paul, but before the writing of this epistle. This implied account of the several events and of the order in which they took place, corresponds exactly with the history. St. Paul, after his first visit into Greece, returned from Corinth into Syria, by the way of Ephesus; and dropping his companions Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus, he proceeded forwards to Jerusalem; from Jerusalem he descended to Antioch, and from thence made a progress through some of the upper or northern provinces of the Lesser Asia, Acts 18:19, 23; during which progress, and consequently in the interval between St. Paul's first and second visit to Corinth, and consequently also before the writing of this epistle, which was at Ephesus, two years at least after the apostle's return from his progress, we hear of Apollos, and we hear of him at Corinth. While St. Paul was engaged, as hath been said, in Phrygia and Galatia, Apollos came down to Ephesus; and being, in St. Paul's absence, instructed by Aquila and Priscilla, and having obtained letters of recommendation from the Church at Ephesus, he passed over to Achaia; and when he was there we read that he "helped them much which had believed through grace, for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly;" Acts 18:27, 28. To have brought Apollos into Achaia, of which Corinth was the capital city, as well as the principal Christian Church, and to have shown that he preached the Gospel in that country, would have been sufficient for our purpose. But the history happens also to mention Corinth by name as the place in which Apollos, after his arrival in Achaia, fixed his residence; for,

proceeding with the account of St. Paul's travels, it tells us that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper coasts, came down to Ephesus, Acts 19:1. What is said, therefore, of Apollos in the epistle, coincides exactly and especially in the point of chronology with what is delivered concerning him in the history. The only question now is whether the allusions were made with a regard to this coincidence? Now the occasions and purposes for which the name of Apollos is introduced in the Acts and in the epistles are so independent and so remote, that it is impossible to discover the smallest reference from one to the other. Apollos is mentioned in the Acts in immediate connection with the history of Aquila and Priscilla, and for the very singular circumstance of his "knowing only the baptism of John." In the epistle, where none of these circumstances are taken notice of, his name first occurs, for the purpose of reproving the contentious spirit of the Corinthians; and it occurs only in conjunction with that of some others: "Every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ." The second passage in which Apollos appears, "I have planted, Apollos watered," fixes, as we have observed, the order of time amongst three distinct events; but it fixes this, I will venture to pronounce, without the writer perceiving that he was doing any such thing. The sentence fixes this order in exact conformity with the history; but it is itself introduced solely for the sake of the reflection which follows: "Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."

## SECTION 6.

1 Corinthians 4:11, 12: "Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and ate buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and labor, working with our own hands."

We are expressly told in the history, that at Corinth St. Paul labored with his own hands: "He found Aquila and Priscilla; and, because he was of the same craft, he abode with them and wrought; for by their occupation they were tent-makers." But in the text before us he is made to say, that "he labored even unto this present hour," that is, to the time of writing the epistle at Ephesus. Now, in the narration of St. Paul's transactions at Ephesus, delivered in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts, nothing is said of

his working with his own hands; but in the twentieth chapter we read, that upon his return from Greece he sent for the elders of the Church of Ephesus to meet him at Miletus; and in the discourse which he there addressed to them, amidst some other reflections which he calls to their remembrance, we find the following: "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel; yea, you yourselves also know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." The reader will not forget to remark, that though St. Paul be now at Miletus, it is to the elders of the Church of Ephesus he is speaking, when he says, "Ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered to my necessities;" and that the whole discourse relates to his conduct during his last preceding residence at Ephesus. That manual labor, therefore, which he had exercised at Corinth, he continued at Ephesus; and not only so, but continued it during that particular residence at Ephesus, near the conclusion of which this epistle was written; so that he might with the strictest truth say, at the time of writing the epistle, "Even unto this present hour we labor, working with our own hands." The correspondency is sufficient, then, as to the undesignedness of it. It is manifest to my judgment, that if the history in this article had been taken from the epistle, this circumstance, if it appeared at all, would have appeared in its place, that is in the direct account of St. Paul's transactions at Ephesus. The correspondency would not have been effected, as it is, by a kind of reflected stroke, that is, by a reference in a subsequent speech to what in the narrative was omitted. Nor is it likely, on the other hand, that a circumstance which is not extant in the history of St. Paul at Ephesus, should have been made the subject of a factitious allusion, in an epistle purporting to be written by him from that place; not to mention that the allusion itself, especially as to time, is too oblique and general to answer any purpose of forgery whatever.

## SECTION 7.

1 Corinthians 9:20: "And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law."

We have the disposition here described exemplified in two instances which the history records; one, Acts 16:3: "Him (Timothy) would Paul have to



go forth with him, and took and circumcised him, because of the Jews in those quarters; for they knew all that his father was a Greek.” This was before the writing of the epistle. The other, Acts 21:23, 26, and after the writing of the epistle: “Do this that we say to thee; we have four men which have a vow on them; them take, and purify thyself with them, that they may shave their heads; and all may know that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. Then Paul took the men, and the next day, purifying himself with them, entered into the temple.” Nor does this concurrence between the character and the instances look like the result of contrivance. St. Paul, in the epistle, describes, or is made to describe, his own accommodating conduct towards Jews and towards Gentiles, towards the weak and over-scrupulous, towards men indeed of every variety of character: “To them that are without law as without law, being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ, that I might gain them that are without law; to the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men that I might gain some.” This is the sequel of the text which stands at the head of the present section. Taking therefore the whole passage together, the apostle’s condescension to the Jews is mentioned only as a part of his general disposition towards all. It is not probable that this character should have been made up from the instances in the Acts, which relate solely to his dealings with the Jews. It is not probable that a sophist should take his hint from those instances, and then extend it so much beyond them; and it is still more incredible that the two instances in the Acts, circumstantially related and interwoven with the history, should have been fabricated, in order to suit the character which St. Paul gives of himself in the epistle.

### SECTION 8.

1 Corinthians 1:14-17: “I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that I baptized in my own name; and I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other; for Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel.”

It may be expected that those whom the apostle baptized with his own hands were converts distinguished from the rest by some circumstance, either of eminence or of connection with him. Accordingly, of the three names here mentioned, Crispus, we find from Acts 18:8, was a “chief ruler of the Jewish synagogue at Corinth, who believed in the Lord with all his house.” Gaius, it appears from Romans 16:23, was St. Paul’s host at Corinth, and the host, he tells us, “of the whole Church.” The household of Stephanas, we read in the sixteenth chapter of this epistle, “were the first fruits of Achaia.” Here therefore is the propriety we expected; and it is a proof of reality not to be contemned; for their names appearing in the several places in which they occur, with a mark of distinction belonging to each, could hardly be the effect of chance, without any truth to direct it: and on the other hand, to suppose that they were picked out from these passages, and brought together in the text before us in order to display a conformity of names, is both improbable in itself, and is rendered more so by the purpose for which they are introduced. They come in to assist St. Paul’s exculpation of himself against the possible charge of having assumed the character of the founder of a separate religion, and with no other visible or, as I think, imaginable design. (12)

(12) 1 Corinthians 1:1; “Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes, our brother, unto the Church of God, which is at Corinth.” The only account we have of any person who bore the name of Sosthenes is found in the eighteenth chapter of the Acts. When the Jews at Corinth had brought Paul before Gallio, and Gallio had dismissed their complaint as unworthy of his interference, and had driven them from the judgment seat; “then all the Greeks,” says the historian, “took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat.” The Sosthenes here spoken of was a Corinthian; and, if he was a Christian, and with St Paul when he wrote this epistle, was likely enough to be joined with him in the salutation of the Corinthian Church. But here occurs a difficulty: If Sosthenes was a Christian at the time of this uproar, why should the Greeks beat him? The assault upon the Christians was made by the Jews. It was the Jews who had brought Paul before the magistrate. If it had been the Jews also who had beaten Sosthenes, I should not have doubted that he had been a favourer of St. Paul, and the same person who is joined with him in the epistle. Let us

see, therefore, whether there be not some error in our present text. The Alexandrian manuscript gives **παντες** alone, without **οι ἕλληνες**, and is followed in this reading by the Coptic version, by the Arabic version published by Erpenius, by the Vulgate, and by Bede's Latin version. Three Greek manuscripts again, as well as Chrysostom, give **οι ιουδαιοι**, in the place of **οι ἕλληνες**. A great plurality of manuscripts authorize the reading which is retained in our copies. In this variety it appears to me extremely probable that the historian originally wrote **παντες** alone, and that **οι ἕλληνες**, and **οι ιουδαιοι**, have been respectively added as explanatory of what the word **παντες** was supposed to mean. The sentence without the addition of either name would run very perspicuously, thus: "**και απηλασεν αυτους απο του βηματος. επιλαβομενοι δε παντες σωσθενην τον απχισοναγωγον, ετυπτον εμπροσθεν του βηματος**" and he drove them away from the judgment seat; and they all," viz. the crowd of Jews whom the judge had bid begone, "took Sosthenes, and beat him before the judgment seat." It is certain that, as the whole body of the people were Greeks, the application of all to them was unusual and hard. If I were describing an insurrection at Paris, I might say all the Jews, all the Protestants, or all the English, acted so and so; but I should scarcely say all the French, when the whole mass of the community were of that description. — See the note on Acts 18:17, where the subject mentioned here by the learned archdeacon is particularly considered.

## SECTION 9.

1 Corinthians 16:10, 11: "Now if Timotheus come, let no man despise him." Why despise him? This charge is not given concerning any other messenger whom St. Paul sent: and, in the different epistles, many such messengers are mentioned. Turn to 1st of Timothy, 1 Timothy 4:12, and you will find that Timothy was a young man, younger probably than those who were usually employed in the Christian mission; and that St. Paul, apprehending lest he should on that account be exposed to contempt, urges upon him the caution which is there inserted: "Let no man despise thy youth."

**SECTION 10.**

1 Corinthians 16:1: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye.”

The Churches of Galatia and Phrygia were the last Churches which St. Paul had visited before the writing of this epistle. He was now at Ephesus, and he came thither immediately from visiting these Churches: “He went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples. And it came to pass that Paul, having passed through the upper coasts, (viz. the above-named countries, called the upper coasts, as being the northern part of Asia Minor,) came to Ephesus;” Acts 18:23; 19:1. These, therefore, probably, were the last Churches at which he left directions for their public conduct during his absence. Although two years intervened between his journey to Ephesus and his writing this epistle, yet it does not appear that during that time he visited any other Church. That he had not been silent when he was in Galatia upon this subject of contribution for the poor, is farther made out from a hint which he lets fall in his epistle to that Church: “Only they (viz. the other apostles) would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.”

**SECTION 11.**

1 Corinthians 4:18: “Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.”

Why should they suppose that he would not come? Turn to the first chapter of the second epistle to the Corinthians, and you will find that he had already disappointed them: “I was minded to come unto you before, that you might have a second benefit; and to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judea. When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? Or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea, yea, and nay, nay? But, as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay.” It appears from this quotation that he had not only intended, but that he had promised them a

visit before; for otherwise, why should he apologize for the change of his purpose, or express so much anxiety lest this change should be imputed to any culpable fickleness in his temper; and lest he should thereby seem to them as one whose word was not in any sort to be depended upon? Besides which, the terms made use of plainly refer to a promise: "Our word toward you was not yea and nay." St. Paul, therefore, had signified an intention which he had not been able to execute; and this seeming breach of his word, and the delay of his visit, had, with some who were evil affected towards him, given birth to a suggestion that he would come no more to Corinth.

## SECTION 12.

1 Corinthians 5:7, 8: "For even Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

Dr. Benson tells us, that from this passage, compared with 1 Corinthians 16:8, it has been conjectured that this epistle was written about the time of the Jewish passover; and to me the conjecture appears to be very well founded. The passage to which Dr. Benson refers us is this: "I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost." With this passage he ought to have joined another in the same context: "And it may be that I will abide yea, and winter with you;" for, from the two passages laid together, it follows that the epistle was written before Pentecost, yet after winter; which necessarily determines the date to the part of the year within which the passover falls. It was written before Pentecost, because he says, "I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost." It was written after winter, because he tells them, "It may be that I may abide, yea, and winter with you." The winter which the apostle purposed to pass at Corinth was undoubtedly the winter next ensuing to the date of the epistle; yet it was a winter subsequent to the ensuing Pentecost, because he did not intend to set forwards upon his journey till after that feast. The words, "Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," look very like words suggested by the season; at least they have, upon that

supposition, a force and significancy which do not belong to them upon any other; and it is not a little remarkable that the hints casually dropped in the epistle concerning particular parts of the year should coincide with this supposition.

LONDON, OCT. 1, 1814.

# PREFACE TO THE FIRST EPISTLE

## TO THE

## CORINTHIANS.

CORINTH, to which this and the following epistle were sent, was one of the most celebrated cities of Greece. It was situated on a gulf of the same name, and was the capital of the Peloponnesus or Achaia, and was united to the continent by an isthmus or neck of land that had the port of Lecheum on the west and that of Cenchrea on the east, the former in the gulf of Lepanto, the latter in the gulf of Elrina, by which it commanded the navigation and commerce both of the Ionian and AEgean seas, consequently of Italy on the one hand and of all the Greek islands on the other: in a word, it embraced the commerce of the whole Mediterranean Sea, from the straits of Gibraltar on the west to the port of Alexandria on the east, with the coasts of Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Asia Minor. It is supposed, by some, to have been founded by Sisyphus, the son of Eolus, and grandfather of Ulysses, about the year of the world 2490 or 2500, and before the Christian era 1504 years. Others report that it had both its origin and name from Corinthus, the son of Pelops. It was at first but a very inconsiderable town; but at last, through its extensive commerce, became the most opulent city of Greece, and the capital of a powerful state. It was destroyed by the Romans under Mummius, about 146 years before Christ, but was afterwards rebuilt by Julius Caesar.

Corinth exceeded all the cities of the world, for the splendor and magnificence of its public buildings, such as temples, palaces, theatres, porticos, cenotaphs, baths, and other edifices; all enriched with a beautiful kind of columns, capitals, and bases, from which the Corinthian order in architecture took its rise. Corinth is also celebrated for its statues; those, especially, of Venus, the Sun, Neptune and Amphitrite, Diana, Apollo,

Jupiter, Minerva, etc. The temple of Venus was not only very splendid, but also very rich, and maintained, according to Strabo, not less than 1000 courtesans, who were the means of bringing an immense concourse of strangers to the place. Thus riches produced luxury, and luxury a total corruption of manners; though arts, sciences, and literature continued to flourish long in it, and a measure of the martial spirit of its ancient inhabitants was kept alive in it by means of those public games which, being celebrated on the isthmus which connects the Peloponnesus to the main land, were called the Isthmian games, and were exhibited once every five years. The exercises in these games were, leaping, running, throwing the quoit or dart, bowing, and wrestling. It appears that, besides these, there were contentions for poetry and music; and the conquerors in any of these exercises were ordinarily crowned either with pine leaves or with parsley. It is well known that the apostle alludes to these games in different parts of his epistles, which shall all be particularly noticed as they occur.

Corinth, like all other opulent and well-situated places, has often been a subject of contention between rival states, has frequently changed masters, and undergone all forms of government. The Venetians held it till 1715, when the Turks took it from them; under whose dominion it has till lately remained. Under this deteriorating government it was greatly reduced, its whole population amounting only to between 13 and 14, 000 souls. It has now got into the hands of the Greeks, its natural owners. It lies about 46 miles to the east of Athens, and 342 south-west of Constantinople. A few vestiges of its ancient splendor still remain, which are objects of curiosity and gratification to all intelligent travelers.

As we have seen that Corinth was well situated for trade, and consequently very rich, it is no wonder that, in its heathen state, it was exceedingly corrupt and profligate. Notwithstanding this, every part of the Grecian learning was highly cultivated here; so that, before its destruction by the Romans, Cicero (*Pro lege Manl. cap. v.*) scrupled not to call it *totius Graeciae lumen*-the eye of all Greece. Yet the inhabitants of it were as lascivious as they were learned. Public prostitution formed a considerable part of their religion; and they were accustomed in their public prayers, to request the gods to multiply their prostitutes! and in order to express their gratitude to their deities for the favors they received,



they bound themselves, by vows, to increase the number of such women; for commerce with them was neither esteemed sinful nor disgraceful. Lais, so famous in history, was a Corinthian prostitute, and whose price was not less than 10, 000 drachmas. Demosthenes, from whom this price was required by her for one night's lodging, said, "I will not buy repentance at so dear a rate." So notorious was this city for such conduct, that the verb **κορινθιαζεσθαι**, to Corinthize, signified to act the prostitute; and **κορινθια κορη**, a Corinthian damsel, meant a harlot or common woman. I mention these things the more particularly because they account for several things mentioned by the apostle in his letters to this city, and things which, without this knowledge of their previous Gentile state and customs, we could not comprehend. It is true, as the apostle states, that they carried these things to an extent that was not practised in any other Gentile country. And yet, even in Corinth-the Gospel of Jesus Christ prevailing over universal corruption-there was founded a Christian Church!

### **Analysis of the First Epistle to the Corinthians.**

This epistle, as to its subject matter, has been variously divided: into three parts by some; into four, seven, eleven, etc., parts, by others. Most of these divisions are merely artificial, and were never intended by the apostle. The following seven particulars comprise the whole:—

I. — The Introduction, 1 Corinthians 1:1-9.

II. — Exhortations relative to their dissensions, 1 Corinthians 1:9-4:21.

III. — What concerns the person who had married his step-mother, commonly called the incestuous person, 1 Corinthians 5, 6, and 7.

IV. — The question concerning the lawfulness of eating things which had been offered to idols, 1 Corinthians 8, 9, and 10, inclusive.

V. — Various ecclesiastical regulations, 1 Corinthians 11-14, inclusive.

VI. — The important question concerning the resurrection of the dead, 1 Corinthians 15.

VII. — Miscellaneous matters; containing exhortations, salutations, commendations, etc., etc., 1 Corinthians 16.



## THE FIRST

# EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

## TO THE

# CORINTHIANS.

### Chronological Notes relative to this Epistle.

-Year of the Constantinopolitan era of the world, as used by the emperors of the east in their diplomata, etc., and thence also called the “civil era of the Greeks,” 5564 -Year of the Alexandrian era of the world, or Greek ecclesiastical epocha, 5558. — Year of the Antiochian era of the world, 5548. — Year of the Eusebian epocha of the creation, or that used in the Chronicon of Eusebius, and the Roman Martyrology, 4284. — Year of the Julian period, 4764. — Year of the Usherian era of the world, or that used in the English Bibles, 4060. — Year of the minor Jewish era of the world, 3816. — Year of the greater Rabbinical era of the world, 4415. — Year since the Deluge, according to Archbishop Usher and the English Bible, 2404. — Year of the Cali Yuga, or Indian era of the Deluge, 3158. — Year of the Iphitus, or since the first commencement of the Olympic games, 996. — Year of the two hundred and eighth Olympiad, 4. — Year from the building of Rome, according to Fabius Pictor, who flourished in the time of the first Punic war, and who is styled by Dionysius of Halicarnassus an accurate writer, 803. (This epoch is used by Diodorus Siculus.) -Year from the building of Rome, according to Polybius, 807. — Year from the building of Rome, according to Cato and the Fasti Consulares; and adopted by Solinus, Eusebius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, etc., 808. — Year from the building of Rome according to Varro, which was that adopted by the Roman emperors in their proclamations, by Plutarch, Tacitus, Dio Cassius, Gellius, Censorinus, Onuphrius, Baronius, and by most modern

chronologers, 809. N. B. Livy, Cicero, Pliny, and Vellcius Paternulus, fluctuate between the Varronian and Catonian computations. — Year of the epocha of Nabonassar, king of Babylon, or that used by Hipparchus, by Ptolemy in his astronomical observations, by Censorinus and others, 803. (The years of this era constantly contained 365 days, so that 1460 Julian were equal to 1461 Nabonassarean years. This epoch began on Feb. 26th, B. C. 747; and consequently, the commencement of the 803rd year of the era of Nabonassar corresponded to the IVth of the Ides of August, A. D. 55.) -Year of the era of the Seleucidae, or since Seleucus, one of the generals of Alexander's army, took Babylon, and ascended the Asiatic throne; sometimes called the Grecian era, and the era of Principalities, in reference to the division of Alexander's empire, 368. — Year of the Caesarean era of Antioch, 104. — Year of the Julian era, or since the calendar of Numa Pompilius was reformed by Julius Caesar, 101. — Year of the Spanish era, or since the second division of the Roman provinces among the Triumviri, 94. (This epoch continued in use among the Spaniards till A. D. 1383, and among the Portuguese till about A. D. 1422.) -Year since the defeat of Pompey, by Julius Caesar, at Pharsalia in Thessaly, called by Catrou and Rouille, the commencement of the Roman empire, 104. — Year of the Actiac, or Actian era, or proper epocha of the Roman empire, commencing with the defeat of Antony by Augustus at Actium, 80. — Year from the birth of Jesus Christ, 60. — Year of the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 56. — Year of the Dionysian period, or Easter Cycle, 57. — Common Golden Number, or year of the Grecian or Metonic Cycle of 19 years, 19, or the seventh Embolismic. — Jewish Golden Number, or year of the Rabbinical Cycle of 19 years, 16, or the second after the fifth Embolismic. — Year of the Solar Cycle, 9. — Dominical Letters, it being Bissextile or Leap-year, DC; D standing till the 24th of February, or the sixth of the Calends of March, (the two following days after Feb. 23rd, or the seventh of the Calends of March, being named the sixth of the same month,) and the other letter for the remainder of the year. — Jewish passover, (15th of Nisan,) Saturday, April 17th, or the XVth of the Calends of May. — Number of Direction, or number of days on which Easter Sunday happens after the 21st of March, 28. — Mean time of the Paschal Full Moon at Corinth, (its longitude being twenty-three degrees to the east of London,) according to Ferguson's Tables, April 19th, or the XIIIth of the Calends of May, at fifteen minutes

and fifty-eight seconds past eleven at night. (The reason of the discrepancy of the fifteenth of Nisan, with the day of the mean Paschal Full Moon arises from the inaccuracy of the Metonic Cycle, which reckoned 235 mean lunations to be precisely equal to nineteen solar years, these lunations being actually performed in one hour and a half less time. The correspondence of the Passover with the mean Full Moon, according to the Julian account, was in A. D. 325.) - True time of the Paschal Full Moon at Corinth, according to Ferguson's Tables, the XIIth of the Calends of May, (April 20th,) at fifty-seven minutes and forty-one seconds past five in the morning. — Easter Sunday, April 18th, or the XIVth of the Calends of May. — Epact, or moon's age on the twenty-second of March, or the Xith of the Calends of April, 18. — Year of the reign of Nero Caesar, the Roman emperor, and fifth Caesar, 3. — Year of Claudius Felix, the Jewish Governor, 4. — Year of the reign of Vologesus, king of the Parthians, of the family of the Arsacidae, 7. — Year of Caius Numidius Quadratus, governor of Syria, 6. — Year of Ishmael, high priest of the Jews, 2. — Year of the reign of Corbred I., king of the Scots, brother to the celebrated Caractacus, who was carried prisoner to Rome, but afterwards released by the emperor, 2. — According to Struyk's catalogue of eclipses, which he collected from the Chinese chronology, the sun was eclipsed at Canton in China, on the 25th of December of this year, or on the VIIIth of the Calends of January, A. D. 57. The middle of the eclipse was at twenty-eight minutes past twelve at noon; the quantity eclipsed at this time being nine digits and twenty minutes. The day of this eclipse was the 19th of Tybi, in the 804th year of the Nabonassarean era, and on the 24th of Cisleu, of the minor Rabbinical or Jewish era of the world, 3817, or 4416 of their greater era. — Roman Consuls, Q. Volusius Saturninus, and P. Cornelius Scipio.

## CHAPTER 1.

*The salutation of Paul and Sosthenes, 1, 2. The apostolical benediction, 3. Thanksgiving for the prosperity of the Church at Corinth, 4. In what that prosperity consisted, 5-9. The apostle reproves their dissensions, and vindicates himself from being any cause of them, 10-17. States the simple means which God uses to convert sinners and confound the wisdom of the wise, etc., 18-21. Why the Jews and Greeks did not believe, 22. The matter of the apostle's preaching, and the reasons why that preaching was effectual to the salvation of men, 23-29. All should glory in God, because all blessings are dispensed by Him through Christ Jesus, 30, 31.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 1.

**Verse 1. *Paul, called to be an apostle***— Bishop Pearce contends that a comma should be placed after κλητος, called, which should not be joined to αποστολος, apostle: the first signifies being called to, the other sent from. He reads it, therefore, Paul the called; the apostle of Jesus Christ. The word κλητος, called, may be here used, as in some other places, for constituted. For this, and the meaning of the word apostle, see the note on Romans 1:1.

As the apostle had many irregularities to reprehend in the Corinthian Church, it was necessary that he should be explicit in stating his authority. He was called-invited to the Gospel feast; had partaken of it, and, by the grace he received, was qualified to proclaim salvation to others: Jesus Christ therefore made him an apostle, that is, gave him a Divine commission to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles.

***Through the will of God***— By a particular appointment from God alone; for, being an extraordinary messenger, he derived no part of his authority from man.

***Sosthenes our brother***— Probably the same person mentioned Acts 18:17, where see the note.

**Verse 2. *The Church of God which is at Corinth***— This Church was planted by the apostle himself about A. D. 52, as we learn from Acts 18:1, etc., where see the notes.

***Sanctified in Christ Jesus***— ἁγιασμενοις, Separated from the corruptions of their place and age.

***Called to be saints***— κλητοις αγιοις, Constituted saints, or invited to become such; this was the design of the Gospel, for Jesus Christ came to save men from their sins.

***With all that in every place***, etc.— All who profess Christianity, both in Corinth, Ephesus, and other parts of Greece or Asia Minor; and by this we see that the apostle intended that this epistle should be a general property of the universal Church of Christ; though there are several matters in it that are suited to the state of the Corinthians only.

***Both theirs and ours***— That is, Jesus Christ is the common Lord and Savior of all. He is the exclusive property of no one Church, or people, or nation. Calling on or invoking the name of the Lord Jesus, was the proper distinguishing mark of a Christian. In those times of apostolic light and purity no man attempted to invoke God but in the name of Jesus Christ; this is what genuine Christians still mean when they ask any thing from God for Christ's SAKE.

**Verse 3. *Grace be unto you***— For a full explanation of all these terms, see the notes on Romans 1:7.

**Verse 4. *For the grace-which is given you***— Not only their calling to be saints, and to be sanctified in Christ Jesus; but for the various spiritual gifts which they had received, as specified in the succeeding verses.

**Verse 5. *Ye are enriched-ye abound-in all utterance***— εν παντι λογω, In all doctrine; for so the word should certainly be translated and understood. All the truths of God relative to their salvation had been explicitly declared to them; and they had all knowledge; so that they perfectly comprehended the doctrines which they had heard.

**Verse 6. *As the testimony of Christ***, etc.— The testimony of Christ is the Gospel which the apostle had preached, and which had been confirmed by various gifts of the Holy Spirit, and miracles wrought by the apostle.

**Verse 7. *So that ye come behind in no gift***— Every gift and grace of God's Spirit was possessed by the members of that Church, some having their gifts after this manner, others after that.

***Waiting for the coming of our Lord***— It is difficult to say whether the apostle means the final judgment, or our Lord's coming to destroy Jerusalem, and make an end of the Jewish polity. — See 1 Thessalonians 3:13. As he does not explain himself particularly, he must refer to a subject with which they were well acquainted. As the Jews in general continued to contradict and blaspheme, it is no wonder if the apostle should be directed to point out to the believing Gentiles that the judgments of God were speedily to fall upon this rebellious people, and scatter them over the face of the earth; which shortly afterwards took place.

**Verse 8. *Who shall-confirm you***— As the testimony of Christ was confirmed among you, so, in conscientiously believing and obeying, God will confirm you through that testimony. See 1 Corinthians 1:6.

***In the day of our Lord Jesus***— In the day that he comes to judge the world, according to some; but, in the day in which he comes to destroy the Jewish polity, according to others. While God destroys them who are disobedient, he can save you who believe.

**Verse 9. *God is faithful***— The faithfulness of God is a favourite expression among the ancient Jews; and by it they properly understand the integrity of God in preserving whatever is entrusted to him. And they suppose that in this sense the fidelity of man may illustrate the fidelity of God, in reference to which they tell the two following stories. "Rabbi Phineas, the son of Jair, dwelt in a certain city, whither some men came who had two measures of barley, which they desired him to preserve for them. They afterwards forgot their barley and went away. Rabbi Phineas each year sowed the barley, reaped, thrashed, and laid it up in his granary. When seven years had elapsed the men returned, and desired to have the barley with which they had entrusted him. Rabbi Phineas recollected them, and said, 'Come and take your treasure,' i.e. the barley they had left, with all that it had produced for seven years. Thus, from the faithfulness of man ye may know the faithfulness of God."



“Rabbi Simeon, the son of Shetach, bought an ass from some Edomites, at whose neck his disciples saw a diamond hanging; they said unto him, Rabbi, the blessing of the Lord maketh rich, Proverbs 10:22. But he answered: The ass I have bought, but the diamond I have not bought; therefore he returned the diamond to the Edomites. Thus, from the fidelity of man ye may know the fidelity of God.” This was an instance of rare honesty, not to be paralleled among the Jews of the present day, and probably among few Gentiles. Whatever is committed to the keeping of God he will most carefully preserve; for he is faithful.

*Unto the fellowship*, etc.— **εἰς κοινωνίαν**, Into the communion or participation of Christ, in the graces of his Spirit and the glories of his future kingdom. God will continue to uphold and save you, if you entrust your bodies and souls to him. But can it be said that God will keep what is either not entrusted to him; or, after being entrusted, is taken away?

**Verse 10.** *Now I beseech you, brethren*— The apostle having finished his introduction comes to his second point, exhorting them to abstain from dissensions, that they might be of the same heart and mind, striving together for the hope of the Gospel.

*By the name of our Lord Jesus*— By his authority, and in his place; and on account of your infinite obligations to his mercy in calling you into such a state of salvation.

*That ye all speak the same thing*— If they did not agree exactly in opinion on every subject, they might, notwithstanding, agree in the words which they used to express their religious faith. The members of the Church of God should labor to be of the same mind, and to speak the same thing, in order to prevent divisions, which always hinder the work of God. On every essential doctrine of the Gospel all genuine Christians agree: why then need religious communion be interrupted? This general agreement is all that the apostle can have in view; for it cannot be expected that any number of men should in every respect perfectly coincide in their views of all the minor points, on which an exact conformity in sentiment is impossible to minds so variously constituted as those of the human race. Angels may thus agree, who see nothing through an imperfect or false medium; but to man this is impossible. Therefore men should bear with

each other, and not be so ready to imagine that none have the truth of God but they and their party.

**Verse 11.** *By them which are of the house of Chloe*— This was doubtless some very religious matron at Corinth, whose family were converted to the Lord; some of whom were probably sent to the apostle to inform him of the dissensions which then prevailed in the Church at that place. Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, mentioned 1 Corinthians 16:17, were probably the sons of this Chloe.

**Contentions**— *εριδες*, Altercations; produced by the *σχισματα*, divisions, mentioned above. When once they had divided, they must necessarily have contended, in order to support their respective parties.

**Verse 12.** *Every one of you saith*— It seems from this expression that the whole Church at Corinth was in a state of dissension: they were all divided into the following sects Paulians, or followers of St. Paul; 2. Apollonians, or followers of Apollos; 3. Kephians, or followers of Kephias; 4. Christians, or followers of Christ. See the introduction, sec. v.

The converts at Corinth were partly Jews and partly Greeks. The Gentile part, as Dr. Lightfoot conjectures, might boast the names of Paul and Apollos; the Jewish, those of Kephias and Christ. But these again might be subdivided; some probably considered themselves disciples of Paul, he being the immediate instrument of their conversion, while others might prefer Apollos for his extraordinary eloquence.

If by Kephias the apostle Peter be meant, some of the circumcision who believed might prefer him to all the rest; and they might consider him more immediately sent to them; and therefore have him in higher esteem than they had Paul, who was the minister or apostle of the uncircumcision: and on this very account the converted Gentiles would prize him more highly than they did Peter.

Instead of Christ, *χριστου*, some have conjectured that we should read *κριπτου*, of Crispus; who is mentioned 1 Corinthians 1:14. And some think that *χριστου*, of Christ, is an interpolation, as it is not likely that Christ in any sense of the word could be said to be the head of a sect, or party, in his own Church; as all those parties held that Gospel, of which himself was both the author and the subject. But it is very easy to

conceive that, in a Church so divided, a party might be found, who, dividing Christ from his ministers, might be led to say, “We will have nothing to do with your parties, nor with your party spirit; we are the disciples of Christ, and will have nothing to do with Paulians, Apollonians, or Kephians, as contradistinguished from Christ.” The reading *κριστου* for *χριστου* is not acknowledged by any MS. or version.

**Verse 13. *Is Christ divided?***— Can he be split into different sects and parties? Has he different and opposing systems? Or, is the Messiah to appear under different persons?

***Was Paul crucified for you?***— As the Gospel proclaims salvation through the crucified only, has Paul poured out his blood as an atonement for you? This is impossible, and therefore your being called by my name is absurd; for his disciples you should be, alone, who has bought you by his blood.

***Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?***— To be baptized in, or into the name of one, implied that the baptized was to be the disciple of him into whose name, religion, etc., he was baptized. As if he said: Did I ever attempt to set up a new religion, one founded on my own authority, and coming from myself? On the contrary, have I not preached Christ crucified for the sin of the world; and called upon all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, to believe on Him?

**Verse 14. *I thank God that I baptized none of you***— None of those who now live in Corinth, except Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, Acts 18:8. And Gaius, the same person probably with whom Paul lodged, Romans 16:23, where see the notes. Dr. Lightfoot observes: “If this be Gaius, or Caius, to whom the third epistle of John was written, which is very probable when the first verse of that epistle is compared with Romans 16:23, { 3 John 1 } then it will appear probable that John wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians. I wrote, says he, unto the Church—What Church? Certainly it must have been some particular Church which the apostle has in view, and the Church where Gaius himself resided. And if this be true, we may look for Diotrephes (3 John 9) in the Corinthian Church; and the author of the schism of which the apostle complains. See the Introduction, sect. viii.

**Verse 15.** *Lest any should say*, etc.— He was careful not to baptize, lest it should be supposed that he wished to make a party for himself; because superficial observers might imagine that he baptized them into his own name—to be his followers, though he baptized them into the name of Christ only.

Instead of **εβαπτισα**, I have baptized, the Codex Alexandrinus, the Codex Ephraim, and several others, with the Coptic, Sahidic, later Syriac in the margin, Armenian, Vulgate, some copies of the Itala, and several of the fathers, read **εβαπτισθητε**, ye were baptized. And if we read **ινα**, so that, instead of lest, the sentence will stand thus: So that no one can say that ye were baptized into my name. This appears to be the true reading, and for it Bp. Pearce offers several strong arguments.

**Verse 16.** *The household of Stephanas*— From 1 Corinthians 16:15, we learn that the family of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, probably converted and baptized by the apostle himself. Epenetus is supposed to be one of this family. See the note on Romans 16:5.

*I know not whether I baptized any other.*— I do not recollect that there is any person now residing in Corinth, or Achaia, besides the above mentioned, whom I have baptized. It is strange that the doubt here expressed by the apostle should be construed so as to affect his inspiration! What, does the inspiration of prophet or apostle necessarily imply that he must understand the geography of the universe, and have an intuitive knowledge of all the inhabitants of the earth, and how often, and where they may have changed their residence! Nor was that inspiration ever given so to work on a man's memory that he could not forget any of the acts which he had performed during life. Inspiration was given to the holy men of old that they might be able to write and proclaim the mind of God in the times which concern the salvation of men.

**Verse 17.** *For Christ sent me not to baptize*— Bp. Pearce translates thus: For Christ sent me, not so much to baptize as to preach the Gospel: and he supports his version thus—"The writers of the Old and New Testaments do, almost every where (agreeably to the Hebrew idiom) express a preference given to one thing beyond another by an affirmation of that which is preferred, and a negation of that which is contrary to it: and so it must be understood here, for if St. Paul was not sent at all to

baptize, he baptized without a commission; but if he was sent, not only to baptize but to preach also, or to preach rather than baptize, he did in fact discharge his duty aright.” It appears sufficiently evident that baptizing was considered to be an inferior office, and though every minister of Christ might administer it, yet apostles had more important work. Preparing these adult heathens for baptism by the continual preaching of the word was of much greater consequence than baptizing them when thus prepared to receive and profit by it.

*Not with wisdom of words*— οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου. In several places in the New Testament the term λογος is taken not only to express a word, a speech, a saying, etc., but doctrine, or the matter of teaching. Here, and in 1 Thessalonians 1:5, and in several other places, it seems to signify reason, or that mode of rhetorical argumentation so highly prized among the Greeks. The apostle was sent not to pursue this mode of conduct, but simply to announce the truth; to proclaim Christ crucified for the sin of the world; and to do this in the plainest and simplest manner possible, lest the numerous conversions which followed might be attributed to the power of the apostle’s eloquence, and not to the demonstration of the Spirit of God. It is worthy of remark that, in all the revivals of religion with which we are acquainted, God appears to have made very little use of human eloquence, even when possessed by pious men. His own nervous truths, announced by plain common sense, though in homely phrase, have been the general means of the conviction and conversion of sinners. Human eloquence and learning have often been successfully employed in defending the outworks of Christianity; but simplicity and truth have preserved the citadel.

It is farther worthy of remark, that when God was about to promulgate his laws he chose Moses as the instrument, who appears to have labored under some natural impediment in his speech, so that Aaron his brother was obliged to be his spokesman to Pharaoh; and that, when God had purposed to publish the Gospel to the Gentile world—to Athens, Ephesus, Corinth, and Rome, he was pleased to use Saul of Tarsus as the principal instrument; a man whose bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible, 2 Corinthians 10:1, 10. And thus it was proved that God sent him to preach, not with human eloquence, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect but with the demonstration and power of

his own Spirit; and thus the excellence of the power appeared to be of God, and not of man.

**Verse 18. *For the preaching of the cross***— ὁ λογος γαρ ο σταυρου, The doctrine of the cross; or the doctrine that is of or concerning the cross; that is, the doctrine that proclaims salvation to a lost world through the crucifixion of Christ.

***Is to them that perish foolishness***— There are, properly speaking, but two classes of men known where the Gospel is preached: **απολλυμενοι**, the unbelievers and gainsayers, who are perishing; and **σοζομενοι**, the obedient believers, who are in a state of salvation. To those who will continue in the first state, the preaching of salvation through the merit of a crucified Savior is folly. To those who believe this doctrine of Christ crucified is the power of God to their salvation; it is divinely efficacious to deliver them from all the power, guilt, and pollution of sin.

**Verse 19. *For it is written***— The place referred to is Isaiah 29:14.

***I will destroy the wisdom of the wise***— **των σοφων**, Of wise men—of the philosophers who in their investigations seek nothing less than God, and whose highest discoveries amount to nothing in comparison of the grand truths relative to God, the invisible world, and the true end of man, which the Gospel has brought to light. Let me add, that the very discoveries which are really useful have been made by men who feared God, and conscientiously credited Divine revelation: witness Newton, Boyle, Pascal, and many others. But all the skeptics and deists, by their schemes of natural religion and morality, have not been able to save one soul! No sinner has ever been converted from the error of his ways by their preaching or writings.

**Verse 20. *Where is the wise-the scribe-the disputer of this world?***— These words most manifestly refer to the Jews; as the places (Isaiah 29:14; 33:18; 44:25) to which he refers cannot be understood of any but the Jews.

The wise man **σοφος**, of the apostle, is the **חכם** chakam of the prophet; whose office it was to teach others.

The scribe, **γραμματεὺς**, of the apostle, is the **סופר** sopher of the prophet; this signifies any man of learning, as distinguished from the common people, especially any master of the traditions.

The disputer, **σζητητής**, answers to the **דרש** derosh, or **דרש** darshan, the propounder of questions; the seeker of allegorical, mystical, and cabalistical senses from the Holy Scriptures. Now as all these are characters well known among the Jews, and as the words **αἰῶνος τούτου**, of this world are a simple translation of **עולם הזה** olam hazzeh, which is repeatedly used to designate the Jewish republic, there is no doubt that the apostle has the Jews immediately in view. This wisdom of theirs induced them to seek out of the sacred oracles any sense but the true one; and they made the word of God of none effect by their traditions. After them, and precisely on their model, the schoolmen arose; and they rendered the doctrine of the Gospel of no effect by their hypercritical questions, and endless distinctions without differences. By the preaching of Christ crucified God made foolish the wisdom of the Jewish wise men; and, after that the pure religion of Christ had been corrupted by a Church that was of this world, God rendered the wisdom and disputing of the schoolmen foolishness, by the revival of pure Christianity at the Reformation. The Jews themselves allow that nothing is wise, nothing strong, nothing rich, without God.

“Our rabbins teach that there were two wise men in this world; one was an Israelite, Achitophel, the other was a Gentile, Balaam; but both were miserable in this world.”

“There were also two strong men in the world; one an Israelite, Samson, the other a Gentile, Goliath; but they were both miserable in this world.”

“There were two rich men in the world; one an Israelite, Korah, the other a Gentile, Haman; but both these were miserable in this world. And why? Because their gifts came not from God.” See Schoettgen.

In truth the world has derived very little, if any, moral good, either from the Jewish rabbins or the Gentile philosophers.

**Verse 21.** *For after that in the wisdom of God*— Dr. Lightfoot observes, “That **σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ**, the wisdom of God, is not to be understood of

that wisdom which had God for its author, but that wisdom which had God for its object. There was, among the heathen, σοφια της φυσικης, wisdom about natural things, that is, philosophy; and σοφια του θεου, wisdom about God; that is, divinity. But the world in its divinity could not, by wisdom, know God.” The plain meaning of this verse is, that the wise men of the world, especially the Greek philosophers, who possessed every advantage that human nature could have, independently of a Divine revelation, and who had cultivated their minds to the uttermost, could never, by their learning, wisdom, and industry, find out God; nor had the most refined philosophers among them just and correct views of the Divine nature, nor of that in which human happiness consists. The work of LUCRETIVS, Deuteronomy Natura Rerum, and the work of CICERO, Deuteronomy Natura Deorum, are incontestable proofs of this. Even the writings of Plato and Aristotle have contributed little to remove the veil which clouded the understanding of men. No wisdom but that which came from God could ever penetrate and illuminate the human mind.

*By the foolishness of preaching*— By the preaching of Christ crucified, which the Gentiles termed μωρια, foolishness, in opposition to their own doctrines, which they termed σοφια, wisdom. It was not by the foolishness of preaching, literally, nor by the foolish preaching, that God saved the world; but by that Gospel which they called μωρια, foolishness; which was, in fact, the wisdom of God, and also the power of God to the salvation of them that believed.

**Verse 22.** *For the Jews require a sign*— Instead of σημειον, a sign, ABCDEFG, several others, both the Syriac, Coptic, Vulgate, and Itala, with many of the fathers, have σημεια, signs; which reading, as undoubtedly genuine, Griesbach has admitted into the text. There never was a people in the universe more difficult to be persuaded of the truth than the Jews: and had not their religion been incontestably proved by the most striking and indubitable miracles, they never would have received it. This slowness of heart to believe, added to their fear of being deceived, induced them to require miracles to attest every thing that professed to come from God. They were a wicked and adulterous generation, continually seeking signs, and never saying, It is enough. But the sign which seems particularly referred to here is the assumption of secular



power, which they expected in the Messiah; and because this sign did not appear in Christ, therefore they rejected him.

*And the Greeks seek after wisdom.*— Such wisdom, or philosophy, as they found in the writings of Cicero, Seneca, Plato, etc., which was called philosophy, and which came recommended to them in all the beauties and graces of the Latin and Greek languages.

**Verse 23. *But we***— Apostles, differing widely from these Gentile philosophers:—

*Preach Christ crucified*— Call on men, both Jews and Gentiles, to believe in Christ, as having purchased their salvation by shedding his blood for them.

*Unto the Jews a stumbling block*— Because Jesus came meek, lowly, and impoverished; not seeking worldly glory, nor affecting worldly pomp; whereas they expected the Messiah to come as a mighty prince and conqueror; because Christ did not come so, they were offended at him. Out of their own mouths, we may condemn the gainsaying Jews. In Sohar Chadash, fol. 26, the following saying is attributed to Moses, relative to the brazen serpent: “Moses said, This serpent is a stumbling block to the world. The holy blessed God answered: Not at all, it shall be for punishment to sinners, and life to upright men.” This is a proper illustration of the apostle’s words.

*Unto the Greeks foolishness*— Because they could not believe that proclaiming supreme happiness through a man that was crucified at Judea as a malefactor could ever comport with reason and common sense; for both the matter and manner of the preaching were opposite to every notion they had formed of what was dignified and philosophic. In Justin Martyr’s dialogue with Trypho the Jew we have these remarkable words, which serve to throw light on the above. “Your Jesus,” says Trypho, “having fallen under the extreme curse of God, we cannot sufficiently admire how you can expect any good from God, who place your hopes *ἐπ’ ἀνθρώπου σταυρωθέντα*, upon a man that was CRUCIFIED.” The same writer adds: “They count us mad, that after the eternal God, the Father of all things, we give the second place, *ἀνθρώπω σταυρωθέντι*, to a man that was crucified.” “Where is your understanding,” said the

Gentiles, “who worship for a god him who was crucified?” Thus Christ crucified was to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. See Whitby on this verse.

**Verse 24. *But unto them which are called***— τοις κλητοις. Those, both of Jews and Greeks, who were by the preaching of the Gospel called or invited to the marriage feast, and have accordingly believed in Christ Jesus; they prove this doctrine to be divinely powerful, to enlighten and convert the soul, and to be a proof of God’s infinite wisdom, which has found out such an effectual way to glorify both his justice and mercy, and save, to the uttermost, all that come to him through Christ Jesus. The called, or invited, κλητοι, is a title of genuine Christians, and is frequently used in the New Testament. ἅγιοι, saints, is used in the same sense.

**Verse 25. *The foolishness of God is wiser***, etc.— The meaning of these strong expressions is, that the things of God’s appointment, which seem to men foolishness, are infinitely beyond the highest degree of human wisdom; and those works of God, which appear to superficial observers weak and contemptible, surpass all the efforts of human power. The means which God has appointed for the salvation of men are so wisely imagined and so energetically powerful, that all who properly use them shall be infallibly brought to the end-final blessedness, which he has promised to them who believe and obey.

**Verse 26. *Ye see your calling***— την κλησιν. The state of grace and blessedness to which ye are invited. I think, βλεπετε την κλησιν, etc., should be read in the imperative: Take heed to, or consider your calling, brethren; that (οτι) not many of you are wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble: men is not in the original, and Paul seems to allude to the Corinthian believers in particular. This seems to have been said in opposition to the high and worldly notions of the Jews, who assert that the Divine Spirit never rests upon any man, unless he be wise, powerful, and rich. Now this Divine Spirit did rest upon the Christians at Corinth, and yet these were, in the sense of the world, neither wise, rich, nor noble. We spoil, if not corrupt the apostle’s meaning, by adding are called, as if God did not send his Gospel to the wise, the powerful, and the noble, or did not will their salvation. The truth is, the Gospel has an equal call to all classes of men; but the wise, the mighty, and the noble, are too

busy, or too sensual, to pay any attention to an invitation so spiritual and so Divine; and therefore there are few of these in the Church of Christ in general.

**Verse 27. *But God hath chosen the foolish things***— God has chosen by means of men who are esteemed rude and illiterate to confound the greatest of the Greek philosophers, and overturn their systems; and, by means of men weak, without secular power or authority, to confound the scribes and Pharisees, and in spite of the exertions of the Jewish sanhedrin, to spread the doctrine of Christ crucified all over the land of Judea, and by such instruments as these to convert thousands of souls to the faith of the Gospel, who are ready to lay down their lives for the truth. The Jews have proverbs that express the same sense as these words of the apostle. In Shemoth Rabba, sec. 17, fol. 117, it is said: “There are certain matters which appear little to men, yet by them God points out important precepts. Thus hyssop in the sight of man is worth nothing, but in the sight of God its power is great; sometimes he equals it to the cedar, particularly in the ordinance concerning the lepers, and in the burning of the red heifer. Thus God commanded them in Egypt, Exodus 12:22: And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, etc. And concerning Solomon it is said, 1 Kings 4:33: And he discoursed of trees, from the cedar on Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall. Whence we may learn that great and small things are equal in the eyes of the Lord, and that even by small things He can work great miracles.”

**Verse 28. *And base things-and things which are despised***— It is very likely that the apostle refers here to the Gentiles and to the Gentile converts, who were considered base and despicable in the eyes of the Jews, who counted them no better than dogs, and who are repeatedly called the things that are not. By these very people, converted to Christianity, God has brought to nought all the Jewish pretensions; and by means of the Gentiles themselves, he has annihilated the whole Jewish polity; so that even Jerusalem itself was soon after this, trodden under foot of the Gentiles.

**Verse 29. *That no flesh should glory***— God does his mighty works in such a way as proves that though he may condescend to employ men as

instruments, yet they have no part either in the contrivance or energy by which such works are performed.

**Verse 30. *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus***— Even the good which you possess is granted by God, for it is by and through him that Christ Jesus comes, and all the blessings of the Gospel dispensation.

***Who of God is made unto us wisdom***— As being the author of that evangelical wisdom which far excels the wisdom of the philosopher and the scribe, and even that legal constitution which is called the wisdom of the Jews, Deuteronomy 4:6.

***And righteousness***— δικαιοσυνη, Justification, as procuring for us that remission of sins which the law could not give, Galatians 2:21; 3:21.

***And sanctification***— As procuring for and working in us, not only an external and relative holiness, as was that of the Jews, but **οσιοτητα της αληθειας**

received; and that, as he has cause of glorying (boasting or exultation) in being made a partaker of these benefits and mercies of his Creator and Redeemer, let him boast in God alone, by whom, through Christ Jesus, he has received the whole.

1. THIS is an admirable chapter, and drawn up with great skill and address. The divided state of the Corinthian Church we have already noticed, and it appears that in these factions the apostle's authority had been set at nought by some, and questioned by many. St. Paul begins his letter with showing his authority; he had it immediately through Christ Jesus himself, by the will of God. And indeed the success of his preaching was a sufficient proof of the Divinity of his call. Had not God been with him he never could have successfully opposed the whole system of the national religion of the Corinthians, supported as it was by the prejudice of the people, the authority of the laws, and the eloquence and learning of their most eminent philosophers. It was necessary, therefore, that he should call the attention of this people to the Divine origin of his mission, that they might acknowledge that the excellency of the power was of God, and not of man.

2. It was necessary also that he should conciliate their esteem, and therefore speak as favourably concerning them as truth would allow; hence he shows them that they were a Church of God, sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints; that they abounded and even excelled in many extraordinary gifts and graces; and that they were not inferior to any Church of God in any gift. And he shows them that they received all these through God's confirmation of that testimony which he had delivered among them, 1 Corinthians 1:4-7.

3. When he had thus prepared their minds to receive and profit by his admonitions he proceeds to their schisms, which he mentions and reprehends in the most delicate manner, so that the most obstinate and prejudiced could take no offense.

4. Having gained this point, he gently leads them to consider that, as God is the fountain of all good, so their good had all come from him; and that none of them should rest in the gift, but in the giver; nor should they consider themselves as of particular consequence on account of possessing such gifts, because all earthly good is transitory, and those who trust in

power, wisdom, or wealth, are confounded and brought to nought; and that they alone are safe who receive every thing as from the hand of God, and, in the strength of his gifts, glorify him who is the donor of all good. He who can read this chapter without getting much profit has very little spirituality in his soul, and must be utterly unacquainted with the work of God in the heart.

## CHAPTER 2.

*The apostle makes an apology for his manner of preaching, 1. And gives the reason why he adopted that manner, 2-5. He shows that this preaching, notwithstanding it was not with excellence of human speech or wisdom, yet was the mysterious wisdom of God, which the princes of this world did not know, and which the Spirit of God alone could reveal, 6-10. It is the Spirit of God only that can reveal the things of God, 11. The apostles of Christ know the things of God by the Spirit of God, and teach them, not in the words of man's wisdom, but in the words of that Spirit, 12, 13. The natural man cannot discern the things of the Spirit, 14. But the spiritual man can discern and teach them, because he has the mind of Christ, 15, 16.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 2.

**Verse 1.** *When I came to you*— Acting suitably to my mission, which was to preach the Gospel, but not with human eloquence, 1 Corinthians 1:17. I declared to you the testimony, the Gospel, of God, not with excellency of speech, not with arts of rhetoric, used by your own philosophers, where the excellence of the speech recommends the matter, and compensates for the want of solidity and truth: on the contrary, the testimony concerning Christ and his salvation is so supremely excellent, as to dignify any kind of language by which it may be conveyed. See the Introduction, sect. ii.

**Verse 2.** *I determined not to know any thing among you*— Satisfied that the Gospel of God could alone make you wise unto salvation, I determined to cultivate no other knowledge, and to teach nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, as the foundation of all true wisdom, piety, and happiness. No other doctrine shall I proclaim among you.

**Verse 3.** *I was with you in weakness*— It is very likely that St. Paul had not only something in his speech very unfavourable to a ready and powerful elocution, but also some infirmity of body that was still more disadvantageous to him. A fine appearance and a fine voice cover many

weaknesses and defects, and strongly and forcibly recommend what is spoken, though not remarkable for depth of thought or solidity of reasoning. Many popular orators have little besides their persons and their voice to recommend them. Louis XIV. styled Peter du Bosc le plus beau parleur de son royaume, the finest speaker in his kingdom; and among his own people he was styled l'orateur parfait, the perfect orator. Look at the works of this French protestant divine, and you find it difficult to subscribe to the above sayings. The difficulty is solved by the information that the person of M. du Bosc was noble and princely, and his voice full, harmonious, and majestic. Paul had none of these advantages, and yet idolatry and superstition fell before him. Thus GOD was seen in the work, and the man was forgotten.

***In fear, and in much trembling.***— This was often the state of his mind; dreading lest he should at any time be unfaithful, and so grieve the Spirit of God; or that, after having preached to others, himself should be a castaway. See 1 Corinthians 9:27.

An eminent divine has said that it requires three things to make a good preacher; study, temptation, and prayer. The latter, no man that lives near to God can neglect; the former, no man who endeavors rightly to divide the word of truth will neglect; and with the second every man will be more or less exercised whose whole aim is to save souls. Those of a different cast the devil permits to pass quietly on in their own indolent and prayerless way.

**Verse 4. *And my speech***— ὁ λογος μου, My doctrine; the matter of my preaching.

***And my preaching***— το κηρυγμα μου, My proclamation, my manner of recommending the grand but simple truths of the Gospel.

***Was not with enticing words of man's wisdom***— ενπειθοις ανθρωπινης σοφιας λογοις, With persuasive doctrines of human wisdom: in every case I left man out, that God might become the more evident. I used none of the means of which great orators avail themselves in order to become popular, and thereby to gain fame.

***But in demonstration of the Spirit***— αποδειξει, In the manifestation; or, as two ancient MSS. have it, αποκαλυψει, in the revelation of the Spirit.



The doctrine that he preached was revealed by the Spirit: that it was a revelation of the Spirit, the holiness, purity, and usefulness of the doctrine rendered manifest: and the overthrow of idolatry, and the conversion of souls, by the power and energy of the preaching, were the demonstration that all was Divine. The greater part of the best MSS., versions, and fathers, leave out the adjective *ανθρωπινης*, man's, before *σοφιας*, wisdom: it is possible that the word may be a gloss, but it is necessarily implied in the clause. Not with the persuasive discourses, or doctrines of wisdom; i.e. of human philosophy.

**Verse 5. *That your faith should not stand***— That the illumination of your souls and your conversion to God might appear to have nothing human in it: your belief, therefore, of the truths which have been proposed to you is founded, not in human wisdom, but in Divine power: human wisdom was not employed; and human power, if it had been employed, could not have produced the change.

**Verse 6. *We speak wisdom among them that are perfect***— By the *εν τοις τελειοις*, among those that are perfect, we are to understand Christians of the highest knowledge and attainments- those who were fully instructed in the knowledge of God through Christ Jesus. Nothing, in the judgment of St. Paul, deserved the name of wisdom but this. And though he apologizes for his not coming to them with excellency of speech or wisdom, yet he means what was reputed wisdom among the Greeks, and which, in the sight of God, was mere folly when compared with that wisdom that came from above. Dr. Lightfoot thinks that the apostle mentions a fourfold wisdom. 1. Heathen wisdom, or that of the Gentile philosophers, 1 Corinthians 1:22, which was termed by the Jews *חכמה יונית* *chokmah yevanith*, Grecian wisdom; and which was so undervalued by them, that they joined these two under the same curse: Cursed is he that breeds hogs; and cursed is he who teaches his son Grecian wisdom. Bava Kama, fol. 82.

2. Jewish wisdom; that of the scribes and Pharisees, who crucified our Lord, 1 Corinthians 2:8.

3. The Gospel, which is called the wisdom of God in a mystery, 1 Corinthians 2:7.

4. The wisdom, **του αἰῶνος τούτου**, of this world; that system of knowledge which the Jews made up out of the writings of their scribes and doctors. This state is called **העולם הזה** haolam hazzeh, this or the present world; to distinguish it from **העולם הבא** haolam habba the world to come; i.e. the days of the Messiah. Whether we understand the term, this world, as relating to the state of the Gentiles, cultivated to the uttermost in philosophical learning, or the then state of the Jews, who had made the word of God of no effect by their traditions, which contained a sort of learning of which they were very fond and very proud, yet, by this Grecian and Jewish wisdom, no soul ever could have arrived at any such knowledge or wisdom as that communicated by the revelation of Christ. This was perfect wisdom; and they who were thoroughly instructed in it, and had received the grace of the Gospel, were termed **τελειοι**, the perfect. This, says the apostle, is not the wisdom of this world, for that has not the manifested Messiah in it; nor the wisdom of the rulers of this world—the chief men, whether philosophers among the Greeks, or rabbins among the Jews (for those we are to understand as implied in the term rulers, used here by the apostle) these rulers came to nought; for they, their wisdom, and their government, were shortly afterwards overturned in the destruction of Jerusalem. This declaration of the apostle is prophetic. The ruin of the Grecian superstition soon followed.

**Verse 7. *The wisdom of God in a mystery***— The GOSPEL of Jesus Christ, which had been comparatively hidden from the foundation of the world, (the settling of the Jewish economy, as this phrase often means,) though appointed from the beginning to be revealed in the fullness of time. For, though this Gospel was, in a certain sense, announced by the prophets, and prefigured by the law, yet it is certain that even the most intelligent of the Jewish rulers, their doctors, scribes, and Pharisees, had no adequate knowledge of it; therefore it was still a mystery to them and others, till it was so gloriously revealed by the preaching of the apostles.

**Verse 8. *Which none of the princes of this world knew***— Here it is evident that this world refers to the Jewish state, and to the degree of knowledge in that state: and the rulers, the priests, rabbins, etc., who were principally concerned in the crucifixion of our Lord.

***The Lord of glory.***— Or the glorious Lord, infinitely transcending all the rulers of the universe; whose is eternal glory; who gave that glorious Gospel in which his followers may glory, as it affords them such cause of triumph as the heathens had not, who gloried in their philosophers. Here is a teacher who is come from God; who has taught the most glorious truths which it is possible for the soul of man to conceive; and has promised to lead all the followers of his crucified Master to that state of glory which is ineffable and eternal.

**Verse 9. *But, as it is written***— The quotation is taken from Isaiah 64:4. The sense is continued here from verse seven, and *λαλουμεν*, we speak, is understood—We do not speak or preach the wisdom of this world; but that mysterious wisdom of God, of which the prophet said: Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love him. These words have been applied to the state of glory in a future world; but they certainly belong to the present state, and express merely the wondrous light, life, and liberty which the Gospel communicates to them that believe in the Lord Jesus Christ in that way which the Gospel itself requires. To this the prophet himself refers; and it is evident, from the following verse, that the apostle also refers to the same thing. Such a scheme of salvation, in which God's glory and man's felicity should be equally secured, had never been seen, never heard of, nor could any mind but that of God have conceived the idea of so vast a project; nor could any power but his own have brought it to effect.

**Verse 10. *But God hath revealed them unto us***— A manifest proof that the apostle speaks here of the glories of the Gospel, and not of the glories of the future world.

***For the Spirit searcheth all things***— This is the Spirit of God, which spoke by the prophets, and has now given to the apostles the fullness of that heavenly truth, of which He gave to the former only the outlines.

***Yea, the deep things of God.***— It is only the Spirit of God which can reveal the counsels of God: these are the purposes which have existed in His infinite wisdom and goodness from eternity; and particularly what refers to creation, providence, redemption, and eternal glory, as far as men and angels are concerned in these purposes. The apostles were so fully

convinced that the scheme of redemption proclaimed by the Gospel was Divine, that they boldly asserted that these things infinitely surpassed the wisdom and comprehension of man. God was now in a certain way become manifest; many attributes of his, which to the heathen world would have for ever lain in obscurity, (for the world by wisdom knew not God,) were now not only brought to light as existing in him, but illustrated by the gracious displays which He had made of himself. It was the Spirit of God alone that could reveal these things; and it was the energy of that Spirit alone that could bring them all into effect—stamp and seal them as attributes and works of God for ever. The apostles were as truly conscious of their own inspiration as they were that they had consciousness at all; and what they spoke, they spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

**Verse 11.** *For what man knoweth the things of a man*— The word **ανθρωπων** in the first clause is omitted by the Codex Alexandrinus, and one other; and by Athanasius, Cyril, and Vigil of Tapsus. Bishop Pearce contends strongly against the authenticity of the word, and reads the passage thus: “For what is there that knoweth the things of a man, except the spirit of a man that is in him?” “I leave out,” says the learned bishop, “**ανθρωπων**, with the Alexandrian MS., and read **τις γαρ οιδεν τα του ανθρωπου**; because I conceive that the common reading is wide of St. Paul’s meaning; for to say, What man except the spirit of a man, is (I think) to speak improperly, and to suppose that the spirit of a man is a man; but it is very proper to say, What except the spirit of a man: **τις** is feminine as well as masculine, and therefore may be supplied with **ουσια**, or some such word, as well as with **ανθρωπος**.” Though the authority for omitting this word is comparatively slender, yet it must be owned that its omission renders the text much more intelligible. But even one MS. may preserve the true reading.

The spirit of a man knows the things of a man: that is, a man is conscious of all the schemes, plans, and purposes, that pass in his own mind; and no man can know these things but himself. So, the Spirit of God, He whom we call the Third Person of the glorious TRINITY, knows all the counsels and determinations of the Supreme Being. As the Spirit is here represented to live in God as the soul lives in the body of a man, and as this Spirit knows all the things of God, and had revealed those to the apostles which

concern the salvation of the world, therefore what they spoke and preached was true, and men may implicitly depend upon it. The miracles which they did, in the name of Christ, were the proof that they had that Spirit, and spoke the truth of God.

**Verse 12. *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world***— We, who are the genuine apostles of Christ, have received this Spirit of God, by which we know the deep things of God; and, through the teaching of that Spirit, we preach Christ crucified. We have not therefore received the spirit of the world—of the Jewish teachers, who are all looking for a worldly kingdom and a worldly Messiah, and interpret all the scriptures of the Old Testament which relate to Him in a carnal and worldly sense.

***That we might know the things***— We receive this teaching that we may know what those supremely excellent things are which God has purposed freely to give to mankind. It is evident that, as the apostle means by princes of the world the rulers of the Jews, 1 Corinthians 2:6-8, so by spirit of the world he here means Jewish wisdom, or their carnal mode of interpreting the sacred oracles, and their carnal expectation of a worldly kingdom under the Messiah.

**Verse 13. *Which things also we speak***— We dare no more use the language of the Jews and the Gentiles in speaking of those glorious things, than we can indulge their spirit. The Greek orators affected a high and florid language, full of tropes and figures, which dazzled more than it enlightened. The rabbins affected obscurity, and were studious to find out cabalistical meanings, which had no tendency to make the people wise unto salvation. The apostles could not follow any of these; they spoke the things of God in the words of God; every thing was plain and intelligible; every word well placed, clear, and nervous. He who has a spiritual mind will easily comprehend an apostle's preaching.

***Comparing spiritual things with spiritual.***— This is commonly understood to mean, comparing the spiritual things under the Old Testament with the spiritual things under the New: but this does not appear to be the apostle's meaning. The word **συγκρινοντες**, which we translate comparing, rather signifies conferring, discussing, or explaining; and the word **πνευματικοις** should be rendered to spiritual men, and not be referred to spiritual things. The passage therefore should be thus

translated: Explaining spiritual things to spiritual persons. And this sense the following verse absolutely requires.

**Verse 14. *But the natural man***— ψυχικός, The animal man—the man who is in a mere state of nature, and lives under the influence of his animal passions; for the word ψυχη, which we often translate soul, means the lower and sensitive part of man, in opposition to νους, the understanding or rational part. The Latins use anima to signify these lower passions; and animus to signify the higher. The person in question is not only one who either has had no spiritual teaching, or has not profited by it; but one who lives for the present world, having no respect to spiritual or eternal things. This ψυχικός, or animal man, is opposed to the πνευματικός, or spiritual man: and, as this latter is one who is under the influence of the Spirit of God, so the former is one who is without that influence.

The apostle did speak of those high and sublime spiritual things to these animal men; but he explained them to those which were spiritual. He uses this word in this sense, 1 Corinthians 3:1; 9:11; and particularly in verse 15 of the present chapter: He that is spiritual judgeth all things. { 1 Corinthians 2:15 }

But the natural man—The apostle appears to give this—as a reason why he explained those deep spiritual things to spiritual men; because the animal man—the man who is in a state of nature, without the regenerating grace of the Spirit of God, receiveth not the things of the Spirit—neither apprehends nor comprehends them: he has no relish for them; he considers it the highest wisdom to live for this world. Therefore these spiritual things are foolishness to him; for while he is in his animal state he cannot see their excellency, because they are spiritually discerned, and he has no spiritual mind.

**Verse 15. *But he that is spiritual judgeth all things***— He who has the mind of Christ discerns and judges of all things spiritual: yet he himself is not discerned by the mere animal man. Some suppose that the word ανακρινεται should be understood thus: He examines, scrutinizes, convinces, reproveth, which it appears to mean in 1 Corinthians 14:24; and they read the verse thus: The spiritual man—the well-taught Christian, convinces, i.e. can easily convict, all men, (παντα, accusing,) every animal man, of error and vice; yet he himself is convicted of no man; his mind is

enlightened, and his life is holy; and therefore the animal man cannot convict him of sin. This is a good sense, but the first appears the most natural. See Pearce and Rosenmuller.

**Verse 16. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord***— Who that is still an animal man can know the mind of God? so as to instruct him, viz. the spiritual man, the same that is spoken of, 1 Corinthians 2:15. But the words may be better understood thus: How can the animal man know the mind of the Lord? and how can any man communicate that knowledge which he has never acquired, and which is foolishness to him, because it is spiritual, and he is animal? This quotation is made from Isaiah 40:13.

***But we have the mind of Christ.***— He has endowed us with the same disposition, being born again by his Spirit; therefore we are capable of knowing his mind and receiving the teachings of his Spirit. These teachings we do receive, and therefore are well qualified to convey them to others.

The words, that he may instruct him, **ος συμβιβασει αυτον**, should be translated that he may teach IT: that is, the mind of God; not instruct God, but teach his mind to others. And this interpretation the Hebrew will also bear.

Bishop Pearce observes: “The principal questions here are,, what **συμβιβασει** signifies, and what **αυτον** is relative to. The Hebrew word which the Septuagint translate by these two is **יודיענו** yodiennu: now, since **ידיע** yodia signifies as well to make known as to know, (and indeed this is the most frequent sense of it in the Old Testament,) the suffix (postfix) **נו** nu, may relate to a thing, as well as to a person; and therefore it may be rendered not by him, but by it, i.e. the mind of the Lord. And in this sense the apostle seems to have used the words of the Seventy; for, if we understand **αυτον** here to be the relative to **κυριου**, Lord, this verse contains no reason for what went before; whereas, if it be a relative to **νοου**, mind, it affords a reason for what had been said before, 1 Corinthians 2:14.” The true translation of the passage, as used by the apostle, appears to be this: For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he should TEACH IT? And this translation agrees with every part of the context, and particularly with what follows.

1. THIS chapter might be considered a good model for a Christian minister to regulate his conduct by, or his public ministry; because it points out the mode of preaching used by St. Paul and the apostles in general. This great apostle came not to the people with excellency of speech and of wisdom, when he declared unto them the counsel of God. They know little, either of the spirit of St. Paul or the design of the Gospel, who make the chief excellence of their preaching to consist in the eloquence of language, or depth of human reasoning. That may be their testimony, but it is not God's. The enticing words of man's wisdom are seldom accompanied by the demonstration and power of the Holy Spirit.

2. One justly remarks, that "the foolishness of preaching has its wisdom, loftiness, and eloquence; but this consists in the sublimity of its truths, the depth of its mysteries, and the ardour of the Spirit of God." In this respect Paul may be said to have preached wisdom among those which were perfect. The wisest and most learned men in the world, who have seriously read the Bible, have acknowledged that there is a depth and height of wisdom and knowledge in that book of God which are sought in vain any where else: and indeed it would not be a revelation from God were it not so. The men who can despise and ridicule this sacred book are those who are too blind to discover the objects presented to them by this brilliant light, and are too sensual to feel and relish spiritual things. They, above all others, are incapable of judging, and should be no more regarded when employed in talking against the sacred writings than an ignorant peasant should be, who, not knowing his alphabet, pretends to decry mathematical learning.

3. A new mode of preaching has been diligently recommended,- "Scriptural phraseology should be generally avoided where it is antiquated, or conveys ideas inconsistent with modern delicacy." St. Paul did not preach in the words which man's wisdom teacheth- such words are too mean and too low for a religion so Divine. That which the Holy Spirit alone can discover, he alone can explain. Let no man dare to speak of God in any other way than he speaks of himself in his word. Let us take care not to profane his truths and mysteries, either by such low and abject ideas as are merely human, or by new and worldly expressions altogether unworthy of the Spirit of God.



4. It is the glory of God, and ought to be ours, not to be acceptable to carnal men. The natural man always finds some pretense to excuse himself from believing, by looking on the mysteries of religion as being either too much above man or too much below God; the spiritual man judges them to be so much the more credible, the less credible they are to the natural man.

The opposition, contempt, and blindness of the world, with regard to the things of God, render all its judgments concerning them liable to exception: this blindness in spiritual things is the just punishment of a carnal life. The principal part of the above is extracted from the reflections of the pious Quesnel.

## CHAPTER 3.

*Because of the carnal, divided state of the people at Corinth, the apostle was obliged to treat them as children in the knowledge of sacred things, 1-3. Some were for setting up Paul, others Apollos, as their sole teachers, 4. The apostle shows that himself and fellow apostles were only instruments which God used to bring them to the knowledge of the truth; and even their sowing, and watering the seed was of no use unless God gave the increase, 5-8. The Church represented as God's husbandry, and as God's building, the foundation of which is Christ Jesus, 9-11. Ministers must beware how and what they build on this foundation, 12-15. The Church of God is his temple, and he that defiles it shall be destroyed, 16, 17. No man should depend on his own wisdom; for the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God, 18-20. None should glory in man as his teacher; God gives his followers every good, both for time and eternity, 21-23.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 3.

**Verse 1.** *I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual*— This is a continuation of the preceding discourse. See the notes there.

*But as unto carnal*— σαρκικους, Persons under the influence of fleshly appetites; coveting and living for the things of this life.

*Babes in Christ.*— Just beginning to acquire some notion of the Christian religion, but as yet very incapable of judging what is most suitable to yourselves, and consequently utterly unqualified to discern between one teacher and another; so that your making the distinctions which you do make, so far from being a proof of mature judgment, is on the contrary a proof that you have no right judgment at all; and this springs from your want of knowledge in Divine things.

**Verse 2.** *I have fed you with milk.*— I have instructed you in the elements of Christianity—in its simplest and easiest truths; because from the low state of your minds in religious knowledge, you were incapable of

comprehending the higher truths of the Gospel: and in this state you will still continue. The apostle thus exposes to them the absurdity of their conduct in pretending to judge between preacher and preacher, while they had but a very partial acquaintance even with the first principles of Christianity.

**Verse 3.** *There is among you envying, and strife, and divisions*— ζηλος και ερις και διχοστασιαι. There are three things here worthy of note: these people were wrong in thought, word, and deed. ζηλος, envying refers to the state of their souls; they had inward grudgings and disaffection towards each other. ερις, strife or contention, refers to their words; they were continually disputing and contending whose party was the best, each endeavoring to prove that he and his party were alone in the right. διχοστασιαι, divisions, refers to their conduct; as they could not agree, they contended till they separated from each other, and thus rent the Church of Christ. Thus the envying and grudging led to strife and evil SPEAKING, and this led to divisions and fixed parties. In this state well might the apostle say, Are ye not carnal, and walk as men? Ye act just as the people of the world, and have no more of the spirit of religion than they.

**Verse 4.** *For while one saith, I am of Paul*, etc.— It was notorious that both Paul and Apollos held the same creed; between them there was not the slightest difference: when, therefore, the dissentients began to prefer the one to the other, it was the fullest proof of their carnality; because in the doctrines of these apostles there was no difference: so that what the people were captivated by must be something in their outward manner, Apollos being probably more eloquent than Paul. Their preferring one to another on such an account proved that they were carnal-led by their senses and mere outward appearances, without being under the guidance either of reason or grace. There are thousands of such people in the Christian Church to the present day. See the notes on 1 Corinthians 1:10, etc.

**Verse 5.** *Ministers by whom ye believed*— The different apostles who have preached unto you the word of life are the means which God has used to bring you to the knowledge of Christ. No one of those has either

preached or recommended himself; they all preach and recommend Christ Jesus the Lord.

*Even as the Lord gave to every man?*— Whatever difference there may be in our talents, it is of God's making; and he who knows best what is best for his Church, has distributed both gifts and graces according to his own mind; and, as his judgment is infallible, all these dispensations must be right. Paul, therefore, is as necessary to the perfecting of the Church of Christ as Apollos; and Apollos, as Paul. Both, but with various gifts, point out the same Christ, building on one and the same foundation.

**Verse 6. *I have planted***— I first sowed the seed of the Gospel at Corinth, and in the region of Achaia.

*Apollos watered*— Apollos came after me, and, by his preachings and exhortations, watered the seed which I had sowed; but God gave the increase. The seed has taken root, has sprung up, and borne much fruit; but this was by the especial blessing of God. As in the natural so in the spiritual world; it is by the especial blessing of God that the grain which is sown in the ground brings forth thirty, sixty, or a hundred fold: it is neither the sower nor the waterer that produces this strange and inexplicable multiplication; it is God alone. So it is by the particular agency of the Spirit of God that even good seed, sown in good ground, the purest doctrine conveyed to the honest heart, produces the salvation of the soul.

**Verse 7. *So then, neither is he that planteth any thing***— God alone should have all the glory, as the seed is his, the ground is his, the laborers are his, and the produce all comes from himself.

**Verse 8. *He that planteth and he that watereth are one***— Both Paul and Apollos have received the same doctrine, preach the same doctrine, and labor to promote the glory of God in the salvation of your souls. Why should you be divided with respect to Paul and Apollos, while these apostles are intimately ONE in spirit, design, and operation?

*According to his own labor.*— God does not reward his servants according to the success of their labor, because that depends on himself; but he rewards them according to the quantum of faithful labor which they

bestow on his work. In this sense none can say, I have labored in vain, and spent my strength for nought.

**Verse 9. *For we are laborers together with God***— We do nothing of ourselves, nor in reference to ourselves; we labor together in that work which God has given us to do, expect all our success from him, and refer the whole to his glory. It would perhaps be more correct to translate **θεου γαρ εσμεν συνεργαι**, we are fellow laborers of God; for, as the preposition **συν** may express the joint labor of the teachers one with another, and not with God, I had rather, with Bishop Pearce, translate as above: i.e. we labor together in the work of God. Far from being divided among ourselves, we jointly labor, as oxen in the same yoke, to promote the honor of our Master.

***Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.***— **θεου γεωργιον, θεου οικοδομη εστε**. The word **γεωργιον**, which we translate husbandry, signifies properly an arable field; so Proverbs 24:30: I went by the FIELD, **γεωργιον**, of the slothful; and Proverbs 31:16: The wise woman considereth a FIELD, **γεωργιον**, and buyeth it. It would be more literal to translate it, Ye are God's farm: **γεωργιον** in Greek answers to **שדה** *sadeh* in Hebrew, which signifies properly a sown field.

Ye are God's building. — Ye are not only the field which God cultivates, but ye are the house which God builds, and in which he intends to dwell. As no man in viewing a fine building extols the quarryman that dug up the stones, the hewer that cut and squared them, the mason that placed them in the wall, the woodman that hewed down the timber, the carpenter that squared and jointed it, etc., but the architect who planned it, and under whose direction the whole work was accomplished; so no man should consider Paul, or Apollos, or Kephas, any thing, but as persons employed by the great Architect to form a building which is to become a habitation of himself through the Spirit, and the design of which is entirely his own.

**Verse 10. *As a wise master builder***— **ὡς σοφὸς ἀρχιτεκτων**. The design or plan of the building is from God; all things must be done according to the pattern which he has exhibited; but the execution of this plan was entrusted chiefly to St. Paul; he was the wise or experienced architect which God used in order to lay the foundation; to ascertain the

essential and immutable doctrines of the Gospel—those alone which came from God, and which alone he would bless to the salvation of mankind.

***Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.***— Let him take care that the doctrines which he preaches be answerable to those which I have preached; let him also take heed that he enjoin no other practice than that which is suitable to the doctrine, and in every sense accords with it.

**Verse 11. *Other foundation can no man lay***— I do not speak particularly concerning the foundation of this spiritual building; it can have no other foundation than Jesus Christ: there cannot be two opinions on this subject among the true apostles of our Lord. The only fear is, lest an improper use should be made of this heavenly doctrine; lest a bad superstructure should be raised on this foundation.

**Verse 12. *If any men build—gold, silver,*** etc.— Without entering into curious criticisms relative to these different expressions, it may be quite enough for the purpose of edification to say, that, by gold, silver, and precious stones, the apostle certainly means pure and wholesome doctrines: by wood, hay, and stubble, false doctrines; such as at that time prevailed in the Corinthian Church; for instance, that there should be no resurrection of the body; that a man may, on his father's death, lawfully marry his step-mother; that it was necessary to incorporate much of the Mosaic law with the Gospel; and, perhaps, other matters, equally exceptionable, relative to marriage, concubinage, fornication, frequenting heathen festivals, and partaking of the flesh which had been offered in sacrifice to an idol; with many other things, which, with the above, are more or less hinted at by the apostle in these two letters.

**Verse 13. *The day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire***— There is much difference of opinion relative to the meaning of the terms in this and the two following verses. That the apostle refers to the approaching destruction of Jerusalem I think very probable; and when this is considered, all the terms and metaphors will appear clear and consistent.

The day is the time of punishment coming on this disobedient and rebellious people. And this day being revealed by fire, points out the extreme rigour, and totally destructive nature, of that judgment.

***And the fire shall try every man's work***— If the apostle refers to the Judaizing teachers and their insinuations that the law, especially circumcision, was of eternal obligation; then the day of fire—the time of vengeance, which was at hand, would sufficiently disprove such assertions; as, in the judgment of God, the whole temple service should be destroyed; and the people, who fondly presumed on their permanence and stability, should be dispossessed of their land and scattered over the face of the whole earth. The difference of the Christian and Jewish systems should then be seen: the latter should be destroyed in that fiery day, and the former prevail more than ever.

**Verse 14. *If any man's work abide***— Perhaps there is here an allusion to the purifying of different sorts of vessels under the law. All that could stand the fire were to be purified by the fire; and those which could not resist the action of the fire were to be purified by water, Numbers 31:23. The gold, silver, and precious stones, could stand the fire; but the wood, hay, and stubble, must be necessarily consumed. So, in that great and terrible day of the Lord, all false doctrine, as well as the system that was to pass away, should be made sufficiently manifest; and God would then show that the Gospel, and that alone, was that system of doctrine which he should bless and protect, and none other.

***He shall receive a reward.***— He has not only preached the truth, but he has labored in the word and doctrine. And the reward is to be according to the labor. See on 1 Corinthians 3:8.

**Verse 15. *If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss***— If he have preached the necessity of incorporating the law with the Gospel, or proclaimed as a doctrine of God any thing which did not proceed from heaven, he shall suffer loss—all his time and labor will be found to be uselessly employed and spent. Some refer the loss to the work, not to the man; and understand the passage thus: If any man's work be burned, IT shall suffer loss—much shall be taken away from it; nothing shall he left but the measure of truth and uprightness which it may have contained.

***But he himself shall be saved***— If he have sincerely and conscientiously believed what he preached, and yet preached what was wrong, not through malice or opposition to the Gospel, but through mere ignorance, he shall be saved; God in his mercy will pass by his errors; and he shall not suffer

punishment because he was mistaken. Yet, as in most erroneous teachings there is generally a portion of wilful and obstinate ignorance, the salvation of such erroneous teachers is very rare; and is expressed here, yet so as by fire, i.e. with great difficulty; a mere escape; a hair's breadth deliverance; he shall be like a brand plucked out of the fire.

The apostle obviously refers to the case of a man, who, having builded a house, and begun to dwell in it, the house happens to be set on fire, and he has warning of it just in time to escape with his life, losing at the same time his house, his goods, his labor, and almost his own life. So he who, while he holds the doctrine of Christ crucified as the only foundation on which a soul can rest its hopes of salvation, builds at the same time, on that foundation, Antinomianism, or any other erroneous or destructive doctrine, he shall lose all his labor, and his own soul scarcely escape everlasting perdition; nor even this unless sheer ignorance and inveterate prejudice, connected with much sincerity, be found in his case.

The popish writers have applied what is here spoken to the fire of purgatory; and they might with equal propriety have applied it to the discovery of the longitude, the perpetual motion, or the philosopher's stone; because it speaks just as much of the former as it does of any of the latter. The fire mentioned here is to try the man's work, not to purify his soul; but the dream of purgatory refers to the purging in another state what left this impure; not the work of the man, but the man himself; but here the fire is said to try the work: ergo, purgatory is not meant even if such a place as purgatory could be proved to exist; which remains yet to be demonstrated.

**Verse 16. *Ye are the temple of God***— The apostle resumes here what he had asserted in 1 Corinthians 3:9: Ye are God's building. As the whole congregation of Israel were formerly considered as the temple and habitation of God, because God dwelt among them, so here the whole Church of Corinth is called the temple of God, because all genuine believers have the Spirit of God to dwell in them; and Christ has promised to be always in the midst even of two or three who are gathered together in his name. Therefore where God is, there is his temple.

**Verse 17. *If any man defile the temple***— This clause is not consistently translated. *εἰ τις τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ φθειρεῖ, φθερεῖ τούτον ὁ θεός·*



If any man destroy the temple of God, him will God destroy. The verb is the same in both clauses. If any man injure, corrupt, or destroy the Church of God by false doctrine, God will destroy him—will take away his part out of the book of life. This refers to him who wilfully opposes the truth; the erring, mistaken man shall barely escape; but the obstinate opposer shall be destroyed. The former shall be treated leniently; the latter shall have judgment without mercy.

**Verse 18.** *If any man among you seemeth to be wise*— *εἰ τις δοκεῖ σοφός εἶναι*. If any pretend or affect to be wise. This seems to refer to some individual in the Church of Corinth, who had been very troublesome to its peace and unity: probably Diotrophes (see on 1 Corinthians 1:14) or some one of a similar spirit, who wished to have the pre-eminence, and thought himself wiser than seven men that could render a reason. Every Christian Church has less or more of these.

*Let him become a fool*— Let him divest himself of his worldly wisdom, and be contented to be called a fool, and esteemed one, that he may become wise unto salvation, by renouncing his own wisdom, and seeking that which comes from God. But probably the apostle refers to him who, pretending to great wisdom and information, taught doctrines contrary to the Gospel; endeavoring to show reasons for them, and to support his own opinions with arguments which he thought unanswerable. This man brought his worldly wisdom to bear against the doctrines of Christ; and probably through such teaching many of the scandalous things which the apostle reprehends among the Corinthians originated.

**Verse 19.** *The wisdom of this world*— Whether it be the pretended deep and occult wisdom of the rabbins, or the wire-drawn speculations of the Grecian philosophers, is foolishness with God; for as folly consists in spending time, strength, and pains to no purpose, so these may be fitly termed fools who acquire no saving knowledge by their speculations. And is not this the case with the major part of all that is called philosophy, even in the present day? Has one soul been made wise unto salvation through it? Are our most eminent philosophers either pious or useful men? Who of them is meek, gentle, and humble! Who of them directs his researches so as to meliorate the moral condition of his fellow creatures? Pride, insolence, self-conceit, and complacency, with a general

forgetfulness of God, contempt for his word, and despite for the poor, are their general characteristics.

***He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.***— This is a quotation from Job 5:13, and powerfully shows what the wisdom of this world is: it is a sort of craft, a subtle trade, which they carry on to wrong others and benefit themselves; and they have generally too much cunning to be caught by men; but God often overthrows them with their own devisings. Paganism raised up persecution against the Church of Christ, in order to destroy it: this became the very means of quickly spreading it over the earth, and of destroying the whole pagan system. Thus the wise were taken in their own craftiness.

**Verse 20. *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise***— They are always full of schemes and plans for earthly good; and God knows that all this is vain, empty, and unsatisfactory; and will stand them in no stead when he comes to take away their souls. This is a quotation from Psalm 94:11. What is here said of the vanity of human knowledge is true of every kind of wisdom that leads not immediately to God himself.

**Verse 21. *Let no man glory in men***— Let none suppose that he has any cause of exultation in any thing but God. All are yours; he that has God for his portion has every thing that can make him happy and glorious: all are his.

**Verse 22. *Whether Paul, or Apollos***— As if he had said: God designs to help you by all things and persons; every teacher sent from him will become a blessing to you, if you abide faithful to your calling. God will press every thing into the service of his followers. The ministers of the Church of Christ are appointed for the hearers, not the hearers for the ministers. In like manner, all the ordinances of grace and mercy are appointed for them, not they for the ordinances.

***Or the world***— The word *κοσμος*, here, means rather the inhabitants of the world than what we commonly understand by the world itself; and this is its meaning in John 3:16, 17; 6:33; John 14:31; 17:21. See particularly John 12:19: *ὁ κοσμοσπισω αυτου απηλθεν*, the WORLD is gone after him—the great mass of the people believe on him. The Greek word has the same meaning, in a variety of places, both in the sacred and

the profane writers, as *le monde*, the world, literally has in French, where it signifies, not only the system of created things, but, by metonymy, the people—every body, the mass, the populace. In the same sense it is often found in English. The apostle's meaning evidently is: Not only Paul, Apollos, and Kephass, are yours—appointed for and employed in your service; but every person besides with whom you may have any intercourse or connection, whether Jew or Greek, whether enemy or friend. God will cause every person, as well as every thing to work for your good, while you love, cleave to, and obey Him.

***Or life***— With all its trials and advantages, every hour of It, every tribulation in it, the whole course of it, as the grand state of your probation, is a general blessing to you: and you have life, and that life preserved in order to prepare for an eternity of blessedness.

***Or death***— That solemn hour, so dreadful to the wicked; and so hateful to those who live without God: that is yours. Death is your servant; he comes a special messenger from God for you; he comes to undo a knot that now connects body and soul, which it would be unlawful for yourselves to untie; he comes to take your souls to glory; and he cannot come before his due time to those who are waiting for the salvation of God. A saint wishes to live only to glorify God; and he who wishes to live longer than he can get and do good, is not worthy of life.

***Or things present***— Every occurrence in providence in the present life; for God rules in providence as well as in grace.

***Or things to come***— The whole order and economy of the eternal world; all in heaven and all in earth are even now working together for your good.

**Verse 23. *And ye are Christ's***— You are called by his name; you have embraced his doctrine; you depend on him for your salvation; he is your foundation stone; he has gathered you out of the world, and acknowledges you as his people and followers. *ὑμεῖς δε χριστου*, ye are of Christ; all the light and life which ye enjoy ye have received through and from him, and he has bought you with his blood.

***And Christ is God's***.— *χριστος δε θεου*, And Christ is of God. Christ, the Messiah, is the gift of God's eternal love and mercy to mankind; for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that they who

believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Christ in his human nature is as much the property of God as any other human being. And as mediator between God and man, he must be considered, in a certain way, inferior to God, but in his own essential, eternal nature, there is no inequality—he is God over all. Ye, therefore, do not belong to men. Why then take Paul, Apollos, Kephas, or any other man for your head? All these are your servants; ye are not their property, ye are Christ’s property: and as he has taken the human nature into heaven, so will he take yours; because he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified are all of one: ye are his brethren; and as his human nature is eternally safe at the throne of God, so shall your bodies and souls be, if ye cleave to him and be faithful unto death.

1. A FINER and more conclusive argument, to correct what was wrong among this people, could not have been used than that with which the apostle closes this chapter. It appears to stand thus: “If you continue in these divisions, and arrange yourselves under different teachers, you will meet with nothing but disappointment, and lose much good. If ye will have Paul, Apollos, etc., on your present plan, you will have them and nothing else; nor can they do you any good, for they are only instruments in God’s hand, at best, to communicate good, and he will not use them to help you while you act in this unchristian way. On the contrary, if you take GOD as your portion, you shall get these and every good besides. Act as you now do, and you get nothing and lose all! Act as I advise you to do, and you shall not only lose nothing of the good which you now possess, but shall have every possible advantage: the men whom you now wish to make your heads, and who, in that capacity, cannot profit you, shall become God’s instruments of doing you endless good. Leave your dissensions, by which you offend God, and grieve his Christ; and then God, and Christ, and all will be yours.” How agitated, convinced, and humbled must they have been when they read the masterly conclusion of this chapter!

2. A want of spirituality seems to have been the grand fault of the Corinthians. They regarded outward things chiefly, and were carried away with sound and show. They lost the TREASURE while they eagerly held fast the earthen vessel that contained it. It is a true saying, that he who lends only the ear of his body to the word of God, will follow that man

most who pleases the ear; and these are the persons who generally profit the soul least.

3. All the ministers of God should consider themselves as jointly employed by Christ for the salvation of mankind. It is their interest to serve God and be faithful to his calling; but shall they dare to make his Church their interest. This is generally the origin of religious disputes and schisms. Men will have the Church of Christ for their own property, and Jesus Christ will not trust it with any man.

4. Every man employed in the work of God should take that part only upon himself that God has assigned him. The Church and the soul, says pious Quesnel, are a building, of which GOD is the master and chief architect; JESUS CHRIST the main foundation; the APOSTLES the subordinate architects; the BISHOPS the workmen; the PRIESTS their helpers; GOOD WORKS the main body of the building; FAITH a sort of second foundation; and CHARITY the top and perfection. Happy is that man who is a living stone in this building.

5. He who expects any good out of God is confounded and disappointed in all things. God alone can content, as he alone can satisfy the soul. All our restlessness and uneasiness are only proofs that we are endeavoring to live without God in the world. A contented mind is a continual feast; but none can have such a mind who has not taken God for his portion. How is it that Christians are continually forgetting this most plain and obvious truth, and yet wonder how it is that they cannot attain true peace of mind?

## CHAPTER 4.

*Ministers should be esteemed by their flocks as the stewards of God, whose duty and interest it is to be faithful, 1, 2. Precipitate and premature judgments condemned, 3-5. The apostle's caution to give the Corinthians no offense, 6. We have no good but what we receive from God, 7. The worldly mindedness of the Corinthians, 8. The enumeration of the hardships, trials, and sufferings of the apostles, 9-13. For what purpose St. Paul mentions these things, 14-16. He promises to send Timothy to them, 17. And to come himself shortly, to examine and correct the abuses that had crept in among them, 18-21.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 4.

**Verse 1.** *Let a man so account of us*— This is a continuation of the subject in the preceding chapter; and should not have been divided from it. The fourth chapter would have begun better at 1 Corinthians 4:6, and the third should have ended with the fifth verse. { 1 Corinthians 4:5 }

*As of the ministers of Christ*— ως υπηρετας χριστου. The word υπηρετης means an under-rower, or one, who, in the trireme, quadrireme, or quinquereme galleys, rowed in one of the undermost benches; but it means also, as used by the Greek writers, any inferior officer or assistant. By the term here the apostle shows the Corinthians that, far from being heads and chiefs, he and his fellow apostles considered themselves only as inferior officers, employed under Christ from whom alone they received their appointment their work, and their recompense.

*Stewards of the mysteries of God.*— και οικονομους μυστηριων θεου, Economists of the Divine mysteries. See the explanation of the word steward in the note on Matthew 24:45; Luke 8:3; 12:42.

The steward, or oikonomos, was the master's deputy in regulating the concerns of the family, providing food for the household, seeing it served out at the proper times and seasons, and in proper quantities. He received all the cash, expended what was necessary for the support of the family,

and kept exact accounts, which he was obliged at certain times to lay before the master. The mysteries, the doctrines of God, relative to the salvation of the world by the passion and death of Christ; and the inspiration, illumination, and purification of the soul by the Spirit of Christ, constituted a principal part of the Divine treasure intrusted to the hands of the stewards by their heavenly Master; as the food that was to be dispensed at proper times, seasons, and in proper proportions to the children and domestics of the Church, which is the house of God.

**Verse 3. *It is a very small thing that I should be judged of you***— Those who preferred Apollos or Kephas before St. Paul, would of course give their reasons for this preference; and these might, in many instances, be very unfavourable to his character as a man, a Christian, or an apostle; of this he was regardless, as he sought not his own glory, but the glory of God in the salvation of their souls.

***Or of man's judgment***— η υπο ανθρωπινης ημερας, literally, or of man's day: but ανθρωπινη ημερα signifies any day set apart by a judge or magistrate to try a man on. This is the meaning of ημερα, Psalm 37:13: The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his DAY, η ημερα αυτου, his judgment is coming. Malachi 3:17: And they shall be mine in the DAY, εις ημεραν, in the judgment, when I make up my jewels. It has the same meaning in 2 Peter 3:10: But the DAY, the JUDGMENT, of the Lord will come. The word ανθρωπινος, man's, signifies miserable, wretched, woful; so Jeremiah 17:16: Neither have I desired, יום אנוש yom enosh, the day of man; but very properly translated in our version, the woful day. God's DAYS, Job 24:1, certainly signify God's JUDGMENTS. And the DAY of our Lord Jesus, in this epistle, 1 Corinthians 1:8; 5:5, signifies the day in which Christ will judge the world; or rather the judgment itself.

***I judge not mine own self.***— I leave myself entirely to God, whose I am, and whom I serve.

**Verse 4. *For I know nothing by myself***— ουδεν γαρ εμαυτω συνοιδα· I am not conscious that I am guilty of any evil, or have neglected to fulfill faithfully the duty of a steward of Jesus Christ. The import of the verb συνειδειν is to be conscious of guilt; and conscire has the same meaning: so, in Horace, Nil CONSCIRE sibi, to know nothing to one's self, is the

same as *nulla pellescere culpa*, not to grow pale at being charged with a crime, through a consciousness of guilt.

***Yet am I not hereby justified***— I do not pretend to say that though I am not conscious of any offense towards God I must therefore be pronounced innocent; no: I leave those things to God; he shall pronounce in my favor, not I myself. By these words the apostle, in a very gentle yet effectual manner, censures those rash and precipitate judgments which the Corinthians were in the habit of pronouncing on both men and things—a conduct than which nothing is more reprehensible and dangerous.

**Verse 5. *Judge nothing before the time***— God, the righteous Judge, will determine every thing shortly: it is his province alone to search the heart, and bring to light the hidden things of darkness. If you be so pure and upright in your conduct, if what you have been doing in these divisions, etc., be right in his sight, then shall you have praise for the same; if otherwise, yourselves are most concerned. Some refer the praise to St. Paul and his companions: Then shall every one of us apostles have praise of God.

**Verse 6. *These things***— Which I have written, 1 Corinthians 3:5, etc.

***I have in a figure transferred to myself and: to Apollos***— I have written as if myself and Apollos were the authors of the sects which now prevail among you; although others, without either our consent or knowledge, have proclaimed us heads of parties. Bishop Pearce paraphrases the verse thus: “I have made use of my own and Apollos’ name in my arguments against your divisions, because I would spare to name those teachers among you who are guilty of making and heading parties; and because I would have you, by our example, not to value them above what I have said of teachers in general in this epistle; so that none of you ought to be puffed up for one against another.” Doubtless there were persons at Corinth who, taking advantage of this spirit of innovation among that people, set themselves up also for teachers, and endeavored to draw disciples after them. And perhaps some even of these were more valued by the fickle multitude than the very apostles by whom they had been brought out of heathenish darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel. I have already supposed it possible that Diotrophes was one of the ringleaders in these schisms at Corinth. See on 1 Corinthians 1:14.



**Verse 7. *For who maketh thee to differ***— It is likely that the apostle is here addressing himself to some one of those puffed up teachers, who was glorying in his gifts, and in the knowledge he had of the Gospel, etc. As if he had said: If thou hast all that knowledge which thou professest to have, didst thou not receive it from myself or some other of my fellow helpers who first preached the Gospel at Corinth? God never spoke to thee to make thee an apostle. Hast thou a particle of light that thou hast not received from our preaching? Why then dost thou glory, boast, and exult, as if God had first spoken by thee, and not by us?

This is the most likely meaning of this verse; and a meaning that is suitable to the whole of the context. It has been applied in a more general sense by religious people, and the doctrine they build on it is true in itself, though it does not appear to me to be any part of the apostle's meaning in this place. The doctrine I refer to is this: God is the foundation of all good; no man possesses any good but what he has derived from God. If any man possess that grace which saves him from scandalous enormities, let him consider that he has received it as a mere free gift from God's mercy. Let him not despise his neighbor who has it not; there was a time when he himself did not possess it; and a time may come when the man whom he now affects to despise, and on whose conduct he is unmerciful and severe, may receive it, and probably may make a more evangelical use of it than he is now doing. This caution is necessary to many religious people, who imagine that they have been eternal objects of God's favor, and that others have been eternal objects of his hate, for no reason that they can show for either the one, or the other. He can have little acquaintance with his own heart, who is not aware of the possibility of pride lurking under the exclamation, Why me! when comparing his own gracious state with the unregenerate state of another.

**Verse 8. *Now ye***— Corinthians are full of secular wisdom; now ye are rich, both in wealth and spiritual gifts; (1 Corinthians 14:26:) ye have reigned as kings, flourishing in the enjoyment of these things, in all tranquillity and honor; without any want of us: and I would to God ye did reign, in deed, and not in conceit only, that we also, poor, persecuted, and despised apostles, might reign with you. — Whitby.

Though this paraphrase appears natural, yet I am of opinion that the apostle here intends a strong irony; and one which, when taken in conjunction with what he had said before, must have stung them to the heart. It is not an unusual thing for many people to forget, if not despise, the men by whom they were brought to the knowledge of the truth; and take up with others to whom, in the things of God, they owe nothing. Reader, is this thy case?

**Verse 9. *God hath set forth us the apostles last***— This whole passage is well explained by Dr. Whitby. “Here the apostle seems to allude to the Roman spectacles, *της των θηριομαχων, και μονομαχιας ανδροφονου*, that of the Bestiarii and the gladiators, where in the morning men were brought upon the theatres to fight with wild beasts, and to them was allowed armor to defend themselves and smite the beasts that assailed them; but in the meridian or noon-day spectacles the gladiators were brought forth naked, and without any thing to defend themselves from the sword of the assailant; and he that then escaped was only kept for slaughter to another day, so that these men might well be called *επιθανατιοι*, men appointed for death; and this being the last appearance on the theater for that day, they are said here to be set forth *εσχατοι*, the last.” Of these two spectacles Seneca speaks thus, Epist. vii.: “In the morning men are exposed to lions and bears; at mid-day to their spectators; those that kill are exposed to one another; the victor is detained for another slaughter; the conclusion of the fight is death. The former fighting compared to this was mercy; now it is mere butchery: they have nothing to cover them; their whole body is exposed to every blow, and every stroke produces a wound,” etc.

***We are made a spectacle***— *’οτι θεατρον εγενηθημεν*, We are exhibited on the theater to the world; we are lawful booty to all mankind, and particularly to the men of the world, who have their portion in this life. Angels are astonished at our treatment, and so are the more considerate part of men. Who at that time would have coveted the apostolate?

**Verse 10. *We are fools for Christ’s sake***— Here he still carries on the allusion to the public spectacles among the Romans, where they were accustomed to hiss, hoot, mock, and variously insult the poor victims. To this Philo alludes, in his embassy to Caius, speaking of the treatment

which the Jews received at Rome: **ωσπερ γαρ εν θεατρο κλωσμοσυριπτοντων, καταμωκωμενων, αμετραχλευαζοντων**. “For, as if exhibited upon a theater, we are hissed, most outrageously hooted, and insulted beyond all bounds.” Thus, says the apostle, we are fools on Christ’s account; we walk in a conformity to his will, and we bear his cross: and did we walk according to the course of this world, or according to the man-pleasing conduct of some among you, we should have no such cross to bear.

***Ye are wise in Christ***— Surely all these expressions are meant ironically; the apostles were neither fools, nor weak, nor contemptible; nor were the Corinthians, morally speaking, wise, and strong, and honorable. Change the persons, and then the epithets will perfectly apply.

**Verse 11. *We both hunger and thirst***, etc.— Who would then have been an apostle of Christ, even with all its spiritual honors and glories, who had not a soul filled with love both to God and man, and the fullest conviction of the reality of the doctrine he preached, and of that spiritual world in which alone he could expect rest? See the Introduction, sect. vi.

***Have no certain dwelling place***— We are mere itinerant preachers, and when we set out in the morning know not where, or whether we shall or not, get a night’s lodging.

**Verse 12. *Working with our own hands***— They were obliged to labor in order to supply themselves with the necessaries of life while preaching the Gospel to others. This, no doubt, was the case in every place where no Church had been as yet formed: afterwards, the people of God supplied their ministers, according to their power, with food and raiment.

***Being reviled, we bless***, etc.— What a most amiable picture does this exhibit of the power of the grace of Christ! Man is naturally a proud creature, and his pride prompts him always to avenge himself in whatever manner he can, and repay insult with insult. It is only the grace of Christ that can make a man patient in bearing injuries, and render blessing for cursing, beneficence for malevolence, etc. The apostles suffered an indignity for Christ’s sake; for it was on his account that they were exposed to persecutions, etc.

**Verse 13. *Being defamed***— βλασφημουμενοι, Being blasphemed. I have already remarked that βλασφημειν signifies to speak injuriously, and may have reference either to God or to man. GOD is blasphemed when his attributes, doctrines, providence, or grace, are treated contemptuously, or any thing said of him that is contrary to his holiness, justice, goodness, or truth. Man is blasphemed when any thing injurious is spoken of his person, character, conduct, etc. Blaspheming against men is any thing by which they are injured in their persons, characters, or property.

***We are made as the filth of the earth—the offscouring of all things***— The Greek word which we render filth, is περικαθαρματα, a purgation, or lustrative sacrifice; that which we translate offscouring is περιψημα, a redemption sacrifice. To understand the full force of these words, as applied by the apostle in this place, we must observe that he alludes to certain customs among the heathens, who, in the time of some public calamity, chose out some unhappy men of the most abject and despicable character to be a public expiation for them; these they maintained a whole year at the public expense; and then they led them out, crowned with flowers, as was customary in sacrifices; and, having heaped all the curses of the country upon their heads, and whipped them seven times, they burned them alive, and afterwards their ashes were thrown into the sea, while the people said these words: περιψημαημων γινου, be thou our propitiation. Sometimes the person thus chosen was thrown into the sea as a sacrifice to Neptune, the people saying the words as before. Hence Origen says that our Lord, in giving up himself as a propitiation for our sins, was much more than his apostles—περικαθαρματα του κοσμου, παντων περιψημα, the lustration of the world, and the peculiar sacrifice for all men. The apostle, therefore, means that he and his fellows were treated like those wretched beings who were judged to be fit for nothing but to be expiatory victims to the infernal gods, for the safety and redemption of others. Our words filth and offscouring, convey no legitimate sense of the original. See several useful remarks upon these terms in Pearce, Whitby, and Parkhurst.

**Verse 14. *I write not these things to shame you***— It is not by way of finding fault with you for not providing me with the necessaries of life that I write thus; but I do it to warn you to act differently for the time to come;

and be not so ready to be drawn aside by every pretender to apostleship, to the neglect of those to whom, under God, you owe your salvation.

**Verse 15. *For though ye have ten thousand instructors***— **μυριους παιδαγωγους**, Myriads of leaders, that is, an indefinite multitude; for so the word is often used. The **παιδαγωγος**, from which we have our word pedagogue, which we improperly apply to a school master, was among the Greeks, the person or servant who attended a child, had the general care of him, and who led him to school for the purpose of being instructed by the **διδασκαλος**, or teacher. It seems there were many at Corinth who offered their services to instruct this people, and who were not well affected towards the apostle.

***Not many fathers***— Many offer to instruct you who have no parental feeling for you; and how can they? you are not their spiritual children, you stand in this relation to me alone; for in Christ Jesus-by the power and unction of his Spirit, I have begotten you-I was the means of bringing you into a state of salvation, so that you have been born again: ye are my children alone in the Gospel. Schoettgen produces a good illustration of this from Shemoth Rabba, sect. 46, fol. 140. “A girl who had lost her parents was educated by a guardian, who was a good and faithful man, and took great care of her; when she was grown up, he purposed to bestow her in marriage; the scribe came, and beginning to write the contract, said, What is thy name? The maid answered, N. The scribe proceeded, What is the name of thy father? The maid was silent. Her guardian said, Why art thou silent? The maid replied, Because I know no other father but thee; for he who educates a child well, is more properly the father than he who begot it.” This is the same kind of sentiment which I have already quoted from Terence, Romans 16:13.

*Natura tu illi pater es, consiliis ego.  
Adelphi, Act i., scene 2, ver. 47.*

*Thou art his father by nature, I by instruction.*

**Verse 16. *Wherefore, I beseech you, be ye followers of me.***— It should rather be translated, Be ye imitators of me; **μιμηται**, from which we have our word mimic, which, though now used only in a bad or ludicrous sense, simply signifies an imitator of another person, whether in speech, manner,

habit, or otherwise. As children should imitate their parents in preference to all others, he calls on them to imitate him, as he claims them for his children. He lived for God and eternity, seeking not his own glory, emolument, or ease: those sowers of sedition among them were actuated by different motives. Here then the apostle compares himself with them: follow and imitate me, as I follow and imitate Christ: do not imitate them who, from their worldly pursuits, show themselves to be actuated with a worldly spirit.

**Verse 17. *For this cause***— That you imitate me, and know in what this consists.

***I sent unto you Timotheus***— The same person to whom he wrote the two epistles that are still extant under his name, and whom he calls here his beloved son, one of his most intimate disciples; and whom he had been the means of bringing to God through Christ.

***My ways which be in Christ***— This person will also inform you of the manner in which I regulate all the Churches; and show to you, that what I require of you is no other than what I require of all the Churches of Christ which I have formed, as I follow the same plan of discipline in every place. See the Introduction, sect. iii.

**Verse 18. *Some are puffed up***— Some of your teachers act with great haughtiness, imagining themselves to be safe, because they suppose that I shall not revisit Corinth.

**Verse 19. *But I will come to you shortly***— God being my helper, I fully purpose to visit you; and then I shall put those proud men to the proof, not of their speech-eloquence, or pretensions to great knowledge and influence, but of their power—the authority they profess to have from God, and the evidences of that authority in the works they have performed. See the Introduction, sect. xi.

**Verse 20. *For the kingdom of God***— The religion of the Lord Jesus is not in word—in human eloquence, excellence of speech, or even in doctrines; but in power, *εν δυναμει*, in the mighty energy of the Holy Spirit; enlightening, quickening, converting, and sanctifying believers; and all his genuine apostles are enabled, on all necessary occasions, to demonstrate

the truth of their calling by miracles; for this the original word often means.

**Verse 21.** *Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love*— Here he alludes to the case of the teacher and father, mentioned in 1 Corinthians 4:15. Shall I come to you with the authority of a teacher, and use the rod of discipline? or shall I come in the tenderness of a father, and entreat you to do what I have authority to enforce? Among the Jews, those who did not amend, after being faithfully admonished, were whipped, either publicly or privately, in the synagogue. If on this they did not amend, they were liable to be stoned. We see, from the cases of Ananias and Sapphira, Elymas the sorcerer, Hymenaeus and Alexander, etc., that the apostles had sometimes the power to inflict the most awful punishments on transgressors. The Corinthians must have known this, and consequently have dreaded a visit from him in his apostolical authority. That there were many irregularities in this Church, which required both the presence and authority of the apostle, we shall see in the subsequent chapters.

1. IN the preceding chapter we find the ministers of God compared to STEWARDS, of whom the strictest fidelity is required. (1.) Fidelity to GOD, in publishing his truth with zeal, defending it with courage, and recommending it with prudence. (2.) Fidelity to CHRIST, whose representatives they are, in honestly and fully recommending his grace and salvation on the ground of his passion and death, and preaching his maxims in all their force and purity. (3.) Fidelity to the CHURCH, in taking heed to keep up a godly discipline, admitting none into it but those who have abandoned their sins; and permitting none to continue in it that do not continue to adorn the doctrine of God their Savior. (4.) Fidelity to their own MINISTRY, walking so as to bring no blame on the Gospel; avoiding the extremes of indolent tenderness on one hand, and austere severity on the other. Considering the flock, not as their flock, but the flock of Jesus Christ; watching, ruling, and feeding it according to the order of their Divine Master.

2. A minister of God should act with great caution: every man, properly speaking, is placed between the secret judgment of God and the public censure of men. He should do nothing rashly, that he may not justly incur the censure of men; and he should do nothing but in the loving fear of God,

that he may not incur the censure of his Maker. The man who scarcely ever allows himself to be wrong, is one of whom it may be safely said, he is seldom right. It is possible for a man to mistake his own will for the will of God, and his own obstinacy for inflexible adherence to his duty. With such persons it is dangerous to have any commerce. Reader, pray to God to save thee from an inflated and self-sufficient mind.

3. Zeal for God's truth is essentially necessary for every minister; and prudence is not less so. They should be wisely tempered together, but this is not always the case. Zeal without prudence is like a flambeau in the hands of a blind man; it may enlighten and warm, but it may also destroy the spiritual building. Human prudence should be avoided as well as intemperate zeal; this kind of prudence consists in a man's being careful not to bring himself into trouble, and not to hazard his reputation, credit, interest, or fortune, in the performance of his duty. Evangelical wisdom consists in our suffering and losing all things, rather than be wanting in the discharge of our obligations.

4. From St. Paul's account of himself we find him often suffering the severest hardships in the prosecution of his duty. He had for his patrimony, hunger, thirst, nakedness, stripes, etc.; and wandered about testifying the Gospel of the grace of God, without even a cottage that he could claim as his own. Let those who dwell in their elegant houses, who profess to be apostolic in their order, and evangelic in their doctrines, think of this. In their state of affluence they should have extraordinary degrees of zeal, humility, meekness, and charity, to recommend them to our notice as apostolical men. If God, in the course of his providence, has saved them from an apostle's hardships, let them devote their lives to the service of that Church in which they have their emoluments; and labor incessantly to build it up on its most holy faith. Let them not be masters to govern with rigour and imperiousness; but tender fathers, who feel every member in the Church as their own child, and labor to feed the heavenly family with the mysteries of God, of which they are stewards.

5. And while the people require much of their spiritual pastors, these pastors have equal right to require much of their people. The obligation is not all on one side; those who watch for our souls have a right not only to their own support, but to our reverence and confidence. Those who



despise their ecclesiastical rulers, will soon despise the Church of Christ itself, neglect its ordinances, lose sight of its doctrines, and at last neglect their own salvation.

## CHAPTER 5.

*Account of the incestuous person, or of him who had married his father's wife, 1. The apostle reproves the Corinthians for their carelessness in this matter, and orders them to excommunicate the transgressor, 2-5. They are reprehended for their glorying, while such scandals were among them, 6. They must purge out the old leaven, that they may properly celebrate the Christian passover, 7-9. They must not associate with any who, professing the Christian religion, were guilty of any scandalous vice, and must put away from them every evil person, 10-13.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 5.

**Verse 1.** *There is fornication among you*— The word *πορνεία*, which we translate fornication in this place, must be understood in its utmost latitude of meaning, as implying all kinds of impurity; for, that the Corinthians were notoriously guilty of every species of irregularity and debauch, we have already seen; and it is not likely that in speaking on this subject, in reference to a people so very notorious, he would refer to only one species of impurity, and that not the most flagitious.

*That one should have his father's wife.*— Commentators and critics have found great difficulties in this statement. One part of the case is sufficiently clear, that a man who professed Christianity had illegal connections with his father's wife; but the principal question is, was his father alive or dead? Most think that the father was alive, and imagine that to this the apostle refers, 2 Corinthians 7:12, where, speaking of the person who did the wrong, he introduces also him who had suffered the wrong; which must mean the father and the father then alive. After all that has been said on this subject, I think it most natural to conclude that the person in question had married the wife of his deceased father, not his own mother, but stepmother, then a widow.

This was a crime which the text says was not so much as named among the Gentiles; the apostle must only mean that it was not accredited by them, for it certainly did often occur: but by their best writers who notice

it, it was branded as superlatively infamous. Cicero styles it, scelus incredibile et inauditum, an incredible and unheard of wickedness; but it was heard of and practised; and there are several stories of this kind in heathen authors, but they reprobate not commend it. The word **ονομαζεται**, named, is wanting in almost every MS. and version of importance, and certainly makes no part of the text. The words should be read, and such fornication as is not amongst the Gentiles, i.e., not allowed. Some think that this woman might have been a proselyte to the Jewish religion from heathenism; and the rabbins taught that proselytism annulled all former relationship, and that a woman was at liberty in such a case to depart from an unbelieving husband, and to marry even with a believing son, i.e., of her husband by some former wife.

**Verse 2. *Ye are puffed up***— Ye are full of strife and contention relative to your parties and favourite teachers, and neglect the discipline of the Church. Had you considered the greatness of this crime, ye would have rather mourned, and have put away this flagrant transgressor from among you.

***Taken away from among you.***— ἵνα εξαρθη εκ μεσου υμων. This is supposed by some to refer to the punishment of death, by others to excommunication. The Christian Church was at this time too young to have those forms of excommunication which were practised in succeeding centuries. Probably no more is meant than a simple disowning of the person, accompanied with the refusal to admit him to the sacred ordinances, or to have any intercourse or connection with him.

**Verse 3. *Absent in body, but present in spirit***— Perhaps St. Paul refers to the gift of the discernment of spirits, which it is very likely the apostles in general possessed on extraordinary occasions. He had already seen this matter so clearly, that he had determined on that sort of punishment which should be inflicted for this crime.

**Verse 4. *In the name of our Lord Jesus***— Who is the head of the Church; and under whose authority every act is to be performed.

***And my spirit***— My apostolical authority derived from him; with the power, **συν δυναμει**, with the miraculous energy of the Lord Jesus, which is to inflict the punishment that you pronounce:—

**Verse 5. *To deliver such a one unto Satan***— There is no evidence that delivering to Satan was any form of excommunication known either among the Jews or the Christians. Lightfoot, Selden, and Schoettgen, who have searched all the Jewish records, have found nothing that answers to this: it was a species of punishment administered in extraordinary cases, in which the body and the mind of an incorrigible transgressor were delivered by the authority of God into the power of Satan, to be tortured with diseases and terrors as a warning to all; but while the body and mind were thus tormented, the immortal spirit was under the influence of the Divine mercy; and the affliction, in all probability, was in general only for a season; though sometimes it was evidently unto death, as the destruction of the flesh seems to imply. But the soul found mercy at the hand of God; for such a most extraordinary interference of God's power and justice, and of Satan's influence, could not fail to bring the person to a state of the deepest humiliation and contrition; and thus, while the flesh was destroyed, the spirit was saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. No such power as this remains in the Church of God; none such should be assumed; the pretensions to it are as wicked as they are vain. It was the same power by which Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead, and Elymas the sorcerer struck blind. Apostles alone were intrusted with it.

**Verse 6. *Your glorying is not good***.— You are triumphing in your superior knowledge, and busily employed in setting up and supporting your respective teachers, while the Church is left under the most scandalous corruptions-corruptions which threaten its very existence if not purged away.

***Know ye not***— With all your boasted wisdom, do you not know and acknowledge the truth of a common maxim, a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? If this leaven-the incestuous person, be permitted to remain among you; if his conduct be not exposed by the most formidable censure; the flood-gates of impurity will be opened on the Church, and the whole state of Christianity ruined in Corinth.

**Verse 7. *Purge out therefore the old leaven***— As it is the custom of the Jews previously to the passover to search their houses in the most diligent manner for the old leaven, and throw it out, sweeping every part clean; so act with this incestuous person. I have already shown with what care the

Jews purged their houses from all leaven previously to the passover; see the note on Exodus 12:8-19, and on the term passover, and Christ as represented by this ancient Jewish sacrifice; see on Exodus 12:27, and my Discourse on the Nature and Design of the Eucharist.

**Verse 8. *Therefore let us keep the feast***— It is very likely that the time of the passover was now approaching, when the Church of Christ would be called to extraordinary acts of devotion, in commemorating the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ; and of this circumstance the apostle takes advantage in his exhortation to the Corinthians. See the Introduction, sect. xii.

***Not with old leaven***— Under the Christian dispensation we must be saved equally from Judaism, heathenism, and from sin of every kind; malice and wickedness must be destroyed; and sincerity and truth, inward purity and outward holiness, take their place.

The apostle refers here not more to wicked principles than to wicked men; let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven—the impure principles which actuated you while in your heathen state; neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, **κακίας και πονηρίας**, wickedness, radical depravity, producing unrighteousness in the life; nor with the persons who are thus influenced, and thus act; but with the unleavened bread, **αλλ' εν αζυμοις**, but with upright and godly men, who have sincerity, **ειλικρινεια**, such purity of affections and conduct, that even the light of God shining upon them discovers no flaw, and truth—who have received the testimony of God, and who are inwardly as well as outwardly what they profess to be.

The word **πονηρίας**, which we translate wickedness, is so very like to **πορνειας**, fornication, that some very ancient MSS. have the latter reading instead of the former; which, indeed, seems most natural in this place; as **κακίας**, which we translate malice, includes every thing that is implied in **πονηρίας**, wickedness whereas **πορνειας**, as being the subject in question, see 1 Corinthians 5:1, would come more pointedly in here: Not with wickedness and fornication, or rather, not with wicked men and fornicators: but I do not contend for this reading.

**Verse 9. *I wrote unto you in an epistle***— The wisest and best skilled in Biblical criticism agree that the apostle does not refer to any other epistle

than this; and that he speaks here of some general directions which he had given in the foregoing part of it; but which he had now in some measure changed and greatly strengthened, as we see from 1 Corinthians 5:11. The words *εγραψα εν τη επιστολη* may be translated, I HAD written to you in THIS EPISTLE; for there are many instances in the New Testament where the aorist, which is here used, and which is a sort of indefinite tense, is used for the perfect and the plusquam-perfect. Dr. Whitby produces several proofs of this, and contends that the conclusion drawn by some, viz. that it refers to some epistle that is lost, is not legitimately drawn from any premises which either this text or antiquity affords. The principal evidence against this is 2 Corinthians 7:8, where *εν τη επιστολη*, the same words as above, appear to refer to this first epistle. Possibly the apostle may refer to an epistle which he had written though not sent; for, on receiving farther information from Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, relative to the state of the Corinthian Church, he suppressed that, and wrote this, in which he considers the subject much more at large. See Dr. Lightfoot.

*Not to company with fornicators*— With which, as we have already seen, Corinth abounded. It was not only the grand sin, but staple, of the place.

**Verse 10.** *For then must ye needs go out of the world.*— What an awful picture of the general corruption of manners does this exhibit! The Christians at Corinth could not transact the ordinary affairs of life with any others than with fornicators, covetous persons, extortioners, railers, drunkards, and idolaters, because there were none others in the place! How necessary was Christianity in that city!

**Verse 11.** *But now I have written*— I not only write this, but I add more: if any one who is called a brother, i.e. professes the Christian religion, be a fornicator, covetous, idolater, railer, drunkard, or extortioner, not even to eat with such—have no communion with such a one, in things either sacred or civil. You may transact your worldly concerns with a person that knows not God, and makes no profession of Christianity, whatever his moral character may be; but ye must not even thus far acknowledge a man professing Christianity, who is scandalous in his conduct. Let him have this extra mark of your abhorrence of all sin; and let the world see that the Church of God does not tolerate iniquity.

**Verse 12.** *For what have I to do to judge them also that are without?*—

The term without, **τους εξω**, signifies those who were not members of the Church, and in this sense its correspondent term: **החיצונים** hachitsonim, those that are without, is generally understood in the Jewish writers, where it frequently occurs. The word **και** also, which greatly disturbs the sense here, is wanting in ABCFG, and several others, with the Syriac, Coptic, Slavonic, Vulgate, and the Itala; together with several of the fathers. The sentence, I think, with the omission of **και** also, should stand thus: Does it belong to me to pass sentence on those which are without-which are not members of the Church? By no means (**ουχι**.) Pass ye sentence on them which are within-which are members of the Church: those which are without-which are not members of the Church, God will pass sentence on, in that way in which he generally deals with the heathen world. But put ye away the evil from among yourselves. This is most evidently the apostle's meaning, and renders all comments unnecessary. In the last clause there appears to be an allusion to Deuteronomy 17:7, where the like directions are given to the congregation of Israel, relative to a person found guilty of idolatry: Thou shalt put away the evil from among you-where the version of the Septuagint is almost the same as that of the apostle: **και εξαρεις τον πονηρον εξ υμων αυτων**.

THERE are several important subjects in this chapter which intimately concern the Christian Church in general.

1. If evil be tolerated in religious societies, the work of God cannot prosper there. If one scandal appear, it should be the cause of general humiliation and mourning to the followers of God where it occurs; because the soul of a brother is on the road to perdition, the cause of God so far betrayed and injured, and Christ recrucified in the house of his friends. Pity should fill every heart towards the transgressor, and prayer for the backslider occupy all the members of the Church.

2. Discipline must be exercised in the Christian Church; without this it will soon differ but little from the wilderness of this world. But what judgment, prudence, piety, and caution, are requisite in the execution of this most important branch of a minister's duty! He may be too easy and tender, and permit the gangrene to remain till the flock be infected with it. Or he may be rigid and severe, and destroy parts that are vital while only

professing to take away what is vitiated. A backslider is one who once knew less or more of the salvation of God. Hear what God says concerning such: Turn, ye backsliders, for I am married unto you. See how unwilling He is to give them up! He suffers long, and is kind: do thou likewise; and when thou art obliged to cut off the offender from the



## CHAPTER 6.

*The Corinthians are reprov'd for their litigious disposition; brother going to law with brother, and that before the heathen, 1-6. They should suffer wrong rather than do any, 7, 8. No unrighteous person can enter into the glory of God, 9, 10. Some of the Corinthians had been grievous sinners, but God had saved them, 11. Many things may be lawful which are not at all times expedient, 12. Meats are for the belly, and the belly for meats; but the body is not for uncleanness, 13. Christ's resurrection a pledge of ours, 14. The bodies of Christians are members of Christ, and must not be defiled, 15-17. He that commits fornication sins against his own body, 18. Strong dissuasives from it, 19, 20.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 6.

**Verse 1.** *Dare any of you*, etc.— From the many things that are here reprehended by the apostle, we learn that the Christian Church at Corinth was in a state of great imperfection, notwithstanding there were very many eminent characters among them. Divided as they were among themselves, there was no one person who possessed any public authority to settle differences between man and man; therefore, as one party would not submit to the decisions of another, they were obliged to carry their contentions before heathen magistrates; and probably these very subjects of litigations arose out of their ecclesiastical divisions. The thing, and this issue of it, the apostle strongly reprehends.

*Before the unjust, and not before the saints?*— The heathen judges were termed **δικασται** from their presumed righteousness in the administration of justice; here the apostle, by a paronomasia, calls them **αδικοι**, unrighteous persons; and it is very likely that at Corinth, where such corruption of manners reigned, there was a great perversion of public justice; and it is not to be supposed that matters relative to the Christians were fairly decided. The Christians the apostle terms **αγιοι** saints, which they were all by profession; and doubtless many were so in spirit and in truth.

**Verse 2. *The saints shall judge the world?***— Nothing can be more evident than that the writers of the New Testament often use ο κόσμος, the world, to signify the Jewish people; and sometimes the Roman empire, and the Jewish state; and in the former sense it is often used by our Lord. When, says he, the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, then shall ye sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, Matthew 19:28. It is supposed that he refers to the same subject as that mentioned here—the saints judging the world; and that St. Paul has his words in view in what he says here to the Corinthians. By judging the twelve tribes of Israel, some have imagined that having authority in the Church is merely intended; but Dr. Lightfoot contends that the words referred to the coming of our Lord to execute judgment on the Jews, and to destroy their state; and that the doctrine of the apostles, not themselves, was to judge and condemn that most disobedient people. The place before us is generally understood to imply, that the redeemed of the Lord shall be, on the great day, assessors with him in judgment; and shall give their award in the determinations of his justice. On reviewing this subject, I am fully of opinion that this cannot be the meaning of the words, and that no such assessorship as is contended for ever will take place; and that the interpretation is clogged with a multitude of absurdities.

1. The saints themselves are to appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and shall be judged by him, after which they shall reign with him; but it is never said in Scripture that they shall judge with him.

2. It would be absurd to suppose that thrones should be erected for the purpose of saints sitting on them to give their approbation in the condemnation of the wicked; of what use can such an approbation be? is it necessary to the validity of Christ's decision? and will not even the damned themselves, without this, acknowledge the justice of their doom? I therefore think with Dr. Lightfoot, that these words of the apostle refer to the prediction of Daniel, Daniel 7:18, 27, and such like prophecies, where the kingdoms of the earth are promised to the saints of the Most High; that is, that a time shall come when Christianity shall so far prevail that the civil government of the world shall be administered by Christians, which, at that time, was administered by heathens. And this is even now true of all those parts of the earth which may be considered of the greatest

political consequence. They profess Christianity, and the kings and other governors are Christians in this general sense of the term.

**Verse 3. *Know ye not that we shall judge angels?***— Dr. Lightfoot observes that “the apostle does not say here, as he said before, the saints shall judge the angels, but WE shall judge them. By angels, all confess that demons are intended; but certainly all saints, according to the latitude with which that word is understood, i.e. all who profess Christianity, shall not judge angels. Nor is this judging of angels to be understood of the last day; but the apostle speaks of the ministers of the Gospel, himself and others, who, by the preaching of the Gospel, through the power of Christ, should spoil the devils of their oracles and their idols, should deprive them of their worship, should drive them out of their seats, and strip them of their dominion. Thus would God subdue the whole world under the Christian power, so that Christian magistrates should judge men, and Christian ministers judge devils.”

**Verse 4. *Things pertaining to this life***— They could examine all civil cases among themselves, which they were permitted to determine without any hinderance from the heathen governments under which they lived.

***Who are least esteemed in the Church.***— *τους εξουθενημενους*, Those who were in the lowest order of judges; for the apostle may refer here to the order in the Jewish benches, as Dr. Lightfoot conjectures, of which there were five, viz:—

1. The great Sanhedrin, consisting of seventy-two elders, which presided in Jerusalem.
2. The little Sanhedrin of twenty-five, in large cities, out of Jerusalem.
3. The Bench of Three in every synagogue.
4. The Authorized, or Authentic Bench.
5. The Bench not authorized, *εξουθενημενος*. This latter bench was so called because it received not its authority immediately from the Sanhedrin, but was chosen by the parties between whom the controversy depended. The apostle certainly does not mean persons of no repute, but such as these arbitrators, who were chosen for the purpose of settling private differences, and preventing them from going before the regular

magistrates. The following verse makes it pretty evident that the apostle refers to this lower kind of tribunal; and hence he says,—

**Verse 5. *Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you?***— Have you none among yourselves that can be arbitrators of the differences which arise, that you go to the heathen tribunals?

**Verse 6. *Brother goeth to law with brother***— One Christian sues another at law! This is almost as great a scandal as can exist in a Christian society. Those in a religious community who will not submit to a proper arbitration, made by persons among themselves, should be expelled from the Church of God.

**Verse 7. *There is utterly a fault among you***— There is a most manifest defect among you, 1. Of peaceableness; 2. Of brotherly love; 3. Of mutual confidence; and 4. Of reverence for God, and concern for the honor of his cause.

***Why do ye not rather take wrong?***— Better suffer an injury than take a method of redressing yourselves which must injure your own peace, and greatly dishonor the cause of God.

**Verse 8. *Nay, ye do wrong***— Far from suffering, ye are the aggressors; and defraud your pious, long-suffering brethren, who submit to this wrong rather than take those methods of redressing their grievances which the spirit of Christianity forbids. Probably the apostle refers to him who had taken his father's wife.

**Verse 9. *The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom***— The unrighteous, *ἀδικοι*, those who act contrary to right, cannot inherit, for the inheritance is by right. He who is not a child of God has no right to the family inheritance, for that inheritance is for the children. If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, Romans 8:17. There are here ten classes of transgressors which the apostle excludes from the kingdom of God; and any man who is guilty of any one of the evils mentioned above is thereby excluded from this kingdom, whether it imply the Church of Christ here below, or the state of glory hereafter.

Several of the evils here enumerated will not bear to be particularly explained; they are, however, sufficiently plain of themselves, and show us what abominations were commonly practised among the Corinthians.

**Verse 11. *And such were some of you***— It was not with the prospect of collecting saints that the apostles went about preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. None but sinners were to be found over the face of the earth; they preached that sinners might be converted unto God, made saints, and constituted into a Church; and this was the effect as well as the object of their preaching.

***But ye are washed***— Several suppose that the order in which the operations of the grace of God take place in the soul is here inverted; but I am of a very different mind. Every thing will appear here in its order, when we understand the terms used by the apostle.

Ye are washed, **απελουσασθε**; ye have been baptized into the Christian faith, and ye have promised in this baptism to put off all filthiness of the flesh and spirit: and the washing of your bodies is emblematical of the purification of your souls.

***Ye are sanctified***— **ἡγιασθητε**; from **α**, privative, and **γη**, the earth; ye are separated from earthly things to be connected with spiritual. Ye are separated from time to be connected with eternity. Ye are separated from idols to be joined to the living God. Separation from common, earthly, or sinful uses, to be wholly employed in the service of the true God, is the ideal meaning of this word, both in the Old and New Testaments. It was in consequence of their being separated from the world that they became a Church of God. Ye were formerly workers of iniquity, and associated with workers of iniquity; but now ye are separated from them, and united together to work out your salvation with fear and trembling before God.

***Ye are justified***— **εδικαιωθητε**. Ye have been brought into a state of favor with God; your sins having been blotted out through Christ Jesus, the Spirit of God witnessing the same to your conscience, and carrying on by his energy the great work of regeneration in your hearts. The process here is plain and simple:— 1. Paul and his brother apostles preached the Gospel at Corinth, and besought the people to turn from darkness to light—from idol vanities to the living God, and to believe in the Lord Jesus

for the remission of sins. 2. The people who heard were convinced of the Divine truths delivered by the apostle, and flocked to baptism. 3. They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and thus took upon them the public profession of the Gospel. 4. Being now baptized into the Christian faith, they were separated from idols and idolaters, and became incorporated with the Church of God. 5. As penitents, they were led to the Lord Jesus for justification, which they received through faith in his blood. 6. Being justified freely-having their sins forgiven through the redemption that is in Jesus, they received the Spirit of God to attest this glorious work of grace to their consciences; and thus became possessed of that principle of righteousness, that true leaven which was to leaven the

that is a Christian, would obey his appetite so far as to do these things for the sake of gratification? A man is brought under the power of any thing which he cannot give up. He is the slave of that thing, whatsoever it be, which he cannot relinquish; and then, to him, it is sin.

**Verse 13. *Meats for the belly***— I suppose that *κοιλια* means the animal appetite, or propensity to food, etc., and we may conceive the apostle to reason thus: I acknowledge that God has provided different kinds of aliments for the appetite of man, and among others those which are generally offered to idols; and he has adapted the appetite to these aliments, and the aliments to the appetite: but God shall destroy both it and them; none of these is eternal; all these lower appetites and sensations will be destroyed by death, and have no existence in the resurrection body; and the earth and its productions shall be burnt up.

***Now the body is not for fornication***— Though God made an appetite for food, and provided food for that appetite, yet he has not made the body for any uncleanness, nor indulgence in sensuality; but he has made it for Christ; and Christ was provided to be a sacrifice for this body as well as for the soul, by taking our nature upon him; so that now, as human beings, we have an intimate relationship to the Lord; and our bodies are made not only for his service, but to be his temples.

**Verse 14. *And God hath both raised up the Lord***— He has raised up the human nature of Christ from the grave, as a pledge of our resurrection; and will also raise us up by his own power, that we may dwell with him in glory for ever.

**Verse 15. *Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?***— Because he has taken your nature upon him, and thus, as believers in him, ye are the members of Christ.

***Shall I then take***, etc.— Shall we, who profess to be members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, connect ourselves with harlots, and thus dishonor and pollute the bodies which are members of Christ? God forbid! These passages admit of a more literal interpretation. This, if given at all, I must give in a strange language.

Membra humana, ad generationem pertinentia, vocantur Membra Christi, quia mysterium conjunctionis Christi et Ecclesiae per conjunctionem maris

et faeminae indigitatur, Ephesians 5:32. In Vet. Test. idem valebat de membro masculino, gippe quod circumcissione, tanquam signo faederis, honoratum est. Vide Schoettgen, Hor. Hebr.

**Verse 16. *He that is joined to a harlot is one body***— In Sohar Genes., fol. 19, we have these remarkable words: Whosoever connects himself with another man's wife, does in effect renounce the holy blessed God, and the Church of the Israelites.

**Verse 17. *Is one spirit***.— He who is united to God, by faith in Christ Jesus, receives his Spirit, and becomes a partaker of the Divine nature. Who can change such a relationship for communion with a harlot; or for any kind of sensual gratification? He who can must be far and deeply fallen!

**Verse 18. *Flee fornication***.— Abominate, detest, and escape from every kind of uncleanness. Some sins, or solicitations to sin, may be reasoned with; in the above cases, if you parley you are undone; reason not, but FLY!

***Sinneth against his own body***.— Though sin of every species has a tendency to destroy life, yet none are so mortal as those to which the apostle refers; they strike immediately at the basis of the constitution. By the just judgment of God, all these irregular and sinful connections are married to death. Neither prostitutes, whoremongers, nor unclean persons of any description, can live out half their days. It would be easy to show, and prove also, how the end of these things, even with respect to the body, is death; but I forbear, and shall finish the subject with the words of the prophet: The show of their countenance doth witness against them, and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not; wo unto their soul, for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.

**Verse 19. *Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost***— What an astonishing saying is this! As truly as the living God dwelt in the Mosaic tabernacle, and in the temple of Solomon, so truly does the Holy Ghost dwell in the souls of genuine Christians; and as the temple and all its utensils were holy, separated from all common and profane uses, and dedicated alone to the service of God, so the bodies of genuine Christians



are holy, and all their members should be employed in the service of God alone.

***And ye are not your own?***— Ye have no right over yourselves, to dispose either of your body, or any of its members, as you may think proper or lawful; you are bound to God, and to him you are accountable.

**Verse 20. *Ye are bought with a price***— As the slave who is purchased by his master for a sum of money is the sole property of that master, so ye, being bought with the price of the blood of Christ, are not your own, you are his property. As the slave is bound to use all his skill and diligence for the emolument of his master, so you should employ body, soul, and spirit in the service of your Lord; promoting, by every means in your power, the honor and glory of your God, whom you must also consider as your Lord and Master.

There are strange discordances in MSS., versions, and fathers, on the conclusion of this verse; and the clauses **καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι ὑμῶν, αὐτὴν ἐστὶ τοῦ θεοῦ**, and in your spirit, which is God's, is wanting in ABC\*D\*EFG, some others, Coptic, AEthiopic, Vulgate, and Itala, and in several of the primitive fathers. Almost every critic of note considers them to be spurious. Whether retained or expunged the sense is the same.

Instead of price simply, the Vulgate and some of the Latin fathers, read, pretio magno, with a great price; and instead of glorify, simply, they read glorificate et portate, glorify and carry God in your bodies. These readings appear to be glosses intended to explain the text. Litigious Christians, who will have recourse to law for every little difference, as well as the impure, may read this chapter either to their conviction or confusion.

## CHAPTER 7.

*A solution of several difficult cases concerning marriage and married persons, 1-6. God has given every man his proper gift, 7. Directions to the unmarried and widows, 8, 9. Directions to the married, 10, 11. Directions to men married to heathen women, and to women married to heathen men, 12-16. Every man should abide in his vocation, 17-24. Directions concerning virgins, and single persons in general, 25-28. How all should behave themselves in the things of this life, in reference to eternity, 29-31. The trials of the married state, 39-35. Directions concerning the state of virginity or celibacy, 36-38. How the wife is bound to her husband during his life, and her liberty to marry another after his death, 39, 40.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 7.

**Verse 1.** *The things whereof ye wrote unto me*— It is sufficiently evident that the principal part of this epistle was written in answer to some questions which had been sent to the apostle in a letter from the Corinthian Church; and the first question seems to be this: “Is it proper for a man to marry in the present circumstances of the Church?”

The question concerning the expediency or in expediency of marriage was often agitated among the ancient philosophers; and many, though inclined to decide against it, because of the troubles and cares connected with it, tolerated it in their opinions; because, though an evil, it was judged to be a necessary evil. The words of Menander are full to this effect: *γαμειν, εαν τις την αληθειαν σκοπη, κακον μεν εστιν, αλλ’ αναγκαιον κακον.* “If a man consider marriage in a proper point of view, it is an evil; but then it is a necessary evil.” Metellus Numidicus spoke of it nearly in the same way. *Si sine uxore possemus, Quirites, esse, omnes ea molestia careremus; sed quoniam ita natura tradidit, ut nec CUM ILLIS salis commode, nec SINE ILLIS ullo modo vivi possit, saluti perpetus potius quam brevi voluptati consulendum.* “If, O ye Romans, we could live unmarried, we should be saved from a great deal of trouble; but, seeing that nature has so ordered it

that we cannot live very comfortably with wives, and without them cannot live at all, marriage should be adopted, not for the sake of the short-lived pleasure, but rather for perpetual safety.” But this was not the common opinion; the Jews absolutely required that every man should marry, and reputed those as murderers who did not. — See on 1 Corinthians 7:6. By the laws of Lycurgus unmarried persons were prohibited from seeing the public games. By the laws of the Spartans bachelors were punished. And Plato declares all such unworthy of any honor. And to this the commentator says, Amen.

***Not to touch a woman***— *γυναικος μη απτεσθαι*. The learned reader need not be informed in what sense *απτομαι* is used among the Greeks, and *langere* among the Latins. For examples Wetstein may be consulted.

**Verse 2. *To avoid fornication***— *δια τας πορνειας*; *verto, propter exercendam libidinem, vel ut libidinem licite exercere liceat. Probo hanc notionem ex Hebraeo, ibi זנה, zanah, est libidinem exercere, Hosea 4:10: For they shall eat and not have enough; they shall commit whoredom, זנות, libidinem exercebunt, and shall not increase. Here the prophet certainly does not speak of whoredom in our sense of the word; for the persons he mentions expected to have children, which cannot be said of those who are addicted to improper connections: the prophet speaks concerning married persons, whom he threatens with a privation of children, notwithstanding libidinem exercebant in order to have numerous families. See Schoettgen. The following verse shows that this is the apostle’s meaning.*

***Let every man have his own wife***— Let every man have one woman, his own; and every woman one man, her own. Here, plurality of wives and husbands is most strictly forbidden; and they are commanded to marry for the purpose of procreating children.

In the Jewish constitutions there are some things not only curious, but useful, respecting marriage. “There are four causes which induce men to marry: 1. Impure desire; 2. To get riches; 3. To become honorable; 4. For the glory of God. Those who marry through the first motive beget wicked and rebellious children. Those who marry for the sake of riches have the curse of leaving them to others. Those who marry for the sake of

aggrandizing their family, their families shall be diminished. Those who marry to promote the glory of God, their children shall be holy, and by them shall the true Church be increased.”

**Verse 3. *Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence***— *την οφειλομενην ευνοιαν*. Though our version is no translation of the original, yet few persons are at a loss for the meaning, and the context is sufficiently plain. Some have rendered the words, not unaptly, the matrimonial debt, or conjugal duty—that which a wife owes to her husband, and the husband to his wife; and which they must take care mutually to render, else alienation of affection will be the infallible consequence, and this in numberless instances has led to adulterous connections. In such cases the wife has to blame herself for the infidelity of her husband, and the husband for that of his wife. What miserable work has been made in the peace of families by a wife or a husband pretending to be wiser than the apostle, and too holy and spiritual to keep the commandments of God!

**Verse 4. *The wife hath not power***, etc.— Her person belongs to her husband; her husband’s person belongs to her: neither of them has any authority to refuse what the other has a matrimonial right to demand. The woman that would act so is either a knave or a fool. It would be trifling to attribute her conduct to any other cause than weakness or folly. She does not love her husband; or she loves some one else better than her husband; or she makes pretensions to a fancied sanctity unsupported by Scripture or common sense.

**Verse 5. *Defraud ye not one the other***— What ye owe thus to each other never refuse paying, unless by mutual consent; and let that be only for a certain time, when prudence dictates the temporary separation, or when some extraordinary spiritual occasion may render it mutually agreeable, in order that ye may fast and pray, and derive the greatest possible benefit from these duties by being enabled to wait on the Lord without distraction.

***That Satan tempt you not for your incontinency***.— It is most evident that the separations permitted by the Apostle, for he enjoins none, are only for a season, on extraordinary occasions; and that the persons may come together again, lest Satan, taking advantage of their matrimonial abstinence, might tempt either party to illicit commerce.



the Church was then in straits and difficulties, it was much better for its single members not to encumber themselves with domestic embarrassments.

***Every man hath his proper gift of God***— Continnence is a state that cannot be acquired by human art or industry; a man has it from God, or not at all: and if he have it from God, he has it from him as the author of his nature; for where it does not exist naturally, it never can exist, but either by miraculous interference, which should never be expected, or by chirurgical operation, which is a shocking abomination in the sight of God. See the note on Matthew 19:12.

**Verse 8. *The unmarried and widows***— It is supposed that the apostle speaks here of men who had been married, in the word *αγαμοι*, but were now widowers; as he does of women who had been married, in the word *χηραι*, but were now widows. And when he says *ως καγω*, even as I, he means that he himself was a widower; for several of the ancients rank Paul among the married apostles.

**Verse 9. *But if they cannot contain***— If they find it inconvenient and uncomfortable to continue as widowers and widows, let them remarry.

***It is better to marry than to burn.***— Bishop Pearce translates the original thus: For it is better to marry than to be made uneasy. *πυρουσθαι*, says he, “signifies primarily to burn; but in a metaphorical sense, to be troubled, vexed, or made uneasy. So in 2 Corinthians 11:29: Who is offended and I burn not, *και ουκ εγω πυρουμαι*, and I am not troubled. So in Terence, *Uro hominem, is I vex him.*” It would be well to soften the sense of this word in reference to the subject of which the apostle speaks. He cannot mean burning with lust, no more than Virgil means so when he says, *AEn. iv. ver. 68: Uritur infelix Dido*, the unfortunate Dido is tormented; and in *Eccl. ii. 68: Me tamen urit amor*, love torments me. All this may be said with the strictest truth in such cases where the impure fire referred to above has no existence.

A curious story, which certainly casts light on the phraseology of this place, is related by Dr. Lightfoot, from the tract *Kiddushin*, fol. 81. “Some captive women were brought to Nehardea, and disposed in the house and the upper room of Rabbi Amram. They took away the ladder (that the

women might not get down, but stay there till they were ransomed.) As one of these captives passed by the window, the light of her great beauty shined into the house. Amram (captivated) set up the ladder; and when he was got to the middle of the steps (checked by his conscience) he stopped short, and with a loud voice cried out FIRE! FIRE! in the house of Amram! (This he did that, the neighbors flocking in, he might be obliged to desist from the evil affection which now prevailed in him.) The rabbins ran to him, and (seeing no fire) they said, Thou hast disgraced us. To which he replied: It is better that ye be disgraced in the house of Amram in this world, then that ye be disgraced by me in the world to come. He then adjured that evil affection to go out of him, and it went out as a pillar of FIRE. Amram said: Thou art FIRE, and I am FLESH; yet for all that I have prevailed against thee.” From this story much instruction may be derived.

**Verse 10. *I command, yet not I, but the Lord***— I do not give my own private opinion or judgment in this case; for the Lord Jesus commands that man shall not put asunder them whom God hath joined, Matthew 5:32; 19:6. And God has said the same, Genesis 2:24. The following extracts will prove that the law among the Jews was very loose relative to the firmness of the marriage bond:—

A woman might put away or depart from her husband by giving this simple reason to the elders, who would give the following certificate. “In \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_ week, of \_\_\_\_ year, A., daughter of B., put away before us and said: My mother, or my brethren, deceived me, and wedded me or betrothed me, when I was a very young maid, to C., son of D.; but I now reveal my mind before you, that I will not have him.”

Sometimes they parted with mutual consent, and this also was considered legal, as was also the marriage of the separated parties to others. Witness the following story: “A good man had a good wife; but because they had no children, they mutually put away each other. The good man married a bad (a heathen) wife, and she made him bad (a heathen;) the good woman married a bad (a heathen) husband, and she made him good.”

Divorces were easily obtained among them, and they considered them the dissolving of the marriage bond; and, in consequence of these, the parties might remarry with others. This was contrary to the original institution of marriage, and is opposed both by our Lord and the apostle.

**Verse 11. *But, and if she depart***— He puts the case as probable, because it was frequent, but lays it under restrictions.

***Let her remain unmarried***— She departs at her own peril; but she must not marry another: she must either continue unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband.

***And let not the husband put away his wife***.— Divorces cannot be allowed but in the case of fornication: an act of this kind dissolves the marriage vow; but nothing else can. It is a fact that, among the Jews, the wife had



word sanctification here is to be applied much more to the Christian state than to any moral change in the persons; for **ἅγιοι**, saints, is a common term for Christians—those who were baptized into the faith of Christ; and as its corresponding term **קְדוּשִׁים** kedoshim signified all the Jews who were in the covenant of God by circumcision, the heathens in question were considered to be in this holy state by means of their connection with those who were by their Christian profession saints.

*Else were your children unclean* — If this kind of relative sanctification were not allowed, the children of these persons could not be received into the Christian Church, nor enjoy any rights, or privileges as Christians; but the Church of God never scrupled to admit such children as members, just as well as she did those who had sprung from parents both of whom were Christians.

The Jews considered a child as born out of holiness whose parents were not proselytes at the time of the birth, though afterwards they became proselytes. On the other hand, they considered the children of heathens born in holiness, provided the parents became proselytes before the birth. All the children of the heathens were reputed unclean by the Jews; and all their own children holy. — See Dr. Lightfoot. This shows clearly what the apostle's meaning is.

If we consider the apostle as speaking of the children of heathens, we shall get a remarkable comment on this passage from Tertullian, who, in his treatise *Deuteronomy Carne Christi*, chaps. 37, 39, gives us a melancholy account of the height to which superstition and idolatry had arrived in his time among the Romans. “A child,” says he, “from its very conception, was dedicated to the idols and demons they worshipped. While pregnant, the mother had her body swathed round with bandages, prepared with idolatrous rites. The embryo they conceived to be under the inspection of the goddess Alemona, who nourished it in the womb. Nona and Decima took care that it should be born in the ninth or tenth month. Partula adjusted every thing relative to the labor; and Lucina ushered it into the light. During the week preceding the birth a table was spread for Juno; and on the last day certain persons were called together to mark the moment on which the Parcae, or Fates, had fixed its destiny. The first step the child set on the earth was consecrated to the goddess Statina; and, finally,

some of the hair was cut off, or the whole head shaven, and the hair offered to some god or goddess through some public or private motive of devotion." He adds that "no child among the heathens was born in a state of purity; and it is not to be wondered at," says he, "that demons possess them from their youth, seeing they were thus early dedicated to their service." In reference to this, he thinks, St. Paul speaks in the verse before us: The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife—else were your children unclean; but now are they holy; i.e. "As the parents were converted to the Christian faith, the child comes into the world without these impure and unhallowed rites; and is from its infancy consecrated to the true God."

**Verse 15. *But if the unbelieving, depart***— Whether husband or wife: if such obstinately depart and utterly refuse all cohabitation, a brother or a sister—a Christian man or woman, is not under bondage to any particular laws, so as to be prevented from remarrying. Such, probably, the law stood then; but it is not so now; for the marriage can only be dissolved by death, or by the ecclesiastical court. Even fornication or adultery does not dissolve the marriage contract; nor will the obstinate separation of any of the parties, however long continued, give the party abandoned authority to remarry. If the person have been beyond sea, and not heard of for seven years, it is presumed he may be dead; and marriage has been connived at in such cases. If there be no person to complain, it may be presumed that there is none injured. But I have known instances where even a marriage after seven years' absence has been very unfortunate; the husband returning at the end of ten or twelve years, and to his utter distress finding his wife married to another man, and with issue of that marriage! There can be no safety in this case, unless there be absolute certainty of the death of the party in question.

***God hath called us to peace.***— The refractory and disagreeing party should not be compelled to fulfill such matrimonial engagements as would produce continual jarring and discord. At the same time each should take care that he give no cause for disagreements and separations, for the author of the Christian religion is the author of peace, and has called us to it.

**Verse 16. *For what knowest thou, O wife***— You that are Christians, and who have heathen partners, do not give them up because they are such, for

you may become the means of saving them unto eternal life. Bear your cross, and look up to God, and he may give your unbelieving husband or wife to your prayers.

**Verse 17.** *But as God hath distributed to every man*, etc.— Let every man fulfill the duties of the state to which God in the course of his providence has called him.

*So ordain I in all Churches*.— I do not lay on you a burden which others are not called to bear: this is the general rule which, by the authority of God, I impose on every Christian society.

**Verse 18.** *Is any man called being circumcised?*— Is any man who was formerly a Jew converted to Christianity?

*Let him not become circumcised*.— Let him not endeavor to abolish the sign of the old covenant, which he bears in his flesh. The Greek words *μη επισπασθω*, let him not draw over, are evidently an elliptical expression: the word *την ακροβυστιαν*, the fore-skin, being understood; which, indeed, is added by the Armenian and the Itala, and several of the Latin fathers. It is a fact that it was possible by the assistance of art to do this; and Celsus himself prescribes the mode, Deuteronomy Medic. vii. 25. By frequent stretching, the circumcised skin could be again so drawn over, as to prevent the ancient sign of circumcision from appearing. Some in their zeal against Judaism endeavored to abolish this sign of it in their flesh: it is most evidently against this that the apostle speaks. Many false Jews made use of this practice, that they might pass through heathen countries unobserved; otherwise, in frequenting the baths they would have been detected.

*Let him not be circumcised*.— Let no man who, being a Gentile, has been converted to the Christian faith, submit to circumcision as something necessary to his salvation.

**Verse 19.** *Circumcision is nothing*— Circumcision itself, though commanded of God, is nothing of itself, it being only a sign of the justification which should be afterwards received by faith. At present, neither it nor its opposite either hinders or furthers the work of grace; and keeping the commandments of God, from his love shed abroad in a believing heart, is the sum and substance of religion.

**Verse 20. *Let every man abide in the same calling***— As both the circumcised and uncircumcised, in Christ, have the same advantages, and to their believing the same facilities; so any situation of life is equally friendly to the salvation of the soul, if a man be faithful to the grace he has received. Therefore, in all situations a Christian should be content, for all things work together for good to him who loves God.

**Verse 21. *Art thou called being a servant?***— *δουλος εκληθης*, Art thou converted to Christ while thou art a slave—the property of another person, and bought with his money? care not for it—this will not injure thy Christian condition, but if thou canst obtain thy liberty—use it rather—prefer this state for the sake of freedom, and the temporal advantages connected with it.

**Verse 22. *For he that is called***— The man who, being a slave, is converted to the Christian faith, is the Lord's freeman; his condition as a slave does not vitiate any of the privileges to which he is entitled as a Christian: on the other hand, all free men, who receive the grace of Christ, must consider themselves the slaves of the Lord, i.e. his real property, to be employed and disposed of according to his godly wisdom, who, notwithstanding their state of subjection, will find the service of their Master to be perfect freedom.

**Verse 23. *Ye are bought with a price***— As truly as your bodies have become the property of your masters, in consequence of his paying down a price for you; so sure you are now the Lord's property, in consequence of your being purchased by the blood of Christ.

Some render this verse interrogatively: Are ye bought with a price from your slavery? Do not again become slaves of men. Never sell yourselves; prefer and retain your liberty now that ye have acquired it.

In these verses the apostle shows that the Christian religion does not abolish our civil connections; in reference to them, where it finds us, there it leaves us. In whatever relation we stood before our embracing Christianity, there we stand still; our secular condition being no farther changed than as it may be affected by the amelioration of our moral character. But slavery, and all buying and selling of the bodies and souls of men, no matter what color or complexion, is a high offense against the holy

and just God, and a gross and unprincipled attack on the liberty and rights of our fellow creatures.

**Verse 24. *Let every man-abide with God.***— Let him live to God in whatsoever station he is placed by Providence. If he be a slave, God will be with him even in his slavery, if he be faithful to the grace which he has received. It is very likely that some of the slaves at Corinth, who had been converted to Christianity, had been led to think that their Christian privileges absolved them from the necessity of continuing slaves; or, at least, brought them on a level with their Christian masters. A spirit of this kind might have soon led to confusion and insubordination, and brought scandals into the Church. It was therefore a very proper subject for the apostle to interfere in; and to his authority, the persons concerned would doubtless respectfully bow.

**Verse 25. *Now concerning virgins***— This was another subject on which the Church at Corinth had asked the advice of the apostle. The word **παρθενος**, virgin, we take to signify a pure, unmarried young woman; but it is evident that the word in this place means young unmarried persons of either sex, as appears from 1 Corinthians 7:26, 27, 32-34, and from Revelation 14:4. The word **παρθενος**, virgin, is frequently applied to men as well as to women. See Suidas, under the word **αβελ· ουτος παρθενος και δι καιος υπηρχε**, He (Abel) was a virgin, and a righteous man. In 1 Corinthians 7:36 the word is supposed to mean the state of virginity or celibacy, and very probable reasons are assigned for it; and it is evident that persons of either sex in a state of celibacy are the persons intended.

***I have no commandment of the Lord***— There is nothing in the sacred writings that directly touches this point.

***Yet I give my judgment***— As every way equal to such commandments had there been any, seeing I have received the teaching of his own Spirit, and have obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful to this heavenly gift, so that it abides with me to lead me into all truth. In this way I think the apostle's words may be safely understood.

**Verse 26. *This is good for the present distress***— There was no period in the heathen times when the Church was not under persecutions and afflictions; on some occasions these were more oppressive than at others.

The word *ἀνάγκη* signifies, necessity, distress, tribulation, and calamity; as it does in Luke 21:23; 2 Corinthians 6:4; 12:10. In such times, when the people of God had no certain dwelling-place, when they were lying at the mercy of their enemies without any protection from the state—the state itself often among the persecutors—he who had a family to care for, would find himself in very embarrassed circumstances, as it would be much more easy to provide for his personal safety than to have the care of a wife and children. On this account it was much better for unmarried persons to continue for the present in their celibacy.

**Verse 27. *Art thou bound unto a wife?***— i e. Married; for the marriage contract was considered in the light of a bond.

***Seek not to be loosed.***— Neither regret your circumstances, notwithstanding the present distress, nor seek on this account for a dissolution of the marriage contract. But if thou art under no matrimonial engagements, do not for the present enter into any.

**Verse 28. *But, and if thou marry***— As there is no law against this, even in the present distress, thou hast not sinned, because there is no law against this; and it is only on account of prudential reasons that I give this advice.

***And if a virgin marry***— Both the man and the woman have equal privileges in this case; either of them may marry without sin. It is probable, as there were many sects and parties in Corinth, that there were among them those who forbade to marry, 1 Timothy 4:3, and who might have maintained other doctrines of devils besides. These persons, or such doctrines, the apostle has in view when he says, They may marry and yet not sin.

***Trouble in the flesh***— From the simple circumstance of the incumbrance of a family while under persecution; because of the difficulty of providing for its comfort and safety while flying before the face of persecution.

***But I spare you.***— The evil is coming; but I will not press upon you the observance of a prudential caution, which you might deem too heavy a cross.

**Verse 29. *The time is short***— These persecutions and distresses are at the door, and life itself will soon be run out. Even then Nero was plotting those grievous persecutions with which he not only afflicted, but devastated the Church of Christ.

***They that have wives***— Let none begin to think of any comfortable settlement for his family, let him sit loose to all earthly concerns, and stand ready prepared to escape for his life, or meet death, as the providence of God may permit. The husband will be dragged from the side of his wife to appear before the magistrates, and be required either to abjure Christ or die.

*Linquenda tellus, et domus, et placens  
Uxor; neque harum, quas colis, arborum  
Te, praeter invisas cupressos,  
Ulla brevem dominum sequetur.  
HOR. ODAR. lib. ii., Od. xiv., v. 22.*

*Your pleasing consort must be left;  
And you, of house and lands bereft,  
Must to the shades descend:  
The cypress only, hated tree!  
Of all thy much-loved groves, shall thee,  
Its short-lived lord, attend.*

FRANCIS.

Poor heathenism! thou couldst give but cold comfort in such circumstances as these: and infidelity, thy younger brother, is no better provided than thou.

**Verse 30. *They that weep***, etc.— There will shortly be such a complete system of distress and confusion that private sorrows and private joys will be absorbed in the weightier and more oppressive public evils: yet, let every man still continue in his calling, let him buy, and sell, and traffic, as usual; though in a short time, either by the coming persecution or the levelling hand of death, he that had earthly property will be brought into the same circumstances with him who had none.

**Verse 31. *And they that use this world***— Let them who have earthly property or employments discharge conscientiously their duties, from a conviction of the instability of earthly things. Make a right use of every

thing, and pervert nothing from its use. To use a thing is to employ it properly in order to accomplish the end to which it refers. To abuse a thing signifies to pervert it from that use. Pass through things temporal, so as not to lose those which are eternal.

*For the fashion of this world*— το σχημα του κοσμου τουτου signifies properly the present state or constitution of things; the frame of the world, that is, the world itself. But often the term **κοσμος**, world, is taken to signify the Jewish state and polity; the destruction of this was then at



himself only; the married man lives both for himself and the public. Both the state and the Church of Christ are dependent on the married man, as from him under God the one has subjects, the other members; while the single man is but an individual in either, and by and by will cease from both, and having no posterity is lost to the public for ever. The married man, therefore, far from being in a state of inferiority to the single man, is beyond him out of the limits of comparison. He can do all the good the other can do, though perhaps sometimes in a different way; and he can do ten thousand goods that the other cannot possibly do. And therefore both himself and his state are to be preferred infinitely before those of the other. Nor could the apostle have meant any thing less; only for the present distress he gave his opinion that it was best for those who were single to continue so. And who does not see the propriety of the advice?

**Verse 34. *There is a difference also between a wife and a virgin.***— That is: There is this difference between a married and an unmarried woman. The unmarried careth (only) for the things of the Lord, having no domestic duties to perform. That she may be holy-separated to Divine employments, both in body and spirit. Whereas she that is married careth (also) for the things of the world, how she may please her husband, having many domestic duties to fulfill, her husband being obliged to leave to her the care of the family, and all other domestic concerns.

On this verse there is a profusion of various readings in MSS., versions, and fathers, for which I must refer to Griesbach, as it would be impossible to introduce them here so as to make them look like sense.

**Verse 35. *This I speak for your own profit***— The advices belong to yourselves alone, because of the peculiar circumstances in which you are placed. Nothing spoken here was ever designed to be of general application; it concerned the Church at Corinth alone, or Churches in similar circumstances.

***Not that I may cast a snare upon you***— οὐχ ἵνα βροχον υμιν επιβλω—Here is a manifest allusion to the Retarius among the Romans, who carried a small casting net, which he endeavored to throw over the head of his adversary and thus entangle him. Or to a similar custom among the Persians, who made use of a noose called the (Arabic) camand; which they employed in the same way. One of these lies before me; it is a strong

silken cord, one end of which is a loop to be held in the hand, and the rest is in the form of a common snare or noose, which, catching hold of any thing, tightens in proportion as it is pulled by the hand that holds the loop.

The apostle, therefore, intimates that what he says was not intended absolutely to bind them, but to show them the propriety of following an advice which in the present case would be helpful to them in their religious connections, that they might attend upon the Lord without distraction, which they could not do in times of persecution, when, in addition to their own personal safety, they had a wife and children to care for.

*For that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction*,— The original *αλλα προς το ευσημον και ευπροσεδρον τω κυριω απερισπαστως*, of which our version is only a paraphrase, is thus translated by Bishop Pearson: But for the sake of decency, and of attending more easily upon the Lord without distraction. This is much more literal than ours.

**Verse 36. *Uncomely towards his virgin***— Different meanings have been assigned to this verse; I shall mention three of the principal. 1. “In those early times, both among the Hebrews and Christians, the daughters were wholly in the power of the father, so that he might give or not give them in marriage as he chose; and might bind them to perpetual celibacy if he thought proper; and to this case the apostle alludes. If the father had devoted his daughter to perpetual virginity, and he afterwards found that she had fixed her affections upon a person whom she was strongly inclined to marry, and was now getting past the prime of life; he, seeing from his daughter’s circumstances that it would be wrong to force her to continue in her state of celibacy; though he had determined before to keep her single, yet he might in this case alter his purpose without sin, and let her and her suitor marry.”

2. “The whole verse and its context speaks of young women dedicated to the service of God, who were called *παρθενοι*, virgins, in the primitive Church. And a case is put here, ‘that circumstances might occur to render the breach of even a vow of this kind necessary, and so no sin be committed.’”

3. “The apostle by **παρθενος**, does not mean a virgin, but the state of virginity or celibacy, whether in man or woman.” Both Mr. Locke and Dr. Whitby are of this opinion, and the latter reasons on it thus:—

It is generally supposed that these three verses relate to virgins under the power of parents and guardians and the usual inference is, that children are to be disposed of in marriage by the parents, guardians, etc. Now this may be true, but it has no foundation in the text, for **τηρειν την εαυτου παρθενον** is not to keep his daughter’s, but his own virginity, or rather his purpose of virginity; for, as Phavorinus says, He is called a virgin who freely gives himself up to the Lord, renouncing matrimony, and preferring a life spent in continency. And that this must be the true import of these words appears from this consideration, that this depends upon the purpose of his own heart, and the power he has over his own will, and the no necessity arising from himself to change this purpose. Whereas the keeping a daughter unmarried depends not on these conditions on her father’s part but on her own; for, let her have a necessity, and surely the apostle would not advise the father to keep her a virgin, because he had determined so to do; nor could there be any doubt whether the father had power over his own will or not, when no necessity lay upon him to betroth his virgin. The Greek runs to this sense: if he had stood already firm in his heart, finding no necessity, viz. to change his purpose; and hath power over his own will, not to marry; finding himself able to persist in the resolution he had made to keep his virginity, he does well to continue a virgin: and then the phrase, if any man think he behaves himself unseemly towards his virgin, if it be over-aged, and thinks he ought rather to join in marriage, refers to the opinions both of Jews and Gentiles that all ought to marry. The Jews say that the time of marriage is from 16 or 17 to 20; while some of the Gentiles specify from 30 to 35. If any think thus, says the apostle, let them do what they will, they sin not: let them marry. And then he concludes with those words applied to both cases: so then, both he that marries doeth well, and he that marries not, doeth better.

This last opinion seems to be the true sense of the apostle.

It may be necessary to make a few general observations on these verses, summing up what has been said.

1. **παρθενος** here should be considered as implying not a virgin, but the state of virginity or celibacy.
2. **ὑπερακμος**, over-aged, must refer to the passing of that time in which both the laws and customs of Jews and Gentiles required men to marry. See above, and see the note on 1 Corinthians 7:6.
3. **και ουτως οφειλει γινεσθαι**, And need so require; or, if there appear to be a necessity; is to be understood of any particular change in his circumstances or in his feelings; or, that he finds, from the law and custom in the case, that it is a scandal for him not to marry; then let him do what he wills or purposes.
4. Instead of **γαμειτωσαν**, let THEM marry, I think **γαμειτω**, let HIM marry, is the true reading, and agrees best with the context. This reading is supported by D\*EFG, Syriac, in the Arabic, Slavonic, one of the Itala, and St. Augustine. Si nubat, if he marry, is the reading of the Vulgate, several copies of the Itala, Ambrose, Jerome, Ambrosiaster, Sedulius, and Bede. This reading is nearly of the same import with the other: Let him do what he willeth, he sinneth not, let him marry; or, he sinneth not if he marry.
5. The whole of the 37th verse relates to the purpose that the man has formed; and the strength that he has to keep his purpose of perpetual celibacy, being under no necessity to change that purpose.
6. Instead of **ο εκγαμιζων**, he who giveth her in marriage, I purpose to read **ο γαμιζων**, he who marrieth, which is the reading of the Codex Alexandrinus, the Codex Vaticanus, No. 1209, and of some others: with Clement, Methodius, and Basil. **την εαυτου παρθενον**, his own virgin, is added after the above, by several very ancient and reputable MSS, as also by the Syriac, Armenian, Vulgate, AEthiopic, Clement, Basil, Optatus, and others; but it seems so much like a gloss, that Griesbach has not made it even a candidate for a place in the text. He then who marrieth, though previously intending perpetual virginity, doeth well; as this is agreeable to laws both Divine and human: and he who marrieth not, doeth better, because of the present distress. See 1 Corinthians 7:26.

**Verse 39. *The wife is bound by the law***— This seems to be spoken in answer to some other question of the Corinthians to this effect: “May a woman remarry whose husband is dead, or who has abandoned her?” To

which he replies, in general, That as long as her husband is living the law binds her to him alone; but, if the husband die, she is free to remarry, but only in the Lord; that is she must not marry a heathen nor an irreligious man; and she should not only marry a genuine Christian, but one of her own religious sentiments; for, in reference to domestic peace, much depends on this.

**Verse 40. *But she is happier if she so abide***— If she continue in her widowhood because of the present distress; for this must always be taken in, that consistency in the apostle's reasoning may be preserved. If this were not understood, how could St. Paul tell the widow that it would be more happy for her to continue in her widowhood than to remarry? She who had tried both the state of celibacy and the state of marriage could certainly best tell which was most for her comfort; and he could not tell any thing but by an express revelation from heaven, relative to the future state of any widow: it is certain that he can never be understood as speaking in general, as there are multitudes of persons abundantly more happy in their married than in their single state; and there are many widows also much more happy in their second marriage than they have been in their first.

***After my judgment***— According to the view I have of the subject, which view I take by the light of the Divine Spirit, who shows me the tribulations which are coming on the Church. But, says he, 1 Corinthians 7:28: I spare you—I will not be more explicit concerning coming evils, as I wish to save you from all forebodings which bring torment.

***I think—I have the Spirit of God.***— *δοκω δε καγω πνευμα θεου εχειν* might be translated, I am CERTAIN that I have the Spirit of God. This sense of *δοκειν* (which we translate to seem, to think, to appear, etc.) I have noticed in another part of this work. Ulpian, on Demosthen. Olynth. 1, says, *το δοκειν ου παντως επι αμοιβολου ταττουσιν οι παλαιοι αλλα πολλακις και επι του αληθευειν*. The word *δοκειν* is used by the ancients, not always to express what is DOUBTFUL, but often to express what is TRUE and CERTAIN. — See Bp. Pearce. The apostle cannot be understood as expressing any doubt of his being under the inspiration of the Divine Spirit, as this would have defeated his object in giving the above advices; for-if they were not dictated by the Spirit of God, can it be

supposed that, in the face of apparent self-interest, and the prevalence of strong passions, they could have been expected to have become rules of conduct to this people? They must have understood him as asserting that he had the direction of the Spirit of God in giving those opinions, else they could not be expected to obey.

1. IN the preceding chapter we have met with subjects both of difficulty and importance. As to the difficulties, it is hoped that they have been so generally considered in the notes that few or none of them remain; and on the subjects of peculiar importance much time has been spent, in order to impress them on the mind of the reader. The delicacy of some of them would not admit of greater plainness; and in a few instances I have been obliged to wrap the meaning in a foreign language.

2. On the important subject of marriage I have said what I believe to be true, and scruple not to say that it is the most useful state in which-the human being can be placed; and consequently that in which most honor may be brought to God. I have listened with much attention for the better part of half a century to the arguments against marriage and in favor of celibacy; and I have had the opportunity of being acquainted with many who endeavored to exemplify their own doctrine. But I have seen an end of all their perfection: neither the world nor the Church are under any obligations to them: they either married when they could do it to their mind and convenience; or, continuing in their celibacy, they lived a comparatively useless life; and died as they should, unregretted. The doctrine is not only dangerous but anti-scriptural: and I hope I have sufficiently vindicated Paul from being its patron or supporter.

3. While I contend for the superior excellence of the marriage state, I hope I shall not be understood to be the apologist of indiscriminate marriages-no, many of them are blamable in a very high degree. Instead of consulting common sense and propriety, childish affections, brutish passions, or the love of money are the motives on which many of them have been contracted. Such marriages are miserable; must be so, and should not be otherwise; and superficial people looking at these form an estimate of the state itself, and then indulge themselves in exclaiming against an ordinance of God, either perverted by themselves or the equally foolish persons who are the subjects of their animadversion. That genuine

Christians can never be so useful in any state as that of marriage I am fully convinced; but to be happy, the marriage must be in the Lord. When believers match with unbelievers, generally *pars sincera trahitur*; the good becomes perverted; and Satan has his triumph when he has got an immortal soul out of the Church of Christ into his own synagogue. But who among young people will lay this to heart? And how few among young men and young women will not sell their Savior and his people for a

his name entered in the census; or public register of the citizens. 2. The slave was led before the praetor, and the magistrate laid his wand, called vindicta, on his head, and declared him free. 3. By testament or will, the master bequeathing to the slave his freedom.

The manner in which the second mode of manumission was performed is curious. The praetor having laid the rod vindicta upon the slave's head, pronounced these words, Dico eum liberum esse more Quiritum, "I pronounce him free according to the custom of the Romans." This done he gave the rod to the lictor, or serjeant, who struck the slave with it upon the head, and afterwards with the hand upon the face and back. The head also of the slave was shaven, and a cup given him by his master as a token of freedom, and the notary entered the name of the new freed-man in the public register, with the reasons of his manumission: it was customary also to give him another surname.

7. Among our Saxon ancestors, and also after the conquest, there was a species of slavery: all the villani were slaves to their respective lords, and each was bound to serve him in a great variety of ways. There is a profusion of curious examples of this in the ancient record preserved in the bishop's auditor's office in the cathedral of Durham, commonly known by the name of the Bolden Book. This record has been lately printed under the direction of his majesty's commissioners on the public records of the kingdom, in the supplement to Domesday Book.

8. Among our Saxon ancestors manumissions were granted on various accounts: 1. A person might, if able, purchase his own freedom. 2. One man might purchase the freedom of another. 3. Manumissions were granted to procure by their merit the salvation of departed souls. 4. Persons were manumitted also in order to be consecrated to the service of God. These manumissions were usually recorded in some holybook, especially in copies of the four Evangelists, which, being preserved in the libraries of abbeys, etc., were a continual record, and might at all convenient times be consulted. Several entries of these manumissions exist in a MS. of the four Evangelists, s. 4, 14, in the library of Corpus Christi or Bennet college, Cambridge.

I shall produce a specimen of one of the several kinds mentioned above, giving the original only of the first; and of the others, verbal translations.



1. The certificate of a man's having purchased his own freedom.

(Anglo-Saxon)

“Here is witnessed, in this book of Christ, that AElfwig the Red hath redeemed himself from Abbot AElfsig, and the whole convent, with one pound. And this is witnessed by the whole convent at Bath.

*May Christ strike him blind  
Who this writing perverts.”*

This is a usual execration at the end of these forms, and is in rhyme in the original.

2. Certificate of one having purchased the liberty of another.

“Here is witnessed, in this book of Christ, that AEdric Atford has redeemed Saegyfa, his daughter, from the Abbot AElfsig, and from the convent of Bath, to be for ever free, and all her posterity.”

3. Certificate of redemption in behalf of one departed.

“Here is witnessed, in this book of Christ, that AElfric Scot and AEgelric Scot are manumitted for the soul of Abbot AElfsig, to perpetual liberty. This was done with the testimony of the whole convent.”

4. Certificate of persons manumitted to be devoted to the service of God.

“Here is witnessed, in this book of Christ, that John bought Gunnilda the daughter of Thurkill, from Goda, widow of Leafenath, with half a pound. With the testimony of the whole convent.

*May Christ strike him blind  
Who this writing perverts.”*

And he has dedicated her to Christ and St. Peter, in behalf of his mother's soul.”

9. When a man was made free, it was either in the church or at some public meeting: the sheriff of the county took him by the right hand and proclaimed him a freeman, and showed him the open door and the public highway, intimating that he was free to go whithersoever he pleased, and then gave him the arms of a freeman, viz. a spear and a sword. In some

cases the man was to pay thirty pence to his master of hide money, intimating that he was no longer under restraint, chastisement, or correction. From which it appears that our ancestors were in the habit of flogging their slaves. See the laws of Ina, c. 24, 39; of Wm. the Conqueror, c. 65; and of Hen. I. c. 78.

10. Among the Gentoos the manumission of a slave was as follows: The slave took a pitcher, filled it with water, and put therein berenge-arook (rice that had been cleansed without boiling) and flowers of doob, (a kind of small salad,) and taking the pitcher on his shoulder he stands near his master; the master then puts the pitcher on the slave's head, breaks it so that the water, rice, flowers, and doob that were in the pitcher may fall on the slave's body: when this is done the master thrice pronounces, I have made thee free; then the slave steps forward a few paces towards the east, and then the manumission is complete. See Code of Gentoos laws, chap. 8: sec. 2, page 160. It is evident that the whole of this ceremony is emblematical: 1. The pitcher represents the confined, servile state of the slave. 2. The articles contained in it, his exclusion while in a state of slavery from the grand benefits and comforts of life. 3. The water contained in the pitcher, his exclusion from the refreshing influences of heaven; for slaves were not permitted to take part in the ordinances of religion. 4. The clean, unboiled rice, his incapacity to have secular possessions; for slaves were not permitted to possess lands either by inheritance or purchase: a slave could sow no seed for himself, and consequently have no legal claim on support from this staff of life. 5. The doob or salad shut up, his being without relish for that state of being which was rendered insupportable to him by his thralldom. 6. The breaking of the pitcher, his manumission and enjoyment of liberty: being as free to go whithersoever he would as the water was to run, being now disengaged from the pitcher. 7. The shedding of the water, rice, flower, etc., over his body, his privilege of enjoying and possessing every heavenly and earthly good. 8. His stepping towards the east, his acknowledgment to the supreme Being, the fountain of light and life, (of whom the sun was the emblem,) for his enlargement; and his eagerness to possess the light and comfort of that new state of happiness into which he was now brought in consequence of his manumission.

11. The description that Dr. John Taylor gives, In his Elements of Civil Law, of the state of slaves among the ancients, will nearly suit with their state among our ancestors, though scarcely as bad as their state in the West Indies. “They were held among the Romans, pro nullis; pro mortuis; pro quadrupedibus:- -for no men; for dead men; for beasts: nay, were in a much worse state than any cattle whatever. They had no head in the state, no name, no tribe or register. They were not capable of being injured, nor could they take by purchase or descent, had no heirs, and could make no will. Exclusive of what was called their peculium, whatever they acquired was their master’s; they could neither plead nor be impleaded; but were entirely excluded from all civil concerns; were not entitled to the rights of matrimony, and therefore had no relief in case of adultery; nor were they proper objects of cognation or affinity. They might be sold, transferred, or pawned, like other goods or personal estate; for goods they were, and such were they esteemed. They might be tortured for evidence, punished at the discretion of their lord, and even put to death, by his authority. They were laid under several other civil incapacities, too tedious to mention.”

When all this is considered, we may at once see the horrible evil of slavery, and wonder at the grace which could render them happy and contented in this situation see the preceding chapter, 1 Corinthians 7:20-22. And yet we need not be surprised that the apostle should say to those who were free or freed, Ye are bought with a price; do not become slaves of men.

12. I have entered the more particularly into this subject, because it, or allusions to it, are frequently occurring in the New Testament, and I speak of it here once for all. And, to conclude, I here register my testimony against the unprincipled, inhuman, anti-Christian, and diabolical slave-trade, with all its authors, promoters, abettors, and sacrilegious gains; as well as against the great devil, the father of it and them.

## CHAPTER 8.

*The question of the Corinthians concerning meats offered to idols, and the apostle's preface to his instructions on that head, 1-3. The nature of idolatry, 4, 5. Of genuine worship, 6. Some ate of the animals that had been offered to idols knowingly, and so defiled their conscience, 7. Neither eating nor abstinence in themselves recommend us to God, 8. But no man should use his Christian liberty so as to put a stumbling block before a brother, 9, 10. If he act otherwise, he may be the means of a brother's destruction, 11. Those who act so as to wound the tender conscience of a brother, sin against Christ, 12. The apostle's resolution on this head, 13.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 8.

**Verse 1.** *As touching things offered unto idols*— This was another subject on which the Corinthians had asked the apostle's advice, and we shall understand the whole of this chapter the better when we consider one fact, viz. That there had long subsisted a controversy between the Karaites and the Traditionites, how far it was lawful to derive any benefit or advantage from things used by the Gentiles. The Karaites were a sect of the Jews who scrupulously held to the letter of the sacred writings, taking this alone for their directory. The Traditionists were those who followed the voice of the elders, interpreting the Divine testimonies by their decisions. From a work of the Karaites, entitled *Addereth Eliyahu*, Triglandus has extracted the following decisions, which will throw light upon this subject. "It is unlawful to receive any benefit from any kind of heathen worship, or from any thing that has been offered to an idol." — "It is unlawful to buy or sell an idol, and if, by accident, any such thing shall come into thy power, thou shalt derive no emolument from it." — "The animals that are destined and prepared for the worship of idols are universally prohibited; and particularly those which bear the mark of the idol. This should be maintained against the opinion of the Traditionists, who think they may lawfully use these kinds of animals, provided they be

not marked with the sign of the idol.” Thus far the Karaites; and here we see one strong point of difference between these two sects. The Karaites totally objected to every thing used in idolatrous services: the Traditionists, as the Talmud shows, did generally the same; but it appears that they scrupled not to use any animal employed in idolatrous worship, provided they did not see the sign of the idol on it. Now the sign of the idol must be that placed on the animal previously to its being sacrificed, such as gilded horns and hoofs, consecrated fillets, garlands, etc. And as, after it had been sacrificed, and its flesh exposed for sale in the shambles, it could bear none of these signs, we may take it for granted that the Jews might think it lawful to buy and eat this flesh: this the Karaite would most solemnly scruple. It may be just necessary to state here, that it was customary, after the blood and life of an animal had been offered in sacrifice to an idol, to sell the flesh in the market indiscriminately with that of other animals which had not been sacrificed, but merely killed for common use. Even the less scrupulous Jews, knowing that any particular flesh had been thus offered, would abhor the use of it; and as those who lived among the Gentiles, as the Jews at Corinth, must know that this was a common case, hence they would be generally scrupulous; and those of them that were converted to Christianity would have their scruples increased, and be as rigid on this point as the Karaites themselves. On the other hand, those of the Gentiles who had received the faith of Christ, knowing that an idol was nothing in the world, nor was even a representation of any thing, (for the beings represented by idol images were purely imaginary,) made no scruple to buy and eat the flesh as they used to do, though not with the same intention; for when, in their heathen state, they ate the flesh offered to idols, they ate it as a feast with the idol, and were thus supposed to have communion with the idol; which was the grossest idolatry.

From these observations it will at once appear that much misunderstanding and offense must have existed in the Corinthian Church; the converted Jews abominating every thing that they knew had been used in the heathen worship, while the converted Gentiles, for the reasons above assigned, would feel no scruple on the account.

***We know that we all have knowledge.***— I am inclined to think that these are not St. Paul’s words, but a quotation from the letter of the Corinthians

to him, and a proof of what the apostle says below, knowledge puffeth up; but however the words may be understood as to their origin, they contain a general truth, as they relate to Christians of those times, and may be thus paraphrased; “All we who are converted to God by Christ have sufficient knowledge concerning idols and idol worship; and we know also the liberty which we have through the Gospel, not being bound by Jewish laws, rites, ceremonies, etc.; but many carry their knowledge in this liberty too far, and do what is neither seemly nor convenient, and thus give offense to others.”

***Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.***— This knowledge is very nearly allied to pride; it puffeth up the mind with vain conceit, makes those who have it bold and rash, and renders them careless of the consciences of others. And this knowledge, boasted of by the Corinthians, led them to contemn others; for so the word **φυσιοι** is understood by some eminent critics.

**Verse 2. *He knoweth nothing yet,*** etc.— The person who acts in this rash, unfeeling way, from the general knowledge which he has of the vanity of idolatry and the liberty which the Gospel affords from Jewish rites, with all his knowledge does not know this, that though the first and greatest commandment says, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, etc., yet the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. He, then, that can torment his neighbour’s weak or tender conscience with his food or his conduct, does not love him as himself, and therefore knows nothing as he ought to know.

**Verse 3. *But if any man love God***— In that way which the commandment requires, which will necessarily beget love to his neighbor, the same is known of him—is approved of God, and acknowledged as his genuine follower.

**Verse 4. *Things that are offered in sacrifice***— See on the first verse. {1 Corinthians 8:1 }

***An idol is nothing in the world***— Dr. Lightfoot translates this, We know that there is no idol in the world; which he explains thus: **ειδωλον**, idol, is **ομοιωμα, εικων, σημειον, χαρακτηριον, σκιοειδες**, a likeness, an image, a sign, a character, a shadow: now **ουδεν ειδωλον** signifies there is

no idol, no representation of GOD, in the world. Images there are of stone, wood and metal; but none of these is any representation of the infinite Spirit. But I prefer the meaning given in the note on verse 1; { 1

**Verse 7. *There is not in every man that knowledge***— This is spoken in reference to what is said, 1 Corinthians 8:4: We know that an idol is nothing in the world; for some with a conscience of the idol, viz. that it is something, eat it—the flesh that was offered to the idol, as a thing thus offered, considering the feast as a sacred banquet, by which they have fellowship with the idol. And their conscience being weak—not properly instructed in Divine things, is defiled—he performs what he does as an act of religious worship, and thus his conscience contracts guilt through this idolatry.

As in the commencement of Christianity, among the Jews that were converted, there were many found who incorporated the rites of the law with the principles of the Gospel; so, doubtless, among the Gentiles, there were several who did not at once throw aside all their idolatry or idolatrous notions, but preserved some of its more spiritual and imposing parts, and might think it necessary to mingle idolatrous feasts with the rites of Christianity; as the sacrament of the Lord's supper was certainly considered as a feast upon a sacrifice, as I have proved in my Discourse on the Nature and Design of the Eucharist. As the minds of many of these young Gentile converts could not, as yet, have been deeply endued with spiritual knowledge, they might incorporate these feasts, and confound their nature and properties.

**Verse 8. *Meat commendeth us not to God***— No such feasts as these can be a recommendation of our souls or persons to the Supreme Being. As to the thing, considered in itself, the eating gives us no spiritual advantage; and the eating not is no spiritual loss.

**Verse 9. *But take heed***— Lest by frequenting such feasts and eating things offered to idols, under the conviction that an idol is nothing, and that you may eat those things innocently, this liberty of yours should become a means of grievously offending a weak brother who has not your knowledge, or inducing one who respects you for your superior knowledge to partake of these things with the conscience, the persuasion and belief, that an idol is something, and to conclude, that as you partake of such things, so he may also, and with safety. He is not possessed of your superior information on this point, and he eats to the idol what you take as a common meal.



**Verse 10. *If any man see thee which hast knowledge***— Of the true God, and who art reputed for thy skill in Divine things.

***Sit at meat in the idol's temple***— Is it not strange that any professing the knowledge of the true God should even enter one of those temples? And is it not more surprising that any Christian should be found to feast there? But by all this we may see that the boasted knowledge of the Corinthians had very little depth in things purely spiritual.

There are many curious thin-spun theories in the rabbinical writings concerning entering idol temples, and eating there, and even worshipping there, providing the mind be towards the true God. Dr. Lightfoot produces several quotations to prove this. Perhaps the man of knowledge mentioned by the apostle was one of those who, possessing a convenient conscience, could accommodate himself to all circumstances; be a heathen without and a Christian within, and vice versa, as circumstances might require.

***Be emboldened to eat***— οἰκοδομηθησεται, Be built up-be confirmed and established in that opinion which before he doubtingly held, that on seeing YOU eat he may be led to think there is no harm in feasting in an idol temple, nor in eating things offered to idols.

**Verse 11. *Shall the weak brother perish***— Being first taught by thy conduct that there was no harm in thus eating, he grieves the Spirit of God; becomes again darkened and hardened; and, sliding back into idolatry, dies in it, and so finally perishes.

***For whom Christ died?***— So we learn that a man may perish for whom Christ died: this admits of no quibble. If a man for whom Christ died, apostatizing from Christianity, (for he is called a brother though weak,) return again to and die in idolatry, cannot go to heaven; then a man for whom Christ died may perish everlastingly. And if it were possible for a believer, whether strong or weak, to retrace his steps back to idolatry and die in it, surely it is possible for a man, who had escaped the pollutions that are in the world, to return to it, live and die in its spirit, and perish everlastingly also. Let him that readeth understand.

**Verse 12. *But when ye sin so against the brethren***— Against Christians, who are called by the Gospel to abhor and detest all such abominations.

*Ye sin against Christ.*— By sending to perdition, through your bad example, a soul for whom he shed his blood; and so far defeating the gracious intentions of his sacrificial death. This is a farther intimation, that a person for whom Christ died may perish; and this is the drift of the apostle's argument.

**Verse 13.** *Wherefore*, etc.— Rather than give any occasion to a Christian to sin against and so to harden his conscience that he should return to idolatry and perish, I would not only abstain from all meats offered to idols, but I would eat no flesh, should I exist through the whole course of time, but live on the herbs of the field, rather than cause my brother to stumble, and thus fall into idolatry and final ruin.

The following words of Origen contain a very solemn lesson and warning: “If we did more diligently attend to these things, we should avoid sinning against our brethren and wounding their weak conscience, that we might not sin against Christ; our brethren that are among us, for whom Christ died, often perishing, not only by our knowledge, but by many other ways, and things, in which things we, sinning against Christ, shall suffer punishment; the souls of them that perish by us being required of and avenged upon us.” See Whitby on this place.

1. THE greater our reputation for knowledge and sanctity, the greater mischief we shall do by our influence and example if we turn aside from the holy commandment delivered unto us. Every man should walk so as either to light or lead his brother to heaven.
2. It is the duty of every Christian to watch against apostasy in his own case, and to prevent it as much as possible in that of others. That a person for whom Christ died may finally perish is strongly argued, says Dr. Whitby, from this place, and Romans 14:15; for here the apostle dissuades the Corinthians from scandalizing their weak brethren, by an argument taken from the irreparable mischiefs they may do them, the eternal ruin they may bring upon them by this scandal; whereas if it be, as some assert, that all things, even the sins of the elect, shall work together for their good, and that they shall never perish; if the apostle knew and taught this doctrine to them, why does he endeavor to affright them from this scandal, by telling them that it might have that effect which he had before told them was impossible? If you interpret his words thus: So shall he

perish, for whom in charity ye ought to judge Christ died; it is certain, from this doctrine, that they must be assured that this judgment of charity must be false, or that their brother could not perish. In the first place, they could not be obliged to act by it, and in the second, they could not rationally be moved by it to abstain from giving scandal on that impossible supposition.

If you interpret the apostle thus: So shalt thou do that which, in its nature, tends to make thy brother perish; and might have that effect, had not God determined to preserve all from perishing, for whom Christ died; since this determination renders it sure to me, who know it, that they cannot actually perish, it must assure me that there can be no cause of abstinency from this scandal, lest they should perish by it.

Moreover, by thus offending, saith the apostle, ye sin against Christ; viz. by sinning against him whom he has purchased by his blood; and destroying them for whose salvation he has suffered. If this intent of Christ's death be denied, how can we show in what Christ has demonstrated his great love to them that perish? Is it possible that they can sin against redeeming love? and how, by thus offending them who neither do nor can belong to him as members of his mystical body, are we injurious to Christ? See Whitby on this place.

3. It is natural for man to wish and affect to be wise; and when this desire is cultivated in reference to lawful objects, it will be an indescribable good; but when, like Eve, we see, in a prohibition, something to be desired to make one wise, we are then, like her, on the verge of our fall. Though extensive knowledge is not given to all, yet it is given for all; and is the public property of the Church. He who does not use it for general edification robs the public of its right. For the misuse and misapplication of this talent we shall give account to God, as well as of other gifts and graces.

4. Persons of an over tender and scrupulous conscience may be very troublesome in a Christian society; but as this excessive scrupulosity comes from want of more light, more experience, or more judgment, we should bear with them. Though such should often run into ridiculous extremes, yet we must take care that we do not attempt to cure them either with ridicule or wrath. Extremes generally beget extremes; and such

persons require the most judicious treatment, else they will soon be stumbled and turned out of the way. We should be very careful lest in using what is called Christian liberty we occasion their fall; and for our own sake we must take heed that we do not denominate sinful indulgences, Christian liberties.

5. Though we are bound to take heed that we put not a stumbling block in the way of a weak brother, yet if such a brother be stumbled at any part of our conduct which is not blamable in itself, but of which he may have taken a wrong view, we are not answerable for the consequences. We are called to walk by the testimony of God; not according to the measure of any man's conscience, how sincere soever he may be.

6. Many persons cover a spirit of envy and uncharitableness with the name of godly zeal and tender concern for the salvation of others; they find fault with all; their spirit is a spirit of universal censoriousness; none can please them; and every one suffers by them. These destroy more souls by tithing mint and cummin, than others do by neglecting the weightier matters of the law. Such persons have what is termed, and very properly too, sour godliness. Both are extremes, and he who would avoid perdition must avoid them.

## CHAPTER 9.

*St. Paul vindicates his apostleship, and shows that he has equal rights and privileges with Peter and the brethren of our Lord; and that he is not bound, while doing the work of an apostle, to labor with his hands for his own support, 1-6. He who labors should live by the fruit of his own industry, 7. For the law will not allow even the ox to be muzzled which treads out the corn, 8-10. Those who minister in spiritual things have a right to a secular support for their work, 11-14. He shows the disinterested manner in which he has preached the Gospel, 15-18. Now he accommodated himself to the prejudices of men, in order to bring about their salvation, 19-23. The way to heaven compared to a race, 24. The qualifications of those who may expect success in the games celebrated at Corinth, and what that success implies, 25. The apostle applies these things spiritually to himself; and states the necessity of keeping his body in subjection, lest, after having proclaimed salvation to others, he should become a castaway, 26, 27.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 9.

**Verse 1.** Amos *I not an apostle?*— It is sufficiently evident that there were persons at Corinth who questioned the apostleship of St. Paul; and he was obliged to walk very circumspectly that they might not find any occasion against him. It appears also that he had given them all his apostolical labors gratis; and even this, which was the highest proof of his disinterested benevolence, was produced by his opposers as an argument against him. “Prophets, and all divinely commissioned men, have a right to their secular support; you take nothing:—is not this from a conviction that you have no apostolical right?” On this point the apostle immediately enters on his own defense.

*Am I not an apostle?* Amos *I not free?*— These questions are all designed as assertions of the affirmative: I am an apostle; and I am free—possessed of all the rights and privileges of an apostle.

***Have I not seen Jesus Christ***— From whom in his personal appearance to me, I have received my apostolic commission. This was judged essentially necessary to constitute an apostle. See Acts 22:14, 15; 26:16.

***Are not ye my work***— Your conversion from heathenism is the proof that I have preached with the Divine unction and authority.

Several good MSS. and versions transpose the two first questions in this verse, thus: Amos I not free? am I not an apostle? But I cannot see that either perspicuity or sense gains any thing by this arrangement. On the contrary, it appears to me that his being an apostle gave him the freedom or rights to which he refers, and therefore the common arrangement I judge to be the best.

**Verse 2. *If I be not an apostle unto others***— If there be other Churches which have been founded by other apostles; yet it is not so with you.

***The seal of mine apostleship are ye***— Your conversion to Christianity is God's seal to my apostleship. Had not God sent me, I could not have profited your souls.

The **σφραγις** or seal, was a figure cut in a stone, and that set in a ring, by which letters of credence and authority were stamped. The ancients, particularly the Greeks, excelled in this kind of engraving. The cabinets of the curious give ample proof of this; and the moderns contend in vain to rival the perfection of those ancient masters.

***In the Lord.***— The apostle shows that it was by the grace and influence of God alone that he was an apostle, and that they were converted to Christianity.

**Verse 3. *Mine answer to them***— ἡ ἐμὴ ἀπολογία τοῖς ἐμὲ ἀνακρινουσίν· This is my defense against those who examine me. The words are forensic; and the apostle considers himself as brought before a legal tribunal, and questioned so as to be obliged to answer as upon oath. His defense therefore was this, that they were converted to God by his means. This verse belongs to the two preceding verses.

**Verse 4. *Have we not power to eat and to drink?***— Have we not authority, or right, **ἐξουσίαν**, to expect sustenance, while we are labouring for your salvation? Meat and drink, the necessaries, not the

superfluities, of life, were what those primitive messengers of Christ required; it was just that they who labored in the Gospel should live by the Gospel; they did not wish to make a fortune, or accumulate wealth; a living was all they desired. It was probably in reference to the same moderate and reasonable desire that the provision made for the clergy in this country was called a living; and their work for which they got this living was called the cure of souls. Whether we derive the word cure from cura, care, as signifying that the care of all the souls in a particular parish or place devolves on the minister, who is to instruct them in the things of salvation, and lead them to heaven; or whether we consider the term as implying that the souls in that district are in a state of spiritual disease, and the minister is a spiritual physician, to whom the cure of these souls is intrusted; still we must consider that such a laborer is worthy of his hire; and he that preaches the Gospel should live by the Gospel.

**Verse 5. *Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife***— The word **ἐξουσίαν** is to be understood here, as above in 1 Corinthians 9:4, as implying authority or right; and authority, not merely derived from their office, but from Him who gave them that office; from the constitution of nature; and from universal propriety or the fitness of things.

When the apostle speaks of leading about a sister, a wife, he means first, that he and all other apostles, and consequently all ministers of the Gospel, had a right to marry. For it appears that our Lord's brethren James and Jude were married; and we have infallible evidence that Peter was a married man, not only from this verse, but from Matthew 8:14, where his mother-in-law is mentioned as being cured by our Lord of a fever.

And secondly, we find that their wives were persons of the same faith; for less can never be implied in the word sister. This is a decisive proof against the papistical celibacy of the clergy: and as to their attempts to evade the force of this text by saying that the apostles had holy women who attended them, and ministered to them in their peregrinations, there is no proof of it; nor could they have suffered either young women or other men's wives to have accompanied them in this way without giving the most palpable occasion of scandal. And Clemens Alexandrinus has particularly remarked that the apostles carried their wives about with

them, “not as wives, but as sisters, that they might minister to those who were mistresses of families; that so the doctrine of the Lord might without reprehension or evil suspicion enter into the apartments of the women.” And in giving his finished picture of his Gnostic, or perfect Christian, he says: *εσθιει, και πινει, και γαμει-εικονας εχει τους αποστολους*. He eats, and drinks, and marries—having the apostles for his example. Vid. Clem. Alex. Strom., lib. vii., c. 12.

On the propriety and excellence of marriage, and its superiority to celibacy, see the notes on chap. 7.

**Verse 6. *Or I only and Barnabas***— Have we alone of all the apostles no right to be supported by our converts? It appears from this, 1. That the apostles did not generally support themselves by their own labor. 2. That Paul and Barnabas did thus support themselves. Some of the others probably had not a business at which they could conveniently work; but Paul and Barnabas had a trade at which they could conveniently labor wherever they came.

**Verse 7. *Who goeth a warfare-at his own charges?***— These questions, which are all supposed from the necessity and propriety of the cases to be answered in the affirmative, tend more forcibly to point out that the common sense of man joins with the providence of God in showing the propriety of every man living by the fruits of his labor. The first question applies particularly to the case of the apostle, *τις στρατευεται ιδιοις οψωνιοις*. Does a soldier provide his own victuals? *οψωσιος* is used to express the military pay or wages, by the Greek writers; for the Roman soldiers were paid not only in money but in victuals; and hence corn was usually distributed among them. See on Luke 3:14.

**Verse 8. *Say I these things as a man?***— Is this only human reasoning? or does not God say in effect the same things? See note on Romans 6:19.

**Verse 9. *Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox***— See this largely explained in the note on Deuteronomy 25:4.

***Doth God take care for oxen?***— This question is to be understood thus: Is it likely that God should be solicitous for the comfort of oxen, and be regardless of the welfare of man? In this Divine precept the kindness and providential care of God are very forcibly pointed out. He takes care of



oxen; he wills them all that happiness of which their nature is susceptible; and can we suppose that he is unwilling that the human soul shall have that happiness which is suited to its spiritual and eternal nature? He could not reprobate an ox, because the Lord careth for oxen; and surely he cannot reprobate a man. It may be said the man has sinned but the ox cannot. I answer: The decree of reprobation is supposed to be from all eternity; and certainly a man can no more sin before he exists, than an ox can when he exists.

**Verse 10. *And he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.***— Instead of ο αλωων της ελπιδος αυτου μετεχειν, επ' ελπιδι, many of the best MSS. and versions read the passage thus: ο αλωων επ' ελπιδι του μετεχειν. And he who thresheth in hope of partaking. “The words της ελπιδος, which are omitted by the above, are,” says Br. Pearce, “superfluous, if not wrong; for men do not live in hope to partake of their hope, but to partake of what was the object and end of their hope. When these words are left out, the former and latter sentence will be both of a piece, and more resembling each other: for μετεχειν may be understood after the first επ' ελπιδι, as well as after the last.” Griesbach has left the words in question out of the text.

**Verse 11. *If we have sown unto you spiritual things***— If we have been the means of bringing you into a state of salvation by the Divine doctrines which we have preached unto you, is it too much for us to expect a temporal support then we give ourselves up entirely to this work? Every man who preaches the Gospel has a right to his own support and that of his family while thus employed.

**Verse 12. *If others be partakers of this power***— If those who in any matter serve you have a right to a recompense for that service, surely we who have served you in the most essential matters have a right to our support while thus employed in your service.

***We have not used this power***— Though we had this right, we have not availed ourselves of it, but have worked with our hands to bear our own charges, lest any of you should think that we preached the Gospel merely to procure a temporal support, and so be prejudiced against us, and thus prevent our success in the salvation of your souls.

**Verse 13. *They which minister about holy things***— All the officers about the temple, whether priests, Levites, Nethinim, etc., had a right to their support while employed in its service. The priests partook of the sacrifices; the others had their maintenance from tithes, first fruits, and offerings made to the temple; for it was not lawful for them to live on the sacrifices. Hence the apostle makes the distinction between those who minister about holy things and those who wait at the altar.

**Verse 14. *Even so hath the Lord ordained***— This is evidently a reference to our Lord's ordination, Matthew 10:10: The workman is worthy of his meat. And Luke 10:7: For the laborer is worthy of his hire. And in both places it is the preacher of the Gospel of whom he is speaking. It was a maxim among the Jews, "that the inhabitants of a town where a wise man had made his abode should support him, because he had forsaken the world and its pleasures to study those things by which he might please God and be useful to men." See an ordinance to this effect in the tract Shabbath, fol. 114.

**Verse 15. *Neither have I written***, etc.— Though I might plead the authority of God in the law, of Christ in the Gospel, the common consent of our own doctors, and the usages of civil society, yet I have not availed myself of my privileges; nor do I now write with the intention to lay in my claims.

**Verse 16. *For though I preach the Gospel***— I have cause of glorying that I preach the Gospel free of all charges to you; but I cannot glory in being a preacher of the Gospel, because I am not such either by my own skill or power. I have received both the office, and the grace by which I execute the office, from God. I have not only his authority to preach, but that authority obliges me to preach; and if I did not, I should endanger my salvation: yea, wo is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel. As every genuine preacher receives his commission from God alone, it is God alone who can take it away. Wo to that man who runs when God has not sent him; and wo to him who refuses to run, or who ceases to run, when God has sent him.

**Verse 17. *For if I do this thing willingly***— If I be a cordial co-operator with God, I have a reward, an incorruptible crown, 1 Corinthians 9:25. Or, if I freely preach this Gospel without being burthensome to any, I have a

special reward; but if I do not, I have simply an office to fulfill, into which God has put me, and may fulfill it conscientiously, and claim my privileges at the same time; but then I lose that special reward which I have in view by preaching the Gospel without charge to any.

This and the 18th verse have been variously translated: Sir Norton Knatchhull and, after him, Mr. Wakefield translate the two passages thus: For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if I am intrusted with an office without my consent? what is my reward then? to make the Gospel of Christ, whilst I preach it, without charge, in not using to the utmost my privileges in the Gospel.

Others render the passage thus: But if I do it merely because I am obliged to it, I only discharge an office that is committed to me, 1 Corinthians 9:18. For what then shall I be rewarded? It is for this, that, preaching the Gospel of Christ, I preach it freely, and do not insist on a claim which the Gospel itself gives me.

**Verse 18. *That I abuse not my power***— I am inclined to think that *καταχρησασθαι* is to be understood here, not in the sense of abusing, but of using to the uttermost-exacting every thing that a man can claim by law. How many proofs have we of this in preachers of different denominations, who insist so strongly and so frequently on their privileges, as they term them, that the people are tempted to believe they seek not their souls' interests, but their secular goods. Such preachers can do the people no good. But the people who are most liable to think thus of their ministers, are those who are unwilling to grant the common necessities of life to those who watch over them in the Lord. For there are such people even in the Christian Church! If the preachers of the Gospel were as parsimonious of the bread of life as some congregations and Christian societies are of the bread that perisheth, and if the preacher gave them a spiritual nourishment as base, as mean, and as scanty as the temporal support which they afford him, their souls must without doubt have nearly a famine of the bread of life.

**Verse 19. *For though I be free***— Although I am under no obligation to any man, yet I act as if every individual had a particular property in me, and as if I were the slave of the public.

**Verse 20. *Unto the Jews I became as a Jew***— In Acts 16:3, we find that for the sake of the unconverted Jews he circumcised Timothy. See the note there.

***To them that are under the law***— To those who considered themselves still under obligation to observe its rites and ceremonies, though they had in the main embraced the Gospel, he became as if under the same obligations; and therefore purified himself in the temple, as we find related, Acts 21:26, where also see the notes.

After the first clause, to them that are under the law as under the law, the following words, **μῶν αὐτοῦ ὑπο νόμον**, not being myself under the law, are added by ABCDEFG, several others; the later Syriac, Sahidic, Armenian, Vulgate, and all the Itala; Cyril, Chrysostom, Damascenus, and others; and on this evidence Griesbach has received them into the text.

**Verse 21. *To them that are without law***— The Gentiles, who had no written law, though they had the law written in their hearts; see on Romans 2:15.

***Being not without law to God***— Instead of **θεῷ**, To God, and **χριστῷ**, To Christ, the most important MSS. and versions have **θεοῦ**, OF God, and **χριστοῦ**, OF Christ; being not without the law of God, but under the law of Christ.

***Them that are without law***.— Dr. Lightfoot thinks the Sadducees may be meant, and that in certain cases, as far as the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish religion were concerned, he might conform himself to them, not observing such rites and ceremonies, as it is well known that they disregarded them; for the doctor cannot see how the apostle could conform himself in any thing to them that were without law, i.e. the heathen. But, 1. It is not likely that the apostle could conform himself to the Sadducees; for what success could he expect among a people who denied the resurrection, and consequently a future world, a day of judgment, and all rewards and punishments? 2. He might among the heathen appear as if he were not a Jew, and discourse with them on the great principles of that eternal law, the outlines of which had been written in their hearts, in order to show them the necessity of embracing that Gospel which was the power of God unto salvation to every one that believed.

**Verse 22. *To the weak became I as weak***— Those who were conscientiously scrupulous, even in respect to lawful things.

***I am made all things to all men***— I assumed every shape and form consistent with innocency and perfect integrity; giving up my own will, my own way, my own ease, my own pleasure, and my own profit, that I might save the souls of all. Let those who plead for the system of accommodation on the example of St. Paul, attend to the end he had in view, and the manner in which he pursued that end. It was not to get money, influence, or honor, but to save SOULS! It was not to get ease but to increase his labors. It was not to save his life, but rather that it should be a sacrifice for the good of immortal souls!

A parallel saying to this of St. Paul has been quoted from Achilles Tattius, lib. v., cap. xix., where Clitophon says, on having received a letter from Leucippe: *τουτοις εντυχων πανταεγινομην ομου, ανεφλεγομην, ωκριων, εθαυμαζον, ηπιστουν, εχατρον, ηχθομην*. “When I read the contents, I became all things at once; I was inflamed, I grew pale, I was struck with wonder; I doubted, I rejoiced, became sad.” The same form of speech is frequent among Greek writers. I think this casts some light on the apostle’s meaning.

***That I might by all means save some***.— On this clause there are some very important readings found in the MSS. and versions. Instead of *παντως τινας σωσω*, that I might by all means save some; *παντας σωσω*, that I might save all, is the reading of DEFG, Syriac, Vulgate, Aethiopic, all the Itala, and several of the fathers. This reading Bishop Pearce prefers, because it is more agreeable to St. Paul’s meaning here, and exactly agrees with what he says, 1 Corinthians 10:33, and makes his design more extensive and noble. Wakefield also prefers this reading.

**Verse 23. *And this I do for the Gospel’s sake***— Instead of *τουτο*, this, *παντα*, all things, (I do all things for the Gospel’s sake,) is the reading of ABCDEFG, several others, the Coptic, Aethiopic, Vulgate, Itala, Armenian, and Sahidic; the two latter reading *ταυτα παντα*, all these things.

Several of the fathers have the same reading, and there is much reason to believe it to be genuine.

***That I might be partaker thereof with you.***— That I might attain to the reward of eternal life which it sets before me; and this is in all probability the meaning of **το ευαγγελιον**, which we translate the Gospel, and which should be rendered here prize or reward; this is a frequent meaning of the original word, as may be seen in my preface to St. Matthew: I do all this for the sake of the prize, that I may partake of it with you.

**Verse 24. *They which run in a race run all***— It is sufficiently evident that the apostle alludes to the athletic exercises in the games which were celebrated every fifth year on the isthmus, or narrow neck of land, which joins the Peloponnesus, or Morea, to the main land; and were thence termed the Isthmian games. The exercises were running, wrestling, boxing, throwing the discus or quoit, etc.; to the three first of these the apostle especially alludes.

***But one receiveth the prize?***— The apostle places the Christian race in contrast to the Isthmian games; in them, only one received the prize, though all ran; in this, if all run, all will receive the prize; therefore he says, So run that ye may obtain. Be as much in earnest to get to heaven as others are to gain their prize; and, although only one of them can win, all of you may obtain.

**Verse 25. *Is temperate in all things***— All those who contended in these exercises went through a long state and series of painful preparations. To this exact discipline Epictetus refers, cap. 35: **θελεις ολυμπια νικησαι; δει σ' ευτακτειν, αναγκοτροφειν, απεχεσθαι, πεμματων, γυμναζεσθαι προς αναγκην εν ωρα τεταγμενη, εν καυματι, εν ψυχει, μη ψυχρον πινειν, μη οινον ως ετυχεν· απλως,ως ιατρω, παραδεδωκεναι σεαυτον τω επιστατη· ειτα εις τον αγωνα παρερχεσθαι· κ. τ. λ.** “Do you wish to gain the prize at the Olympic games?—Consider the requisite preparations and the consequences: you must observe a strict regimen; must live on food which you dislike; you must abstain from all delicacies; must exercise yourself at the necessary and prescribed times both in heat and in cold; you must drink nothing cooling; take no wine as formerly; in a word, you must put yourself under the directions of a pugilist, as you would under those of a physician, and afterwards enter the lists. Here you may get your arm broken, your foot put out of joint, be obliged to swallow mouthfuls of dust, to receive many

stripes, and after all be conquered.” Thus we find that these suffered much hardships in order to conquer, and yet were uncertain of the victory.

*Horace speaks of it in nearly the same way:—  
Qui studet optatam cursu contingere metam,  
Multa tulit fecitque puer: sudavit et alsit:  
Abstenuit Venere et Baccho.*

*Deuteronomy Arte Poet., ver. 412.*

*A youth who hopes the Olympic prize to gain,  
All arts must try, and every toil sustain;  
Th’ extremes of heat and cold must often prove;  
And shun the weakening joys of wine and love.*

*Francis.*

These quotations show the propriety of the apostle’s words: Every man that striveth for the mastery, *παστα εγκρατευεται*, is temperate, or continent, in all things.

***They do it to obtain a corruptible crown***— The crown won by the victor in the Olympian games was made of the wild olive; in the Pythian games of laurel; in the Nemean games of parsley; and in the Isthmian games of the pine. These were all corruptible, for they began to wither as soon as they were separated from the trees, or plucked out of the earth. In opposition to these, the apostle says, he contended for an incorruptible crown, the heavenly inheritance. He sought not worldly honor; but that honor which comes from God.

**Verse 26. *I therefore so run, not as uncertainly***— In the foot-course in those games, how many soever ran, only one could have the prize, however strenuously they might exert themselves; therefore, all ran uncertainly; but it was widely different in the Christian course, if every one ran as he ought, each would receive the prize.

The word *αδηλωος*, which we translate uncertainly, has other meanings. 1. It signifies ignorantly; I do not run like one ignorant of what he is about, or of the laws of the course; I know that there is an eternal life; I know the way that leads to it; and I know and feel the power of it. 2. It signifies without observation; the eyes of all the spectators were fixed on those who ran in these races; and to gain the applause of the multitude, they

stretched every nerve; the apostle knew that the eyes of all were fixed upon him. 1. His false brethren waited for his halting: 2. The persecuting Jews and Gentiles longed for his downfall: 3. The Church of Christ looked on him with anxiety: And he acted in all things as under the immediate eye of God.

*Not as one that beateth the air*— Kypke observes, that there are three ways in which persons were said, **ἀερα δερειν**, to beat the air. 1. When in practising for the combat they threw their arms and legs about in different ways, thus practising the attitudes of offense and defense. This was termed **σκιαμαχια**, fighting with a shadow. To this Virgil alludes when representing Dares swinging his arms about, when he rose to challenge a competitor in the boxing match:—

*Talis prima Dares caput altum in praelia tollit,  
Ostenditque humeros latos, alternaque jactat  
Brachia protendens, et verberat ictibus auras.*

*AEne. v., ver. 375.*

*Thus, glorying in his strength, in open view  
His arms around the towering Dares threw;  
Stalked high, and laid his brawny shoulders bare,  
And dealt his whistling blows in empty air.*

*Pitt.*

Sometimes boxers were to aim blows at their adversaries which they did not intend to take place, and which the others were obliged to exert themselves to prevent as much as if they had been really intended, and by these means some dexterous pugilists vanquished their adversaries by mere fatigue, without giving them a single blow. 3. Pugilists were said to beat the air when they had to contend with a nimble adversary, who, by running from side to side, stooping, and various contortions of the body, eluded the blows of his antagonist; who spent his strength on the air, frequently missing his aim, and sometimes overturning himself in attempting to hit his adversary, when this, by his agility, had been able to elude the blow. We have an example of this in Virgil's account of the boxing match between Entellus and Dares, so well told *AEneid. v., ver. 426, etc.*, and which will give us a proper view of the subject to which the apostle alludes: viz. boxing at the Isthmian games.



*Constitit in digitos extemplo arrectus uterque,  
 Brachiaque ad superas interritus extulit auras.  
 Abduxere retro longe capita ardua ab ictu;  
 Immiscentque manus manibus, pugnamque lacessunt.  
 Ille (Dares) pedum melior motu, fretusque juvena;  
 Hic (Entellus) membris et mole valens; sed tarda trementi  
 Genua labant, vastos quatit aeger anhelitus artus.  
 Multa viri nequicquam inter se vulnera jactant,  
 Multa cavo lateri ingeminant, et pectore vasto  
 Dant sonitus; erratque aures et tempora circum  
 Crebra manus; duro crepitant sub vulnere malae,  
 Stat gravis Entellus, nisuque immotus eodem,  
 Corpore tela modo atque oculis vigilantibus exit.  
 Ille, velut celsam oppugnat qui molibus urbem,  
 Aut montana sedet circum castella sob armis;  
 Nunc hos, nunc illos aditus, omnemque pererrat  
 Arte locum, et variis assultibus irritus urget.  
 Ostendit dextram insurgens Entellus, et alte  
 Extulit: ille ictum venientem a vertice velox  
 Praevидit, celerique elapsus corpore cessit.  
 Entellus VIRES IN VENTUM EFFUDIT; et ultro  
 Ipse gravis, graviterque ad terram ponere vasto  
 Concidit: ut quondam cava concidit, aut Erymantho,  
 Aut Ida in magna, radicibus eruta pinus. —  
 Consurgunt studiis Teucris et Trinacria pubes;  
 It clamor coelo: primusque accurrit Acestes,  
 AEquaevumque ab humo miserans attollit amicum.  
 At non tardatus casu, neque territus heros,  
 Acrrior ad pugnam redit, ac vim suscitatur ira:  
 Tum pudor incendit vires, et conscia virtus;  
 Praecipitemque Daren ardens agit aequore toto;  
 Nunc dextra ingeminans ictus, nunc ille sinistra  
 Nec mora, nec requies: quam multa grandine nimbi  
 Culminibus crepitant; sic densis ictibus heros  
 Creber utraque manu pulsatur versaturque Dareta.*

*Both on the tiptoe stand, at full extent;  
 Their arms aloft, their bodies inly bent;  
 Their heads from aiming blows they bear afar,  
 With clashing gauntlets then provoke the war.  
 One (Dares) on his youth and pliant limbs relies;  
 One (Entellus) on his sinews, and his giant size.  
 The last is stiff with age, his motions slow;  
 He heaves for breath, he staggers to and fro. —  
 Yet equal in success, they ward, they strike;  
 Their ways are different, but their art alike.  
 Before, behind, the blows are dealt; around  
 Their hollow sides the rattling thumps resound;  
 A storm of strokes, well meant, with fury flies,  
 And errs about their temples, ears, and eyes:*

*Nor always errs; for oft the gauntlet draws  
A sweeping stroke along the crackling jaws.  
Hoary with age, Entellus stands his ground;  
But with his warping body wards the wound;  
His head and watchful eye keep even pace,  
While Dares traverses and shifts his place;  
And, like a captain who beleaguers round  
Some strong-built castle, on a rising ground,*

τρις μὲν ἐπιτ' ἐπορούσε ποδαρκῆς διος ἀχιλλεύς  
 εἰχει χαλκείῳ, τρις δ' ἤερα τυψέ βαθείαν.

ILIAD, lib. xx., ver. 445

*Thrice struck Pelides with indignant heart,  
 Thrice, in impressive air, he plunged the dart.-Pope.*

**Verse 27. *But I keep under my body***, etc.— This is an allusion, not only to boxers, but also to wrestlers in the same games, as we learn from the word **υπωπιάζω**, which signifies to hit in the eyes; and **δουλαγωγῶ**, which signifies to trip, and give the antagonist a fall, and then keep him down when he was down, and having obliged him to acknowledge himself conquered, make him a slave. The apostle considers his body as an enemy with which he must contend; he must mortify it by self-denial, abstinence, and severe labor; it must be the slave of his soul, and not the soul the slave of the body, which in all unregenerate men is the case.

***Lest-having preached to others***— The word **κηρυξας**, which we translate having preached, refers to the office of the **κηρυξ**, or herald, at these games, whose business it was to proclaim the conditions of the games, display the prizes, exhort the combatants, excite the emulation of those who were to contend, declare the terms of each contest, pronounce the name of the victors, and put the crown on their heads. See my observations on this office in the notes at Matthew 3:17.

***Should be a castaway***.— The word **αδοκιμος** signifies such a person as the **βραβευται**, or judges of the games, reject as not having deserved the prize. So Paul himself might be rejected by the great Judge; and to prevent this, he ran, he contended, he denied himself, and brought his body into subjection to his spirit, and had his spirit governed by the Spirit of God. Had this heavenly man lived in our days, he would by a certain class of people have been deemed a legalist; a people who widely differ from the practice of the apostle, for they are conformed to the world, and they feed themselves without fear.

ON the various important subjects in this chapter I have already spoken in great detail; not, indeed, all that might be said, but as much as is necessary. A few general observations will serve to recapitulate and impress what has been already said.

1. St. Paul contends that a preacher of the Gospel has a right to his support; and he has proved this from the law, from the Gospel, and from the common sense and consent of men. If a man who does not labor takes his maintenance from the Church of God, it is not only a domestic theft but a sacrilege. He that gives up his time to this labor has a right to the support of himself and family: he who takes more than is sufficient for this purpose is a covetous hireling. He who does nothing for the cause of God and religion, and yet obliges the Church to support him, and minister to his idleness, irregularities, luxury, avarice, and ambition, is a monster for whom human language has not yet got a name.

2. Those who refuse the laborer his hire are condemned by God and by good men. How liberal are many to public places of amusement, or to some popular charity, where their names are sure to be published abroad; while the man who watches over their souls is fed with the most parsimonious hand! Will not God abate this pride and reprove this hard-heartedness?

3. As the husbandman plows and sows in hope, and the God of providence makes him a partaker of his hope, let the upright preachers of God's word take example and encouragement by him. Let them labor in hope; God will not permit them to spend their strength for nought. Though much of their seed, through the fault of the bad ground, may be unfruitful, yet some will spring up unto eternal life.

4. St. Paul became all things to all men, that he might gain all. This was not the effect of a fickle or man-pleasing disposition; no man was ever of a more firm or decided character than St. Paul; but whenever he could with a good conscience yield so as to please his neighbor for his good to edification, he did so; and his yielding disposition was a proof of the greatness of his soul. The unyielding and obstinate mind is always a little mind: a want of true greatness always produces obstinacy and peevishness. Such a person as St. Paul is a blessing wherever he goes: on the contrary, the obstinate, hoggish man, is either a general curse, or a general cross; and if a preacher of the Gospel, his is a burthensome ministry. Reader, let me ask thee a question: If there be no gentleness in thy manners, is there any in thy heart? If there be little of Christ without, can there be much of Christ within?

5. A few general observations on the Grecian games may serve to recapitulate the subject in the four last verses.

1. The Isthmian games were celebrated among the Corinthians; and therefore the apostle addresses them, 1 Corinthians 9:24: KNOW ye not, etc.

2. Of the five games there used, the apostle speaks only of three. RUNNING; 1 Corinthians 9:24: They which run in a race; and 1 Corinthians 9:26: I therefore so run, not as uncertainly. WRESTLING, 1 Corinthians

ωστε αυτον αποσκευασαμενον της δουλειας την υποψιαν ουτως εις τους αγωνας εμβησαι: Who can accuse this man? For which he gives this reason: “that being free from all suspicion of being in a state of slavery, (and elsewhere he says of being a thief, or of corrupt morals,) he might enter the lists with credit.” Chrysost. Homil. in Inscript. Altaris, etc., vol. iii. page 59, Edit. Benedict.

6. The boxers used to prepare themselves by a sort of **σκιαμαχια**, or going through all their postures of defense and attack when no adversary was before them. This was termed beating the air, 1 Corinthians 9:26; but when such came to the combat, they endeavored to blind their adversaries by hitting them in the eye, which is the meaning of **υπωπιαζειν**, as we

Olympic games, as he was passing by the statue of Jupiter he offered up this prayer: *ει παντα, ω ζευ, δεοντως μοι τα προς τον αγωνα ταοεσκευασται, αποδος φερων δικαιως την νικην εμοι.* ‘O Jupiter, if I have performed every thing as I ought in reference to this contest, grant me the victory!’” May we not feel something of this spirit in seeking the kingdom of God? And can any thing of this kind be supposed to derogate from the glory of Christ? St. Paul himself says, if a man contend for the mastery, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully. Shall we pretend to be wiser than the apostle; and say, that we may gain the crown, though we neither fight the good fight nor finish the course?

## CHAPTER 10.

*Peculiar circumstances in the Jewish history were typical of the greatest mysteries of the Gospel; particularly their passing through the Red Sea, and being overshadowed with the miraculous cloud, 1, 2. The manna with which they were fed, 3. And rock out of which they drank, 4. The punishments inflicted on them for their disobedience are warnings to us, 5. We should not lust as they did, 6. Nor commit idolatry, 7. Nor fornication as they did; in consequence of which twenty-three thousand of them were destroyed, 8. Nor tempt Christ as they did, 9. Nor murmur, 10. All these transgressions and their punishments are recorded as warnings to us, that we may not fall away from the grace of God, 11, 12. God never suffers any to be tempted above their strength, 13. Idolatry must be detested, 14. And the sacrament of the Lord's Supper properly considered and taken, that God may not be provoked to punish us, 15-22. There are some things which may be legally done which are not expedient; and we should endeavor so to act as to edify each other, 23, 24. The question concerning eating things offered to idols considered, and finally settled, 25-30. We should do all things to the glory of God, avoid whatsoever might be the means of stumbling another, and seek the profit of others in spiritual matters rather than our own gratification, 31-33.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 10.

**Verse 1.** *I would not that ye should be ignorant*— It seems as if the Corinthians had supposed that their being made partakers of the ordinances of the Gospel, such as baptism and the Lord's Supper, would secure their salvation, notwithstanding they might be found partaking of idolatrous feasts; as long, at least, as they considered an idol to be nothing in the world. To remove this destructive supposition, which would have led them to endless errors both in principle and practice, the apostle shows that the Jews had sacramental ordinances in the wilderness, similar to those of the Christians; and that, notwithstanding they had the typical baptism from the cloud, and the typical eucharist from the paschal lamb,



and the manna that came down from heaven, yet, when they joined with idolaters and partook of idolatrous feasts, God was not only displeased with them, but signified this displeasure by pouring out his judgments upon them, so that in one day 23, 000 of them were destroyed.

***Under the cloud***— It is manifest from Scripture that the miraculous cloud in the wilderness performed a three-fold office to the Israelites. 1. It was a cloud in the form of a pillar to direct their journeyings by day. 2. It was a pillar of fire to give light to the camp by night. 3. It was a covering for them during the day, and preserved them from the scorching rays of the sun; and supplied them with a sufficiency of aqueous particles, not only to cool that burning atmosphere, but to give refreshment to themselves and their cattle; and its humidity was so abundant that the apostle here represents the people as thoroughly sprinkled and enveloped in its aqueous vapour. See the note on Exodus 13:21.

**Verse 2. *And were all baptized unto Moses***— Rather INTO Moses-into the covenant of which Moses was the mediator; and by this typical baptism they were brought under the obligation of acting according to the Mosaic precepts, as Christians receiving Christian baptism are said to be baptized INTO Christ, and are thereby brought under obligation to keep the precepts of the Gospel.

**Verse 3. *Spiritual meat***— The manna which is here called spiritual. 1. Because it was provided supernaturally; and, Because it was a type of Christ Jesus, who speaking of it, John 6:31, etc., tells us that it was a type of that true bread which came down from heaven, which gives life to the world, John 6:33, and that himself was the bread of life, John 6:48.

**Verse 4. *Spiritual drink***— By the βρωμα πνευματικον spiritual meat, and πομα πνευματικον, spiritual drink, the apostle certainly means both meat and drink, which were furnished to the Israelitish assembly miraculously, as well as typically: and he appears to borrow his expression from the Jews themselves, who expressly say הלז רוחני הלהם hallechem hallaz ruchani, that bread was spiritual, and היו מיים רוחניים haiu meyim ruchainiyim haiu, the waters were spiritual. Alschech in legem. fol. 238, to which opinion the apostle seems particularly to refer. See Schoettgen.

***The spiritual rock that followed them***— There is some difficulty in this verse. How could the rock follow them? It does not appear that the rock ever moved from the place where Moses struck it. But to solve this difficulty, it is said that rock here is put, by metonymy, for the water of the rock; and that this water did follow them through the wilderness. This is more likely; but we have not direct proof of it. The ancient Jews, however, were of this opinion, and state that the streams followed them in all their journeyings, up the mountains, down the valleys, etc., etc.; and that when they came to encamp, the waters formed themselves into cisterns and pools; and that the rulers of the people guided them, by their staves, in rivulets to the different tribes and families. And this is the sense they give to Numbers 21:17: Spring up, O well, etc. See the places in Schoettgen.

Others contend, that by the rock following them we are to understand their having carried of its waters with them on their journeyings. This we know is a common custom in these deserts to the present day; and that the Greek verb *ακολουθεω*, to follow, has this sense, Bishop Pearce has amply proved in his note on this place. The Jews suppose that the rock itself went with the Israelites, and was present with them in their thirty-eight stations, for only so many are mentioned. See Alschech in legem. fol. 236. And see Schoettgen.

Now, though of all the senses already given that of Bishop Pearce is the best, yet it does appear that the apostle does not speak about the rock itself, but of Him whom it represented; namely, Christ: this was the Rock that followed them, and ministered to them; and this view of the subject is rendered more probable by what is said 1 Corinthians 10:9, that they tempted Christ, and were destroyed by serpents. The same rock is in the vale of Rephidim to the present day; and it bears aboriginal marks of the water that flowed from it in the fissures that appear on its sides. It is one block of fine granite, about seven yards long, five broad, and — high. A fragment of this typical rock now lies before me, brought by a relative of my own, who broke it off, and did not let it pass into any hand till he placed it in mine. See the note on Exodus 17:6.

**Verse 5. *They were overthrown in the wilderness.***— And yet ALL these persons were under the cloud-ALL passed through the sea-ALL were

baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea-ALL ate the same spiritual meat-ALL drank the same spiritual drink, for they were made partakers of the spiritual Rock, CHRIST. Nothing can be a more decisive proof than this that people, who have every outward ordinance, and are made partakers of the grace of our Lord Jesus, may so abuse their privileges and grieve the Spirit of God as to fall from their state of grace, and perish ever lastingly. Let those who are continually asserting that this is impossible, beware lest they themselves, if in a state of grace, become, through their overmuch security, proofs in point of the possibility of ending in the flesh, though they began in the Spirit. Reader, remember who said, Ye shall not surely die; and remember the mischiefs produced by a belief of his doctrine.

**Verse 6. *These things were our examples***— The punishments which God inflicted on them furnish us with evidences of what God will inflict upon us, if we sin after the similitude of those transgressors.

***We should not lust after evil things***— It is most evident that the apostle refers here to the history in Numbers 11:4, etc.: And the mixed multitude fell a lusting, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? Into the same spirit the Corinthians had most evidently fallen; they lusted after the flesh in the idol feasts, and therefore frequented them to the great scandal of Christianity. The apostle shows them that their sin was of the same nature as that of the murmuring rebellious Israelites whom God so severely punished; and if he did not spare the natural branches, there was no likelihood that he should spare them.

**Verse 7. *Neither be ye idolaters***— The apostle considers partaking of the idolatrous feasts as being real acts of idolatry; because those who offered the flesh to their gods considered them as feeding invisibly with them on the flesh thus offered, and that every one that partook of the feast was a real participator with the god to whom the flesh or animal had been offered in sacrifice. See 1 Corinthians 10:21.

***Rose up to play.***— See the note on Exodus 32:6. The Jews generally explain this word as implying idolatrous acts only: I have considered it as implying acts of impurity, with which idolatrous acts were often accompanied. It also means those dances which were practised in honor of their gods. That this is one meaning of the verb *παίζειν*, Kypke has largely proved. The whole idolatrous process was as follows: 1. The

proper victim was prepared and set apart. 2. It was slain, and its blood poured out at the altar of the deity. 3. The flesh was dressed, and the priests and offerers feasted on it, and thus endeavored to establish a communion between themselves and the object of their worship. 4. After eating, they had idolatrous dances in honor of their god; and, 5. as might be expected, impure mixtures, in consequence of those dances. The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play; and it is in reference to this issue of idolatrous feasts and dancings that the apostle immediately subjoins: Neither let us commit FORNICATION, etc.

**Verse 8. *Fell in one day three and twenty thousand.***— In Numbers 25:9, the number is 24, 000; and, allowing this to be the genuine reading, (and none of the Hebrew MSS. exhibit any various reading in the place,) Moses and the apostle may be thus reconciled: in Numbers 25:4, God commands Moses to take all the heads (the rulers) of the people, and hang them up before the Lord against the sun; these possibly amounted to 1000, and those who fell by the plague were 23, 000, so that the whole amounted to 24, 000. Instead of *εικοσιτρεις χιλιαδες*, 23, 000, two MSS., with the later Syriac and the Armenian, have *εικοσιτεσσαρες χιλιαδες*, 24, 000; but this authority is too slender to establish a various reading, which recedes so much from the received text. I think the discordance may be best accounted for by supposing, as above, that Phineas and his companions might have slain 1000 men, who were heads of the people, and chief in this idolatry; and that the plague sent from the Lord destroyed 23, 000 more; so an equal number to the whole tribe of Levi perished in one day, who were just 23, 000. See Numbers 26:62; and see Lightfoot.

**Verse 9. *Neither let us tempt Christ***— I have already supposed, in the note on 1 Corinthians 10:4, that Christ is intended by the spiritual rock that followed them: and that it was he, not the rock, that did follow or accompany the Israelites in the wilderness. This was the angel of God's presence who was with the Church in the wilderness, to whom our fathers would not obey, as St. Stephen says, Acts 7:38, 39. Instead of *χριστον*, Christ, several MSS. and a few versions have *κυριον*, the Lord, and some few *θεον*, God. But though some respectable MSS. have the Lord instead of Christ, yet this latter has the greatest proportion of authority on its side. And this affords no mean proof that the person who is called יהוה Yehovah in the Old Testament, is called Christ in the New. By tempting

Christ is meant disbelieving the providence and goodness of God; and presuming to prescribe to him how he should send them the necessary supplies, and of what kind they should be, etc.

**Verse 10. *Neither murmur ye***— How the Israelites murmured because of the manna, which their souls despised as a light bread-something incapable of affording them nourishment, etc., and because they had been brought out of Egypt into the wilderness, and pretended that the promises of God had failed; and how they were destroyed by serpents, and by the destroyer or plague; may be seen at large in the texts referred to in the margin on this and the preceding verses. It appears from what the apostle says here, that the Corinthians were murmuring against God and his apostle for prohibiting them from partaking of the idolatrous feasts, just as the Israelites did in the wilderness in reference to a similar subject. See the history of Phineas, with Zimri and Cosbi, and the rebellion of Corah and his company, etc., etc.

***Destroyed of the destroyer.***— The Jews suppose that God employed destroying angels to punish those rebellious Israelites; they were five in number, and one of them they call מַשְׁחִית Meshachith, the destroyer; which appears to be another name for Samael, the angel of death, to whose influence they attribute all deaths which are not uncommon or violent. Those who die violent deaths, or deaths that are not in the common manner of men, are considered as perishing by immediate judgments from God.

**Verse 11. *Upon whom the ends of the world are come.***— τα τελη των αιωνων. The end of the times included within the whole duration of the Mosaic economy. For although the word αιων means, in its primary sense, endless being, or duration; yet, in its accommodated sense, it is applied to any round or duration that is complete in itself: and here it evidently means the whole duration of the Mosaic economy. “Thus, therefore,” says Dr. Lightfoot, “the apostle speaks in this place that those things, which were transacted in the beginning of the Jewish ages, are written for an example to you upon whom the ends of those ages are come; and the beginning is like to the end, and the end to the beginning. Both were forty years; both consisted of temptation and unbelief; and both ended in the destruction of the unbelievers—that, in the destruction of

those who perished in the wilderness; this, in the destruction of those that believed not: viz. the destruction of their city and nation.” The phrase **סופ יומיא** *soph yomaiya*, the end of days, says the Targum of Jerusalem, Genesis 3:15, means **ביומוי דמלכא משיחא** *beyomoi demalca Meshicha*, in the days of the King Messiah. We are to consider the apostle’s words as referring to the end of the Jewish dispensation and the commencement of the Christian, which is the last dispensation which God will vouchsafe to man in the state of probation.

**Verse 12.** *Let him that thinketh he standeth*— **ὁ δοκῶν εστάναι**. Let him who most confidently standeth—him who has the fullest conviction in his own conscience that his heart is right with God, and that his mind is right in the truth, take heed lest he fall from his faith, and from the state of holiness in which the grace of God has placed him. I have already shown that the verb **δοκεῖν**, which we render to seem, to think, to suppose, is used by the best Greek writers, not to lessen or weaken the sense, but to render it stronger and more emphatic. See the note on Luke 8:18.

In a state of probation every thing may change; while we are in this life we may stand or fall: our standing in the faith depends on our union with God; and that depends on our watching unto prayer, and continuing to possess that faith that worketh by love. The highest saint under heaven can stand no longer than he depends upon God and continues in the obedience of faith. He that ceases to do so will fall into sin, and get a darkened understanding and a hardened heart: and he may continue in this state till God come to take away his soul. Therefore, let him who most assuredly standeth, take heed lest he fall; not only partially, but finally.

**Verse 13.** *But such as is common to man*— **ανθρωπινος**. Chrysostom has properly translated this word **ανθρωπινος, τουτεστι μικρος, βραχυς, συμμετρος**; that is, small, short, moderate. Your temptations or trials have been but trifling in comparison of those endured by the Israelites; they might have been easily resisted and overcome. Besides, God will not suffer you to be tried above the strength he gives you; but as the trial comes, he will provide you with sufficient strength to resist it; as the trial comes in, he will make your way out. The words are very remarkable, **ποιησει συν τω πειρασμω και την εκβασιν**, “He will, with the temptation, make the deliverance, or way out.” Satan is never

permitted to block up our way, without the providence of God making a way through the wall. God ever makes a breach in his otherwise impregnable fortification. Should an upright soul get into difficulties and straits, he may rest assured that there is a way out, as there was a way in; and that the trial shall never be above the strength that God shall give him to bear it.

**Verse 14. *Therefore flee from idolatry.***— This is a trial of no great magnitude; to escape from so gross a temptation requires but a moderate portion of grace and circumspection.

**Verse 15. *I speak as to wise men***— The Corinthians valued themselves not a little on their wisdom and various gifts; the apostle admits this, and draws an argument from it against themselves. As ye are so wise, surely ye can see the propriety of abominating idolatry of every kind: for an idol is nothing in the world, and can do nothing for you and nothing against you.

**Verse 16. *The cup of blessing***— The apostle speaks here of the Eucharist, which he illustrates by the כוס הברכה *kos habberacah*, cup of blessing, over which thanks were expressed at the conclusion of the passover. See this largely explained at the conclusion of the notes on Matthew 26:75, and in my Discourse upon the Eucharist, 8vo. 2nd edit. 1814.

***The communion of the blood of Christ?***— We who partake of this sacred cup, in commemoration of the death of Christ, are made partakers of his body and blood, and thus have fellowship with him; as those who partake of an idol feast, thereby, as much as they can, participate with the idol, to whom the sacrifice was offered. This I have proved at large in the above tract, to which I must refer the reader, as the subject is too voluminous to be inserted here.

**Verse 17. *For we, being many, are one bread***— The original would be better translated thus: Because there is one bread, or loaf; we, who are many, are one body. As only one loaf was used at the passover, and those who partook of it were considered to be one religious body; so we who partake of the eucharistical bread and wine, in commemoration of the sacrificial death of Christ, are one spiritual society, because we are all

made partakers of that one Christ whose blood was shed for us to make an atonement for our sins; as the blood of the paschal lamb was shed and sprinkled in reference to this of which it was the type.

**Verse 18. *Behold Israel after the flesh***— The Jews not yet converted to Christianity: the latter being Israel after the Spirit. As the design of the apostle was to withdraw his converts at Corinth from all temptations to idolatry, he produces two examples to show the propriety of his endeavors. 1. All who join together in celebrating the Lord's Supper, and are partakers of that one bread, give proof by this that they are Christians, and have fellowship with Christ. 2. All the Israelites who offer sacrifice, and partake of those sacrifices, give proof thereby that they are Jews, and are in fellowship with the object of their worship: so they who join in idol festivals, and eat things which have been offered to idols, give proof that they are in communion with those idolaters, and that they have fellowship with the demons they worship.

**Verse 19. *What say I then?***— A Jewish phrase for, I conclude; and this is his conclusion: that although an idol is nothing, has neither power nor influence, nor are things offered to idols any thing the worse for being thus offered; yet, as the things sacrificed by the Gentiles are sacrificed to demons and not to God, those who partake of them have fellowship with demons: those who profess Christianity cannot have fellowship both with Christ and the devil.

**Verse 21. *Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord***— It is in vain that you who frequent these idol festivals profess the religion of Christ, and commemorate his death and passion in the holy eucharist; for you can not have that fellowship with Christ which this ordinance implies, while you are partakers of the table of demons. That the Gentiles, in their sacrifices, fed on the slain beasts, and ate bread and drank wine in honor of their gods, is sufficiently clear from various accounts. See my Discourse on the Holy Eucharist, where many examples are produced. The following from Virgil, AEn. viii, verse 179-273, is proof in point:—

*Tum lecti juvenes certatim araeque sacerdos  
Viscera tosta ferunt taurorum, onerantque canistris  
Dona laboratae Cereris, Bacchumque ministrant.  
Vescitur Aeneas simul et Trojana juvenus  
Perpetui tergo bovis et lustralibus extis. —*



*Quare agite, O juvenes, tantarum in munere laudum,  
Cingite fronde comas, et pocula porgite dextris,  
Communemque vocate Deum, et date vina volentes.*

*The loaves were served in canisters; the wine  
In bowls; the priests renewed the rites divine:  
Broiled entrails are their food, and beef's continued chine  
Ye warlike youths, your heads with garlands crown,  
Fill high the goblets with a sparkling flood,  
And with deep draughts invoke our common god.*

**Verse 22.** Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? All idolatry is represented as a sort of spiritual adultery; it is giving that heart to Satan that should be devoted to God; and he is represented as being jealous, because of the infidelity of those who have covenanted to give their hearts to him.

*Are we stronger than he?*— As he has threatened to punish such transgressors, and will infallibly do it, can we resist his omnipotence? A sinner should consider, while he is in rebellion against God, whether he be able to resist that power whereby God will inflict vengeance.

**Verse 23.** *All things are lawful for me*— I may lawfully eat all kinds of food, but all are not expedient; *οὐ πάντα συμφέρει*. It would not be becoming in me to eat of all, because I should by this offend and grieve many weak minds. See the notes on 1 Corinthians 6:12, etc.

**Verse 24.** *Let no man seek his own*, etc.— Let none, for his private gratification or emolument, disturb the peace or injure the soul of another. Let every man live, not for himself, but for every part of the great human family with which he is surrounded.

**Verse 25.** *Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat*— The case to which the apostle refers is simply this; it was customary to bring the flesh of the animal to market, the blood of which had been poured out in sacrifice to an idol; or, taken more particularly, the case was this; one part of the sacrifice was consumed on the altar of the idol: a second part was dressed and eaten by the sacrificer; and a third belonged to the priest, and was often sold in the shambles. To partake of the second share, or to feast upon the sacrifice, St. Paul absolutely forbids, because this was one part of the religious worship which was paid to the idol; it was sitting down as

guests at his table, in token that they were in fellowship with him. This was utterly incompatible with receiving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which was the communion of the body and blood of Christ. But as to the third share, the apostle leaves them at liberty either to eat of it or forbear; except that, by eating, their weak brethren should be offended; in that case, though the thing was lawful, it was their duty to abstain. See the notes on 1 Corinthians 8:1, etc. Hindoos eagerly embrace whatever has been offered to an idol: hence it is common to see the flowers that have been thus offered placed in the hair of a Hindoo. Water that has been thus made sacred is preserved in Hindoo houses, and with it they rub their bodies, and occasionally sip a drop, regarding it as the water of life. — See Ward.

***Asking no questions for consciences sake***— Dr. Lightfoot observes, that “the Jews were vexed with innumerable scruples in their feasts, as to the eating of the thing, as well as to the company with which they ate; and even the manner of their eating. Of fruits and herbs brought to the table, they were to inquire whether they were tithed according to custom; whether they were consecrated by the Truma, or whether they were profane; whether they were clean, or touched with some pollution, etc. And concerning flesh set on the table, they were to inquire whether it was of that which had been offered to idols; whether it were the flesh of an animal that had been torn by wild beasts; or of that which had been strangled, or not killed according to the canons; etc., etc. All which doubts the liberty of the Gospel abolished as to one's own conscience, with this proviso, that no scandal or offense be cast before another man's weak or scrupulous conscience.”

From this it is evident that the apostle had the case of the Jewish converts in view, and not the Gentiles. The latter were not troubled with such extraordinary scrupulousness.

**Verse 26. *For the earth is the Lord's***— And because God made the earth and its fullness, all animals, plants, and vegetables, there can be nothing in it or them impure or unholy; because all are the creatures of God.

**Verse 27. *If any-bid you to a feast***— The apostle means any common meal, not an idol festival; for to such no Christian could lawfully go.

***Whatsoever is set before you, eat***— Do not act as the Jews generally do, torturing both themselves and others with questions, such as those mentioned in 1 Corinthians 10:26.

**Verse 28. *This is offered in sacrifice unto idols***— While they were not apprized of this circumstance they might lawfully eat; but when told that the flesh set before them had been offered to an idol, then they were not to eat, for the sake of his weak conscience who pointed out the circumstance. For the apostle still takes it for granted that even the flesh offered in sacrifice to an idol might be eaten innocently at any private table, as in that case they were no longer in danger of being partakers with devils, as this was no idol festival.

***For the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof***— This whole clause, which appears also in 1 Corinthians 10:26, is wanting here in ABCDEFGH, several others, the Syriac, Erpen, Coptic, Sahidic, Aethiopic, Armenian, Vulgate, Itala; and in several of the fathers. Griesbach has left it out of the text: and Professor White says, “Certissime delendum;” it should most undoubtedly be erased. It has scarcely any authority to support it.

**Verse 29. & 30. *For why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?*** etc.— Though in the case of flesh offered to idols, and other matters connected with idolatry, (on which it appears there was much of a tender conscience among some of the Corinthians,) it was necessary to sacrifice something to an over-scrupulous conscience, yet the Gospel of Christ did not lay any man under this general burthen, that he must do nothing at which any weak brother might feel hurt or be stumbled; for the liberty of the Gospel must not take for its rule the scrupulosity of any conscience; for if a man, by grace-by the allowance or authority of the Gospel, partake of any thing that God's bounty has sent, and which the Gospel has not forbidden, and give thanks to God for the blessing, no man has right or authority to condemn such a person. This seems to be the meaning of these two verses; and they read a lesson of caution to rash judges, and to those who are apt to take offense.

**Verse 30.** See Clarke on “1 Corinthians 10:29”

**Verse 31. *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink***— As no general rule can be laid down in reference to the above particulars, there is one maxim of which no Christian must lose sight—that whether he eats or drinks of this or the other kind of aliments, or whatever else he may do, he must do it so as to bring glory to God. This is a sufficient rule to regulate every man's conscience and practice in all indifferent things, where there are no express commands or prohibitions.

**Verse 32. *Give none offense***, etc.— Scrupulously avoid giving any cause of offense either to the unconverted Jews or the unconverted Gentiles, so as to prejudice them against Christianity: nor to the Church of God, made up of converts from the above parties.

**Verse 33. *Even as I please all men***— Act as I do: forgetting myself, my own interests, convenience, ease, and comfort, I labor for the welfare of others; and particularly that they may be saved. How blessed and amiable was the spirit and conduct of this holy man!

THIS chapter has already presented the serious reader with a variety of maxims for his regulation. — 1. As to his own private walk; 2. His domestic duties; and 3. His connection with the Church of God. Let us review some of the principal parts.

1. We should be on our guard against what are called little sins, and all occasions and excitements to sin. Take heed what company you frequent. One thing, apparently harmless, may lead by almost imperceptible links to sins of the deepest dye. See the example in this chapter: 1. The people sat down to eat and to drink. 2. They rose up to play, dance, and sing; and 3. They committed fornication, and brought upon themselves swift destruction.

2. However conscious we may be of our own sincerity and uprightness, we should ever distrust ourselves. God has made nothing independent of himself; the soul has no principle of self-dependence either in itself or its attainments: it is wise, powerful, and happy, only while it is depending on infinite wisdom, unlimited power, and endless mercy.

3. The Gentiles were in communion with demons by their idolatrous services. In what communion are those who feed themselves without fear, who eat with the glutton and drink with the drunkard? So they partake of

the Lord Jesus who are under the influence of pride, self-will, hatred, censoriousness, etc., and who carry their self-importance and worldly spirit even into the house and worship of God?

4. A spirit of curiosity too much indulged may, in an irreligious man, lead to covetousness and theft: in a godly man, to a troublesome and unscriptural scrupulosity of conscience, productive of nothing but uneasiness to itself, and disturbance to others. Simplicity of heart saves from this, and is an excellent gift.

5. In many actions we have a twofold rule—the testimony of God and charity: and in many things charity is the best interpreter of the testimony. The testimony often permits what charity forbids, because circumstances in time, place, etc., may render a thing improper on one occasion that might be proper on another.

6. Pious Quesnel has well said: Every thing honors God when it is done for his sake; every thing dishonors him when any ultimate end is proposed beside his glory. It is an unchangeable principle of the Christian morality that all comes from God by his love, and all should be returned to him by ours. This rule we should keep inviolate.

7. Though many of the advices given in this chapter appear to respect the Corinthians alone, yet there is none of them that is not applicable to Christians in general in certain circumstances. God has given no portion of his word to any people or age exclusively; the whole is given to the Church universal in all ages of the world. In reading this epistle let us seriously consider what parts of it apply to ourselves; and if we are disposed to appropriate its promises, let us act conscientiously, and inquire how many of its reprehensions we may fairly appropriate also.

## CHAPTER 11.

*The apostle reprehends the Corinthians for several irregularities in their manner of conducting public worship; the men praying or prophesying with their heads covered, and the women with their heads uncovered, contrary to custom, propriety, and decency, 1-6. Reasons why they should act differently, 7-16. They are also reprov'd for their divisions and heresies, 17-19. And for the irregular manner in which they celebrated the Lord's Supper, 20-22. The proper manner of celebrating this holy rite laid down by the apostle, 23-26. Directions for a profitable receiving of the Lord's Supper, and avoiding the dangerous consequences of communicating unworthily, 27-34.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 11.

**Verse 1. *Be ye followers of me***— This verse certainly belongs to the preceding chapter, and is here out of all proper place and connection.

**Verse 2. *That ye remember me in all things***— It appears that the apostle had previously given them a variety of directions relative to the matters mentioned here; that some had paid strict attention to them, and that others had not; and that contentions and divisions were the consequences, which he here reprov'es and endeavors to rectify. While Paul and Apollos had preached among them, they had undoubtedly prescribed every thing that was necessary to be observed in the Christian worship: but it is likely that those who joined in idol festivals wished also to introduce something relative to the mode of conducting the idol worship into the Christian assembly, which they might think was an improvement on the apostle's plan.

**Verse 3. *The head of every man is Christ***— The apostle is speaking particularly of Christianity and its ordinances: Christ is the Head or Author of this religion; and is the creator, preserver, and Lord of every man. The man also is the lord or head of the woman; and the Head or Lord of Christ, as Mediator between God and man, is God the Father. Here is the order-God sends his Son Jesus Christ to redeem man; Christ comes

and lays down his life for the world; every man who receives Christianity confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father; and every believing woman will acknowledge, according to Genesis 3:16, that God has placed her in a dependence on and subjection to the man. So far there is no difficulty in this passage.

**Verse 4. *Praying, or prophesying***— Any person who engages in public acts in the worship of God, whether prayer, singing, or exhortation: for we learn, from the apostle himself, that *προφητευσειν*, to prophesy, signifies to speak unto men to edification, exhortation, and comfort, 1 Corinthians 14:3. And this comprehends all that we understand by exhortation, or even preaching.

***Having his head covered***— With his cap or turban on, dishonoreth his head; because the head being covered was a sign of subjection; and while he was employed in the public ministration of the word, he was to be considered as a representative of Christ, and on this account his being veiled or covered would be improper. This decision of the apostle was in point blank hostility to the canons of the Jews; for they would not suffer a man to pray unless he was veiled, for which they gave this reason. “He should veil himself to show that he is ashamed before God, and unworthy with open face to behold him.” See much in Lightfoot on this point.

**Verse 5. *But every woman that prayeth***, etc.— Whatever may be the meaning of praying and prophesying, in respect to the man, they have precisely the same meaning in respect to the woman. So that some women at least, as well as some men, might speak to others to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. And this kind of prophesying or teaching was predicted by Joel, Joel 2:28, and referred to by Peter, Acts 2:17. And had there not been such gifts bestowed on women, the prophecy could not have had its fulfillment. The only difference marked by the apostle was, the man had his head uncovered, because he was the representative of Christ; the woman had hers covered, because she was placed by the order of God in a state of subjection to the man, and because it was a custom, both among the Greeks and Romans, and among the Jews an express law, that no woman should be seen abroad without a veil. This was, and is, a common custom through all the east, and none but public prostitutes go without veils. And if a woman should appear in public without a veil, she

would dishonor her head-her husband. And she must appear like to those women who had their hair shorn off as the punishment of whoredom, or adultery.

Tacitus informs us, *Germ.* 19, that, considering the greatness of the population, adulteries were very rare among the Germans; and when any woman was found guilty she was punished in the following way: *accisis crinibus, nudatam coram propinquis expellit domo maritus*; “having cut off



ειδετε παρ' ακρας ως απεθρισεν τριχας, σωζουσα καλλος, εστι δε η παλαι γυνη: “see how she cuts off only the very points of her hair, that she may preserve her beauty, and is just the same woman as before.” See the note on the preceding verse.

In Hindostan a woman cuts off her hair at the death of her husband, as a token of widowhood; but this is never performed by a married woman, whose hair is considered an essential ornament. The veil of the Hindoo women is nothing more than the garment brought over the face, which is always very carefully done by the higher classes of women when they appear in the streets. — Ward’s Customs.

**Verse 7. *A man indeed ought not to cover his head***— He should not wear his cap or turban in the public congregation, for this was a badge of servitude, or an indication that he had a conscience overwhelmed with guilt; and besides, it was contrary to the custom that prevailed, both among the Greeks and Romans.

***He is the image and glory of God***— He is God’s vicegerent in this lower world; and, by the authority which he has received from his Master, he is his representative among the creatures, and exhibits, more than any other part of the creation, the glory and perfections of the Creator.

***But the woman is the glory of the man.***— As the man is, among the creatures, the representative of the glory and perfections of God, so that the fear of him and the dread of him are on every beast of the field, etc.; so the woman is, in the house and family, the representative of the power and authority of the man. I believe this to be the meaning of the apostle; and that he is speaking here principally concerning power and authority, and skill to use them. It is certainly not the moral image of God, nor his celestial glory, of which he speaks in this verse.

**Verse 8. *For, the man is not of the woman***— Bishop Pearce translates ου γαρ εστιν ανηρ εκ γυναικος, αλλα γυνη εξ ανδρος, thus: “For the man doth not BELONG to the woman, but the woman to the man.” And vindicates this sense of εκ, by its use in 1 Corinthians 12:15. If the foot shall say, ουκ ειμι εκ του σωματος, I am not of the body, i.e. I do not belong to the body. He observes that as the verb εστιν is in the present tense, and will not allow that we should understand this verse of

something that is past, **γαρ**, for, in the following verse, which is unnoticed by our translators, will have its full propriety and meaning, because it introduces a reason why the woman belongs to the man and not the man to the woman. His meaning is, that the man does not belong to the woman, as if she was the principal; but the woman belongs to the man in that view.

**Verse 9.** *Neither was the man created*, etc.— **και γαρ ουκ εκτισθη** for the man was not created upon the woman's account. The reason is plain from what is mentioned above; and from the original creation of woman she was made for the man, to be his proper or suitable helper.

**Verse 10.** *For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels*.— There are few portions in the sacred writings that have given rise to such a variety of conjectures and explanations, and are less understood, than this verse, and 1 Corinthians 15:29. Our translators were puzzled with it; and have inserted here one of the largest marginal readings found any where in their work; but this is only on the words power on her head, which they interpret thus: that is, a covering, in sign that she is under the power of her husband. But, admitting this marginal reading to be a satisfactory solution so far as it goes, it by no means removes all the difficulty. Mr. Locke ingenuously acknowledged that he did not understand the meaning of the words; and almost every critic and learned man has a different explanation. Some have endeavored to force out a meaning by altering the text. The emendation of Mr. Toup, of Cornwall, is the most remarkable: he reads **εξιουσα**, going out, instead of **εξουσιαν**, power; wherefore the woman, when she goes out, should have a veil on her head. Whatever ingenuity there may appear in this emendation, the consideration that it is not acknowledged by any MS., or version, or primitive writer, is sufficient proof against it. Dr. Lightfoot, Schoettgen, and Bishop Pearce, have written best on the subject, in which they allow that there are many difficulties. The latter contends, 1. That the original should be read, Wherefore the woman ought to have A power upon her head, that is, the power of the husband over the wife; the word power standing for the sign or token of that power which was a covering or veil. Theophylact explains the word, **το του εξουσιαζεσθαι συμβολον, τουτεστι, το καλυμμα**, “the symbol of being under power, that is, a veil, or covering.” And Photius explains it thus: **της υποταγης συμβολον το επι της κεφαλης καλυμμα φερειν**; to wear a veil on the head is a

symbol of subjection. It is no unusual thing, in the Old and New Testament, for the signs and tokens of things to be called by the names of the things themselves, for thus circumcision is called the covenant, in Genesis 17:10, 13, though it was only the sign of it.

2. The word angels presents another difficulty. Some suppose that by these the apostle means the fallen angels, or devils; others, the governors of the Church; and others, those who were deputed among the Jews to espouse a virgin in the name of a lover. All these senses the learned bishop rejects, and believes that the apostle uses the word angels, in its most obvious sense, for the heavenly angels; and that he speaks according to the notion which then prevailed among Jews, that the holy angels interested themselves in the affairs of men, and particularly were present in their religious assemblies, as the cherubim, their representation, were present in their temple. Thus we read in Ecclesiastes 5:6: Neither say thou before the ANGEL, it was an error; and in 1 Timothy 5:21: I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect ANGELS, etc. Parallel to these is what Agrippa says in his oration to the Jews, Josephus, War, b. ii. chap. 16: I protest before God, your holy temple, and all the ANGELS of heaven, etc. All which passages suppose, or were spoken to those who supposed, that the angels know what passes here upon earth. The notion, whether just or not, prevailed among the Jews; and if so, St. Paul might speak according to the common opinion.

3. Another difficulty lies in the phrase *δια τουτο*, wherefore, which shows that this verse is a conclusion from what the apostle was arguing before; which we may understand thus: that his conclusion, from the foregoing argument, ought to have the more weight, upon account of the presence, real or supposed, of the holy angels, at their religious meetings. See Bishop Pearce, in loc.

The learned bishop is not very willing to allow that the doctrine of the presence of angelic beings in religious assemblies is legitimate; but what difficulty can there be in this, if we take the words of the apostle in another place: Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? He 1:14. And perhaps there is no time in which they can render more essential services to the followers of God than when they are engaged in Divine ordinances. On the whole, the

bishop's sense of the passage and paraphrase stands thus: "And because of this superiority in the man, I conclude that the woman should have on her head a veil, the mark of her husband's power over her, especially in the religious assemblies, where the angels are supposed to be invisibly present."

The ancient versions make little alteration in the common reading, and the MSS. leave the verse nearly as it stands in the common printed editions. The Armenian has a word that answers to umbram, a shade or covering. The AEthiopic, her head should be veiled. The common editions of the Vulgate have potestatem, power; but in an ancient edition of the Vulgate, perhaps one of the first, if not the first, ever printed, 2 vols. fol., sine ulla nota anni, etc.: the verse stands thus: Ideo debet mulier velamen habere super caput suum: et propter angelos. My old MS. translation seems to have been taken from a MS. which had the same reading: Wherefore the woman schal haue a veyl on her heuyd; and for aungels. Some copies of the Itala have also velamen, a veil.

In his view of this text, Kypke differs from all others; and nothing that so judicious a critic advances should be lightly regarded. 1. He contends that **ἐξουσιαν** occurs nowhere in the sense of veil, and yet he supposes that the word **καλυμμα**, veil is understood, and must in the translation of the passage be supplied. 2. He directs that a comma be placed after **ἐξουσιαν**, and that it be construed with **οφειλει**, ought; after which he translates the verse thus: Propterea mulier potestati obnoxia est, ita ut velamen in capite habeat propter angelos; On this account the woman is subject to power, so that she should have a veil on her head, because of the angels. 3. He contends that both the Latins and Greeks use debere and **οφειλειν** elegantly to express that to which one is obnoxious or liable. So Horace:—

— *Tu, nisi ventis*  
*Debes ludibrium, cave.*  
*Carm. lib. i. Od. xiv. ver. 15.*

Take heed lest thou owe a laughing stock to the winds; i.e. lest thou become the sport of the winds; for to these thou art now exposing thyself.

So Dionys. Hal. Ant. lib. iii., page 205: **και πολλην οφειλοντες αισχυνην απηλθον εκ της αγορας**; They departed from the market,

exposed to great dishonor. So Euripides, *οφειλω σοι βλαβην*. I am exposed to thy injury.

4. He contends that the words taken in this sense agree perfectly with the context, and with *δια τουτο*, wherefore, in this verse, “Because the man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man, therefore she is subject to his authority, and should have a veil on her head as a token of that subjection; and particularly before the holy angels, who are present in the congregations of the saints.”

For Dr. Lightfoot’s opinion, that by angels we are to understand the paranymphs, or messengers who came on the part of others, to look out for proper spouses for their friends, I must refer to his works, vol. ii. fol., p. 772. The reader has now before him every thing that is likely to cast light on this difficult subject, and he must either adopt what he judges to be best, or else think for himself.

After all, the custom of the Nazarite may cast some light upon this place. As Nazarite means one who has separated himself by vow to some religious austerity, wearing his own hair, etc.; so a married woman was considered a Nazarite for life; i.e. separated from all others, and joined to one husband, who is her lord: and hence the apostle, alluding to this circumstance, says, The woman ought to have power on her head, i.e. wear her hair and veil, for her hair is a proof of her being a Nazarite, and of her subjection to her husband, as the Nazarite was under subjection to the Lord, according to the rule or law of his order. See notes on Numbers 6:5-7.

**Verse 11.** *Neither is the man without the woman*— The apostle seems to say: I do not intimate any disparagement of the female sex, by insisting on the necessity of her being under the power or authority of the man; for they are both equally dependent on each other, in the Lord, *εν κυριω*: but instead of this reading, Theodoret has *εν τω κοσμω*, in the world. Probably the apostle means that the human race is continued by an especial providence of God. Others think that he means that men and women equally make a Christian society, and in it have equal rights and privileges.

**Verse 12. *For as the woman is of the man***— For as the woman was first formed out of the side of man, man has ever since been formed out of the womb of the woman; but they, as all other created things, are of God.

**Verse 13. *Judge in yourselves***— Consider the subject in your own common sense, and then say whether it be decent for a woman to pray in public without a veil on her head? The heathen priestesses prayed or delivered their oracles bare-headed or with dishevelled hair, non comptae mansere comae, as in the case of the Cumaean Sibyl, AEn. vi., ver. 48, and otherwise in great disorder: to be conformed to them would be very disgraceful to Christian women. And in reference to such things as these, the apostle appeals to their sense of honor and decency.

**Verse 14. *Doth not-nature-teach you, that, if a man have long hair***— Nature certainly teaches us, by bestowing it, that it is proper for women to have long hair; and it is not so with men. The hair of the male rarely grows like that of a female, unless art is used, and even then it bears but a scanty proportion to the former. Hence it is truly womanish to have long hair, and it is a shame to the man who affects it. In ancient times the people of Achaia, the province in which Corinth stood, and the Greeks in general, were noted for their long hair; and hence called by Homer, in a great variety of places, *καρηκομοωντες αχαιοι*, the long-haired Greeks, or Achaeans. Soldiers, in different countries, have been distinguished for their long hair; but whether this can be said to their praise or blame, or whether Homer uses it always as a term of respect, when he applies it to the Greeks, I shall not wait here to inquire. Long hair was certainly not in repute among the Jews. The Nazarites let their hair grow, but it was as a token of humiliation; and it is possible that St. Paul had this in view. There were consequently two reasons why the apostle should condemn this practice:—1. Because it was a sign of humiliation; 2. Because it was womanish. After all it is possible that St. Paul may refer to dressed, frizzled and curled hair, which shallow and effeminate men might have affected in that time, as they do in this. Perhaps there is not a sight more ridiculous in the eye of common sense than a high-dressed, curled, cued, and powdered head, with which the operator must have taken considerable pains, and the silly patient lost much time and comfort in submitting to what all but senseless custom must call an indignity and degradation. Hear

nature, common sense, and reason, and they will inform you, that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him.

**Verse 15. *But if a woman have long hair***— The Author of their being has given a larger proportion of hair to the head of women than to that of men; and to them it is an especial ornament, and may in various cases serve as a veil.

It is a certain fact that a man's long hair renders him contemptible, and a woman's long hair renders her more amiable. Nature and the apostle speak the same language; we may account for it as we please.

**Verse 16. *But if any man seem to be contentious***— **εἰ δε τις δοκει φιλονεικος ειναι**. If any person sets himself up as a wrangler-puts himself forward as a defender of such points, that a woman may pray or teach with her head uncovered, and that a man may, without reproach, have long hair; let him know that we have no such custom as either, nor are they sanctioned by any of the Churches of God, whether among the Jews or the Gentiles. We have already seen that the verb **δοκειν**, which we translate to seem, generally strengthens and increases the sense. From the attention that the apostle has paid to the subject of veils and hair, it is evident that it must have occasioned considerable disturbance in the Church of Corinth. They have produced evil effects in much later times.

**Verse 17. *Now in this-I praise you not***— In the beginning of this epistle the apostle did praise them for their attention in general to the rules he had laid down, see 1 Corinthians 11:2; but here he is obliged to condemn certain irregularities which had crept in among them, particularly relative to the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Through some false teaching which they had received, in the absence of the apostle, they appear to have celebrated it precisely in the same way the Jews did their passover. That, we know, was a regular meal, only accompanied with certain peculiar circumstances and ceremonies: two of these ceremonies were, eating bread, solemnly broken, and drinking a cup of wine called the cup of blessing. Now, it is certain that our Lord has taken these two things, and made them expressive of the crucifixion of his body, and the shedding of his blood, as an atonement for the sins of mankind. The teachers which had crept into the Corinthian Church appear to have perverted the whole of this Divine institution; for the celebration of the Lord's Supper appears

to have been made among them a part of an ordinary meal. The people came together, and it appears brought their provisions with them; some had much, others had less; some ate to excess, others had scarcely enough to suffice nature. One was hungry, and the other was drunken, *μεθυει*, was filled to the full; this is the sense of the word in many places of Scripture. At the conclusion of this irregular meal they appear to have done something in reference to our Lord's institution, but more resembling the Jewish passover. These irregularities, connected with so many indecencies, the apostle reproves; for, instead of being benefited by the Divine ordinance, they were injured; they came together not for the better, but for the worse.

**Verse 18. *There be divisions among you***— They had *σχισματα*, schisms, among them: the old parties were kept up, even in the place where they assembled to eat the Lord's Supper. The Paulians, the Kephites, and the Apollonians, continued to be distinct parties; and ate their meals separately, even in the same house.

**Verse 19. *There must be also heresies***— *αιρεσεις*: Not a common consent of the members of the Church, either in the doctrines of the Gospel, or in the ceremonies of the Christian religion. Their difference in religious opinion led to a difference in their religious practice, and thus the Church of God, that should have been one body, was split into sects and parties. The divisions and the heresies sprung out of each other. I have spoken largely on the word heresy in Acts 5:17, to which place I beg leave to refer the reader.

**Verse 20. *This is not to eat the Lord's Supper***.— They did not come together to eat the Lord's Supper exclusively, which they should have done, and not have made it a part of an ordinary meal.

**Verse 21. *Every one taketh before-his own supper***— They had a grand feast, though the different sects kept in parties by themselves; but all took as ample a supper as they could provide, (each bringing his own provisions with him,) before they took what was called the Lord's Supper. See on 1 Corinthians 11:17.



**Verse 22. *Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in*?**— They should have taken their ordinary meal at home, and have come together in the church to celebrate the Lord's Supper.

***Despise ye the church of God***— Ye render the sacred assembly and the place contemptible by your conduct, and ye show yourselves destitute of that respect which ye owe to the place set apart for Divine worship.

***And shame them that have not*?**— *τοὺς μὴ ἔχοντάς*, Them that are poor; not them who had not victuals at that time, but those who are so poor as to be incapable of furnishing themselves as others had done. See the note on Matthew 13:12.

**Verse 23. *I have received of the Lord***— It is possible that several of the people at Corinth did receive the bread and wine of the eucharist as they did the paschal bread and wine, as a mere commemoration of an event. And as our Lord had by this institution consecrated that bread and wine, not to be the means of commemorating the deliverance from Egypt, and their joy on the account, but their deliverance from sin and death by his passion and cross; therefore the apostle states that he had received from the Lord what he delivered; viz. that the eucharistic bread and wine were to be understood of the accomplishment of that of which the paschal lamb was the type—the body broken for them, the blood shed for them.

***The Lord Jesus-took bread***— See the whole of this account, collated with the parallel passages in the four Gospels, amply explained in my Discourse on the Eucharist, and in the notes on Matthew 26.

**Verse 24. *This do in remembrance of me***.— The papists believe the apostles were not ordained priests before these words. *Si quis dixerit, illis verbis, hoc facite in meam commemorationem, Christum non instituisse apostolos sacerdotes, anathema sit*: “If any one shall say that in these words, ‘This do in remembrance of me,’ Christ did not ordain his apostles priests, let him be accursed.” Conc. Trid. Sess. 22. Conc. 2. And he that does believe such an absurdity, on such a ground, is contemptible.

**Verse 26. *Ye do show the Lord's death***— As in the passover they showed forth the bondage they had been in, and the redemption they had received from it; so in the eucharist they showed forth the sacrificial death of Christ, and the redemption from sin derived from it.

**Verse 27. *Whosoever shall eat-and drink-unworthily***— To put a final end to controversies and perplexities relative to these words and the context, let the reader observe, that to eat and drink the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper unworthily, is to eat and drink as the Corinthians did, who ate it not in reference to Jesus Christ's sacrificial death; but rather in such a way as the Israelites did the passover, which they celebrated in remembrance of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Likewise, these mongrel Christians at Corinth used it as a kind of historical commemoration of the death of Christ; and did not, in the whole institution, discern the Lord's body and blood as a sacrificial offering for sin: and besides, in their celebration of it they acted in a way utterly unbecoming the gravity of a sacred ordinance. Those who acknowledge it as a sacrificial offering, and receive it in remembrance of God's love to them in sending his Son into the world, can neither bring damnation upon themselves by so doing, nor eat nor drink unworthily. See our translation of this verse vindicated at the end of the chapter. {1 Corinthians 11:34}

Shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. If he use it irreverently, if he deny that Christ suffered unjustly, (for of some such persons the apostle must be understood to speak,) then he in effect joins issue with the Jews in their condemnation and crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, and renders himself guilty of the death of our blessed Lord. Some, however, understand the passage thus: is guilty, i.e. eats and drinks unworthily, and brings on himself that punishment mentioned 1 Corinthians 11:30.

**Verse 28. *Let a man examine himself***— Let him try whether he has proper faith in the Lord Jesus; and whether he discerns the Lord's body; and whether he duly considers that the bread and wine point out the crucified body and spilt blood of Christ.

**Verse 29. *Eateth and drinketh damnation***— κριμα, Judgment, punishment; and yet this is not unto damnation, for the judgment or punishment inflicted upon the disorderly and the profane was intended for their emendation; for in 1 Corinthians 11:32, it is said, then we are judged, κρινόμενοι, we are chastened, παιδευμεθα, corrected as a father does his children, that we should not be condemned with the world.

**Verse 30. *For this cause***— That they partook of this sacred ordinance without discerning the Lord's body; many are weak and sickly: it is hard

to say whether these words refer to the consequences of their own intemperance or to some extraordinary disorders inflicted immediately by God himself. That there were disorders of the most reprehensible kind among these people at this sacred supper, the preceding verses sufficiently point out; and after such excesses, many might be weak and sickly among them, and many might sleep, i.e. die; for continual experience shows us that many fall victims to their own intemperance. However, acting as they did in this solemn and awful sacrament, they might have “provoked God to plague them with divers diseases and sundry kinds of death.” Communion service.

**Verse 31. *If we would judge ourselves***— If, having acted improperly, we condemn our conduct and humble ourselves, we shall not be judged, i.e. punished for the sin we have committed.

**Verse 32. *But when we are judged***— See on 1 Corinthians 11:29.

**Verse 33. *When ye come together to eat***— The Lord’s Supper, tarry one for another-do not eat and drink in parties as ye have done heretofore; and do not connect it with any other meal.

**Verse 34. *And if any man hunger***— Let him not come to the house of God to eat an ordinary meal, let him eat at home-take that in his own house which is necessary for the support of his body before he comes to that sacred repast, where he should have the feeding of his soul alone in view.

***That ye come not together unto condemnation***— That ye may avoid the curse that must fall on such worthless communicants as those above mentioned; and that ye may get that especial blessing which every one that discerns the Lord’s body in the eucharist must receive.

***The rest will I set in order***, etc.— All the other matters relative to this business, to which you have referred in your letter, I will regulate when I come to visit you; as, God permitting, I fully design. The apostle did visit them about one year after this, as is generally believed.

I HAVE already been so very particular in this long and difficult chapter, that I have left neither room nor necessity for many supplementary observations. A few remarks are all that is requisite.

1. The apostle inculcates the necessity of order and subjection, especially in the Church. Those who are impatient of rule, are generally those who wish to tyrannize. And those who are loudest in their complaints against authority, whether civil or ecclesiastical, are those who wish to have the power in their own hands, and would infallibly abuse it if they had. They alone who are willing to obey, are capable of rule; and he who can rule well, is as willing to obey as to govern. Let all be submissive and orderly; let the woman know that the man is head and protector; let the man know that Christ is his head and redeemer, and the gift of God's endless mercy for the salvation of a lost world.

2. The apostle insisted on the woman having her head covered in the Church or Christian assembly. If he saw the manner in which Christian women now dress, and appear in the ordinances of religion, what would he think? What would he say? How could he even distinguish the Christian from the infidel? And if they who are in Christ are new creatures, and the persons who ordinarily appear in religious assemblies are really new creatures (as they profess in general to be) in Christ, he might reasonably inquire: If these are new creatures, what must have been their appearance when they were old creatures. Do we dress to be seen? And do we go to the house of God to exhibit ourselves? Wretched is that man or woman who goes to the house of God to be seen by any but God himself.

3. The Lord's Supper may be well termed the feast of charity; how unbecoming this sacred ordinance to be the subject of dispute, party spirit, and division! Those who make it such must answer for it to God. Every man who believes in Christ as his atoning sacrifice should, as frequently as he can, receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And every minister of Christ is bound to administer it to every man who is seeking the salvation of his soul, as well as to all believers. Let no man dare to oppose this ordinance; and let every man receive it according to the institution of Christ.

4. Against the fidelity of our translation of 1 Corinthians 11:27 of this chapter, Whosoever shall eat this bread, AND drink this cup unworthily, several popish writers have made heavy complaints, and accused the Protestants of wilful corruption; as both the Greek and Vulgate texts, instead of **καὶ** and et, AND, have **ἠ** and vel, OR: Whosoever shall eat this

bread, OR drink this cup. As this criticism is made to countenance their unscriptural communion in one kind, it may be well to examine the ground of the complaint. Supposing even this objection to be valid, their cause can gain nothing by it while the 26th and 28th verses stand, both in the Greek text and Vulgate, as they now do: For as often as ye eat this bread, AND drink this cup, etc. Let him eat of that bread, AND drink of that cup. But although  $\eta$ , OR, be the reading of the common printed text,  $\kappa\alpha\iota$  AND, is the reading of the Codex Alexandrinus, and the Codex Claromontanus, two of the best MSS. in the world: as also of the Codex Lincolniensis, 2, and the Codex Petavianus, 3, both MSS. of the first character: it is also the reading of the ancient Syriac, all the Arabic, the Coptic, the margin of the later Syriac, the AETHiopic, different MSS. of the Vulgate, and of one in my own possession; and of Clemens Chromatius, and Cassiodorus. Though the present text of the Vulgate has vel, OR, yet this is a departure from the original editions, which were all professedly taken from the best MSS. In the famous Bible with out date, place, or printer's name, 2 vols. fol., two columns, and forty-five lines in each, supposed by many to be the first Bible ever printed, the text stands thus: Ita que quicunque manducaverit panem, ET biberit calicem, etc.; Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread AND drink this cup, etc.: here is no vel, OR. The Bible printed by Fust, 1462, the first Bible with a date, has the same reading. Did the Protestants corrupt these texts? In the editio princeps of the Greek Testament, printed by the authority of Cardinal Ximenes at Complutum, and published by the authority of Pope Leo X., though  $\eta$ , OR, stands in the Greek text; yet, in the opposite column, which contains the Vulgate, and in the opposite line, ET, and, is found, and not VEL, or; though the Greek text would have authorized the editor to have made this change: but he conscientiously preserved the text of his Vulgate. Did the Protestants corrupt this Catholic text also? Indeed, so little design had any of those who differed from the Romish Church to make any alteration here, that even Wiclif, having a faulty MS. of the Vulgate by him, which read vel instead of et, followed that faulty MS. and translated, And so who ever schal ete the breed or drinke the cup.

That  $\kappa\alpha\iota$ , AND, is the true reading, and not  $\eta$ , or, both MSS. and versions sufficiently prove: also that et, not vels is the proper reading in the Vulgate, those original editions formed by Roman Catholics, and one of

them by the highest authority in the papal Church, fully establish: likewise those MSS., versions, fathers, and original editions, must be allowed to be, not only competent, but also unsuspected and incontrovertible witnesses.

But as this objection to our translation is brought forward to vindicate the withholding the cup from the laity in the Lord's Supper, it may be necessary to show that without the cup there can be no eucharist. With respect to the bread, our Lord had simply said, Take, eat, this is my body; but concerning the cup, he says Drink ye all of this; for as this pointed out the very essence of the institution, viz. the blood of atonement, it was necessary that each should have a particular application of it, therefore he says, Drink ye ALL of THIS. By this we are taught that the cup is essential to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; so that they who deny the cup to the people, sin against God's institution; and they who receive not the cup, are not partakers of the body and blood of Christ. If either could without mortal prejudice be omitted, it might be the bread; but the cup as pointing out the blood poured out, i.e. the life, by which alone the great sacrificial act is performed, and remission of sins procured, is absolutely indispensable. On this ground it is demonstrable, that there is not a popish priest under heaven, who denies the cup to the people, (and they all do this,) that can be said to celebrate the Lord's Supper at all; nor is there one of their votaries that ever received the holy sacrament. All pretension to this is an absolute farce so long as the cup, the emblem of the atoning blood, is denied. How strange is it that the very men who plead so much for the bare, literal meaning of this is my body, in the preceding verse, should deny all meaning to drink ye all of this cup, in this verse! And though Christ has, in the most positive manner, enjoined it, they will not permit one of the laity to taste it! See the whole of this argument, at large, in my Discourse on the Nature and Design of the Eucharist.

## CHAPTER 12.

The apostle proceeds to the question of the Corinthians concerning spiritual gifts, 1. He calls to their remembrance their former state, and how they were brought out of it, 2, 3. Shows that there are diversities of gifts which proceed from the Spirit, 4. Diversities of administrations which proceed from the Lord Jesus, 5. And diversities of operations which proceed from God, 6. What these gifts are, and how they are dispensed, 7-11. Christ is the Head, and the Church his members; and this is pointed out under the similitude of the human body, 12, 13. The relation which the members of the body have to each other; and how necessary their mutual support, 14-26. The members in the Church, or spiritual body, and their respective offices, 27-30. We should earnestly covet the best gifts, 31.

### NOTES ON CHAP. 12.

**Verse 1. *Now concerning spiritual gifts***— This was a subject about which they appear to have written to the apostle, and concerning which there were probably some contentions among them. The words *περι των πνευματικων* may as well be translated concerning spiritual persons, as spiritual gifts; and indeed the former agrees much better with the context.

***I would not have you ignorant.***— I wish you fully to know whence all such gifts come, and for what end they are given, that each person may serve the Church in the capacity in which God has placed him, that there may be no misunderstandings and no schism in the body.

**Verse 2. *Ye were Gentiles***— Previously to your conversion to the Christian faith; ye were heathens, carried away, not guided by reason or truth, but hurried by your passions into a senseless worship, the chief part of which was calculated only to excite and gratify animal propensities.

***Dumb idols***— Though often supplicated, could never return an answer; so that not only the image could not speak, but the god or demon pretended

to be represented by it could not speak: a full proof that an idol was nothing in the world.

**Verse 3. *No man speaking by the Spirit of God***— It was granted on all hands that there could be no religion without Divine inspiration, because God alone, could make his will known to men: hence heathenism pretended to this inspiration; Judaism had it in the law and the prophets; and it was the very essence of the Christian religion. The heathen priests and priestesses pretended to receive, by inspiration from their god, the answers which they gave to their votaries. And as far as the people believed their pretensions, so far they were led by their teaching.

Both Judaism and heathenism were full of expectations of a future teacher and deliverer; and to this person, especially among the Jews, the Spirit in all the prophets gave witness. This was the Anointed One, the Messiah who was manifested in the person of Jesus of Nazareth; and him the Jews rejected, though he proved his Divine mission both by his doctrines and his miracles. But as he did not come as they fancied he would—as a mighty secular conqueror, they not only rejected but blasphemed him; and persons among them professing to be spiritual men, and under the influence of the Spirit of God, did so. But as the Holy Spirit, through all the law and the prophets gave Testimony to the Messiah, and as Jesus proved himself to be the Christ both by his miracles and doctrines, no man under the inspiration of the Divine Spirit could say to him anethema—thou art a deceiver, and a person worthy of death, etc., as the Jews did: therefore the Jews were no longer under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. This appears to be the meaning of the apostle in this place. No man speaking by the Spirit, etc.

***And that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord***— Nor can we demonstrate this person to be the Messiah and the Savior of men, but by the Holy Ghost, enabling us to speak with divers tongues, to work miracles; he attesting the truth of our doctrines to them that hear, by enlightening their minds, changing their hearts, and filling them with the peace and love of God.

**Verse 4. *There are diversities of gifts***— *χαρισμάτων*· Gracious endowments, leading to miraculous results; such as the gift of prophecy,



speaking different tongues, etc. And these all came by the extraordinary influences of the Holy Spirit.

**Verse 5. *Differences of administrations***— **διακονιων**. Various offices in the Church, such as apostle, prophet, and teacher; under which were probably included bishop or presbyter, pastor, deacon, etc.; the qualifications for such offices, as well as the appointments themselves, coming immediately from the one Lord Jesus Christ.

**Verse 6. *Diversities of operations***— **ενεργηματων**. Miraculous influences exerted on others; such as the expulsion of demons, inflicting extraordinary punishments, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, Elymas the sorcerer, etc., the healing of different diseases, raising the dead, etc.: all these proceeded from God the Father, as the fountain of all goodness and power, and the immediate dispenser of every good and perfect gift.

In the three preceding verses we find more than an indirect reference to the doctrine of the sacred Trinity.

GIFTS are attributed to the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 12:4.

ADMINISTRATIONS to the Lord Jesus, 1 Corinthians 12:5.

OPERATIONS to God the Father, 1 Corinthians 12:6.

He who may think this fanciful must account for the very evident distinctions here in some more satisfactory way.

**Verse 7. *The manifestation of the Spirit***— **φανερωσις του πνευματος**. This is variably understood by the fathers; some of them rendering **φανερωσις** by illumination, others demonstration, and others operation. The apostle's meaning seems to be this: Whatever gifts God has bestowed, or in what various ways soever the Spirit of God may have manifested himself, it is all for the common benefit of the Church. God has given no gift to any man for his own private advantage, or exclusive profit. He has it for the benefit of others as well as for his own salvation.

**Verse 8. *Word of wisdom***— In all these places I consider that the proper translation of **λογος** is doctrine, as in many other places of the New Testament. It is very difficult to say what is intended here by the different kinds of gifts mentioned by the apostle: they were probably all

supernatural, and were necessary at that time only for the benefit of the Church. On the 8th, 9th, and 10th verses, much may be seen in Lightfoot, Whitby, Pearce, and others. {1 Corinthians 12:8-10}

By doctrine of wisdom we may understand, as Bp. Pearce and Dr. Whitby observe, the mystery of our redemption, in which the wisdom of God was most eminently conspicuous: see 1 Corinthians 2:7, 10; and which is called the manifold wisdom of God, Ephesians 3:10. Christ, the great teacher of it, is called the wisdom of God, 1 Corinthians 1:24; and in him are said to be contained all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Colossians 2:3. The apostles to whom this doctrine was committed are called σοφοι, wise men; (Matthew 23:34;) and they are said to teach this Gospel according to the wisdom given them, 2 Peter 3:15.

2. By the doctrine of knowledge we may understand either a knowledge of the types, etc., in the Old Testament; or what are termed mysteries; the calling of the Gentiles, the recalling of the Jews, the mystery of iniquity, of the beast, etc., and especially the mystical sense or meaning of the Old Testament, with all its types, rites, ceremonies, etc., etc.

3. By faith, 1 Corinthians 12:9, we are to understand that miraculous faith by which they could remove mountains, 1 Corinthians 13:2; or a peculiar impulse, as Dr. Whitby calls it, that came upon the apostles when any difficult matter was to be performed, which inwardly assured them that God's power would assist them in the performance of it. Others think that justifying faith, received by means of Gospel teaching, is what is intended.

4. Gifts of healing simply refers to the power which at particular times the apostles received from the Holy Spirit to cure diseases; a power which was not always resident in them; for Paul could not cure Timothy, nor remove his own thorn in the flesh; because it was given only on extraordinary occasions, though perhaps more generally than many others.

5. The working of miracles, ενεργηματα δυναμεων, 1 Corinthians 12:10. This seems to refer to the same class as the operations, ενεργηματων, 1 Corinthians 12:6, as the words are the same; and to signify those powers by which they were enabled at particular times to work miraculously on others; ejecting demons, inflicting punishments or judgments, as in the

cases mentioned under 1 Corinthians 12:6. It is a hendyadis for mighty operations.

6. Prophecy. This seems to import two things: 1st, the predicting future events, such as then particularly concerned the state of the Church and the apostles; as the dearth foretold by Agabus, Acts 11:28; and the binding of St. Paul, and delivering him to the Romans, Acts 21:10, etc.; and St. Paul's foretelling his own shipwreck on Malta, Acts 27:25, etc. And 2ndly, as implying the faculty of teaching or expounding the Scriptures, which is also a common acceptation of the word.

7. Discerning of spirits. A gift by which the person so privileged could discern a false miracle from a true one; or a pretender to inspiration from him who was made really partaker of the Holy Ghost. It probably extended also to the discernment of false professors from true ones, as appears in Peter in the case of Ananias and his wife.

8. Divers kinds of tongues. *γενη γλωσσων*, Different languages, which they had never learned, and which God gave them for the immediate instruction of people of different countries who attended their ministry.

9. Interpretation of tongues. It was necessary that while one was speaking the deep things of God in a company where several were present who did not understand, though the majority did, there should be a person who could immediately interpret what was said to that part of the congregation that did not understand the language. This power to interpret was also an immediate gift of God's Spirit, and is classed here among the miracles.

**Verse 11.** *But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit*— All these gifts are miraculously bestowed; they cannot be acquitted by human art or industry, the different languages excepted; but they were given in such a way, and in such circumstances, as sufficiently proved that they also were miraculous gifts.

**Verse 12.** *For as the body is one*— Though the human body have many members, and though it be composed of a great variety of parts, yet it is but one entire system; every part and member being necessary to the integrity or completeness of the whole.

***So also is Christ.***— That is, So is the Church the body of Christ, being composed of the different officers already mentioned, and especially those enumerated, 1 Corinthians 12:28, apostles, prophets, teachers, etc. It cannot be supposed that Christ is composed of many members, etc., and therefore the term Church must be understood, unless we suppose, which is not improbable, that the term *ὁ χριστός*, Christ, is used to express the Church, or whole body of Christian believers.

**Verse 13. *For by one Spirit are we all baptized,*** etc.— As the body of man, though composed of many members, is informed and influenced by one soul; so the Church of Christ, which is his body, though composed of many members, is informed and influenced by one Spirit, the Holy Ghost; actuating and working by his spiritual body, as the human soul does in the body of man.

***To drink into one Spirit.***— We are to understand being made partakers of the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost agreeably to the words of our Lord, John 7:37, etc.: If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink: this he spake of the Spirit which they that believed on him should receive.

On this verse there is a great profusion of various readings, which may be found in Griesbach, but cannot be conveniently noticed here.

**Verse 14. *For the body is not one member***— The mystical body, the Church, as well as the natural body, is composed of many members.

**Verse 15. *If the foot shall say,*** etc.— As all the members of the body are necessarily dependent on each other, and minister to the general support of the system, so is it in the Church. All the private members are intimately connected among themselves, and also with their pastors; without which union no Church can subsist.

**Verse 21. *And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee***— The apostle goes on, with his principal object in view, to show that the gifts and graces with which their different teachers were endowed were all necessary for their salvation, and should be collectively used; for not one of them was unnecessary, nor could they dispense with the least of them; the body of Christ needed the whole for its nourishment and support. The famous apologue of Menenius Agrippa, related by Livy, will serve to illustrate the apostle's reasoning: the Roman people, getting into a

state of insurrection and rebellion against the nobility, under pretext that the great men not only had all the honors but all the emoluments of the nation, while they were obliged to bear all the burdens, and suffer all the privations; they then in riotous assemblage left their homes and went to Mount Aventine. Matters were at last brought to such an issue, that the senators and great men were obliged to fly from the city, and the public peace was on the point of being utterly ruined: it was then thought expedient to send Menenius Agrippa to them, who was high in their esteem, having vanquished the Sabines and Samnites, and had the first triumph at Rome. This great general, who was as eloquent as he was valiant, went to the Mons Sacer, to which the insurgents had retired, and thus addressed them: *Tempore, quo in homine non, ut nunc emnia in unum consentiebant, sed singulis membris suum cuique consilium, suus sermo fuerat, indignatas reliquas partes, sua cura, suo labore ac ministerio ventri omnia quaeri; ventrem, in medio quietum, nihil aliud, quam datis voluptatibus frui. Conspirasse inde, ne manus ad os cibum ferrent, nec os acciperet datum, nec dentes conficerent. Hac ira, dum ventrem fame domare vellent, ipsa una membra totumque corpus ad extremam tabem venisse. Inde apparuisse, ventris quoque haud segne ministerium esse: nec magis ali, quam alere eum, reddentem in omnes corporis partes hunc, quo vivimus vigemusque, divisum pariter in venas maturum, confecto cibo, sanguinem.* T. Livii, *Histor. lib. ii. cap. 32.* “In that time in which the different parts of the human body were not in a state of unity as they now are, but each member had its separate office and distinct language, they all became discontented, because whatever was procured by their care, labor, and industry, was spent on the belly; while this, lying at ease in the midst of the body, did nothing but enjoy whatever was provided for it. They therefore conspired among themselves, and agreed that the hands should not convey food to the mouth, that the mouth should not receive what was offered to it, and that the teeth should not masticate whatever was brought to the mouth. Acting on this principle of revenge, and hoping to reduce the belly by famine, all the members, and the whole body itself, were at length brought into the last stage of a consumption. It then plainly appeared that the belly itself did no small service; that it contributed not less to their nourishment than they did to its support, distributing to every part that from which they derived life and vigor; for by properly

concocting the food, the pure blood derived from it was conveyed by the arteries to every member.”

This sensible comparison produced the desired effect; the people were persuaded that the senators were as necessary to their existence as they were to that of the senators, and that it required the strictest union and mutual support of high and low to preserve the body politic. This transaction took place about 500 years before the Christian era, and was handed down by unbroken tradition to the time of Titus Livius, from whom I have taken it, who died in the year of our Lord 17, about forty years before St. Paul wrote this epistle. As his works were well known and universally read among the Romans in the time of the apostle, it is very probable that St. Paul had this famous apologue in view when he wrote from the 14th verse to the end of the chapter. {1 Corinthians 12:14-31 }

**Verse 22. *Those members-which seem to be more feeble***— These, and the less honorable and uncomely, mentioned in the next verses, seem to mean the principal viscera, such as the heart, lungs, stomach, and intestinal canal. These, when compared with the arms and limbs, are comparatively weak; and some of them, considered in themselves, uncomely and less honorable; yet these are more essential to life than any of the others. A man may lose an eye by accident, and an arm or a leg may be amputated, and yet the body live and be vigorous; but let the stomach, heart, lungs, or any of the viscera be removed, and life becomes necessarily extinct. Hence these parts are not only covered, but the parts in which they are lodged are surrounded, ornamented, and fortified for their preservation and defense, on the proper performance of whose functions life so immediately depends.

**Verse 24. *For our comely parts have no need***— It would be easy to go into great detail in giving an anatomical description of the different members and parts to which the apostle refers, but it would not probably answer the end of general edification; and to explain every allusion made by the apostle, would require a minuteness of description which would not be tolerated except in a treatise on the anatomy of the human body. My readers will therefore excuse my entering into this detail.

**Verse 25. *That there should be no schism in the body***— That there should be no unnecessary and independent part in the whole human machine, and that every part should contribute something to the general proportion, symmetry, and beauty of the body. So completely has God tempered the whole together, that not the smallest visible part can be removed from the body without not only injuring its proportions, but producing deformity. Hence the members have the same care one for another. The eyes and ears watch for the general safety of the whole; and they are placed in the head, like sentinels in a tower, that they may perceive the first approach of a foe, and give warning. The hands immediately on an attack exert themselves to defend the head and the body; and the limbs are swift to carry off the body from dangers against which resistance would be vain. Even the heart takes alarm from both the eyes and the ears; and when an attack is made on the body, every external muscle becomes inflated and contracts itself, that, by thus collecting and concentrating its force, it may the more effectually resist the assailants, and contribute to the defense of the system.

**Verse 26. *And whether one member suffer***— As there is a mutual exertion for the general defense, so there is a mutual sympathy. If the eye, the hand, the foot, etc., be injured, the whole man grieves; and if by clothing, or any thing else, any particular member or part is adorned, strengthened, or better secured, it gives a general pleasure to the whole man.

**Verse 27. *Now ye are the body of Christ***— The apostle, having finished his apologue, comes to his application.

As the members in the human body, so the different members of the mystical body of Christ. All are intended by him to have the same relation to each other; to be mutually subservient to each other; to mourn for and rejoice with each other. He has also made each necessary to the beauty, proportion, strength, and perfection of the whole. Not one is useless; not one unnecessary. Paul, Apollos, Kephass, etc., with all their variety of gifts and graces, are for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, Ephesians 4:12. Hence no teacher should be exalted above or opposed to another. As the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee, so luminous Apollos cannot say to laborious Paul, I can build up and preserve the Church without thee. The

foot planted on the ground to support the whole fabric, and the hands that swing at liberty, and the eye that is continually taking in near and distant prospects, are all equally serviceable to the whole, and mutually helpful to and dependent on each other. So also are the different ministers and members of the Church of Christ.

From a general acquaintance with various ministers of Christ, and a knowledge of their different talents and endowments manifested either by their preaching or writings, and with the aid of a little fancy, we could here make out a sort of correspondency between their services and the uses of the different members of the human body. We could call one eye, because of his acute observation of men and things, and penetration into cases of conscience and Divine mysteries. Another hand, from his laborious exertions in the Church. Another foot, from his industrious travels to spread abroad the knowledge of Christ crucified: and so of others. But this does not appear to be any part of the apostle's plan.

**Verse 28. *God hath set some in the Church***— As God has made evident distinctions among the members of the human body, so that some occupy a more eminent place than others, so has he in the Church. And to prove this, the apostle numerates the principal offices, and in the order in which they should stand.

***First, apostles***— *αποστολους*, from *απο* from, and *στελλο*, I send; to send from one person to another, and from one place to another. Persons immediately designated by Christ, and sent by him to preach the Gospel to all mankind.

***Secondarily, prophets***— *προφητας*, from *προ*, before, and *φημι*, I speak; a person who, under Divine inspiration, predicts future events; but the word is often applied to these who preach the Gospel. See on 1 Corinthians 12:8.

***Thirdly, teachers***— *διδασκαλους*, from *διδασκω*, I teach; persons whose chief business it was to instruct the people in the elements of the Christian religion, and their duty to each other. See on Romans 8:8.

***Miracles***— *δυναμεις*. Persons endued with miraculous gifts, such as those mentioned Mark 16:17, 18; casting out devils, speaking with new



tongues, etc. See on 1 Corinthians 12:8, and at the end of the chapter. {1 Corinthians 12:31}

**Gifts of healings**— *χαρισματα ιαματων*. Such as laying hands upon the sick, and healing them, Mark 16:18; which, as being one of the most beneficent miraculous powers, was most frequently conceded. See on 1 Corinthians 12:8.

**Helps**— *αντιληψεις*. Dr. Lightfoot conjectures that these were the apostles' helpers; persons who accompanied them, baptized those who were converted by them, and were sent by them to such places as they could not attend to, being otherwise employed.

The Levites are termed by the Talmudists helps of the priests. The word occurs Luke 1:54; Romans 8:26.

**Governments**— *κυβερνησεις*. Dr. Lightfoot contends that this word does not refer to the power of ruling, but to the case of a person endued with a deep and comprehensive mind, who is profoundly wise and prudent; and he thinks that it implies the same as discernment of spirits, 1 Corinthians 12:8, where see the note. He has given several proofs of this use of the word in the Septuagint.

**Diversities of tongues.**— *γενη γλωσσων*. Kinds of tongues; that is, different kinds. The power to speak, on all necessary occasions, languages which they had not learned. See on 1 Corinthians 12:8.

**Verse 29. *Are all apostles***, etc.— That is: All are not apostles, all are not prophets, etc.; God has distributed his various gifts among various persons, each of whom is necessary for the complete edification of the body of Christ. On these subjects see the notes on 1 Corinthians 12:7-10.

**Verse 31. *But covet earnestly***— To covet signifies to desire earnestly. This disposition towards heavenly things is highly laudable; towards earthly things, is deeply criminal. A man may possess the best of all these gifts, and yet be deficient in what is essentially necessary to his salvation, for he may be without that love or charity which the apostle here calls the more excellent way, and which he proceeds in the next chapter to describe.

Some think that this verse should be read affirmatively, Ye earnestly contend about the best gifts; but I show unto you a more excellent way;

i.e. get your hearts filled with love to God and man-love, which is the principle of obedience, which works no ill to its neighbor, and which is the fulfilling of the law. This is a likely reading, for there were certainly more contentions in the Church of Corinth about the gifts than about the graces of the Spirit.

1. AFTER all that has been said on the different offices mentioned by the apostle in the preceding chapter, there are some of them which perhaps are not understood. I confess I scarcely know what to make of those which we translate helps and governments. Bishop Pearce, who could neither see Church government nor state government in these words, expresses himself thus: "These two words, after all that the commentators say about them, I do not understand; and in no other part of the New Testament is either of them, in any sense, mentioned as the gift of the Spirit; especially it is observable that in 1 Corinthians 12:29, 30, where the gifts of the Spirit are again enumerated, no notice is taken of any thing like them, while all the other several parts are exactly enumerated. Perhaps these words were put in the margin to explain *δυναμεις*, miracles or powers; some taking the meaning to be helps, assistances, as in 2 Corinthians 12:9; others to be *κυβερνησεις*, governments, as in Romans 8:38; and from being marginal explanations, they might have been at last incorporated with the text." It must, however, be acknowledged that the omission of these words is not countenanced by any MS. or version. One thing we may fully know, that there are some men who are peculiarly qualified for governing by either providence or grace; and that there are others who can neither govern nor direct, but are good helpers. These characters I have often seen in different places in the Church of God.

2. In three several places in this chapter the apostle sums up the gifts of the Spirit. Dr. Lightfoot thinks they answer to each other in the following order, which the reader will take on his authority.

Verses 8, 9, and 10.

Is given  
The word of Wisdom;  
The word of Knowledge.

Ver. 9.

Faith;  
 Gifts of Healing.

Ver. 10.

Working of Miracles;  
 Prophecy;  
 Discerning of Spirits;  
 Divers kinds of Tongues;  
 Interpretation of Tongues.

Verse 28.

God hath set some  
 First, APOSTLES;  
 Secondly, PROPHETS;  
 Thirdly, TEACHERS;  
 After that, MIRACLES;  
 The GIFTS of HEALINGS;  
 HELPS;  
 GOVERNMENTS;  
 Divers kinds of TONGUES.

Verses 29, and 30.

Are all  
 Apostles;  
 Prophets;  
 Teachers;  
 Miracles;

Ver. 30.

Gifts of Healing.  
 Speak with Tongues;  
 Interpret.

If the reader think that this is the best way of explaining these different gifts and offices, he will adopt it; and he will in that case consider, 1. That the word or doctrine of wisdom comes from the apostles. 2. The doctrine of knowledge, from the prophets. 3. Faith, by means of the teachers. 4. That working of miracles includes the gifts of healing. 5. That to

prophecy, signifying preaching, which it frequently does, helps is a parallel. 6. That discernment of spirits is the same with governments, which Dr. Lightfoot supposes to imply a deeply comprehensive, wise, and prudent mind. 7. As to the gift of tongues, there is no variation in either of the three places.

3. It is strange that in this enumeration only three distinct officers in the Church should be mentioned; viz. apostles, prophets, and teachers. We do not know that miracles, gifts of healing, helps, governments, and diversity of tongues, were exclusive offices; for it is probable that apostles, prophets, and teachers wrought miracles occasionally, and spoke with divers tongues. However, in all this enumeration, where the apostle gives us all the officers and gifts necessary for the constitution of a Church, we find not one word of bishops, presbyters, or deacons; much less of the various officers and offices which the Christian Church at present exhibits. Perhaps the bishops are included under the apostles, the presbyters under the prophets, and the deacons under the teachers. As to the other ecclesiastical officers with which the Romish Church teems, they may seek them who are determined to find them, any where out of the New Testament.

4. Mr. Quesnel observes on these passages that there are three sorts of gifts necessary to the forming Christ's mystical body. Gifts of power, for the working of miracles, in reference to the Father. 2. Gifts of labor and ministry, for the exercise of government and other offices, with respect to the Son. 3. Gifts of knowledge, for the instruction of the people, with relation to the Holy Ghost.

The FATHER is the principle and end of all created power; let us then ultimately refer all things to him.

The SON is the Institutor and Head of all the hierarchical ministries; let us depend upon him.

The HOLY GHOST is the fountain and fullness of all spiritual graces; let us desire and use them only in and by him.

There is nothing good, nothing profitable to salvation, unless it be done in the power of God communicated by Christ Jesus, and in that holiness of heart which is produced by his SPIRIT. Pastors are only the instruments of

God, the depositaries of the authority of Christ, and the channels by whom the love and graces of the Spirit are conveyed. Let these act as receiving all from God by Christ, through the Holy Ghost; and let the Church receive them as the ambassadors of the Almighty.

## CHAPTER 13.

*Charity, or love to God and man, the sum and substance of all true religion; so that without it, the most splendid eloquence, the gift of prophecy, the most profound knowledge, faith by which the most stupendous miracles might be wrought, benevolence the most unbounded, and zeal for the truth, even to martyrdom, would all be unavailing to salvation, 1-3. The description and praise of this grace, 4-7. Its durableness; though tongues, prophecies, and knowledge shall cease, yet this shall never fail, 8-10. Description of the present imperfect state of man, 11, 12. Of all the graces of God in man, charity, or love, is the greatest, 13.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 13.

**Verse 1.** *Though I speak*, etc.— At the conclusion of the preceding chapter the apostle promised to show the Corinthians a more excellent way than that in which they were now proceeding. They were so distracted with contentions, divided by parties, and envious of each other's gifts, that unity was nearly destroyed. This was a full proof that love to God and man was wanting; and that without this, their numerous gifts and other graces were nothing in the eyes of God; for it was evident that they did not love one another, which is a proof that they did not love God; and consequently, that they had not true religion. Having, by his advices and directions, corrected many abuses, and having shown them how in outward things they should walk so as to please God, he now shows them the spirit, temper, and disposition in which this should be done, and without which all the rest must be ineffectual.

Before I proceed to the consideration of the different parts of this chapter, it may be necessary to examine whether the word [αγαπη](#) be best translated by charity or love. Wiclif, translating from the Vulgate, has the word charity; and him our authorized version follows. But Coverdale, Matthews, Cranmer, and the Geneva Bible, have love; which is adopted by recent translators and commentators in general; among whom the chief

are Dodd, Pearce, Purver, Wakefield, and Wesley; all these strenuously contend that the word charity, which is now confined to almsgiving, is utterly improper; and that the word love, alone expresses the apostle's sense. As the word charity seems now to express little else than almsgiving, which, performed even to the uttermost of a man's power, is nothing if he lack what the apostle terms **αγαπη**, and which we here translate charity; it is best to omit the use of a word in this place which, taken in its ordinary signification, makes the apostle contradict himself; see 1 Corinthians 13:3: Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. That is: "Though I have the utmost charity, and act in every respect according to its dictates, yet, if I have not charity, my utmost charity is unprofitable." Therefore, to shun this contradiction, and the probable misapplication of the term, LOVE had better be substituted for CHARITY!

The word **αγαπη**, love, I have already considered at large in the note on Matthew 22:37; and to that place I beg leave to refer the reader for its derivation and import. Our English word love we have from the Teutonic *leben* to live, because love is the means, dispenser, and preserver of life; and without it life would have nothing desirable, nor indeed any thing even supportable: or it may be taken immediately from the Anglo-Saxon (Anglo-Saxon) and (Anglo-Saxon) love, from (Anglo-Saxon) and (Anglo-Saxon), to desire, to love, to favor. It would be ridiculous to look to the Greek verb **φιλειν** for its derivation.

Having said so much about the word love, we should say something of the word charity, which is supposed to be improper in this place. Charity comes to us immediately from the French *charite*, who borrowed it from the Latin *charitas*, which is probably borrowed from the Greek **χαρις**, signifying grace or favor, or **χαρα**, joy, as a benefit bestowed is a favor that inspires him who receives it with joy; and so far contributes to his happiness. The proper meaning of the word *CHARUS*, is dear, costly; and *CRARITAS*, is dearth, scarcity, a high price, or dearness. Hence, as in times of dearth or scarcity, many, especially the poor, must be in want, and the benevolent will be excited to relieve them; the term which expressed the cause of this want was applied to the disposition which was excited in behalf of the sufferer. Now, as he who relieves a person in distress, and preserves his life by communicating a portion of his property to him, will

feel a sort of interest in the person thus preserved; Hence he is said to be dear to him: i.e. he has cost him something; and he values him in proportion to the trouble or expense he has cost him. Thus charity properly expresses that affectionate attachment we may feel to a person whose wants we have been enabled to relieve; but originally it signified that want of the necessaries of life which produced dearth or dearness of those necessaries; and brought the poor man into that state in which he stood so much in need of the active benevolence of his richer neighbor. If the word be applied to God's benevolence towards man, it comes in with all propriety and force: we are dear to God, for we have not been purchased with silver or gold, but with the precious (τιμιω αϊματι, costly) blood of Christ, who so loved us as to give his life a ransom for ours.

As Christians in general acknowledge that this chapter is the most important in the whole New Testament, I shall give here the first translation of it into the English language which is known to exist, extracted from an ancient and noble MS. in my own possession, which seems to exhibit both a text and language, if not prior to the time of Wiclif, yet certainly not posterior to his days. The reader will please to observe that there are no divisions of verses in the MS.

The XIII. Chapter of I. Corinthians, from an ancient MS.

Gyf I speke with tungis of men and aungels sotheli I have not charitee: I am maad as brasse sounynge, or a symbale tynking. And gif I schal habe prophecie and habe knowen alle mysteries and alle hunynge {or science.} and gif I schal have al feith so that I oder bere hills fro oo place to an other. forsothe gif I schal not have charite: I am nought. And gif I schal deperte al my goodid into metis of pore men. And gif I schal bitake my body so that I brenne forsothe gif I schal not have charite it profitith to me no thing. Charite is pacient {or suffering.} It is benyngne {or of good wille.} Charite envyeth not. It doth not gyle it is not inblowen with pride it is not ambyciousse or coveitouse of wirschippis. It seeketh not the thingis that ben her owne. It is not stirid to wrath it thinkith not yvil. it joyeth not on wickidnesse forsothe it joyeth to gydre to treuthe. It suffreth all thingis. it bileeveth alle thingis. it hopith alle thingis it susteeneth alle things. Charite fallith not down. Whether prophecies schuln be bolde eyther langagis



schuln ceese: eyther science schul be destruyed. Forsothe of the party we ban knowen: and of partye prophecien. Forsothe whenne that schal cum to that is perfit: that thing that is of partye schal be avoydid. Whenne I was a litil chiilde: I spake as a litil chiilde. I understode as a litil chiilde: I thoughte as a litil chiild. Forsothe whenne I was a maad a mam: I avoydid tho thingis that weren of a litil chiild. Forsothe we seen now bi a moror in dercness: thanne forsothe face to face. Nowe I know of partye: thanne forsothe I schal know and as I am knowen. Nowe forsothe dwellen feith hoope charite. These three: forsothe the more of hem is charite.

This is the whole of the chapter as it exists in the MS., with all its peculiar orthography, points, and lines. The words with lines under {here enclosed in braces} may be considered the translator's marginal readings; for, though incorporated with the text, they are distinguished from it by those lines.

I had thought once of giving a literal translation of the whole chapter from all the ancient versions. This would be both curious and useful; but the reader might think it would take up too much of his time, and the writer has none to spare.

*The tongues of men*— All human languages, with all the eloquence of the most accomplished orator.

*And of angels*— i.e. Though a man knew the language of the eternal world so well that he could hold conversation with its inhabitants, and find out the secrets of their kingdom. Or, probably, the apostle refers to a notion that was common among the Jews, that there was a language by which angels might be invoked, adjured, collected, and dispersed; and by the means of which many secrets might be found out, and curious arts and sciences known.

There is much of this kind to be found in their cabalistical books, and in the books of many called Christians. Cornelius Agrippa's occult philosophy abounds in this; and it was the main object of Dr. Dee's actions with spirits to get a complete vocabulary of this language. See what has been published of his work by Dr. Casaubon; and the remaining manuscript parts in the Sloane library, in the British museum.

In Bava Bathra, fol. 134, mention is made of a famous rabbin, Jochanan ben Zaccai, who understood the language of devils, trees, and angels.

Some think that the apostle means only the most splendid eloquence; as we sometimes apply the word angelic to signify any thing sublime, grand, beautiful, etc.; but it is more likely that he speaks here after the manner of his countrymen, who imagined that there was an angelic language which was the key to many mysteries; a language which might be acquired, and which, they say, had been learned by several.

**Sounding brass**— *χαλκος ηχων*. That is, like a trumpet made of brass; for although; *χαλκος* signifies brass, and *aes* signifies the same, yet we know the latter is often employed to signify the trumpet, because generally made of this metal. Thus Virgil, when he represents Misenus endeavoring to fright away the harpies with the sound of his trumpet:—

*Ergo, ubi delapsae sonitum per curva dedere  
Littora, dat signum specula Misenus ab alta  
Aere cavo: invadunt socii, et nova praelia tentant,  
Obscoenas pelagi ferro faedare volucres.  
AENEID, lib. iii. ver. 238.*

*Then as the harpies from the hills once more  
Poured shrieking down, and crowded round the shore,  
On his high stand Misenus sounds from far  
The brazen trump, the signal of the war.  
With unaccustomed fight, we flew to slay  
The forms obscene, dread monsters of the sea. — Pitt.*

The metal of which the instrument was made is used again for the instrument itself, in that fine passage of the same poet, AENEID, lib. ix. ver. 603, where he represents the Trojans rushing to battle against the Volscians:—

*At tuba terribilem sonitum procul aere canoro  
Increpuit: sequitur clamor, caelumque remugit.*

*And now the trumpets, terrible from far,  
With rattling clangour rouse the sleepy war.  
The soldiers' shouts succeed the brazen sounds  
And heaven from pole to pole their noise rebounds.  
Dryden.*

And again, in his Battle of the Bees, Geor., lib. iv. ver. 70:—

— *namque morantes*

*Martius ille aeris rauci canor increpat, et vox  
Auditur fractos sonitus imitata tubarum.*

*With shouts the cowards' courage they excite,  
And martial clangours call them out to fight;  
With hoarse alarms the hollow camp rebounds,  
That imitate the trumpet's angry sounds.*

DRYDEN.

Examples of the same figure might be multiplied; but these are sufficient.

***Tinkling cymbal.***— “The cymbal was a concavo-convex plate of brass, the concave side of which being struck against another plate of the same kind produced a tinkling, inharmonious sound.” We may understand the apostle thus: “Though I possessed the knowledge of all languages, and could deliver even the truth of God in them in the most eloquent manner, and had not a heart full of love to God and man, producing piety and obedience to the ONE, and benevolence and beneficence to the other, doing unto all as I would wish them to do to me were our situations reversed, my religion is no more to my salvation than the sounds emitted by the brazen trumpet, or the jingling of the cymbals could contribute intellectual pleasure to the instruments which produce them; and, in the sight of God, I am of no more moral worth than those sounds are. I have, it is true, a profession; but, destitute of a heart filled with love to God and man, producing meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, etc., I am without the soul and essence of religion.”

I have quoted several passages from heathens of the most cultivated minds in Greece and Rome to illustrate passages of the sacred writers. I shall now quote one from an illiterate collier of Paulton, in Somerset; and, as I have named Homer, Horace, Virgil, and others, I will quote Josiah Gregory, whose mind might be compared to a diamond of the first water, whose native splendor broke in various places through its incrustations, but whose brilliancy was not brought out for want of the hand of the lapidary. Among various energetic sayings of this great, unlettered man, I remember to have heard the following: “People of little religion are always noisy; he who has not the love of God and man filling his heart is like an empty wagon coming violently down a hill: it makes a great noise, because there is nothing in it.”

**Verse 2. *And though I have the gift of prophecy***— Though I should have received from God the knowledge of future events, so that I could correctly foretell what is coming to pass in the world and in the Church:—

***And understand all mysteries***— The meaning of all the types and figures in the Old Testament, and all the unexplored secrets of nature; and all knowledge—every human art and science; and though I have all faith—such miraculous faith as would enable me even to remove mountains; or had such powerful discernment in sacred things that I could solve the greatest difficulties, see the note on Matthew 21:21, and have not charity—this love to God and man, as the principle and motive of all my conduct, the characteristics of which are given in the following verses; I am nothing—nothing in myself, nothing in the sight of God, nothing in the Church, and good for nothing to mankind. Balaam, and several others not under the influence of this love of God, prophesied; and we daily see many men, who are profound scholars, and well skilled in arts and sciences, and yet not only careless about religion but downright infidels! It does not require the tongue of the inspired to say that these men, in the sight of God, are nothing; nor can their literary or scientific acquisitions give them a passport to glory.

**Verse 3. *And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor***— This is a proof that charity, in our sense of the word, is not what the apostle means; for surely almsgiving can go no farther than to give up all that a man possesses in order to relieve the wants of others. The word ψωμιζω, which we translate to feed the poor, signifies to divide into morsels, and put into the mouth; which implies carefulness and tenderness in applying the bounty thus freely given.

***And though I give my body to be burned***— ἵνα καθησομαι. Mr. Wakefield renders this clause thus: And though I give up my body so as to have cause of boasting: in vindication of which he, first, refers to Daniel 3:28; Acts 15:26; Romans 8:32; Philippians 1:20. He says that there is no such word as καθησομαι. 3. That καυχησομαι, that I may boast, is the reading of the Aethiopic and Coptic, and he might have added of the Codex Alexandrinus; several Greek and Latin MSS. referred to by St. Jerome; of Ephraim; and of St. Jerome himself, who translates the passage thus: Si tradidero corpus meum ut gloriar: i.e. “If I deliver up my body

that I may glory, or have cause of boasting.” 4. He adds that burning, though a common punishment in after times, was not prevalent when this epistle was written.

Some of the foreign critics, particularly Schulzius, translate it thus: *Si traderem corpus, ut mihi stigma inureretur*: “If I should deliver up my body to receive a stigma with a hot iron;” which may mean, If I should, in order to redeem another, willingly give up myself to slavery, and receive the mark of my owner, by having my flesh stamped with a hot iron, and have not love, as before specified, it profits me nothing. This gives a good sense; but will the passage bear it? In the MSS. there are several various readings, which plainly show the original copyists scarcely knew what to make of the word **καυθησωμαι**, which they found in the text generally. The various readings are, **καυθησομαι**, which Griesbach seems to prefer; **καυθησεται**; and **καυθη**; all of which give little variation of meaning. Which should be preferred I can scarcely venture to say. If we take the commonly received word, it states a possible case; a man may be so obstinately wedded to a particular opinion, demonstrably false in itself, as to give up his body to be burned in its defense, as was literally the case with Vanini, who, for his obstinate atheism, was burnt alive at Paris, February 19th, A. D. 1619. In such a cause, his giving his body to be burned certainly profited him nothing.

“We may observe,” says Dr. Lightfoot, “in those instances which are compared with charity, and are as good as nothing if charity be absent, that the apostle mentions those which were of the noblest esteem in the Jewish nation; and also that the most precious things that could be named by them were compared with this more precious, and were of no account in comparison of it.

“1. To speak with the tongues of men, among the Jewish interpreters, means, to speak the languages of the seventy nations. To the praise of Mordecai, they say that he understood all those languages; and they require that the fathers of the Sanhedrin should be skilled in many languages that they may not be obliged to hear any thing by an interpreter. Maim. in Sanh., c. 2.

“2. To speak with the tongues of angels, they thought to be not only an excellent gift, but to be possible; and highly extol Jochanan ben Zaccai because he understood them: see the note on 1 Corinthians 13:1.

“3. To know all mysteries and all knowledge was not only prized but affected by them. Of Hillel, the elder, they say he had eighty disciples: thirty who were worthy to have the Holy Spirit dwell upon them, as it did upon Moses; thirty who were worthy that the sun should stop his course for them, as it did for Joshua; and there were twenty between both. The greatest of all was Jonathan ben Uzziel; the least was Jochanan ben Zaccai. He omitted not (i.e. perfectly understood) the Scripture, the Mishna, the Gemara, the idiotisms of the law, and the scribes, traditions, illustrations, comparisons, equalities, gematries, parables, etc.

“4. The moving or rooting up of mountains, which among them signified the removing of the greatest difficulties, especially from the sacred text, they considered also a high and glorious attainment: see the note on Matthew 21:21. And of his salvation, who had it, they could not have formed the slightest doubt. But the apostle says, a man might have and enjoy all those gifts, etc., and be nothing in himself, and be nothing profited by them.”

The reader will consider that the charity or love, concerning which the apostle speaks, is that which is described from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, inclusive: it is not left to the conjectures of men to find it out. What the apostle means is generally allowed to be true religion; but if he had not described it, this true religion would have been as various as the parties are who suppose they have it. Let the reader also observe that, not only the things which are in the highest repute among the Jews, but the things which are in the highest repute among Christians and Gentiles are those which the apostle shows to be of no use, if the love hereafter described be wanting. And yet, who can suppose that the man already described can be destitute of true religion, as he must be under an especial influence of God; else, how, 1st, could he speak all the languages of men? for this was allowed to be one of the extraordinary gifts of God’s Spirit. 2. He must have Divine teaching to know the language of angels, and thus to get acquainted with the economy of the invisible world. 3. Without immediate influence from God he could not be a prophet, and predict future events.

4. Without this he could not understand all the mysteries of the Divine word, nor those of Providence. 5. All knowledge, suppose this to be confined to human arts and sciences, could not be acquired without especial assistance. 6. And without the most powerful and extraordinary assistance, he could not have a faith that could remove mountains, or miraculous faith of any kind: and the apostle supposes that a man might have all these six things, and not possess that religion which could save his soul! And may we not say that, if all these could not avail for salvation, a thousand times less surely cannot. How blindly, therefore, are multitudes of persons trusting in that which is almost infinitely less than that which the apostle says would profit them nothing!

The charity or love which God recommends, the apostle describes in sixteen particulars, which are the following:—

**Verse 4.** (1.) *Charity suffereth long*— **μακροθυμει**, Has a long mind; to the end of which neither trials, adversities, persecutions, nor provocations, can reach. The love of God, and of our neighbor for God's sake, is patient towards all men: it suffers all the weakness, ignorance, errors, and infirmities of the children of God; and all the malice and wickedness of the children of this world; and all this, not merely for a time, but long, without end; for it is still a mind or disposition, to the end of which trials, difficulties, etc., can never reach. It also waits God's time of accomplishing his gracious or providential purposes, without murmuring or repining; and bears its own infirmities, as well as those of others, with humble submission to the will of God.

(2.) *Is kind*— **χρηστευεται**. It is tender and compassionate in itself, and kind and obliging to others; it is mild, gentle, and benign; and, if called to suffer, inspires the sufferer with the most amiable sweetness, and the most tender affection. It is also submissive to all the dispensations of God; and creates trouble to no one.

(3.) *Charity envieth not*— **ου ζηλοι**. Is not grieved because another possesses a greater portion of earthly, intellectual, or spiritual blessings. Those who have this pure love rejoice as much at the happiness, the honor, and comfort of others, as they can do in their own. They are ever willing that others should be preferred before them.

(4.) *Charity vaunteth not itself*— ου περπερευεται· This word is variously translated; acteth not rashly, insolently; is not inconstant, etc. It is not agreed by learned men whether it be Greek, Latin, or Arabic. Bishop Pearce derived it from the latter language; and translates it, is not inconstant. There is a phrase in our own language that expresses what I think to be the meaning of the original, does not set itself forward—does not desire to be noticed or applauded; but wishes that God may be all in all.

(5.) *Is not puffed up*— ου φυσιουται· Is not inflated with a sense of its own importance; for it knows it has nothing but what it has received; and that it deserves nothing that it has got. Every man, whose heart is full of the love of God, is full of humility; for there is no man so humble as he whose heart is cleansed from all sin. It has been said that indwelling sin humbles us; never was there a greater falsity: PRIDE is the very essence of sin; he who has sin has pride, and pride too in proportion to his sin: this is a mere popish doctrine; and, strange to tell, the doctrine in which their doctrine of merit is founded! They say God leaves concupiscence in the heart of every Christian, that, in striving with and overcoming it from time to time, he may have an accumulation of meritorious acts: Certain Protestants say, it is a true sign of a very gracious state when a man feels and deplores his inbred corruptions. How near do these come to the Papists, whose doctrine they profess to detest and abhor! The truth is, it is no sign of grace whatever; it only argues, as they use it, that the man has got light to show him his corruptions; but he has not yet got grace to destroy them. He is convinced that he should have the mind of Christ, but he feels that he has the mind of Satan; he deplores it, and, if his bad doctrine do not prevent him, he will not rest till he feels the blood of Christ cleansing him from all sin.

True humility arises from a sense of the fullness of God in the soul; abasement from a sense of corruption is a widely different thing; but this has been put in the place of humility, and even called grace; many, very many, verify the saying of the poet:—

*“Proud I am my wants to see;  
Proud of my humility.”*

**Verse 5.** (6.) *Doth not behave itself unseemly*— ουκ ασχημονει, from α, negative, and σχημα, figure, mein; love never acts out of its place or



character; observes due decorum and good manners; is never rude, bearish, or brutish; and is ever willing to become all things to all men, that it may please them for their good to edification. No ill-bred man, or what is termed rude or unmannerly, is a Christian. A man may have a natural bluntness, or be a clown, and yet there be nothing boorish or hoggish in his manner. I must apologize for using such words; they best express the evil against which I wish both powerfully and successfully to declaim. I never wish to meet with those who affect to be called “blunt, honest men;” who feel themselves above all the forms of respect and civility, and care not how many they put to pain, or how many they displease. But let me not be misunderstood; I do not contend for ridiculous ceremonies, and hollow compliments; there is surely a medium: and a sensible Christian man will not be long at a loss to find it out. Even that people who profess to be above all worldly forms, and are generally stiff enough, yet are rarely found to be rude, uncivil, or ill-bred.

(7.) *Seeketh not her own*— ου ζητει τα εαυτης· Is not desirous of her own spiritual welfare only, but of her neighbour’s also: for the writers of the Old and New Testament do, almost every where, agreeably to their Hebrew idiom, express a preference given to one thing before another by an affirmation of that which is preferred, and a negative of that which is contrary to it. See Bishop Pearce, and see the notes on 1 Corinthians 1:17; 10:24, 33. Love is never satisfied but in the welfare, comfort, and salvation of all. That man is no Christian who is solicitous for his own happiness alone; and cares not how the world goes, so that himself be comfortable.

(8.) *Is not easily provoked*— ου παροξυνεται· Is not provoked, is not irritated, is not made sour or bitter. How the word easily got into our translation it is hard to say; but, however it got in, it is utterly improper, and has nothing in the original to countenance it. By the transcript from my old MS., which certainly contains the first translation ever made in English, we find that the word did not exist there, the conscientious translator rendering it thus:-It is not stirid to wrath.

The New Testament, printed in 1547, 4to., the first year of Edward VI., in English and Latin, has simply, is not provoked to anger. The edition published in English in the following year, 1548, has the same rendering, but the orthography better: is not provoked to anger. The Bible in folio,

with notes, published the next year, 1549, by Edmund Becke, preserves nearly the same reading, is not provoketh to anger. The large folio printed by Richard Cardmarden, at Rouen, 1566, has the same reading. The translation made and printed by the command of King James I., fol., 1611, etc. departs from all these, and improperly inserts the word easily, which might have been his majesty's own; and yet this translation was not followed by some subsequent editions; for the 4to. Bible printed at London four years after, 1615, not only retains this original and correct reading, it is not provoked to anger, but has the word love every where in this chapter instead of charity, in which all the preceding versions and editions agree. In short, this is the reading of Coverdale, Matthews, Cranmer, the Geneva, and others; and our own authorized version is the only one which I have seen where this false reading appears.

As to the ancient versions, they all, Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, Aethiopic, Coptic, and Itala, strictly follow the Greek text; and supply no word that tends to abate the signification of the apostle's *ου παροξυνεται*, is not provoked; nor is there a various reading here in all the numerous MSS. It is of importance to make these observations, because the common version of this place destroys the meaning of the apostle, and makes him speak very improperly. If love is provoked at all; it then ceases to be love; and if it be not easily provoked, this grants, as almost all the commentators say, that in special cases it may be provoked; and this they instance in the case of Paul and Barnabas, Acts 15:39; but I have sufficiently vindicated this passage in my note on that place, and given at large the meaning of the word *παροξυνω*; and to that place I beg leave to refer the reader. The apostle's own words in 1 Corinthians 13:7, are a sufficient proof that the love of which he speaks can never be provoked. When the man who possesses this love gives way to provocation, he loses the balance of his soul, and grieves the Spirit of God. In that instant he ceases from loving God with all his soul, mind, and strength; and surely if he get embittered against his neighbor, he does not love him as himself. It is generally said that, though a man may feel himself highly irritated against the sin, he may feel tender concern for the sinner. Irritation of any kind is inconsistent with self-government, and consequently with internal peace and communion with God. However favourably we may think of our own state, and however industrious we may be to find out excuses for sallies of

passion, etc., still the testimony of God is, Love is not provoked; and if I have not such a love, whatever else I may possess, it profiteth me nothing.

(9.) **Thinketh no evil**— *ουλογιζεται το κακον*. “Believes no evil where no evil seems.” Never supposes that a good action may have a bad motive; gives every man credit for his profession of religion, uprightness, godly zeal, etc., while nothing is seen in his conduct or in his spirit inconsistent with this profession. His heart is so governed and influenced by the love of God, that he cannot think of evil but where it appears. The original implies that he does not invent or devise any evil; or, does not reason on any particular act or word so as to infer evil from it; for this would destroy his love to his brother; it would be ruinous to charity and benevolence.

**Verse 6.** (10.) **Rejoiceth not in iniquity**— *ου χαιρει επι τη αδικια*. Rejoiceth not in falsehood, but on the contrary, rejoiceth in the truth: this meaning *αδικια* has in different parts of the Scriptures. At first view, this character of love seems to say but little in its favor; for who can rejoice in unrighteousness or falsity? But is it not a frequent case that persons, who have received any kind of injury, and have forborne to avenge themselves, but perhaps have left it to God; when evil falls upon the sinner do console themselves with what appears to them an evidence that God has avenged their quarrels; and do at least secretly rejoice that the man is suffering for his misdeeds? Is not this, in some sort, rejoicing in iniquity? Again: is it not common for interested persons to rejoice in the successes of an unjust and sanguinary war, in the sackage and burning of cities and towns; and is not the joy always in proportion to the slaughter that has been made of the enemy? And do these call themselves Christians? Then we may expect that Moloch and his sub-devils are not so far behind this description of Christians as to render their case utterly desperate. If such Christians can be saved, demons need not despair!

(11.) **But rejoiceth in the truth**— *αληθεια*. Every thing that is opposite to falsehood and irreligion. Those who are filled with the love of God and man rejoice in the propagation and extension of Divine truth—in the spread of true religion, by which alone peace and good will can be diffused throughout the earth. And because they rejoice in the truth, therefore they

do not persecute nor hinder true religion, but help it forward with all their might and power.

**Verse 7. (12.) *Beareth all things***— *παντα στεγει*. This word is also variously interpreted: to endure, bear, sustain, cover, conceal, contain. Bishop Pearce contends that it should be translated covereth all things, and produces several plausible reasons for this translation; the most forcible of which is, that the common translation confounds it with endureth all things, in the same verse. We well know that it is a grand and distinguishing property of love to cover and conceal the fault of another; and it is certainly better to consider the passage in this light than in that which our common version holds out; and this perfectly agrees with what St. Peter says of charity, 1 Peter 4:8: It shall cover the multitude of sins; but there is not sufficient evidence that the original will fully bear this sense; and perhaps it would be better to take it in the sense of contain, keep in, as a vessel does liquor; thus Plato compared the souls of foolish men to a sieve, and not able, *στεγειν δια απιστιαν τε και ληθην*, to contain any thing through unfaithfulness and forgetfulness. See Parkhurst and Wetstein. Some of the versions have *στεργει*, loveth, or is warmly affectioned to all things or persons. But the true import must be found either in cover or contain. Love conceals every thing that should be concealed; betrays no secret; retains the grace given; and goes on to continual increase. A person under the influence of this love never makes the sins, follies, faults, or imperfections of any man, the subject either of censure or conversation. He covers them as far as he can; and if alone privy to them, he retains the knowledge of them in his own bosom as far as he ought.

(13.) ***Believeth all things***— *παντα πιστευει*. Is ever ready to believe the best of every person, and will credit no evil of any but on the most positive evidence; gladly receives whatever may tend to the advantage of any person whose character may have suffered from obloquy and detraction; or even justly, because of his misconduct.

(14.) ***Hopeth all things***.— *παντα ελπίζει*. When there is no place left for believing good of a person, then love comes in with its hope, where it could not work by its faith; and begins immediately to make allowances and excuses, as far as a good conscience can permit; and farther, anticipates

the repentance of the transgressor, and his restoration to the good opinion of society and his place in the Church of God, from which he had fallen.

(15.) *Endureth all things*.— *παντα υπομενει*. Bears up under all persecutions and mal-treatment from open enemies and professed friends; bears adversities with an even mind, as it submits with perfect resignation to every dispensation of the providence of God; and never says of any trial, affliction, or insult, this cannot be endured.

**Verse 8.** (16.) *Charity never faileth*— *ἡ αγαπη ουδεποτε εκπιπτει*. This love never falleth off, because it bears, believes, hopes, and endures all things; and while it does so it cannot fail; it is the means of preserving all other graces; indeed, properly speaking, it includes them all; and all receive their perfection from it. Love to God and man can never be dispensed with. It is essential to social and religious life; without it no communion can be kept up with God; nor can any man have a preparation for eternal glory whose heart and soul are not deeply imbued with it. Without it there never was true religion, nor ever can be; and it not only is necessary through life, but will exist throughout eternity. What were a state of blessedness if it did not comprehend love to God and human spirits in the most exquisite, refined, and perfect degrees?

*Prophecies-shall fail*— Whether the word imply predicting future events, or teaching the truths of religion to men, all such shall soon be rendered useless. Though the accurate prophet and the eloquent, persuasive preacher be useful in their day, they shall not be always so; nor shall their gifts fit them for glory; nothing short of the love above described can fit a soul for the kingdom of God.

*Tongues-shall cease*— The miraculous gift of different languages, that soon shall cease, as being unnecessary.

*Knowledge-shall vanish away*.— All human arts and sciences, as being utterly useless in the eternal world, though so highly extolled and useful here.

**Verse 9.** *For we know in part*— We have here but little knowledge even of earthly, and much less of heavenly, things. He that knows most knows little in comparison of what is known by angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. And as we know so very little, how deficient must we

be if we have not much love! Angels may wonder at the imperfection of our knowledge; and separate spirits may wonder at the perfection of their own, having obtained so much more in consequence of being separated from the body, than they could conceive to be possible while in that body. When Sir Isaac Newton had made such astonishing discoveries in the laws of nature, far surpassing any thing that had been done by all his predecessors in science from the days of Solomon; one of our poets, considering the scantiness of human knowledge when compared with that which is possessed by the inhabitants of heaven, reduced his meditations on the subject to the following nervous and expressive epigram: —

*Superior beings, when of late they saw  
A mortal man explain all nature's law,  
Admired such wisdom in an earthly shape,  
And show'd our NEWTON as we show an ape.*

These fine lines are a paraphrase from a saying of Plato, from whom our poet borrows without acknowledging the debt. The words are these: *ανθρωπον ο σοφωτατος προς θεον πιθηκος φανειται*. “The wisest of mortals will appear but an ape in the estimation of God.” Vid. Hipp. Maj. vol. xi. p. 21. Edit. Bipont.

*We prophesy in part*— Even the sublimest prophets have been able to say but little of the heavenly state; and the best preachers have left the Spirit of God very much to supply. And had we no more religious knowledge than we can derive from men and books, and had we no farther instruction in the knowledge of God and ourselves than we derive from preaching, our religious experience would be low indeed. Yet it is our duty to acquire all the knowledge we possibly can; and as preaching is the ordinary means by which God is pleased to instruct and convert the soul, we should diligently and thankfully use it. For we have neither reason nor Scripture to suppose that God will give us that immediately from himself which he has promised to convey only by the use of means. Even this his blessing makes effectual; and, after all, his Spirit supplies much that man cannot teach. Every preacher should take care to inculcate this on the hearts of his hearers. When you have learned all you can from your ministers, remember you have much to learn from God; and for this you should diligently wait on him by the reading of his word, and by incessant prayer.

**Verse 10. *But when that which is perfect***— The state of eternal blessedness; then that which is in part—that which is imperfect, shall be done away; the imperfect as well as the probationary state shall cease for ever.

**Verse 11. *When I was a child***— This future state of blessedness is as far beyond the utmost perfection that can be attained in this world, as our adult state of Christianity is above our state of natural infancy, in which we understand only as children understand; speak only a few broken articulate words, and reason only as children reason; having few ideas, little knowledge but what may be called mere instinct, and that much less perfect than the instinct of the brute creation; and having no experience. But when we became men-adults, having gained much knowledge of men and things, we spoke and reasoned more correctly, having left off all the manners and habits of our childhood.

**Verse 12. *Now we see through a glass, darkly***— δι' εσοπτρου εν αινιγματι. Of these words some literal explanation is necessary. The word εσοπτρον which we translate a glass, literally signifies a mirror or reflector, from εις, into, and οπτομαι, I look; and among the ancients mirrors were certainly made of fine polished metal. The word here may signify any thing by which the image of a person is reflected, as in our looking, or look in glass. The word is not used for a glass to look through; nor would such an image have suited with the apostle's design.

The εσοπτρον or mirror, is mentioned by some of the most ancient Greek writers; so Anacreon, Ode xi. ver. 1:—

λεγουσιν αι γυναικες,  
ανακρεων, γερων ει·  
λαβων εσοπτρον αθρει  
κομας μεν ουκετ' ουσας.

*The women tell me,  
Anacreon, thou art grown old;  
Take thy mirror, and view  
How few of thy hairs remain.*

And again, in Ode xx. ver. 5:—

εγο δ' εσοπτρον ειην,  
 ὅπως αει βλεπης με.

*I wish I were a mirror  
 That thou mightst always look into me.*

In Exodus 38:8, we meet with the term looking glasses; but the original is מַרְאֵת maroth, and should be translated mirrors; as out of those very articles, which we absurdly translate looking GLASSES, the brazen laver was made!

In the Greek version the word εσοπτρον is not found but twice, and that in the apocryphal books.

In the book of the Wisdom of Solomon, chap. 7:26, speaking of wisdom the author says: “She is the brightness of the everlasting light, και εσοπτρον ακηλιδωτον, and the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness.”

In Ecclus. xii. 11, exhorting to put no trust in an enemy, he says: “Though he humble himself, and go crouching, yet take good heed and beware of him, and thou shalt be unto him, ως εκμεμαχος εσοπτρον, as if thou hadst wiped a looking glass, (mirror,) and thou shalt know that his rust hath not altogether been wiped away.” All these passages must be understood of polished metal, not of glass, which, though it existed among the Romans and others, yet was brought to very little perfection; and as to grinding and silvering of glass, they are modern inventions.

Some have thought that the apostle refers to something of the telescopic kind, by which distant and small objects become visible, although their surfaces become dim in proportion to the quantum of the magnifying power; but this is too refined; he appears simply to refer to a mirror by which images were rejected, and not to any diaphanous and magnifying powers, through which objects were perceived.

Possibly the true meaning of the words δι' εσοπτρου εν αινιγματι, through a glass darkly, may be found among the Jewish writers, who use a similar term to express nearly the same thing to which the apostle refers. A revelation of the will of God, in clear and express terms, is called by them אִסְפֵּקְלָרִיא מְאִירָה aspecularia maira, a clear or lucid glass, or



specular in reference, specularibus lapidibus, to the diaphanous polished stones, used by the ancients for windows instead of glass. An obscure prophecy they termed **אספקלריא דלא נהריא** *aspecularia dela naharia*, “a specular which is not clear.”

Numbers 12:6: If there be a prophet-I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and I will speak unto him in a dream; Rab. Tanchum thus explains: “My Shechinah shall not be revealed to him, **מאירה באספקלריא** *beaspecularia maira*, in a lucid specular, but only in a dream and a vision.”

On Ezekiel 1:4, 5: And I looked, and behold a whirlwind-a great cloud, and a fire unfolding itself, etc.; Sohar Chadash, fol. 33, says: “This is a vision **אספקלריא דלא נהרא** *beaspecularia dela nahara*, by an obscure or dark specular.”

From a great variety of examples produced by Schoettgen it appears that the rabbins make a great deal of difference between seeing through the lucid glass or specular, and seeing through the obscure one. The first is attributed only to Moses, who conversed with God face to face, i.e. through the lucid specular; and between the other prophets, who saw him in dreams and visions, i.e. through the obscure specular. In these distinctions and sayings of the ancient Jews we must seek for that to which the apostle alludes. See Schoettgen.

The word **αὐινυγματι**, which we render darkly, will help us to the true meaning of the place. The following is Mr. Parkhurst’s definition of the term and of the thing: “**αὐινυγμα**, from **ηινυγμα**, the perfect passive of **ισουζτω**, to hint, intimate, signify with some degree of obscurity; an enigma, in which one thing answers or stands in correspondence to, or as the representative of, another, which is in some respects similar to it; occurs 1 Corinthians 13:12: Now-in this life, we see by means of a mirror reflecting the images of heavenly and spiritual things, **εν αὐινυγματι**, in an enigmatical manner, invisible things being represented by visible, spiritual by natural, eternal by temporal; but then-in the eternal world, face to face,

***Now I know in part***— Though I have an immediate revelation from God concerning his great design in the dispensation of the Gospel, yet there are lengths, breadths, depths, and heights of this design, which even that revelation has not discovered; nor can they be known and apprehended in the present imperfect state. Eternity alone can unfold the whole scheme of the Gospel.

***As-I am known***.— In the same manner in which disembodied spirits know and understand.

**Verse 13. *And now [in this present life] abideth faith, hope, charity***—

These three supply the place of that direct vision which no human embodied spirit can have; these abide or remain for the present state. Faith, by which we apprehend spiritual blessings, and walk with God. Hope, by which we view and expect eternal blessedness, and pass through things temporal so as not to lose those which are eternal. Charity or love, by which we show forth the virtues of the grace which we receive by faith in living a life of obedience to God, and of good will and usefulness to man.

***But the greatest of these is charity***.— Without faith it is impossible to please God; and without it, we can not partake of the grace of our Lord Jesus: without hope we could not endure, as seeing him who is invisible; nor have any adequate notion of the eternal world; nor bear up under the afflictions and difficulties of life: but great and useful and indispensably necessary as these are, yet charity or love is greater: LOVE is the fulfilling of the law; but this is never said of faith or hope.

It may be necessary to enter more particularly into a consideration of the conclusion of this very important chapter.

1. Love is properly the image of God in the soul; for God is LOVE. By faith we receive from our Maker; by hope we expect a future and eternal good; but by love we resemble God; and by it alone are we qualified to enjoy heaven, and be one with him throughout eternity. Faith, says one, is the foundation of the Christian life, and of good works; hope rears the superstructure; but love finishes, completes, and crowns it in a blessed eternity. Faith and hope respect ourselves alone; love takes in both GOD and MAN. Faith helps, and hope sustains us; but love to God and man

makes us obedient and useful. This one consideration is sufficient to show that love is greater than either faith or hope.

2. Some say love is the greatest because it remains throughout eternity, whereas faith and hope proceed only through life; hence we say that there faith is lost in sight, and hope in fruition. But does the apostle say so? Or does any man inspired by God say so? I believe not. Faith and hope will as necessarily enter into eternal glory as love will. The perfections of God are absolute in their nature, infinite in number, and eternal in their duration. However high, glorious, or sublime the soul may be in that eternal state, it will ever, in respect to God, be limited in its powers, and must be improved and expanded by the communications of the supreme Being. Hence it will have infinite glories in the nature of God to apprehend by faith, to anticipate by hope, and enjoy by love.

3. From the nature of the Divine perfections there must be infinite glories in them which must be objects of faith to disembodied spirits; because it is impossible that they should be experimentally or possessively known by any creature. Even in the heaven of heavens we shall, in reference to the infinite and eternal excellences of God, walk by faith, and not by sight. We shall credit the existence of infinite and illimitable glories in him, which, from their absolute and infinite nature, must be incommunicable. And as the very nature of the soul shows it to be capable of eternal growth and improvement; so the communications from the Deity, which are to produce this growth, and effect this improvement, must be objects of faith to the pure spirit; and, if objects of faith, consequently objects of hope; for as hope is “the expectation of future good,” it is inseparable from the nature of the soul, to know of the existence of any attainable good without making it immediately the object of desire or hope. And is it not this that shall constitute the eternal and progressive happiness of the immortal spirit; viz. knowing, from what it has received, that there is infinitely more to be received; and desiring to be put in possession of every communicable good which it knows to exist?

4. As faith goes forward to view, so hope goes forward to desire; and God continues to communicate, every communication making way for another, by preparing the soul for greater enjoyment, and this enjoyment must produce love. To say that the soul can have neither faith nor hope in a

future state is to say that, as soon as it enters heaven, it is as happy as it can possibly be; and this goes to exclude all growth in the eternal state, and all progressive manifestations and communications of God; and consequently to fix a spirit, which is a composition of infinite desires, in a state of eternal sameness, in which it must be greatly changed in its constitution to find endless gratification.

5. To sum up the reasoning on this subject I think it necessary to observe,

1. That the term faith is here to be taken in the general sense of the word, for that belief which a soul has of the infinite sufficiency and goodness of God, in consequence of the discoveries he has made of himself and his designs, either by revelation, or immediately by his Spirit. Now we know that God has revealed himself not only in reference to this world, but in reference to eternity; and much of our faith is employed in things pertaining to the eternal world, and the enjoyments in that state. That hope is to be taken in its common acceptation, the expectation of future good; which expectation is necessarily founded on faith, as faith is founded on knowledge. God gives a revelation which concerns both worlds, containing exceeding great and precious promises relative to both. We believe what he has said on his own veracity; and we hope to enjoy the promised blessings in both worlds, because he is faithful who has promised. As the promises stand in reference to both worlds, so also must the faith and hope to which these promises stand as objects. The enjoyments in the eternal world are all spiritual, and must proceed immediately from God himself.
5. God, in the plenitude of his excellences, is as incomprehensible to a glorified spirit, as he is to a spirit resident in flesh and blood.
6. Every created, intellectual nature is capable of eternal improvement.
7. If seeing God as he is be essential to the eternal happiness of beatified spirits, then the discoveries which he makes of himself must be gradual; forasmuch as it is impossible that an infinite, eternal nature can be manifested to a created and limited nature in any other way.
8. As the perfections of God are infinite, they are capable of being eternally manifested, and, after all manifestations, there must be an

desires for the enjoyment of spiritual good, and faith in the infinite goodness of God necessarily implies that he will satisfy every desire he has excited. 11. The power to gratify, in the Divine Being, and the capacity to be gratified, in the immortal spirit, will necessarily excite continual desires, which desires, on the evidence of faith, will as necessarily produce hope, which is the expectation of future good. 12. All possible perfections in God are the objects of faith; and the communication of all possible blessedness, the object of hope. 13. Faith goes forward to apprehend, and hope to anticipate, as God continues to discover his unbounded glories and perfections. 14. Thus discovered and desired, their influences become communicated, love possesses them, and is excited and increased by the communication. 15. With respect to those which are communicated, faith and hope cease, and go forward to new apprehensions and anticipations, while love continues to retain and enjoy the whole. 16. Thus an eternal interest is kept up, and infinite blessings, in endless succession, apprehended, anticipated and enjoyed.

6. My opinion that faith and hope, as well as love, will continue in a future state, will no doubt appear singular to many who have generally considered the two former as necessarily terminating in this lower world; but this arises from an improper notion of the beatified state, and from inattention to the state and capacity of the soul. If it have the same faculties there which it has here, howsoever improved they may be, it must acquire its happiness from the supreme Being in the way of communication, and this communication must necessarily be gradual for the reasons already alleged; and if gradual, then there must be (if in that state we have any knowledge at all of the Divine nature) faith that such things exist, and may be communicated; desire to possess them because they are good; and hope that these good things shall be communicated.

7. I conclude, therefore, from these and a multitude of other reasonings which might be brought to bear on this subject, that faith and hope will exist in the eternal world as well as love; and that there, as well as here, it may endlessly be said, the greatest of these is love. With great propriety therefore does the apostle exhort, Follow after love, it being so essential to our comfort and happiness here, and to our beatification in the eternal world; and how necessary faith and hope are to the same end we have already seen.

## CHAPTER 14.

*We should earnestly desire spiritual gifts; but prophesying is to be preferred, because it is superior to the gift of tongues, 1, 2. Prophesying defined, 3. How to regulate this supernatural gift of tongues, in teaching for the edification of the Church, 4-13. In praying and giving thanks, 14-17. Those who speak with tongues should interpret that others may be edified, 18-22 What benefit may accrue from this in the public assemblies, 23-28. How the prophets or teachers should act in the Church, 29-33. Women should keep silence in the church, 34, 35. All should be humble, and every thing should be done in love 36-40.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 14.

**Verse 1. *Follow after charity***— Most earnestly labor to be put in possession of that love which beareth, believeth, hopeth, and endureth all things. It may be difficult to acquire, and difficult to retain this blessed state, but it is essential to your present peace and eternal happiness. This clause belongs to the preceding chapter.

***Desire spiritual gifts***— Ye are very intent on getting those splendid gifts which may add to your worldly consequence, and please your carnal minds-but labor rather to get the gifts of God's Spirit, by which ye may grow in grace, and be useful to others-and particularly desire that ye may prophesy-that ye may be able to teach and instruct others in the things of their salvation.

**Verse 2. *For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue***— This chapter is crowded with difficulties. It is not likely that the Holy Spirit should, in the church, suddenly inspire a man with the knowledge of some foreign language, which none in the church understood but himself; and lead him to treat the mysteries of Christianity in that language, though none in the place could profit by his teaching.

Dr. Lightfoot's mode of reconciling these difficulties is the most likely I have met with. He supposes that by the unknown tongue the Hebrew is

meant, and that God restored the true knowledge of this language when he gave the apostles the gift of tongues. As the Scriptures of the Old Testament were contained in this language, and it has beauties, energies, and depths in it which no verbal translation can reach, it was necessary, for the proper elucidation of the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and the establishment of the Christian religion, that the full meaning of the words of this sacred language should be properly understood. And it is possible that the Hebrew Scriptures were sometimes read in the Christian congregations as they were in the Jewish synagogues; and if the person who read and understood them had not the power and faculty of explaining them to others, in vain did he read and understand them himself. And we know that it is possible for a man to understand a language, the force, phraseology, and idioms of which he is incapable of explaining even in his mother tongue. We shall see, in the course of these notes, how this view of the subject will apply to the illustration of the apostle's words throughout the chapter.

*Speaketh not unto men, but unto God*— None present understanding the language, God alone knowing the truth and import of what he says:—

*In the spirit he speaketh mysteries.*— Though his own mind (for so πνεύματι

***But he that prophesieth***— Has the gift of preaching.

***Edifieth the Church.***— Speaketh unto men to edification, exhortation, and comfort, 1 Corinthians 14:3.

**Verse 5. *I would that ye all spake with tongues***— The word  $\theta\epsilon\lambda\omega$  does not so much imply a wish or desire, as a command or permission. As if he had said: I do not restrain you to prophesying or teaching though I prefer that; but I give you full permission to speak in Hebrew whenever it is proper, and when one is present who can interpret for the edification of the Church, provided yourselves have not that gift, though you understand the language. The apostle said tongue, in the singular number, 1 Corinthians 14:2, 4, because he spoke of a single man; now he says tongues, in the plural number, because he speaks of many speaking; but he has the same meaning in both places. — Lightfoot.

***Greater is he that prophesieth***— A useful, zealous preacher, though unskilled in learned languages, is much greater in the sight of God, and in the eye of sound common sense, than he who has the gift of those learned tongues; except he interpret: and we seldom find great scholars good preachers. This should humble the scholar, who is too apt to be proud of his attainments, and despise his less learned but more useful brother. This judgment of St. Paul is too little regarded.

**Verse 6. *Speaking with tongues***— Without interpreting.

***What shall I profit you?***— i.e. I shall not profit you;

***Except I shall speak to you either by revelation***— Of some secret thing; or by knowledge, of some mystery; or by prophesying, foretelling some future event; or by doctrine, instructing you what to believe and practice. — See Whitby. These four words are taken in different acceptations by learned men. The general sense of the terms is that given above: but the peculiar meaning of the apostle is perhaps not easily discerned.

**Verse 7. *And even things without life***— I may, as if he had said, illustrate this farther by referring to a pipe or harp; if these were to utter mere sounds without order, harmony, or melody, though every tone of music might be in the sounds, surely no person could discern a tune in such sounds, nor receive pleasure from such discords: even so is the person



who speaks in an unknown tongue, but does not interpret. His speech tends no more to edification than those discordant and unmeaning sounds do to pleasure and delight.

**Verse 8. *If the trumpet give an uncertain sound***— If, when the soldier should prepare himself for the battle, the trumpet should give a different sound to that which is ordinarily used on such occasions, the soldier is not informed of what he should do, and therefore does not arm himself; consequently, that vague, unintelligible sound of the trumpet, is of no use.

**Verse 9. *Likewise ye***— If ye do not speak in the Church so as to be understood, your labor is useless; ye shall speak into the air—your speech will be lost and dissipated in the air, without conveying any meaning to any person: there will be a noise or sound, but nothing else. Gifts of that kind, thus used, are good for nothing.

**Verse 10. *There are, it may be***— εἰ τυχοῖ, For example.

***So many kinds of voices***— So many different languages, each of which has its distinct articulation, pronunciation, emphasis, and meaning; or there may be so many different nations, each possessing a different language, etc.

**Verse 11. *If I know not the meaning of the voice***— τὴν δύναμις τῆς φωνῆς, The power and signification of the language.

***I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian***— I shall appear to him, and he to me, as a person who had no distinct and articulate sounds which can convey any kind of meaning. This observation is very natural: when we hear persons speaking in a language of which we know nothing, we wonder how they can understand each other, as, in their speech, there appears to us no regular distinction of sounds or words. For the meaning and origin of the word barbarian, see the note on Acts 28:2.

**Verse 12. *For as much as ye are zealous***— Seeing ye affect so much to have spiritual gifts, seek that ye may get those by which ye may excel in edifying the Church.

**Verse 13. *Pray that he may interpret***.— Let him who speaks or reads the prophetic declarations in the Old Testament, in that tongue in which they were originally spoken and written, pray to God that he may so

understand them himself, and receive the gift of interpretation, that he may be able to explain them in all their depth and latitude to others.

**Verse 14. *For if I pray in an unknown tongue***— If my prayers are composed of sentences and sayings taken out of the prophets, etc., and in their own language—my spirit prayeth, my heart is engaged in the work, and my prayers answer all the purpose of prayers to myself; but my understanding is unfruitful to all others, because they do not understand my prayers, and I either do not or cannot interpret them. See the note on 1 Corinthians 14:19.

**Verse 16. *He that occupieth the room of the unlearned***— One who is not acquainted with the language in which you speak, sing, or pray.

***Say Amen***— Give his assent and ratification to what he does not understand. It was very frequent in primitive times to express their approbation in the public assemblies by Amen. This practice, soberly and piously conducted, might still be of great use in the Church of Christ.

This response was of the highest authority and merit among the Jews; they even promised the remission of all sins, the annihilation of the sentence of damnation, and the opening of the gates of paradise, to those who fervently say Amen. And it is one of their maxims that “greater is he who says Amen than he who prays.” See many testimonies of this kind in Schoettgen. Now, allowing that this was of so much consequence in the time of St. Paul, it was a very serious matter for a person to be in a congregation where prayer was offered, who could not say Amen, because the prayers were in a language which he did not understand.

**Verse 17. *Thou verily givest thanks well***— Because he felt gratitude, and, from a sense of his obligation, gave praise to God; but because this was in an unknown tongue, those who heard him received no edification.

**Verse 18. *I speak with tongues more than ye all***— He understood more languages than any of them did: and this was indispensably necessary, as he was the apostle of the Gentiles in general, and had to preach to different provinces where different dialects, if not languages, were used. In the Hebrew, Syriac, Greek, and Latin, he was undoubtedly well skilled from his education; and how many he might understand by miraculous gift we

cannot tell. But, even literally understood, it is very probable that he knew more languages than any man in the Church of Corinth.

**Verse 19. *Yet in the church***— As the grand object of public worship is the edification of those who attend, five words spoken so as to convey edification, were of much more consequence than ten thousand which, not being understood, could convey none. By the word *γλωσση*, tongue, to which we add unknown, I suppose the apostle always means the Hebrew, for the reasons offered in the note on 1 Corinthians 14:1.

One of the greatest difficulties, says Bishop Pearce, in this epistle is contained in the words *πνευμα* and *νους*, spirit and understanding, which are frequently used in this chapter; and fixing the true meaning of these words will solve the difficulty. In this verse the apostle explains *λαλειν τω σοι*, to speak with the understanding, by *ινα αλλους καταχησω*, that I might teach others; so that the sense of *νους*, understanding, seems to be, that understanding which the hearer has of what is said; and this sense will agree well with, I will sing with the spirit, and with the understanding, 1 Corinthians 14:15.

He observes also that *πνευμα* spirit, and *νους*, understanding, have a sense opposite to each other; so that if *νους* is rightly rendered, the understanding which another has of what is said; then *πνευμα* will signify a man's own mind, i.e. his own understanding of what he himself speaks; and this sense agrees well with 1 Corinthians 14:2: In the spirit he speaketh mysteries.

**Verse 20. *Be not children in understanding***— There are three words here to which we must endeavor to affix the proper sense. *παιδια* signifies children in general, but particularly such as are grown up, so as to be fit to send to school in order to receive instruction; 2. *νηπιος*, from *νη*, not, and *ειπω*, I speak, signifies an infant; one that cannot yet speak, and is in the lowest stage of infancy; 3. *τελειοι*, from *τελεω*, I complete or perfect, signifies those who are arrived at perfect maturity, both of growth and understanding. We shall now see the apostle's meaning: Brethren, be not, *παιδια*, as little children, just beginning to go to school, in order to learn the first elements of their mother tongue, and with an understanding only sufficient to apprehend those elements.

***In malice***— **κακια**, In wickedness, **νηπιαζετε**, be ye as infants, who neither speak, do, nor purpose evil.

***But in understanding***— **τελειοι γινεσθε**, Be ye perfect men, whose vigor of body, and energy of mind show a complete growth, and a well cultivated understanding.

**Verse 21. *In the law it is written***— But the passage quoted is in Isaiah 28:11. Here is no contradiction, for the term **תֹּרָה** torah, LAW, was frequently used by the Jews to express the whole Scriptures, law, prophets, and hagiographia; and they used it to distinguish these sacred writings from the words of the scribes.

***With men of other tongues***— Bishop Pearce paraphrases this verse as follows: “With the tongues of foreigners and with the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people; and yet, for all that, will they not hear me, saith the Lord.” To enter into the apostle’s meaning we must enter into that of the prophet. The Jewish people were under the teaching of the prophets who were sent from God; these instructed, reprov’d, and corrected them by this Divine authority. They however became so refractory and disobedient that God purpos’d to cast them off, and abandon them to the Babylonians: then, they had a people to teach, correct, and reprove them, whose language they did not understand. The discipline that they received in this way was widely different from that which they received while under the teaching of the prophets and the government of God; and yet for all this they did not humble themselves before their Maker that this affliction might be removed from them.

**Verse 22. *Wherefore tongues are for a sign***— The miraculous gift of tongues was never designed for the benefit of those who have already believed, but for the instruction of unbelievers, that they might see from such a miracle that this is the work of God; and so embrace the Gospel. But as, in the times of the prophet, the strange Babylonish tongues came in the way of punishment, and not in the way of mercy; take heed that it be not the case now: that, by dwelling on the gift, ye forget the Giver; and what was designed for you as a blessing, may prove to you to be a curse. For if, because ye have the gift of tongues, ye will choose for your own aggrandizement to use them in the public congregation where none understands them, God may curse your blessings.

**Prophesying**— Teaching the things of God in a known language is of infinitely more consequence than speaking in all the foreign tongues in the universe.

**Verse 23. *Will they not say that ye are mad?***— So they well might, finding a whole assembly of people talking languages which those who had most need of instruction could not understand.

**Verse 24. *But if all prophecy***— If all those who teach do it in the tongue which all understand; if an unbeliever, or one who knows nothing of the sacred language, come in and hear things just suited to his own state, he is convicted by all, and he is judged by all.

**Verse 25. *And thus are the secrets of his heart***— As these, who were the prophets or teachers, had often the discernment of spirits, they were able in certain cases, and probably very frequently, to tell a man the secrets of his own heart; and, where this was not directly the case, God often led his ministers to speak those things that were suitable to the case before them, though they themselves had no particular design. The sinner, therefore, convinced that God alone could uncover the secrets of his heart, would be often obliged to fall down on his face, abashed and confounded, and acknowledge that God was truly among them. This seems to be the plain meaning of the passages before us.

**Verse 26. *How is it—every one of you hath a psalm***, etc.— Dr. Lightfoot understands this in the following manner: When the congregation came together, some were for spending the time in psalmody; others in explaining particular doctrines; others in reading, praying, or speaking in the Hebrew tongue; others were curious to hear of farther revelations; and others wished to spend the time in the interpretation of what had already been spoken. This may be specious, but to me it is not satisfactory. It seems more likely that, when the whole Church came together, among whom there were many persons with extraordinary gifts, each of them wished to put himself forward, and occupy the time and attention of the congregation: hence confusion must necessarily take place, and perhaps not a little contention. This was contrary to that edifying which was the intention of these gifts.

**Verse 27. *Speak in an unknown tongue***— The Hebrew, as has already been conjectured.

***Let it be by two; or at the most by three, and that by course***— Let only two or three in one assembly act in this way, that too much time may not be taken up with one exercise; and let this be done by course, the one after the other, that two may not be speaking at the same time: and let one interpret for all that shall thus speak.

**Verse 28. *But if there be no interpreter***— If there be none present who can give the proper sense of this Hebrew reading and speaking, then let him keep silence, and not occupy the time of the Church, by speaking in a language which only himself can understand.

**Verse 29. *Let the prophets***— Those who have the gift of speaking to men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort; 1 Corinthians 14:3.

***Two or three***— As prophesying implied psalmody, teaching, and exhortation, Dr. Lightfoot thinks that the meaning of the place is this: Let one sing who has a psalm; let another teach who has a doctrine; and let a third exhort, or comfort, who has a gift of that kind.

***And let the other judge.***— The other prophets, or qualified persons, judge of the propriety of what had been spoken; or let them discern, **διακρινωσαν**, how the revelation under the new covenant confirmed and illustrated the revelation granted under the Old Testament. It appears to have been taken for granted, that a man might pretend to this spirit of prophecy who was not sent of God; and therefore it was the duty of the accredited teachers to examine whether what he spoke was according to truth, and the analogy of faith. For the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets; every man's gift was to be judged of by those whose age, experience, and wisdom, gave them a right to decide. Besides, though the person who did speak might do it from an impulse of God, yet, if he was not sufficiently known, his testimony ought to be received with caution; and therefore the aged prophets should judge of his gift, lest false doctrines should slide into the Church.

But all these provisions, as Schoettgen justly observes, were in imitation of the practice in the Jewish synagogues; for there it was customary for them to object, interrogate, judge, refute, etc.

**Verse 30. *Be revealed to another that sitteth by***— Probably those who were teachers sat on a particular seat, or place, from which they might most readily address the people; and this may be the meaning of sitting by. If such a person could say, I have just received a particular revelation from God, then let him have the liberty immediately to speak it; as it might possibly relate to the circumstances of that time and place.

**Verse 31. *For ye may all prophesy one by one***— The gifts which God grants are given for the purpose of edification; but there can be no edification where there is confusion; therefore let them speak one by one.

**Verse 32. *And the spirits of the prophets*, etc.**— Let no one interrupt another; and let all be ready to prefer others before themselves; and let each feel a spirit of subjection to his brethren. God grants no ungovernable gifts.

**Verse 33. *For God is not the author of confusion***— Let not the persons who act in the congregation in this disorderly manner, say, that they are under the influence of God; for he is not the author of confusion; but two, three, or more, praying or teaching in the same place, at the same time, is confusion; and God is not the author of such work; and let men beware how they attribute such disorder to the God of order and peace. The apostle calls such conduct **ακαταστασια**, tumult, sedition; and such it is in the sight of God, and in the sight of all good men. How often is a work of God marred and discredited by the folly of men! for nature will always, and Satan too, mingle themselves as far as they can in the genuine work of the Spirit, in order to discredit and destroy it. Nevertheless, in great revivals of religion it is almost impossible to prevent wild-fire from getting in amongst the true fire; but it is the duty of the ministers of God to watch against and prudently check this; but if themselves encourage it, then there will be confusion and every evil work.

**Verse 34. *Let your women keep silence in the churches***— This was a Jewish ordinance; women were not permitted to teach in the assemblies, or even to ask questions. The rabbins taught that “a woman should know nothing but the use of her distaff.” And the sayings of Rabbi Eliezer, as delivered, Bammidbar Rabba, sec. 9, fol. 204, are both worthy of remark and of execration; they are these: **דברי תורה ואל ימסרו לנשים**

שִׂרְפוּ yisrephu dibrey torah veal yimsaru lenashim, “Let the words of the law be burned, rather than that they should be delivered to women.”

This was their condition till the time of the Gospel, when, according to the prediction of Joel, the Spirit of God was to be poured out on the women as well as the men, that they might prophesy, i.e. teach. And that they did prophesy or teach is evident from what the apostle says, 1 Corinthians 11:5, where he lays down rules to regulate this part of their conduct while ministering in the church.

But does not what the apostle says here contradict that statement, and show that the words in chap. 11 should be understood in another sense? For, here it is expressly said that they should keep silence in the church; for it was not permitted to a woman to speak. Both places seem perfectly consistent. It is evident from the context that the apostle refers here to asking questions, and what we call dictating in the assemblies. It was permitted to any man to ask questions, to object, altercation, attempt to refute, etc., in the synagogue; but this liberty was not allowed to any woman. St. Paul confirms this in reference also to the Christian Church; he orders them to keep silence; and, if they wished to learn any thing, let them inquire of their husbands at home; because it was perfectly indecorous for women to be contending with men in public assemblies, on points of doctrine, cases of conscience, etc. But this by no means intimated that when a woman received any particular influence from God to enable her to teach, that she was not to obey that influence; on the contrary, she was to obey it, and the apostle lays down directions in chap. 11 for regulating her personal appearance when thus employed. All that the apostle opposes here is their questioning, finding fault, disputing, etc., in the Christian Church, as the Jewish men were permitted to do in their synagogues; together with the attempts to usurp any authority over the man, by setting up their judgment in opposition to them; for the apostle has in view, especially, acts of disobedience, arrogance, etc., of which no woman would be guilty who was under the influence of the Spirit of God.

***But-to be under obedience, as also saith the law.***— This is a reference to Genesis 3:16: Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. From this it is evident that it was the disorderly and disobedient that



the apostle had in view; and not any of those on whom God had poured out his Spirit.

**Verse 35. *For it is a shame for women to speak in the church.***— The Jews would not suffer a woman to read in the synagogue; though a servant or even a child, had this permission; but the apostle refers to irregular conduct, such conduct as proved that they were not under obedience, 1 Corinthians 14:34.

**Verse 36. *Came the word of God out from you?***— Was it from you that other Churches received the Gospel? Are you the mother Church? that you should have rules, and orders, and customs, different from all others; and set yourselves up for a model to be copied by all the Churches of Christ?

***Or came it unto you only?***— Are you the only Church of God? Are there not many others founded before you that have no such customs, and permit no such disorders?

**Verse 37. *If any man think himself to be a prophet,*** etc.— He who is really a spiritual man, under the influence of the Spirit of God, and capable of teaching the Divine will, he will acknowledge that what I now say is from the same Spirit; and that the things which I now write are the commandments of God, and must be obeyed on pain of his displeasure.

**Verse 38. *But if any man be ignorant***— If he affect to be so, or pretend that he is ignorant; let him be ignorant—let him be so at his peril.

**Verse 39. *Covet to prophesy***— Let it be your endeavor and prayer to be able to teach the way of God to the ignorant; this is the most valuable, because the most useful gift of the Spirit.

***And forbid not to speak with tongues.***— Let every gift have its own place and operation; let none envy another; nor prevent him from doing that part of the work to which God, by giving the qualification, has evidently called him.

**Verse 40. *Let all things be done decently***— εὐσεβῶς; In their proper forms; with becoming reverence; according to their dignity and importance, Every thing in the Church of God should be conducted with gravity and composure, suitable to the importance of the things, the infinite dignity of

the object of worship, and the necessity of the souls in behalf of which those religious ordinances are instituted.

*And in order.*— *κατα ταξιν*. Every thing in its place, every thing in its time, and every thing suitably.

Let all things be done decently and in order, is a direction of infinite moment in all the concerns of religion, and of no small consequence in all the concerns of life. How much pain, confusion, and loss would be prevented, were this rule followed! There is scarcely an embarrassment in civil or domestic life that does not originate in a neglect of this precept. No business, trade, art, or science, can be carried on to any advantage or comfort, unless peculiar attention be paid to it. And as to religion, there can be absolutely none without it. Where decency and order are not observed in every part of the worship of God, no spiritual worship can be performed. The manner of doing a thing is always of as much consequence as the act itself. And often the act derives all its consequence and utility from the manner in which it is performed.

## CHAPTER 15.

The Gospel which the apostle preached to the Corinthians; viz. that Christ died for our sins, and rose again the third day, 1-4. The witnesses of his resurrection, Peter, James, and more than five hundred brethren, 5-7. Lastly, Paul himself saw him, and was called by him to the apostleship, 8-11. Objections against the resurrection of the dead answered, 12-34. The manner in which this great work shall be performed, 35-49. The astonishing events that shall take place in the last day, 50-57. The use we should make of this doctrine, 68.

### NOTES ON CHAP. 15.

It appears from this chapter that there were some false apostles at Corinth, who denied the resurrection, see 1 Corinthians 15:12; in consequence of which St. Paul discusses three questions in this chapter:—

1. Whether there be a resurrection of the dead? 1 Corinthians 15:1-35.
  2. What will be the nature of the resurrection bodies? 1 Corinthians 15:35-51.
  3. What should become of those who should be found alive in the day of judgment? 1 Corinthians 15:51-57.
- I. The resurrection he proves,
1. From Scripture, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.
  2. From eye witnesses, 1 Corinthians 15:5-12.
- II. He proves the resurrection by showing the absurdity of the contrary doctrine:—
1. If the dead rise not, Christ is not risen, 1 Corinthians 15:13.
  2. It would be absurd to have faith in Him, according to the preaching of the Gospel, if he be not risen, 1 Corinthians 15:14.

3. The apostles must be false witnesses who attest this resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15:15.
4. The faith of the Corinthians must be vain who believe it, 1 Corinthians 15:16, 17.
5. All the believers who have died in the faith of Christ have perished, if Christ be not risen, 1 Corinthians 15:18.
6. Believers in Christ are in a more miserable state than any others, if there be no resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15:19.
7. Those who were baptized in the faith that Christ died for them and rose again, are deceived, 1 Corinthians 15:29.
8. The apostles, and Christians in general, who suffer persecution on the ground that, after suffering awhile here they shall have a glorious resurrection, are acting a foolish and unprofitable part, 1 Corinthians 15:30-32.

**Verse 1. *The Gospel which I preached unto you***— This Gospel is contained in Christ dying for our sins, being buried, and rising again the third day. See the following verses.

**Verse 2. *By which also ye are saved***— That is, ye are now in a salvable state; and are saved from your Gentilism, and from your former sins.

***If ye keep in memory***— Your future salvation, or being brought finally to glory, will now depend on your faithfulness to the grace that ye have received.

**Verse 3. *For I delivered unto you first of all***— *εν πρωτοις*. As the chief things, or matters of the greatest importance; fundamental truths.

***That which I-received***— By revelations from God himself, and not from man.

***That Christ died for our sins***— The death of Jesus Christ, as a vicarious sacrifice for sin, is *εν πρωτοις*; among the things that are of chief importance, and is essential to the Gospel scheme of salvation.

***According to the Scriptures***— It is not said any where in the Scriptures, in express terms, that Christ should rise on the third day; but it is fully implied in his types, as in the case of Jonah, who came out of the belly of the fish on the third day; but particularly in the case of Isaac, who was a very expressive type of Christ; for, as his being brought to the Mount Moriah, bound and laid on the wood, in order to be sacrificed, pointed out the death of Christ; so his being brought alive on the third day from the mount was a figure of Christ's resurrection. Bishop Pearce and others refer to Matthew 12:40; 16:21; and Luke 9:22; "which two Gospels, having been written at the time when Paul wrote this epistle, were properly called by the name of the Sacred Scriptures." It might be so; but I do not know of one proof in the New Testament where its writings, or any part of them, are called the Scriptures.

**Verse 5. *That he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve***— This refers to the journey to Emmaus, Luke 24:13, 34; and to what is related Mark 16:14.

***Then of the twelve***— Instead of δωδεκα, twelve, ενδεκα, eleven, is the reading of D\*EFG, Syriac in the margin, some of the Slavonic, Armenian, Vulgate, Itala, and several of the fathers; and this reading is supported by Mark 16:14. Perhaps the term twelve is used here merely to point out the society of the apostles, who, though at this time they were only eleven, were still called the twelve, because this was their original number, and a number which was afterward filled up. See John 20:24.

**Verse 6. *Above five hundred brethren at once***— This was probably in Galilee, where our Lord had many disciples. See Matthew 28:16. What a remarkable testimony is this to the truth of our Lord's resurrection! Five hundred persons saw him at one time; the greater part of whom were alive when the apostle wrote, and he might have been confronted by many if he had dared to assert a falsity.

**Verse 7. *After that, he was seen of James***— But where, and on what occasion, we are not told; nor indeed do we know which James is intended; James the son of Zebedee, or James the son of Alphaeus. But one thing is sufficiently evident, from what is here said, that this James, of whom the apostle speaks, was still alive; for the apostle's manner of speaking justifies this conclusion.

*Then of all the apostles.*— Including, not only the eleven, but, as some suppose, the seventy-two disciples.

**Verse 8. *And last of all-of me also***— It seems that it was essential to the character of a primitive apostle that he had seen and conversed with Christ; and it is evident, from the history of Saul's conversion, Acts 9:4-7, where see the notes, that Jesus Christ did appear to him; and he pleaded this ever after as a proof of his call to the apostleship. And it does not appear that, after this time, Jesus ever did make any personal discovery of himself to any one.

*As of one born out of due time.*— The apostle considers himself as coming after the time in which Jesus Christ personally conversed with his disciples; and that, therefore, to see him at all, he must see him in this extraordinary way. Some have entered into a very disgusting detail on the figure used here by the apostle. The words, *ωσπερι τω εκτρωματι*, signify not merely one born out of due time, but one born before his time; and consequently, not bidding fair for vigor, usefulness, or long life. But it is likely that the apostle had a different meaning; and that he refers to the original institution of the twelve apostles, in the rank of whom he never stood, being appointed not to fill up a place among the twelve, but as an extra and additional apostle. Rosenmuller says that those who were beyond the number of twelve senators were termed abortivi, abortives; and refers to Suetonius in Octavio, cap. 35. I have examined the place, but find no such epithet. According to Suetonius, in that place, they were called *orcini*-persons who had assumed the senatorial dignity after the death of Julius Caesar, pretending that they had derived that honor from him.

**Verse 9. *I am the least of the apostles***— This was literally true in reference to his being chosen last, and chosen not in the number of the twelve, but as an extra apostle. How much pains do some men take to make the apostle contradict himself, by attempting to show that he was the very greatest of the apostles, though he calls himself the least! Taken as a man and a minister of Christ, he was greater than any of the twelve; taken as an apostle he was less than any of the twelve, because not originally in that body.

*Am not meet to be called an apostle*— None of the twelve had ever persecuted Christ, nor withstood his doctrine: Saul of Tarsus had been,

before his conversion, a grievous persecutor; and therefore he says, **οὐκ εἰμι ἰκανός**, I am not proper to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God, i.e. of Christ, which none of the apostles ever did.

**Verse 10. *But, by the grace of God I am what I am***— God, by his mere grace and good will, has called me to be an apostle, and has denominated me such.

***And his grace***, etc.— Nor have I been unfaithful to the Divine call; I used the grace which he gave me; and when my labors, travels, and sufferings are considered, it will be evident that I have labored more abundantly than the whole twelve. This was most literally true.

***Yet not I, but the grace of God***— It was not through my own power or wisdom that I performed these things, but through the Divine influence which accompanied me.

**Verse 11. *Whether it were I or they***— All the apostles of Christ agree in the same doctrines; we all preach one and the same thing; and, as we preached, so ye believed; having received from us the true apostolical faith, that Jesus died for our sins, and rose again for our justification; and that his resurrection is the pledge and proof of ours. Whoever teaches contrary to this does not preach the true apostolic doctrine.

Paul was the last of the primitive apostles. The primitive apostles were those who had seen Christ, and got their call to the apostolate immediately from himself. There were many apostles after this time, but they were all secondary; they had a Divine call, but it was internal, and never accompanied by any vision or external demonstration of that Christ who had been manifested in the flesh.

**Verse 12. *Now if Christ be preached***, etc.— Seeing it is true that we have thus preached Christ, and ye have credited this preaching, how say some among you, who have professed to receive this doctrine from us; that there is no resurrection of the dead, though we have shown that his resurrection is the proof and pledge of ours? That there was some false teacher, or teachers, among them, who was endeavoring to incorporate Mosaic rites and ceremonies with the Christian doctrines, and even to blend Sadduceeism with the whole, appears pretty evident. To confute this

mongrel Christian, and overturn his bad doctrine, the apostle writes this chapter.

**Verse 13. *If there be no resurrection of the dead***— As Christ was partaker of the same flesh and blood with us, and he promised to raise mankind from the dead through his resurrection, if the dead rise not then Christ has had no resurrection. There seem to have been some at Corinth who, though they denied the resurrection of the dead, admitted that Christ had risen again: the apostle's argument goes therefore to state that, if Christ was raised from the dead, mankind may be raised; if mankind cannot be raised from the dead, then the body of Christ was never raised.

**Verse 14. *Then is our preaching vain***— Our whole doctrine is useless, nugatory and false.

***And your faith is also vain.***— Your belief of a false doctrine must necessarily be to you unprofitable.

**Verse 16. *False witnesses***— As having testified the fact of Christ's resurrection, as a matter which ourselves had witnessed, when we knew that we bore testimony to a falsehood. But could five hundred persons agree in this imposition? And if they did, is it possible that some one would not discover the cheat, when he could have no interest in keeping the secret, and might greatly promote his secular interest by making the discovery? Such a case never occurred, and never can occur. The testimony, therefore, concerning the resurrection of Christ, is incontrovertibly true.

***If so be that the dead rise not.***— This clause is wanting in DE, Syriac, some of the Slavonian, and Itala; several also of the primitive fathers omit it. Its great similarity to the following words might be the cause of its omission by some copyists.

**Verse 17. *Ye are yet in your sins.***— If Christ has not risen from the dead, there is no proof that he has not been justly put to death. If he were a malefactor, God would not work a miracle to raise him from the dead. If he has not been raised from the dead, there is a presumption that he has been put to death justly; and, if so, consequently he has made no atonement; and ye are yet in your sins—under the power, guilt, and condemnation of them. All this reasoning of the apostle goes to prove that at Corinth, even



among those false teachers, the innocence of our Lord was allowed, and the reality of his resurrection not questioned.

**Verse 18. *They also which are fallen asleep***— All those who, either by martyrdom or natural death, have departed in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, are perished; their hope was without foundation, and their faith had not reason and truth for its object. Their bodies are dissolved in the earth, finally decomposed and destroyed, notwithstanding the promise of Christ to such, that he would raise them up at the last day. See John 5:25, 28, 29; 11:25, 26, etc.

**Verse 19. *If in this life only we have hope***— It would be better to translate and point this verse as follows:—

And, if in this life we have hoped in Christ only, we are more to be pitied than all men. If, in this life, we have no other hope and confidence but in Christ, (and if he be still dead, and not yet risen,) we are more to be pitied than any other men; we are sadly deceived; we have denied ourselves, and been denied by others; have mortified ourselves, and been persecuted by our fellow creatures on account of our belief and hope in One who is not existing, and therefore can neither succor us here, nor reward us hereafter. Bishop Pearce.

**Verse 20. *But now is Christ risen***— On the contrary, Christ is raised from the dead, and is become the first fruits of them that slept. His resurrection has been demonstrated, and our resurrection necessarily follows; as sure as the first fruits are the proof that there is a harvest, so surely the resurrection of Christ is a proof of ours. The Judaizing teacher at Corinth would feel the force of this observation much sooner than we can, who are not much acquainted with Jewish customs. “Although,” says Dr. Lightfoot, “the resurrection of Christ, compared with some first fruits, has very good harmony with them; yet especially it agrees with the offering of the sheaf, commonly called עומר *omer*, not only as the thing itself, but also as to the circumstances of the time. For first there was the passover, and the day following was a Sabbatic day, and on the day following that the first fruits were offered. So Christ, our passover, was crucified: the day following his crucifixion was the Sabbath, and the day following that, He, the first fruits of them that slept, rose again. All who

died before Christ, and were raised again to life, died afterwards; but Christ is the first fruits of all who shall be raised from the dead to die no more.”

**Verse 21. *For since by man came death***— Mortality came by Adam, immortality by Christ; so sure as all have been subjected to natural death by Adam, so sure shall all be raised again by Christ Jesus. Mortality and immortality, on a general ground, are the subject of the apostle’s reasoning here; and for the explanation of the transgression of Adam, and the redemption by Christ, see the notes on Romans 5:10, etc.

**Verse 23. *But every man in his own order***— The apostle mentions three orders here: 1. Christ, who rose from the dead by his own power. 2. Them that are Christ’s; all his apostles, martyrs, confessors, and faithful followers. 3. Then cometh the end, when the whole mass shall be raised. Whether this order be exactly what the apostle intends, I shall not assert. Of the first, Christ’s own resurrection, there can be no question. The second, the resurrection of his followers, before that of the common dead, is thought by some very reasonable. “They had here a resurrection from a death of sin to a life of righteousness, which the others had not, because they would not be saved in Christ’s way. That they should have the privilege of being raised first, to behold the astonishing changes and revolutions which shall then take place, has nothing in it contrary to propriety and fitness;” but it seems contrary to 1 Corinthians 15:52, in which all the dead are said to rise in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. “And, thirdly, that all the other mass of mankind should be raised last, just to come forward and receive their doom, is equally reasonable:” but it is apparently inconsistent with the manner in which God chooses to act; see 1 Corinthians 15:53. Some think that by them that are Christ’s at his coming, “we are to understand Christ’s coming to reign on earth a thousand years with his saints, previously to the general judgment;” but I must confess I find nothing in the sacred writings distinctly enough marked to support this opinion of the millennium, or thousand years’ reign; nor can I conceive any important end that can be answered by this procedure.

We should be very cautious how we make a figurative expression, used in the most figurative book in the Bible, the foundation of a very important literal system that is to occupy a measure of the faith, and no small

portion of the hope, of Christians. The strange conjectures formed on this very uncertain basis have not been very creditable either to reason or religion.

**Verse 24. *When he shall have delivered up the kingdom***— The mediatorial kingdom, which comprehends all the displays of his grace in saving sinners, and all his spiritual influence in governing the Church.

***All rule, and all authority and power.***— ἀρχην ἐξουσιαν--και δυνάμιν. As the apostle is here speaking of the end of the present system of the world, the rule, authority, and power, may refer to all earthly governments, emperors, kings, princes, etc.; though angels, principalities, and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, and all spiritual wickedness in high places, may be also intended. Our Lord Jesus is represented here as administering the concerns of the kingdom of grace in this lower world during the time that this Divine economy lasts; and when the end—the time determined by the wisdom of God, comes, then, as there is no longer any need of this administration, the kingdom is delivered up unto the Father: an allusion to the case of Roman viceroys or governors of provinces, who, when their administration was ended, delivered up their kingdom or government into the hands of the emperor.

The apostle may refer, also, to an opinion of the ancient Jews, that there should be ten kings who should have the supreme government of the whole world: the first and last of which should be GOD himself; but the ninth should be the Messiah; after whose empire the kingdom should be delivered up into the hands of God for ever. See the place in Schoettgen on this verse, and on Luke 1:33.

**Verse 25. *For he must reign***, etc.— This is according to the promise, Psalm 110:1: “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” Therefore the kingdom cannot be given up till all rule and government be cast down. So that while the world lasts, Jesus, as the Messiah and Mediator, must reign; and all human beings are properly his subjects, are under his government, and are accountable to him.

**Verse 26. *The last enemy***— Death, shall be destroyed; καταργείται, shall be counter-worked, subverted, and finally overturned. But death

cannot be destroyed by there being simply no farther death; death can only be destroyed and annihilated by a general resurrection; if there be no general resurrection, it is most evident that death will still retain his empire. Therefore, the fact that death shall be destroyed assures the fact that there shall be a general resurrection; and this is a proof, also, that after the resurrection there shall be no more death.

**Verse 27. *For he hath put all things under his feet***— The Father hath put all things under the feet of Christ according to the prophecy, Psalm 110:1-7.

***He is excepted***— i.e. The Father, who hath put all things under him, the Son. This observation seems to be introduced by the apostle to show that he does not mean that the Divine nature shall be subjected to the human nature. Christ, as Messiah, and Mediator between God and man, must ever be considered inferior to the Father: and his human nature, however dignified in consequence of its union with the Divine nature, must ever be inferior to God. The whole of this verse should be read in a parenthesis.

**Verse 28. *The Son also himself be subject***— When the administration of the kingdom of grace is finally closed; when there shall be no longer any state of probation, and consequently no longer need of a distinction between the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory; then the Son, as being man and Messiah, shall cease to exercise any distinct dominion and God be all in all: there remaining no longer any distinction in the persons of the glorious Trinity, as acting any distinct or separate parts in either the kingdom of grace, or the kingdom of glory, and so the one infinite essence shall appear undivided and eternal. And yet, as there appears to be a personality essentially in the infinite Godhead, that personality must exist eternally; but how this shall be we can neither tell nor know till that time comes in which we shall SEE HIM AS HE IS. 1 John 3:2.

**Verse 29. *Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead***— This is certainly the most difficult verse in the New Testament; for, notwithstanding the greatest and wisest men have labored to explain it, there are to this day nearly as many different interpretations of it as there are interpreters. I shall not employ my time, nor that of my reader, with a vast number of discordant and conflicting opinions; I shall make a few remarks: 1. The doctrine of the resurrection of our Lord was a grand

doctrine among the apostles; they considered and preached this as the demonstration of the truth of the Gospel. 2. The multitudes who embraced Christianity became converts on the evidence of this resurrection. 3. This resurrection was considered the pledge and proof of the resurrection of all believers in Christ to the possession of the same glory into which he had entered. 4. The baptism which they received they considered as an emblem of their natural death and resurrection. This doctrine St. Paul most pointedly preaches, Romans 6:3-5: Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore

“I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” That is, I must die a violent death for the salvation of men. 10. The sum of the apostle’s meaning appears to be this: If there be no resurrection of the dead, those who, in becoming Christians, expose themselves to all manner of privations, crosses, severe sufferings, and a violent death, can have no compensation, nor any motive sufficient to induce them to expose themselves to such miseries. But as they receive baptism as an emblem of death in voluntarily going under the water, so they receive it as an emblem of the resurrection unto eternal life, in coming up out of the water; thus they are baptized for the dead, in perfect faith of the resurrection. The three following verses seem to confirm this sense.

**Verse 30. *And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?***— Is there any reason why we should voluntarily submit to so many sufferings, and every hour be in danger of losing our lives, if the dead rise not? On the conviction of the possibility and certainty of the resurrection, we are thus baptized for the dead. We have counted the cost, despise sufferings, and exult at the prospect of death, because we know we shall have a resurrection unto eternal life.

**Verse 31. *I protest by your rejoicing***— *νη την υμετεραν καυχησιν*. By your exaltation or boasting. Dr. Lightfoot understands this of “the boasting of the Corinthians against the apostle; that he considered himself continually trampled on by them; rejected and exposed to infamy and contempt; but that he took this as a part of the reproach of Christ; and was happy in the prospect of death and a glorious resurrection, when all those troubles and wrongs would terminate for ever.” Instead of *υμετεραν*, YOUR exultation or boasting, *ημετεραν*, OUR exultation, is the reading of the Codex Alexandrinus, and several others, with the Aethiopic, Origen, and Theophylact. This will lead to an easier sense: I declare by the exultation which I have in Christ Jesus, as having died for my offenses, and risen again for my justification, that I neither fear sufferings nor death; and am daily ready to be offered up, and feel myself continually exposed to death. But the common reading is probably to be preferred; for your glorying is the same as glorying on your account: I profess by the glorying or exultation which I have on account of your salvation, that I anticipate with pleasure the end of my earthly race.

***I die daily.***— A form of speech for, I am continually exposed to death. The following passages will illustrate this. So Philo, p. 990. Flaccus, who was in continual fear of death, says: **καθ' ἑκαστην ἡμεραν, μαλλον δε ωραν, προαποθνησκω, πολλους θανατους υπομενων ανθ' ενος του τελευταιου.** “Every day, rather every hour, I anticipate death; enduring many deaths before that last one comes.” So Libanius, speaking of his own miseries and those of the people of Antioch, epist. 1320, page 615, says: **ετι ζωντες τεθνηκαμεν.** “Though living, we are dead.” Livy has a similar form of expression to signify continual danger, xxix. 17: Quotidie capitur urbs nostra, quotidie diripitur. “Daily is our city taken, daily is it pillaged.”

**Verse 32. *If, after the manner of men,*** etc.— Much learned criticism has been employed on this verse, to ascertain whether it is to be understood literally or metaphorically. Does the apostle mean to say that he had literally fought with wild beasts at Ephesus? or, that he had met with brutish, savage men, from whom he was in danger of his life? That St. Paul did not fight with wild beasts at Ephesus, may be argued, 1. From his own silence on this subject, when enumerating his various sufferings, 2 Corinthians 11:23, etc. 2. From the silence of his historian, Luke, who, in the acts of this apostle, gives no intimation of this kind; and it certainly was too remarkable a circumstance to be passed over, either by Paul in the catalogue of his own sufferings, or by Luke in his history. 3. From similar modes of speech, which are employed metaphorically, and are so understood. 4. From the improbability that a Roman citizen, as Paul was, should be condemned to such a punishment, when in other cases, by pleading his privilege, he was exempted from being scourged, etc. And, 5. From the positive testimony of Tertullian and Chrysostom, who deny the literal interpretation.

On the other hand, it is strongly argued that the apostle is to be literally understood; and that he did, at some particular time, contend with wild beasts at Ephesus, from which he was miraculously delivered. 1. That the phrase **κατα ανθρωπον** signifies as men used to do, and never means according to the manner of men, as implying their purpose, or, to use their forms of speech, etc. 2. From the circumstances of the case in Ephesus usually referred to, viz. the insurrection by Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen; where, though Paul would have been in danger had he gone into

the theater, he was in little or none, as he did not adventure himself. 3. From his having endured much greater conflicts at Lystra and at Philippi than at Ephesus, at the former of which he was stoned to death, and again miraculously raised to life: see the notes on Acts 14:19, etc. And yet he calls not those greater dangers by this name. 4. That it cannot refer to the insurrection of Demetrius and his fellows, for St. Paul had no contention with them, and was scarcely in any danger, though Gaius and Aristarchus were: see the whole of Acts 19. And, 5. As we do not read of any other imminent danger to which he was exposed at Ephesus, and that already mentioned is not sufficient to justify the expression, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, therefore we must conclude that he was at some time, not directly mentioned by his historian or himself, actually exposed to wild beasts at Ephesus. 6. That this is the case he refers to, 2 Corinthians 1:8-10: For we would not, brethren, have you if ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, καθ' υπερβολην εβαρηθημεν υπερ δυναμεις, insomuch that we despaired even of life. But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead; who delivered us from so great a death: for these expressions refer to some excessive and unprecedented danger, from which nothing less than a miraculous interference could have saved him; and that it might have been an actual exposure to wild beasts, or any other danger equally great, or even greater.

***What advantage it me, if the dead rise not?***— I believe the common method of pointing this verse is erroneous; I propose to read it thus: If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what doth it advantage me? If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.

What the apostle says here is a regular and legitimate conclusion from the doctrine, that there is no resurrection: For if there be no resurrection, then there can be no judgment—no future state of rewards and punishments; why, therefore, should we bear crosses, and keep ourselves under continual discipline? Let us eat and drink, take all the pleasure we can, for tomorrow we die; and there is an end of us for ever. The words, Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die, are taken from Isaiah 22:13, as they stand now in the Septuagint; and are a pretty smooth proverbial saying,



which might be paralleled from the writings of several epicurean heathens, φαγωμεν και πιωμεν αυριον γαρ αποθνησκομεν. The words of Isaiah are אכול רשתו כי מחר נמות akol reshatho, ki machar namuth: “In eating and drinking, for to-morrow we die ;” i.e. Let us spend our time in eating and drinking, etc. See a similar speech by Trimalchio in Petronius Arbiter, Satiric. cap. xxxvii:—

*Heu, heu nos miseros! quam totus homuncio nil est!  
Sic erimus cuncti, postquam nos auferet orcus.  
Ergo vivamus, dum licet esse bene.*

Alas! alas! what wretches we are! all mankind are a worthless pack: thus shall we all be, after death hath taken us away. Therefore, while we may, let us enjoy life.

**Verse 33. *Be not deceived***— Do not impose on yourselves, and permit not others to do it.

***Evil communications corrupt good manners.***— There are many sayings like this among the Greek poets; but this of the apostle, and which according to the best MSS. makes an Iambic verse, is generally supposed to have been taken from Menander’s lost comedy of Thais.

φθειρουσιν ηθη χρησθ’ ομιλια κακαι·

*Bad company good morals doth corrupt.*

There is a proverb much like this among the rabbins:

תרי אורי יכישו ותר רטיבא אוקר יכישו לרטיבא

*“There were two dry logs of wood, and one green log;  
but the dry logs burnt up the green log.”*

There is no difficulty in this saying; he who frequents the company of bad or corrupt men will soon be as they are. He may be sound in the faith, and have the life and power of godliness, and at first frequent their company only for the sake of their pleasing conversation, or their literary accomplishments: and he may think his faith proof against their infidelity; but he will soon find, by means of their glozing speeches, his faith weakened; and when once he gets under the empire of doubt, unbelief will

soon prevail; his bad company will corrupt his morals; and the two dry logs will soon burn up the green one.

The same sentiment in nearly the same words is found in several of the Greek writers; AEschylus, Sept. Theb. ver. 605: *εν παντι πραγει δεσθ' ομιλιας κακης κακιος ουδεν*. “In every matter there is nothing more deleterious than evil communication.” — Diodorus Siculus, lib. xvi. cap. 54: *ταις πονηραις ομιλιας διεφθειρε τα ηθη των ανθρωπων*. “With these evil communications he corrupted the morals of men.”

ταυτα μεν ουτως ισθι· κακοισι δε μη προσομιλο  
ανδρασιν, αλλθ αιει των αγαθων εχει·  
και μετα τοισιν πινε και εσθιε, και μετα τοισιν  
ιζε, και ανδανε τοις, ων μεγαλη δυναμις.  
εσθλων μεν γαρ απ' εσθλα μαθησεαι· ην δε κακοισι  
συμμιχθης, απολεις και τον εοντα νοον.

Theogn. Sent., ver. 31-36.

Know this: Thou must not keep company with the wicked, but converse always with good men. With such eat, drink, and associate. Please those who have the greatest virtue. From good men thou mayest learn good things; but if thou keep company with the wicked, thou wilt lose even the intelligence which thou now possessest.

**Verse 34. *Awake to righteousness***— Shake off your slumber; awake fully, thoroughly, *δικαιως*, as ye ought to do: so the word should be rendered; not awake to righteousness. Be in earnest; do not trifle with God, your souls, and eternity.

***Sin not***— For this will lead to the destruction both of body and soul. Life is but a moment; improve it. Heaven has blessings without end.

***Some have not the knowledge of God***— The original is very emphatic: *αγνωσιαν γαρ θεου τινες εχουσι*, some have an ignorance of God; they do not acknowledge God. They have what is their bane; and they have not what would be their happiness and glory. To have an ignorance of God—a sort of substantial darkness, that prevents the light of God from penetrating the soul, is a worse state than to be simply in the dark, or without the Divine knowledge. The apostle probably speaks of those who were once enlightened, had once good morals, but were corrupted by bad

company. It was to their shame or reproach that they had left the good way, and were now posting down to the chambers of death.

**Verse 35. *But some man will say***— *αλλα ερει τις*. It is very likely that the apostle, by *τις* some, some one, some man, means particularly the false apostle, or teacher at Corinth, who was chief in the opposition to the pure doctrine of the Gospel, and to whom, in this covert way, he often refers.

The second part of the apostle's discourse begins at this verse. What shall be the nature of the resurrection body?

1. The question is stated, 1 Corinthians 15:35. 2. It is answered: first, by a similitude, 1 Corinthians 15:36-38; secondly, by an application, 1 Corinthians 15:33-41; and thirdly, by explication, 1 Corinthians 15:42-50.

**Verse 36. *Thou fool***— *αφρον*. If this be addressed, as it probably is, to the false apostle, there is a peculiar propriety in it; as this man seems to have magnified his own wisdom, and set it up against both God and man; and none but a fool could act so. At the same time, it is folly in any to assert the impossibility of a thing because he cannot comprehend it.

***That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die***— I have shown the propriety of this simile of the apostle in the note on John 12:24, to which I must refer the reader. A grain of wheat, etc., is composed of the body or lobes, and the germ. The latter forms an inconsiderable part of the mass of the grain; the body, lobes, or farinaceous part, forms nearly the whole. This body dies-becomes decomposed, and forms a fine earth, from which the germ derives its first nourishment; by the nourishment thus derived the germ is quickened, receives its first vegetable life, and through this means is rendered capable of deriving the rest of its nourishment and support from the grosser earth in which the grain was deposited. Whether the apostle would intimate here that there is a certain germ in the present body, which shall become the seed of the resurrection body, this is not the place to inquire; and on this point I can with pleasure refer to Mr. Drew's work on the "Resurrection of the Human Body;" where this subject, as well as every other subject connected with this momentous question, is considered in a very luminous and cogently argumentative point of view.

**Verse 37. *Thou sowest not that body that shall be***— This is decomposed, and becomes the means of nourishing the whole plant, roots, stalk, leaves, ear, and full corn in the ear.

**Verse 38. *But God giveth it a body***— And is there any other way of accounting for it but by the miraculous working of God's power? For out of that one bare grain is produced a system of roots, a tall and vigorous stalk, with all its appendages of leaves, etc., besides the full corn in the ear; the whole making several hundred times the quantum of what was originally deposited. There are no proofs that what some call nature can effect this: it will ever be a philosophical as well as a Scriptural truth, that God giveth it a body as it pleaseth him; and so doth he manage the whole of the work, that every seed shall have its own body: that the wheat germ shall never produce barley; nor the rye, oats. See the note on Genesis 1:12.

**Verse 39. *All flesh is not the same flesh***— Though the organization of all animals is, in its general principles, the same, yet there are no two different kinds of animals that have flesh of the same flavour, whether the animal be beast, fowl, or fish. And this is precisely the same with vegetables.

In opposition to this general assertion of St. Paul, there are certain people who tell us that fish is not flesh; and while their religion prohibits, at one time of the year, the flesh of quadrupeds and fowls, it allows them to eat fish, fondly supposing that fish is not flesh: they might as well tell us that a lily is not a vegetable, because it is not a cabbage. There is a Jewish canon pronounced by Schoettgen which my readers may not be displeased to find inserted here: Nedarim, fol. 40: **יְהֵא אִסּוּר כְּבוֹר הַגִּימ וְהַגִּימ**  
**הַנּוֹדֵר מִהַכֶּשֶׁר** He who is bound by a vow to abstain from flesh, is bound to abstain from the flesh of fish and of locusts. From this it appears that they acknowledged that there was one flesh of beasts and another of fishes, and that he was religiously bound to abstain from the one, who was bound to abstain from the other.

**Verse 40. *There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial***— The apostle certainly does not speak of celestial and terrestrial bodies in the sense in which we use those terms: we invariably mean by the former the sun, moon, planets, and stars; by the latter, masses of inanimate matter. But the apostle speaks of human beings, some of which were clothed with

celestial, others with terrestrial bodies. It is very likely, therefore, that he means by the celestial bodies such as those refined human bodies with which Enoch, Elijah, and Christ himself, appear in the realms of glory: to which we may add the bodies of those saints which arose after our Lord's resurrection; and, after having appeared to many, doubtless were taken up to paradise. By terrestrial bodies we may understand those in which the saints now live.

***But the glory of the celestial is one***— The glory—the excellence, beauty, and perfection. Even the present frail human body possesses an indescribable degree of contrivance, art, economy, order, beauty, and excellence; but the celestial body, that in which Christ now appears, and according to which ours shall be raised, (Philippians 3:21,) will exceed the excellence of this beyond all comparison. A glory or splendor will belong to that which does not belong to this: here there is a glory of excellence; there, there will be a glory of light and effulgence; for the bodies of the saints shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. See Matthew 13:43.

**Verse 41. *There is one glory of the sun***— As if he had said: This may be illustrated by the present appearance of the celestial bodies which belong to our system. The sun has a greater degree of splendor than the moon; the moon than the planets; and the planets than the stars. And even in the fixed stars, one has a greater degree of splendor than another, which may proceed either from their different magnitudes, or from the comparative proximity of some of them to our earth; but from which of these causes, or from what other cause unknown, we cannot tell, as it is impossible to ascertain the distance of any of the fixed stars; even the nearest of them being too remote to afford any sensible parallax, without which their distances cannot be measured. See the concluding observations.

**Verse 42. *So also is the resurrection of the dead***.— That is, the bodies of the dead, though all immortal, shall possess different degrees of splendor and glory, according to the state of holiness in which their respective souls were found. The rabbins have some crude notions concerning different degrees of glory, which the righteous shall possess in the kingdom of heaven. They make out seven degrees:—

“The first of which is possessed by צדיקים tsaddi kim, the just, who observe the covenant of the holy, blessed God, and subjugate all evil affections.”

“The second is possessed by those who are ישרים yesharim, the upright; whose delight it is to walk in the ways of God and please him.”

“The third is for תמימים temimim, the perfect: those who, with integrity, walk in the ways of God, and do not curiously pry into his dispensations.”

“The fourth is for קדושים kedoshim, the holy ones; those who are the excellent of the earth, in whom is all God’s delight.” Psalm 16:3.

“The fifth is for בעלי תשובה baaley teshubah, the chief of the penitents; who have broken through the brazen doors, and returned to the Lord.”

“The sixth is for תינוקות של בית רב tinukoth shel beith raban, the scholars and tender ones; who have not transgressed.”

“The seventh is for חסידים chasidim, the godly: and this is the innermost of all the departments.” These seven degrees require a comment by themselves.

There is a saying among the rabbins very like that of the apostle in this and the preceding verse Siphri, in Yalcut Simeoni, page 2, fol. 10: “The faces of the righteous shall be, in the world to come, like suns, moons, the heaven, stars, lightnings: and like the lilies and candlesticks of the temple.”

***It is sown in corruption***— The body is buried in a state of degradation, decay, and corruption. The apostle uses the word sown to intimate that the body shall rise again, as a seed springs up that has been sown in the earth.

***It is raised in incorruption***— Being no more subject to corruption, dissolution, and death.

**Verse 43. *It is sown in dishonor***— Being now stripped of all the glory it had as a machine, fearfully and wonderfully made by the hands of God; and also consigned to death and destruction because of sin. This is the most dishonorable circumstance.

***It is raised in glory***— It is raised a glorious body, because immortal, and for ever redeemed from the empire of death.

***It is sown in weakness***— The principles of dissolution, corruption, and decay, have prevailed over it; disease undermined it; and death made it his prey.

***It is raised in power***— To be no more liable to weakness, through labor; decay, by age; wasting, by disease; and dissolution, by death.

**Verse 44. *It is sown a natural body***— **σωμα ψυχικον**. An animal body, having a multiplicity of solids and fluids of different kinds, with different functions; composed of muscles, fibres, tendons, cartilages, bones, arteries, veins, nerves, blood, and various juices, requiring continual support from aliment; and hence the necessity of labor to provide food, and skill to prepare it; which food must be masticated, digested, and refined; what is proper for nourishment secreted, brought into the circulation, farther elaborated, and prepared to enter into the composition of every part; hence growth and nutrition; without which no organized body can possibly exist.

***It is raised a spiritual body***.— One perfect in all its parts; no longer dependent on natural productions for its support; being built up on indestructible principles, and existing in a region where there shall be no more death; no more causes of decay leading to dissolution; and consequently, no more necessity for food, nutrition, etc. The body is spiritual, and has a spiritual existence and spiritual support.

What the apostle says here is quite consistent with the views his countrymen had on this subject.

In Sohar Chadash, fol. 43, it is said: “So shall it be in the resurrection of the dead; only, the old uncleanness shall not be found.”

R. Bechai, on the law, fol. 14, says: “When the godly shall arise, their bodies shall be pure and innocent; obedient to the instinct of the soul: there shall be no adversary, nor any evil disease.”

Rab. Pinchas says: “The holy blessed God shall make the bodies of the righteous as beautiful as the body of Adam was when he entered into paradise.”

Rab. Levi says: "When the soul is in heaven, it is clothed with celestial light; when it returns to the body, it shall have the same light; and then the body shall shine like the splendor of the firmament of heaven. Then shall men gain the knowledge of what is perfect." Sohar. Gen., fol. 69.

The Jews have an opinion that the os coxendicis, the lower joint of the backbone, survives the corruption of the body; and that it is out of this bone that the resurrection body is formed. In the place last quoted, fol. 70, we have the following teachings on this subject: "Let us borrow an example from what relates to the purifying of silver. First, the ore is cast into the burning furnace, that it may be separated from its earthly impurities; it is then silver, but not perfect silver. They put it into the furnace a second time, and then all its scoriae are separated from it, and it becomes perfect silver, without any adulteration. Thus does the holy blessed God: he first buries our bodies under the earth, where they putrefy and corrupt, that nothing remains but that one bone: from this a new body is produced, which is indeed a body, but not a perfect body. But in that great day, when all bodies are hidden in the earth, and the soul departs, then even that bone decays, and the body which was formed out of it remains, and is as the light of the sun, and the splendor of heaven. Thus, as the silver was purified, so is the body: and no imperfect mixture remains." See Schoettgen.

These things must not be treated as rabbinical dotages; the different similes used for the apostle have the same spirit and design: as the seed which is sown in the earth rots, and out of the germ contained in it God in his providence produces a root, stalk, leaves, ear, and a great numerical increase of grains; is it not likely that God, out of some essential parts of the body that now is, will produce the resurrection body; and will then give the soul a body as it pleaseth him; and so completely preserve the individuality of every human being, as he does of every grain; giving to each its own body? 1 Corinthians 15:38. So that as surely as the grain of wheat shall produce wheat after it is cast in the earth, corrupts, and dies; so surely shall our bodies produce the same bodies as to their essential individuality. As the germination of seeds is produced by his wisdom and power, so shall the pure and perfect human body be in the resurrection. Hence he does not say the body is buried, but the body is sown; it is sown in weakness, it is sown in dishonor, etc., etc.



***There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.***— This very saying is found in so many words, in Yalcut Rubeni, fol. 126: “There are different kinds of men.” רגופא אית אדם דאיהו אדם דנשמה ואיה אדם  
 “There is a spiritual Adam, and there is also a corporeal Adam.”

**Verse 45. *The first man Adam was made a living soul***— These forms of expression are also common among the Jews: hence we find אדם הראשו Adam harishon, “Adam the first;” and אדם קדמא Adam kadmai, “Adam the last.” They assert that there are two Adams: The mystical heavenly Adam; and 2. The mystical earthly Adam. See Sohar Exod., fol. 29; and the several examples in Schoettgen. The apostle says this is written: The first man Adam was made a living soul: this is found Genesis 2:7, in the words נשמת חיים nishmath chayim, the breath of lives; which the apostle translates ψυχη ζωσαν, a living soul.

***The last Adam—a quickening spirit.***— This is also said to be written; but where, says Dr. Lightfoot, is this written in the whole sacred book? Schoettgen replies, In the very same verse, and in these words: לנפש חיה ויהי האדם vayehi ha-Adam le-nephesh chayah, and Adam became a living soul; which the apostle translates πνευμα ζωοποιουσα, a quickening, or life-giving spirit. Among the cabalistic Jews נפש nephesh is considered as implying greater dignity than נשמה nishma. The former may be considered as pointing out the rational, the latter the sensitive soul. All these references to Jewish opinions and forms of speech the apostle uses to convince them that the thing was possible; and that the resurrection of the body was generally credited by all their wise and learned men. The Jews, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, speak frequently of the Spirit of the Messiah; and they allow that it was this Spirit that moved on the face of the waters, Genesis 1:2. And they assert that the Messiah shall quicken those who dwell in the dust.

“It ought not to be passed by,” says the same author, “that Adam, receiving from God the promise of Christ—The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent, and believing it, named his wife חוה Chauvah, that is, life; so the Septuagint, και εκαλεσεν αδαμ το ονομα της γυναικος αυτου ζωη. And Adam called the name of his wife, Life. What! Is she called Life that brought death into the world? But Adam

perceived **τον εσχατον αδαμ**, the last Adam exhibited to him in the promise, to be **πνευμα ζωο, ποιουν**, a quickening or life-giving spirit; and had brought in a better life of the soul; and should at last bring in a better life of the body. Hence is that saying, John 1:4: **εν αυτω ζωη ην**, In HIM was LIFE.”

Some contend that the first Adam and the last Adam mean the same person in two different states: the first man with the body of his creation; the same person with the body of his resurrection. See on 1 Corinthians 15:49.

**Verse 46. *That was not first which is spiritual***— The natural or animal body, described 1 Corinthians 15:44, was the first; it was the body with which Adam was created. The spiritual body is the last, and is that with which the soul is to be clothed in the resurrection.

**Verse 47. *The first man is of the earth***— That is: Adam’s body was made out of the dust of the earth; and hence the apostle says he was **χοικος**, of the dust; for the body was made **עפר מ האדמה** *aphar min ha-adamah*, dust from the ground; Genesis 2:7.

***The second man is-from heaven.***— Heavenly, **ουρανιος**, as several good MSS. and versions read. The resurrection body shall be of a heavenly nature, and not subject to decay or death. What is formed of earth must live after an earthly manner; must be nourished and supported by the earth: what is from heaven is of a spiritual nature; and shall have no farther connection with, nor dependence upon, earth. I conceive both these clauses to relate to man; and to point out the difference between the animal body and the spiritual body, or between the bodies which we now have and the bodies which we shall have in the resurrection. But can this be the meaning of the clause, the second man is the Lord from heaven? In the quotation I have omitted **ο κυριος**, the Lord, on the following authorities: MANUSCRIPTS-BCD\*EFG, and two others. VERSIONS-Coptic, Aethiopic, Armenian in the margin, Vulgate, and Itala. FATHERS-Origen, who quotes it once and omits it once; Athanasius, Basil, the two Gregories, Nyssen and Nazianzen; Isidore, Cyril, Tertullian, Cyprian, Hilary, Zeno, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, Ambrosiaster, Philaster, Leo, Pacianus, Primasius, Sedulius, Bede, and others. See these authorities more at large in Wetstein. Some of the most eminent of modern critics leave out the word, and

Tertullian says that it was put in by the heretic Marcion. I do think that the word is not legitimate in this place. The verse is read by the MSS., versions, and fathers referred to, thus: The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is of heaven, heavenly; **κρυστος** being omitted and **ουρανιος** added. The first man and the second man of this verse are the same as the first Adam and the second Adam of 1 Corinthians 15:45, and it is not clear that Christ is meant in either place. Some suppose that there is a reference here to what Eve said when she brought forth Cain: I have gotten a man from the Lord, **קניתי איש את יהוה** kanithi ish eth Yehovah, I have possessed or obtained a man, the Lord; that is, as Dr. Lightfoot explains it, that the Lord himself should become man: and he thinks that Eve had respect to the promise of Christ when she named her son; as Adam had when he named his wife. If Eve had this in view, we can only say she was sadly mistaken: indeed the conjecture is too refined.

The terms first man of the earth, and second man from heaven, are frequent among the Jews: **אדם לעילא** the superior Adam; and **תתאה אדם** Adam the inferior; that is, the earthly and the heavenly Adam: Adam before the resurrection, and Adam after it.

**Verse 48.** *As is the earthy*, etc.— As Adam was, who was formed from the earth, so are all his descendants; frail, decaying, and subject to death.

*As is the heavenly*— As is the heavenly state of Adam and all glorified beings, so shall be the state of all those who, at the resurrection, are found fit for glory.

**Verse 49.** *And as we have borne the image of the earthy*— As being descendants from Adam we have all been born in his likeness, and subject to the same kind of corruption, disgrace, and death; we shall also be raised to a life immortal, such as he now enjoys in the kingdom of God. This interpretation proceeds on the ground that what is here spoken belongs to Adam in his twofold state: viz. of mortality and immortality; of disgrace and honor; of earth and heaven.

But by many commentators the words are understood to refer to Adam and Christ, in 1 Corinthians 15:46-49. By these, Christ is called the second Adam, the quickening Spirit, the second man, and the heavenly; whose image of righteousness and true holiness we are to bear.

But when I consider, 1st. How all these terms are used and applied in the Jewish writings, it appears to me that as this was not their import among them, so it was not the design of Paul; and it would be very difficult to find any place where Jesus Christ is called the second Adam in either Old or New Testament. The discourse of the apostle, Romans 5:14-19, will not prove it, though in those verses there is a comparison drawn between Adam and Christ; but that comparison refers to the extent of the sin and condemnation brought upon all men by the transgression of the first; and the redemption purchased for all men by the sacrifice of the last; and the

propose is no heresy. There are many difficulties in the chapter, and not a few in the verses immediately under consideration.

**Verse 50. *Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom***— This is a Hebrew periphrasis for man, and man in his present state of infirmity and decay. Man, in his present state, cannot inherit the kingdom of God; his nature is not suited to that place; he could not, in his present weak state, endure an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory. Therefore, it is necessary that he should die, or be changed; that he should have a celestial body suited to the celestial state. The apostle is certainly not speaking of flesh and blood in a moral sense, to signify corruption of mind and heart; but in a natural sense; as such, flesh and blood cannot inherit glory, for the reasons already assigned.

**Verse 51. *I show you a mystery***— That is, a thing which you have never known before. But what is this mystery? Why, that we shall not all sleep; we shall not all die; but we shall all be changed: of this the Jews had not distinct notions. For, as flesh and blood cannot inherit glory, and all shall not be found dead at the day of judgment, then all must be changed—undergo such a change that their bodies may become spiritual, like the bodies of those who shall be raised from the dead.

**Verse 52. *In a moment***— *εν ατομω*. In an atom; that is, an indivisible point of time. In the twinkling of an eye; as soon as a man can wink; which expressions show that this mighty work is to be done by the almighty power of God, as he does all his works, He calls, and it is done. The resurrection of all the dead, from the foundation of the world to that time, and the change of all the living then upon earth, shall be the work of a single moment.

***At the last trump***— This, as well as all the rest of the peculiar phraseology of this chapter, is merely Jewish, and we must go to the Jewish writers to know what is intended. On this subject, the rabbins use the very same expression. Thus Rabbi Akiba: “How shall the holy blessed God raise the dead? We are taught that God has a trumpet a thousand ells long, according to the ell of God: this trumpet he shall blow, so that the sound of it shall extend from one extremity of the earth to the other. At the first blast the earth shall be shaken; at the second, the dust shall be separated; at the third, the bones shall be gathered together; at the fourth, the members shall

wax warm; at the fifth, the heads shall be covered with skin; at the sixth, the souls shall be rejoined to their bodies; at the seventh, all shall revive and stand clothed.” See Wetstein. This tradition shows us what we are to understand by the last trump of the apostle; it is the seventh of Rab. Akiba, when the dead shall be all raised, and, being clothed upon with their eternal vehicles, they shall be ready to appear before the judgment seat of God.

***For the trumpet shall sound***— By this the apostle confirms the substance of the tradition, there shall be the sound of a trumpet on this great day; and this other scriptures teach: see Zechariah 9:14; Matthew 24:31; John 5:25; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, in which latter place, the apostle treats this subject among the Thessalonians, as he does here among the Corinthians. See the notes there.

***Shall be raised incorruptible***— Fully clothed with a new body, to die no more.

***We shall be changed.***— That is, those who shall then be found alive.

**Verse 53. *For this corruptible***, etc.— Because flesh and blood cannot inherit glory; therefore, there must be a refinement by death, or a change without it.

**Verse 54. *Death is swallowed up in victory.***— **κατεποθη ο θανατος εις νικος**. These words are a quotation from Isaiah 25:8, where the Hebrew is **בלע המות לנצח** *billa hammaveth lanetsach*: He (God) hath swallowed up death in victory; or, for ever. These words in the Septuagint are thus translated: **κατεπιεν ο θανατος ισχυσας**. Death having prevailed, or conquered, hath swallowed up. But in the version of Theodotion, the words are the same with those of the apostle. The Hebrew **לנצח** *lanetsach* the Septuagint sometimes translate **εις νικος**, in victory, but most commonly **εις τελος**, for ever; both, as Bishop Pearce observes, in such kind of phrases, signifying the same thing, because eternity conquers all things; and accordingly, in 2 Samuel 2:26, where the Septuagint have **μη εις νικος καταφαγεται η ρομφαια**, our English version has, Shall the sword devour FOR EVER? And the same may be seen in Job 36:7; Lamentations 5:20; Amos 1:11; 8:7; from which authority the bishop translates the clause here, Death is swallowed up FOR EVER.

Death is here personified and represented as a devouring being, swallowing up all the generations of men; and by the resurrection of the body and the destruction of the empire of death, God is represented as swallowing him up; or that eternity gulps him down; so that he is endlessly lost and absorbed in its illimitable waste. How glorious a time to the righteous, when the inhabitant shall no more say, I am sick; when God shall have wiped away all tears from off all faces, and when there shall be no more death. This time must come. Hallelujah! The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

**Verse 55.** *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*—  
 που σου, θανατε, το κεντρον· που σου, αδη, το νικος· These words are generally supposed to be taken from Hosea 13:14, where the Hebrew

Having vindicated the translation, it is necessary to inquire into the meaning of the apostle's expressions. Both Death and Hades are here personified: Death is represented as having a sting, dagger, or goad, by which, like the driver of oxen, he is continually irritating and urging on; (these irritations are the diseases by which men are urged on till they fall into Hades, the empire of Death;) to Hades, victory is attributed, having overcome and conquered all human life, and subdued all to its own empire. By the transposition of these two members of the sentence, the victory is given to Death, who has extinguished all human life; and the sting is given to Hades, as in his empire the evil of death is fully displayed by the extinction of all animal life, and the destruction of all human bodies. We have often seen a personification of death in ancient paintings—a skeleton crowned, with a dart in his hand; probably taken from the apostle's description. The Jews represent the angel of death as having a sword, from which deadly drops of gall fall into the mouths of all men.

Hades, which we here translate grave, is generally understood to be the place of separate spirits. See the note on Matthew 11:23.

**Verse 56. *The sting of death is sin***— The apostle explains himself particularly here: death could not have entered into the world if sin had not entered first; it was sin that not only introduced death, but has armed him with all his destroying force; the goad or dagger of death is sin; by this both body and soul are slain.

***The strength of sin is the law***.— The law of God forbids all transgression, and sentences those who commit it to temporal and eternal death. Sin has its controlling and binding power from the law. The law curses the transgressor, and provides no help for him; and if nothing else intervene, he must, through it, continue ever under the empire of death.

**Verse 57. *But thanks be to God***— What the law could not do, because it is law, (and law cannot provide pardon,) is done by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: he has died to slay death; he has risen again to bring mankind from under the empire of hades. All this he has done through his mere unmerited mercy; and eternal thanks are due to God for this unspeakable gift. He has given us the victory over sin, Satan, death, the grave, and hell.



**Verse 58. *Be ye steadfast***— ἕδραῖοι, from ἕδρα, a seat; be settled; confide in the truth of this doctrine of the resurrection, and every thing that pertains to it, as confidently as a man sits down on a SEAT, which he knows to be solid, firm, and safe; and on which he has often sat.

***Unmovable***— ἀμετακίνητοι, from α, negative, and μετακινεω, to move away; let nothing shake your faith; let nothing move you away from this hope of the Gospel which is given unto you. What I tell you I receive from God; your false teachers cannot say so: in a declaration of God you may unshakingly confide.

***Always abounding in the work of the Lord***— The work of the Lord is obedience to his holy word; every believer in Christ is a workman of God. He that works not, to bring glory to God and good to man, is not acknowledged as a servant of Christ; and if he be not a servant, he is not a son; and if not a son, then not an heir. And he must not only work, but abound in that work; ever exceeding his former self; and this, not for a time, but always; beginning, continuing, and ending every act of life to God's glory and the good of his fellows.

***Your labor is not in vain***— Your labor in the Lord is not in vain; you must not only work, but you must labor-put forth all your strength; and you must work and labor in the Lord-under his direction, and by his influence; for without him ye can do nothing. And this labor cannot be in vain; you shall have a resurrection unto eternal life: not because you have labored, but because Christ died and gave you grace to be faithful.

1. THE chapter through which the reader has passed is a chapter of great importance and difficulty; and on its difficulties much has been written in the preceding notes. Though I have used all the helps in my power to guide me in explaining it, I have, upon the whole, been obliged to think for myself, and claim only the praise of severe labor, ever directed by honest intention and an earnest desire to find out the truth.

2. There are many questions connected with the doctrine of the resurrection which I could not introduce here without writing a book instead of short notes on a very long chapter. On such subjects, I again beg leave to direct the reader to Mr. Samuel Drew's Essay on that subject.

3. One remark I cannot help making; the doctrine of the resurrection appears to have been thought of much more consequence among the primitive Christians than it is now! How is this? The apostles were continually insisting on it, and exciting the followers of God to diligence, obedience, and cheerfulness through it. And their successors in the present day seldom mention it! So apostles preached, and so primitive Christians believed; so we preach, and so our hearers believe. There is not a doctrine in the Gospel on which more stress is laid; and there is not a doctrine in the present system of preaching which is treated with more neglect!

4. Though all men shall rise again, yet it will be in widely different circumstances: some will rise to glory and honor; others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those alone who here received the salvation of God, and continued faithful unto death, shall have a resurrection to everlasting glory; not every believer, but every loving obedient believer, shall enter into the paradise of God, and have a body fashioned like unto his Lord's glorious body.

5. All glorified spirits will not have the same degree of glory. Two things will necessarily cause great difference: 1. The quantum of mind; and 2. The quantum of grace.

(1.) It is idle to suppose that God has made all human souls with the same capacities: he has not. There is an infinite diversity; he who has the greatest mind can know most, do most, suffer most, and enjoy most.

(2.) The quantum of grace will be another great cause of diversity and glory. He who received most of Christ here, and was most devoted to his service, shall have the nearest approach to him in his own kingdom. But all equally holy and equally faithful souls shall not have equal degrees of glory; for the glory will be according to the capacity of the mind, as well as the degree of grace and improvement. The greater the capacity, provided it be properly influenced by the grace of Christ, the greater will be the enjoyment.

6. That there will be great diversity in the states of glorified saints is the apostle's doctrine; and he illustrates it by the different degrees of splendor between the sun, moon, planets, and stars. This needs little application. There are some of the heavenly bodies that give heat, light, and splendor,

as the SUN; and are of the utmost service to the world: some that give light, and comparative splendor, without heat, as the MOON; and yet are of very great use to mankind: others, again, which give a steady but not a splendid light, at the PLANETS; and are serviceable in their particular spheres: and lastly, others which twinkle in their respective systems, as the stars of different magnitudes.

7. One star, says the apostle, differs from another in glory, i.e. in splendor, according to what is called their different magnitudes. I will state a remarkable fact: The northern and southern hemispheres of the heavens have been divided into 102 constellations, and in these constellations Professor Bode has set down the places of 17, 240 stars; simple, nebulous, conglobate, and double. The stars have been distinguished by their apparent magnitudes or rather splendor, into stars of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, etc., magnitudes: of these 17, 240, only sixteen are, by astronomers in general, agreed to be of the first magnitude, all of which are set down in the following catalogue, with some of those that are remarkable in the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth magnitudes. The reader will observe that the name of the constellation or star is first mentioned; the Greek letters, etc., are those by which they are distinguished on maps and globes; and they are, by astronomers, referred to by these letters and numbers. My inferences follow the table.

A TABLE of the most remarkable FIXED STARS, from the FIRST to Observations on the preceding Table.

The five stars of the second magnitude in the above list, marked with an asterisk, are by some writers denominated of the first magnitude; and those named of the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth magnitudes, (the stars of the last-mentioned order being barely visible to the naked eye,) are such as the moon can occult, or make a near appulse to; except the last sixteen, in the column of stars of the third magnitude, and the last twenty-nine in that of the sixth magnitude, which never set in the latitude of London. The stars Algol and  $\alpha$  Ceti are set down according to their brightest appearance; the former varying from the second to the fourth magnitude every two days, 20 hours, 48 minutes, 58 seconds, 18 thirds, and 25 fourths; and the latter, from the second to the seventh, and sometimes to the tenth, every 331 days, 10 hours, and 19 minutes. The stars of the first magnitude,

Capella and Lyra, never set in the latitude of London; Acharnar, Canopus,  $\beta$  in Argo, and  $\alpha$  in the Cross and Centaur, never rise. Of the stars of the second magnitude in the preceding list,  $\beta$  in Medusa's head, or Algol,  $\alpha$  in Perseus, the two Pointers, the Dragon's tail, and the Swan's tail, never set; the head of the Phoenix and the bright star in the Crane never rise. The stars marked with an asterisk in the third column are between the third and fourth magnitudes; and those in the last column with the same mark are between the fifth and sixth magnitudes. Stars fainter than those of the sixth magnitude cannot be discerned without the help of a glass, and are therefore called telescopic. The 2h, and 3h, in Aquarius, are of this last description, both of the seventh magnitude, and such as the moon can occult.

8. This subject, as far as it concerns the present place, admits of few remarks or reflections. It has already been observed, that, of all the stars which our best astronomers have been able to describe and lay down in tables and maps, only sixteen are of the first magnitude; i.e. appear more luminous than any other stars in the firmament: some, indeed, increase the number to twenty-one, by taking in Castor and Pollux, the upper Pointer, Atteer, or Atair, in the Eagle, and  $\beta$  in the ship Argo, which I have placed among those of the second magnitude, because astronomers are not agreed on the subject, some ranking them with stars of the first magnitude, others, with stars of the second.

The reader is probably amazed at the paucity of large stars in the whole firmament of heaven! Will he permit me to carry his mind a little farther, and either stand astonished at or deplore with me the fact, that, out of the millions of Christians in the vicinity and splendor of the eternal Sun of righteousness, how very few are found of the first order! How very few can stand examination by the test laid down in the 13th chapter of this epistle! How very few love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength; and their neighbor as themselves! How few mature Christians are found in the Church! How few are, in all things, living for eternity! How little light, how little heat, and how little influence and activity are to be found among them that bear the name of Christ! How few stars of the FIRST magnitude will the Son of God have to deck the crown of his glory! Few are striving to excel in righteousness; and it seems to be a principal concern with many to find out how little grace they may have, and yet

escape hell; how little conformity to the will of God they may have, and yet get to heaven! In the fear of God I register this testimony, that I have perceived it to be the labor of many to lower the standard of Christianity, and to soften down, or explain away, those promises of God that himself has linked with duties; and because they know that they cannot be saved by their good works, they are contented to have no good works at all: and thus the necessity of Christian obedience, and Christian holiness, makes no prominent part of some modern creeds. Let all those who retain the apostolic doctrine, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin in this life, press every believer to go on to perfection, and expect to be saved, while here below, into the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Jesus. To all such my soul says, Labour to show yourselves approved unto God; workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth; and may the pleasure of the Lord prosper in your hands!-Amen.

## CHAPTER 16.

*The apostle exhorts the Corinthians to make a contribution for the relief of the poor Christians at Jerusalem; and directs to the best mode of doing it, 1-4. Promises to pay them a visit after pentecost, 5-9. Gives directions about the treatment of Timothy and Apollos, 10-12. And concerning watchfulness, etc., 13, 14. Commends the house of Stephanas, and expresses his satisfaction at the visit paid him by Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus, 15-18. Sends the salutations of different persons, 19, 21. Shows the awful state of those who were enemies to Christ, 22. And concludes the epistle with the apostolical benediction, 23, 24.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 16.

**Verse 1. *The collection for the saints***— περι-της λογιας, from λεγω, to gather, or collect; translated by the Vulgate, de collectis, a contribution made by the rich for the relief of the poor. The Christians living at Jerusalem, we may naturally suppose, were greatly straitened; as the enmity of their countrymen to the Gospel of Christ led them to treat those who professed it with cruelty, and spoil them of their goods; (see Hebrews 10:34; and Romans 15:26; and see the note Romans 15:27;) and the apostle hereby teaches that it was the duty of one Christian congregation to help another when in distress.

**Verse 2. *Upon the first day of the week***— The apostle prescribes the most convenient and proper method of making this contribution. 1. Every man was to feel it his duty to succor his brethren in distress. 2. He was to do this according to the ability which God gave him. 3. He was to do this at the conclusion of the week, when he had cast up his weekly earnings, and had seen how much God had prospered his labor. 4. He was then to bring it on the first day of the week, as is most likely, to the church or assembly, that it might be put in the common treasury. 5. We learn from this that the weekly contribution could not be always the same, as each man was to lay by as God had prospered him: now, some weeks he would gain more; others, less. It appears from the whole that the first day of the

week, which is the Christian Sabbath, was the day on which their principal religious meetings were held in Corinth and the Churches of Galatia; and, consequently, in all other places where Christianity had prevailed. This is a strong argument for the keeping of the Christian Sabbath. 7. We may observe that the apostle follows here the rule of the synagogue; it was a regular custom among the Jews to make their collections for the poor on the Sabbath day, that they might not be without the necessaries of life, and might not be prevented from coming to the synagogue. 8. For the purpose of making this provision, they had a purse, which was called של צדקה ארנקי Arneki shel tsedakah, “The purse of the alms,” or what we would term, the poor’s box. This is what the apostle seems to mean when he says, Let him lay by him in store-let him put it in the alms’ purse, or in the poor’s box. 9. It was a maxim also with them that, if they found any money, they were not to put it in their private purse, but in that which belonged to the poor. 10. The pious Jews believed that as salt seasoned food, so did alms, riches; and that he who did not give alms of what he had, his riches should be dispersed. The moth would corrupt the bags, and the canker corrode the money, unless the mass was sanctified by giving a part to the poor.

**Verse 3. *Whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters***— Why should Paul require letters of approbation in behalf of certain persons, when he himself should be among them, and could have their characters viva voce? It is probable that he refers here to letters of recommendation which they had sent to him while he was away; and he now promises that when he should come to Corinth, he would appoint these persons, whom they had recommended, to carry the alms to Jerusalem. If δοκιμασητε, be read ye shall have approved, as Bishop Pearce does, the difficulty will vanish.

Some MSS. and several versions join δι’ επιστολων, by letters, to the following words, and read the verse thus: When I come, those whom ye shall approve I will send with letters to bring your liberality to Jerusalem. This seems most natural.

**Verse 4. *And if it be meet***, etc.— If it be a business that requires my attendance, and it be judged proper for me to go to Jerusalem, I will take those persons for my companions. On the delicacy with which St. Paul

managed the business of a collection for the poor, Archdeacon Paley makes the following appropriate remarks:—

“The following observations will satisfy us concerning the purity of our apostle’s conduct in the suspicious business of a pecuniary contribution.

“1st. He disclaims the having received any inspired authority for the directions which he is giving: ‘I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.’ (2 Corinthians 8:8.) Who, that had a sinister purpose to answer by the recommending of subscriptions, would thus distinguish, and thus lower the credit of his own recommendation?

“2nd. Although he asserts the general right of Christian ministers to a maintenance from their ministry, yet he protests against the making use of this right in his own person: ‘Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel; but I have used none of these things; neither have I written these things that it should be so done unto me; for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying, i.e. my professions of disinterestedness, void.’ (1 Corinthians 9:14, 15.)

“3rd. He repeatedly proposes that there should be associates with himself in the management of the public bounty; not colleagues of his own appointment, but persons elected for that purpose by the contributors themselves. ‘And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem; and if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.’ (1 Corinthians 16:3, 4.) And in the second epistle, what is here proposed we find actually done, and done for the very purpose of guarding his character against any imputation that might be brought upon it in the discharge of a pecuniary trust: ‘And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the Churches; and not that only, but who was also chosen of the Churches to travel with us with this grace, (gift,) which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and the declaration of your ready mind: avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us; providing for things honest, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men:’ i.e. not resting in the consciousness of our own integrity, but, in such a subject, careful also to approve our



integrity to the public judgment. (2 Corinthians 8:18-21.”) Horae Paulinae, page 95.

**Verse 5. *I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia***— St. Paul was now at Ephesus; for almost all allow, in opposition to the subscription at the end of this epistle that states it to have been written from Philippi, that it was written from Ephesus: and this is supported by many strong arguments; and the 8th verse here seems to put it past all question: I will tarry at Ephesus; i.e. I am in Ephesus, and here I purpose to remain until pentecost. Though Macedonia was not in the direct way from Ephesus to Corinth, yet the apostle intended to make it in his way. And it was because it was not in the direct road, but lay at the upper end of the AEgean Sea, and very far out of his direct line, that he says, I do pass through Macedonia—I have purposed to go thither before I go to Corinth.

**Verse 6. *Yea, and winter with you***— He purposed to stay till pentecost at Ephesus; after that to go to Macedonia, and probably to spend the summer there; and come in the autumn to Corinth, and there spend the winter.

***That ye may bring me on my journey***— That ye may furnish me with the means of travelling. It appears that, in most cases, the different Churches paid his expenses to other Churches; where this was not done, then he labored at his business to acquire the means of travelling.

**Verse 7. *I will not see you now by the way***— From Ephesus to Corinth was merely across the AEgean Sea, and comparatively a short passage.

**Verse 8. *I will tarry at Ephesus***— And it is very probable that he did so; and that all these journeys were taken as he himself had projected. See on 1 Corinthians 16:5.

**Verse 9. *A great door and effectual is opened***— *θυρα γαρ μοι ανεωγε μεγαλη και ενεργης*. A great and energetic door is opened to me; that is, God has made a grand opening to me in those parts, which I perceive will require much labor; and besides, I shall have many adversaries to oppose me. So Bp. Pearce understands the words *ενεργης*, not as signifying effectual, but as implying full of labor. Door often signifies occasion or opportunity; but here, the apostle may allude to the throwing open of the

great doors of the Circus Maximus before the chariot races began; and the many adversaries may refer to the numerous competitors in those races.

God gave him a grand opportunity to preach the Gospel; but he was not to expect that either Satan or wicked men would leave him unmolested.

**Verse 10. *Now, if Timotheus come***— Of Timothy we have heard before, 1 Corinthians 4:17. And we learn, from Acts 19:22, that Paul sent him with Erastus from Ephesus to Macedonia. It is evident, therefore, in opposition to the very exceptionable subscription at the end of this epistle, that the epistle itself was not sent by Timothy, as there stated.

***That he may be with you without fear***— That he may be treated well, and not perplexed and harassed with your divisions and jealousies; for he worketh the work of the Lord—he is Divinely appointed, as I also am.

**Verse 11. *Let no man-despise him***— Let none pretend to say that he has not full authority from God to do the work of an evangelist.

***But conduct him forth in peace***— I believe, with Bp. Pearce, that this clause should be translated and pointed thus: accompany him upon his journey, that he may come unto me in peace, (εν ειρηνη, in safety,) as the word is used in Mark 5:34; and Luke 7:50.

***For I look for him with the brethren.***— εκδεχομαι-αυτον μετα των αδελφων. This clause should not be understood as if Paul was expecting certain brethren with Timothy; but it was the brethren that were with Paul that were looking for him; I, with the brethren, am looking for him.

**Verse 12. *As touching our brother Apollos***— It appears from this that the brethren, of whom the apostle speaks in the preceding verse, were then with him at Ephesus; I, with the brethren, greatly desired to come.

***But his will was not at all to come***— As there had been a faction set up in the name of Apollos at Corinth, he probably thought it not prudent to go thither at this time, lest his presence might be the means of giving it either strength or countenance.

**Verse 13. *Watch ye***— You have many enemies; be continually on your guard; be always circumspect:-1. Watch against evil; 2. Watch for opportunities to receive good; 3. Watch for opportunities to do good; 4.

Watch over each other in love; 5. Watch, that none may draw you aside from the belief and unity of the Gospel.

**Stand fast in the faith**— Hold in conscientious credence what you have already received as the truth of God; for it is the Gospel by which ye shall be saved, and by which ye are now put into a state of salvation: see 1 Corinthians 15:1, 2.

**Quit you like men**— Be not like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine; let your understanding receive the truth; let your judgment determine on the absolute necessity of retaining it; and give up life rather than give up the testimony of God.

**Be strong**.— Put forth all the vigor and energy which God has given you in maintaining and propagating the truth, and your spiritual strength will increase by usage. The terms in this verse are all military: Watch ye, **γρηγορευετε**, watch, and be continually on your guard, lest you be surprised by your enemies; keep your scouts out, and all your sentinels at their posts, lest your enemies steal a march upon you. See that the place you are in be properly defended; and that each be alert to perform his duty.

Stand fast in the faith-**στηκετε εν τη πιστει**. Keep in your ranks; do not be disorderly; be determined to keep your ranks unbroken; keep close together. On your unity your preservation depends; if the enemy succeed in breaking your ranks, and dividing one part of this sacred army from another, your rout will be inevitable.

Quit yourselves like men-**ανδριζεσθε**. When you are attacked, do not flinch; maintain your ground; resist; press forward; strike home; keep compact; conquer.

Be strong-**κραταιουαθε**. If one company or division be opposed by too great a force of the enemy, strengthen that division, and maintain your position; if an attack is to be made on any part or intrenchment of the foe, summon up all your courage, sustain each other; fear not, for fear will enervate you. Your cause is good; it is the faith, the religion of Jesus; he is your Captain in the field; and, should you even die in the contest, the victory is yours.

**Verse 14.** *Let all your things be done with charity.*— Let love to God, to man, and to one another, be the motive of all your conduct.

**Verse 15.** *Ye know the house of Stephanas*— Ye know that Stephanas and his family have addicted them to the help of the followers of Christ; they have been the chief instruments of supporting the work of God in Achaia, of which work they themselves have been the first fruits. See the note on Romans 16:5.

**Verse 16.** *That ye submit yourselves unto such*— That ye have due regard to them, and consider them as especial instruments in the hand of God for countenancing and carrying on his great work. The submission here recommended does not imply obedience, but kind and courteous demeanour. Kypke vindicates this sense of the word from Ephesians 5:21; 1 Peter 5:5.

**Verse 17.** *I am glad of the coming of Stephanas*, etc.— It was by these that the Corinthians had sent that letter to the apostle, to answer which was a main part of the design of St. Paul in this epistle.

*Fortunatus*— This man is supposed to have survived St. Paul; and to be the same mentioned by Clement in his epistle to the Corinthians, sec. 59, as the bearer of that epistle from Clement at Rome to the Christians at Corinth.

*For that which was lacking on your part*— This may either refer to additional communications besides those contained in the letter which the Corinthians sent to the apostle—which additional circumstances were furnished by the persons above; and from them St. Paul had a fuller account of their spiritual state than was contained in the letter—or to some contributions on their part for the support of the apostle in his peregrinations and labors.

**Verse 18.** *They have refreshed my spirit and yours*— They have been a means of contributing greatly to my comfort; and what contributes to my comfort must increase yours. This is probably the meaning of the apostle.

*Therefore acknowledge ye them*— Pay them particular respect, and let all be held in esteem in proportion to their work and usefulness. When this is made the rule of respect and esteem, then foolish and capricious

attachments will have no place. A man will then be honored in proportion to his merit; and his merit will be estimated by his usefulness among men.

**Verse 19. *The Churches of Asia salute you.***— i.e. The Churches in Asia Minor. Ephesus was in this Asia, and it is clear from this that the apostle was not at Philippi; had he been at Philippi, as the subscription states, he would have said, The Churches of MACEDONIA, not the Churches of ASIA, salute you. How these places lay, in reference to each other, the reader will at once perceive by consulting the map in Acts.

***Aquila and Priscilla***— Of these eminent persons we have heard before: see Acts 18:2, 18, 26; and Romans 16:3.

***With the Church that is in their house.***— That is, the company of believers who generally worshipped there. There were no churches or chapels at that time built; and the assemblies of Christians were necessarily held in private houses. It appears that Aquila and Priscilla devoted their house to this purpose. The house of Philemon was of the same kind; Philemon 2. So was likewise the house of Nymphas, Colossians 4:15. See the note on Romans 16:5.

**Verse 20. *With a holy kiss.***— The ancient patriarchs, and the Jews in general, were accustomed to kiss each other whenever they met; and this was a token of friendship and peace with them, as shaking of hands is with us. The primitive Christians naturally followed this example of the Jews. See the note on Romans 16:16.

**Verse 21. *The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand.***— This should be rendered: “The salutation is written by the hand of me Paul;” **γεγραπται**, is written, being understood. It is very likely that the apostle wrote this and the following verses with his own hand. The rest, though dictated by him, was written by an amanuensis.

**Verse 22. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus***— This is directed immediately against the Jews. From 1 Corinthians 12:3, we find that the Jews, who pretended to be under the Spirit and teaching of God, called Jesus **αναθεμα**, or accursed; i.e. a person who should be devoted to destruction: see the note there. In this place the apostle retorts the whole upon themselves, and says: If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let HIM be **αναθεμα**, accursed, and devoted to destruction. This is not said in

the way of a wish or imprecation, but as a prediction of what would certainly come upon them if they did not repent, and of what did come on them because they did not repent; but continued to hate and execrate the Lord Jesus; and of what still lies upon them, because they continue to hate and execrate the Redeemer of the world.

It is generally allowed that the apostle refers here to some of the modes of excommunication among the Jews, of which there were three, viz.:—

1. Niddui נִדְּוִי, which signifies a simple separation or exclusion of a man from the synagogue, and from his wife and family, for THIRTY days.
2. Cherem חֶרֶם which was inflicted on him who had borne the niddui, and who had not, in the thirty days, made proper compensation, in order to be reconciled to the synagogue. This was inflicted with dire execrations, which he was informed must all come upon him if he did not repent; but the cherem always supposed place for repentance.
3. Shammatha שַׁמְתָּה: this was the direst of all, and cut off all hope of reconciliation and repentance; after which the man was neither reconcilable to the synagogue, nor acknowledged as belonging even to the Jewish nation. See these different forms in Buxtorf's Rabbinical and Talmudical Lexicon, under their respective words.

In the Lexicon just now quoted, Buxtorf gives a form of the cherem, which he says he copied from an ancient Hebrew MS. Of this awful piece I shall lay a translation before the reader.

“By the sentence of the Lord of lords, let P. the son of P. be anathematized in both houses of judgment; the superior and inferior. Let him be anathematized among the highest saints; let him be anathematized among the seraphim and ophanim; and finally, let him be anathematized by all the congregations of the great and the small! Let great and continued plagues rest upon him; with great and horrible diseases! Let his house be the habitation of dragons! and let his constellation be darkened in the clouds! Let him be for indignation, and wrath, and burning! Let his carcass be thrown to the wild beasts and serpents! Let his enemies and his adversaries triumph over him! Let his silver and gold be given to others! And let all his children be exposed at the doors of their enemies! And let

posterity be astonished at his day! Let him be accursed by the mouth of Addiriron and Achartiel; by the mouth of Sandalphon and Hadraniel; by the mouth of Ansisiel and Patchiel; by the mouth of Seraphiel and Sagansael; by the mouth of Michael and Gabriel; by the mouth of Raphael and Mesharetiel! Let him be anathematized by the mouth of Zaafzavif, and by the mouth of Hafhavif, who is the great God; and by the mouth of the seventy names of the supreme King; and lastly, by the mouth of Tsortak the great chancellor.

“Let him be swallowed up like Korah and his companions! Let his soul depart with fear and terror! Let the chiding of the Lord slay him! Let him be confounded as Achitophel was in his counsel! Let the leprosy of Gehazi be his leprosy! and let there be no resurrection of his ruins! In the sepulchres of the children of Israel let him not be buried! Let his wife be given to another, and let others bow themselves upon her in his death! In this anathema, let P. the son of P. be; and let this be his inheritance! But upon me and upon all Israel may God extend his peace and blessing, Amen.” To this is added the 18th, 19th, and 20th verses of Deuteronomy 29, {Deuteronomy 29:18-20} which the reader may read at his leisure. There are many things in this cherem which require a comment, but this is not the place.

*Anathema, maran-atha.*— “Let him be accursed; our Lord cometh.” I cannot see the reason why these words were left untranslated. The former is Greek, and has been already explained; the latter is Syriac (Syriac) maran-atha, our Lord is coming: i.e. to execute the judgment denounced. Does not the apostle refer to the last verse in the Bible? Lest I come and smite the land (חֶרֶם cherem) with a curse? And does he not intimate that the Lord was coming to smite the Jewish land with that curse? Which took place a very few years after, and continues on that gainsaying and rebellious people to the present day. What the apostle has said was prophetic, and indicative of what was about to happen to that people. God was then coming to inflict punishment upon them: he came, and they were broken and dispersed.

**Verse 23.** *The grace of our Lord Jesus*— May the favor, influence, mercy, and salvation procured by Jesus Christ, be with you—prevail among

you, rule in you, and be exhibited by you, in your life and conversation!  
Amen.

**Verse 24.** *My love be with you all in Christ Jesus.*— It appears exceedingly strange that the apostle should say, My love be with you; as



from Ephesus, by Stephanas and Fortunatus; COPTIC. Written from Philippi by Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus; SLAVONIC. Written, etc., by Paul and Sosthenes. Written from the city of Philippi, and sent by Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus, and Timotheus; ARABIC. There are other variations, which need not be set down. Those only appear to be correct that state the epistle to have been sent from Ephesus, of which there can be no reasonable doubt.

2. In closing my observations on this epistle, I feel it necessary once more to call the reader's attention to the many difficulties contained in it as an excuse for any thing he may find handled in an unsatisfactory manner. Perhaps it will be of little consequence for him to know that this epistle has cost me more labor and difficulty than any portion of the same quantity which I have yet passed over either in the Old or New Testament.

3. It has been already noticed that the Church at Corinth had written to the apostle for advice, direction, and information on a variety of points; and that this epistle is, in the main, an answer to the epistle from Corinth. Had we that epistle, all difficulty would vanish in this; but, as the apostle only refers to their questions by mere catch words from their letter, it is impossible to know, in all cases, what the questions contained. To them the answers would be clear, because they knew on what they had consulted him; to us the answers must be, as they really are in some cases, necessarily obscure, because we know not the whole bearing and circumstances of the questions. Indeed the epistle contains more local matter, and more matter of private application, than any other in the New Testament; and there is in it, on the whole, less matter for general use than in most other parts of the sacred writings. Yet it is both very curious and useful; it gives insight into several customs, and not a few forms of speech, and matters relative to the discipline of the primitive Church, which we can find nowhere else: and it reads a very awful lesson to those who disturb the peace of society, make schisms in the Church of Christ, and endeavor to set up one preacher at the expense of another.

4. It shows us also how many improper things may, in a state of ignorance or Christian infancy, be consistent with a sincere belief in the Gospel of Christ, and a conscientious and zealous attachment to it.

5. In different parts of the epistle we find the apostle speaking very highly of the knowledge of this Church; and its various gifts and endowments. How then can we say that its blemishes arose from ignorance? I answer, that certainly only a few of the people at Corinth could possess those eminent spiritual qualifications; because the things that are attributed to this Church in other places are utterly inconsistent with that state of grace for which the apostle, in other places, appears to give them credit. The solution of the difficulty is this: There were in the Church at Corinth many highly gifted and very gracious people; there were also there many more, who, though they might have been partakers of some extraordinary gifts, had very little of that religion which the apostle describes in the thirteenth chapter of this epistle.

6. Besides, we must not suppose that eminent endowments necessarily imply gracious dispositions. A man may have much light and little love; he may be very wise in secular matters, and know but little of himself, and less of his God. There is as truly a learned ignorance, as there is a refined and useful learning. One of our old writers said, "Knowledge that is not applying, is only like a candle which a man holds to light himself to hell." The Corinthians abounded in knowledge, and science, and eloquence, and various extraordinary gifts; but in many cases, distinctly enough marked in this epistle, they were grossly ignorant of the genius and design of the Gospel. Many, since their time, have put words and observances in place of the weightier matters of the LAW, and the spirit of the GOSPEL. The apostle has taken great pains to correct these abuses among the Corinthians, and to insist on that great, unchangeable, and eternal truth, that love to God and man, filling the heart, hallowing the passions, regulating the affections, and producing universal benevolence and beneficence, is the fulfilling of all law; and that all professions, knowledge, gifts, etc., without this, are absolutely useless. And did this epistle contain no more than what is found in the 13th chapter, yet that would be an unparalleled monument of the apostle's deep acquaintance with God; and an invaluable record of the sum and substance of the Gospel, left by God's mercy to the Church, as a touchstone for the trial of creeds, confessions of faith, and ritual observances, to the end of the world.

7. I have often had occasion to note that the whole epistle refers so much to Jewish affairs, customs, forms of speech, ceremonies, etc., that it

necessarily supposes the people to have been well acquainted with them: from this I infer that a great majority of the Christian Church at Corinth was composed of converted JEWS; and it is likely that this was the case in all the Churches of Asia Minor and Greece. Many Gentiles were undoubtedly brought to the knowledge of the truth; but the chief converts were from among the Hellenistic Jews. In many respects Jewish phraseology prevails more in this epistle than even in that to the Romans. Without attention to this it would be impossible to make any consistent sense out of the 15th chapter, where the apostle treats so largely on the doctrine of the resurrection, as almost every form and turn of expression is JEWISH; and we must know what ideas they attached to such words and forms of speech, in order to enter into the spirit of the apostle's meaning. His ignorance of this caused a late eminent writer and philosopher to charge the apostle with "inconsistent reasoning." Had he understood the apostle's language, he would not have said so; and as he did not understand it, he should have said nothing. A man may be qualified to make great and useful discoveries in the doctrine of gases or factitious airs, who may be ill qualified to elucidate the meaning of the Holy Spirit.

8. Before I finish my concluding observations on this epistle, I must beg leave to call the reader's attention once more to the concluding words of the apostle: If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema, maran-atha. These words have been as often misunderstood, and perhaps as dangerously applied, as another passage in this epistle, He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, etc. Though I am ready to grant that the bad Christian, i.e. the man who professes Christianity, and yet lives under the power of sin, is in a very dangerous state; and that he who, while he credits Christianity, is undecided as to the public part he should take in its profession and practice, is putting his eternal interests to the most awful hazard; yet I must also grant that the meaning generally put on the words in question is not correct. The words apply to the gainsaying and blasphemous Jews; to those who were calling Christ anathema, or accursed; and cannot be applied to any person who respects his name, or confides in him for his salvation; much less do they apply to him who finds through the yet prevalence of evil in his heart, and the power of temptation, that he has little, and, to his own apprehension, no love to the Lord Jesus. The

anathema of the apostle is denounced against him only who gives the anathema to Christ: of this, not one of my readers is capable. It is the duty of all to love him with an undivided heart: if any be not yet able to do it, let him not be discouraged: if the Lord cometh to execute judgment on him who calleth Jesus accursed, he cometh also to fulfill the desire of them who fear him; to make them partake of the Divine nature, and so cleanse their hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that they shall perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his name.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EPISTLE

OF THE

CORINTHIANS.

FOR an account of Corinth, the reader is referred to the preface to the first epistle, where every thing relative to the geographical, political, and religious situation of that celebrated city, as far as such subjects are proper for a work of this kind is amply detailed.

As I have borrowed from the learned and accurate Archdeacon Paley several arguments to prove the authenticity of the first epistle, and the same able writer having bestowed equal pains on the second, I shall make those extracts which bear particularly on the subject; referring my reader to the work itself for ampler information.

## SECTION 1.

I will not say that it is impossible, having seen the First Epistle to the Corinthians, to construct a second with ostensible allusions to the first; or that it is impossible that both should be fabricated, so as to carry on an order and continuation of story, by successive references to the same events. But I say that this, in either case, must be the effect of craft and design: whereas, whoever examines the allusions to the former epistle which he finds in this, whilst he will acknowledge them to be such as would rise spontaneously to the hand of the writer, from the very subject of the correspondence, and the situation of the corresponding parties, supposing these to be real, will see no particle of reason to suspect, either that the clauses containing these allusions were insertions for the purpose, or that the several transactions of the Corinthian Church were feigned, in order to form a train of narrative, or to support the appearance of connection between the two epistles.

1. In the first epistle, St. Paul announces his intention of passing through Macedonia in his way to Corinth: "I will come to you when I shall pass through Macedonia." In the second epistle we find him arrived in Macedonia, and about to pursue his journey to Corinth. But observe the manner in which this is made to appear: "I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago, and your zeal hath provoked very many: yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready; lest, haply, if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not you) be ashamed in this same confident boasting." (2 Corinthians 9:2-4.) St. Paul's being in Macedonia at the time of writing the epistle is, in this passage, inferred only from his saying that he had boasted to the Macedonians of the alacrity of his Achaian converts; and the fear which he expresses, lest, if any of the Macedonian Christians should come with him unto Achaia, they should find his boasting unwarranted by the event. The business of the contribution is the sole cause of mentioning Macedonia at all. Will it be insinuated that this passage was framed merely to state that St. Paul was now in Macedonia; and by that statement to produce an apparent agreement with the purpose of visiting Macedonia, notified in the first epistle? Or will it be thought probable that, if a sophist had meant to place St. Paul in Macedonia, for the sake of giving countenance to his forgery, he would have done it in so oblique a manner as through the medium of a contribution? The same thing may be observed of another text in the epistle, in which the name of Macedonia occurs: "Farthermore, when I came to Troas to preach the Gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus, my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia." I mean, that it may be observed of this passage also, that there is a reason for mentioning Macedonia, entirely distinct from the purpose of showing St. Paul to be there. The text, however, in which it is most strongly implied that St. Paul wrote the present epistle from Macedonia, is found in the fourth, fifth, and sixth verses of the seventh chapter. {2 Corinthians 7:4-6} Yet, even here, I think no one will contend that St. Paul's coming to Macedonia, or being in Macedonia, was the principal thing intended to be told; or that the telling of it, indeed, was any part of the intention with which the text was written; or that the mention even of the name of

Macedonia was not purely incidental, in the description of those tumultuous sorrows with which the writer's mind had been lately agitated, and from which he was relieved by the coming of Titus. The first five verses of the eighth chapter, {2 Corinthians 8:1-5} which commend the liberality of the Macedonian Churches, do not, in my opinion, by themselves, prove St. Paul to have been at Macedonia at the time of writing the epistle.

2. In the first epistle, St. Paul denounces a severe censure against an incestuous marriage, which had taken place amongst the Corinthian converts, with the connivance, not to say with the approbation, of the Church; and enjoins the Church to purge itself of this scandal, by expelling the offender from its society, (1 Corinthians 5:1-5.) In the second epistle we find this sentence executed, and the offender to be so affected with the punishment, that St. Paul now intercedes for his restoration: "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many; so that, contrariwise, ye ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow; wherefore I beseech you, that ye would confirm your love towards him." (2 Corinthians 2:7, 8.) Is this whole business feigned for the sake of carrying on a continuation of story through the two epistles? The Church also, no less than the offender, was brought by St. Paul's reproof to a deep sense of the impropriety of their conduct. Their penitence and their respect to his authority were, as might be expected, exceedingly grateful to St. Paul: "We were comforted not by Titus's coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind towards me, so that I rejoiced the more; for though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent; for I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing." (2 Corinthians 7:7-9.) That this passage is to be referred to the incestuous marriage is proved by the twelfth verse of the same chapter: "Though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that had suffered wrong; but that our care for you, in the sight of God, might appear unto you." {2 Corinthians 7:12} There were, it is true, various topics of blame

noticed in the first epistle; but there was none, except this of the incestuous marriage, which could be called a transaction between private parties, or of which it could be said that one particular person had “done the wrong,” and another particular person “had suffered it.” Could all this be without foundation?

3. In the sixteenth chapter of the first epistle, a collection for the saints is recommended to be set forwards at Corinth, (1 Corinthians 16:1.) In the ninth chapter of the second epistle, such a collection is spoken of, as in readiness to be received: “As touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you, for I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago, and your zeal hath provoked very many.” (2 Corinthians 9:1, 2.) This is such a continuation of the transaction as might be expected, or, possibly it will be said, as might easily be counterfeited; but there is a circumstance of nicety in the agreement between the two epistles, which I am convinced the author of a forgery would not have hit upon, or which, if he had hit upon it, he would have set forth with more clearness. The second epistle speaks of the Corinthians as having begun this eleemosynary business a year before: “This is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago.” (2 Corinthians 8:10.) “I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago.” (2 Corinthians 9:2.) From these texts it is evident that something had been done in the business a year before. It appears, however, from other texts in the epistle, that the contribution was not yet collected or paid; for brethren were sent from St. Paul to Corinth, “to make up their bounty.” (2 Corinthians 9:5.) They are urged to “perform the doing of it.” (2 Corinthians 8:11.) “And every man was exhorted to give as he purposed in his heart.” (2 Corinthians 9:7.) The contribution, therefore, as represented in our present epistle, was in readiness, yet not received from the contributors; was begun, was forward long before, yet not hitherto collected. Now this representation agrees with one, and only with one, supposition, namely, that every man had laid by in store—had already provided the fund, from which he was afterwards to contribute—the very case which the first epistle authorizes us to suppose to have existed; for in that epistle St. Paul had charged the Corinthians, “upon the first day



of the week, every one of them, to lay by in store as God had prospered him.” (1 Corinthians 16:2.)

## SECTION 2.

In comparing the Second Epistle to the Corinthians with the Acts of the Apostles, we are soon brought to observe, not only that there exists no vestige either of the epistle having been taken from the history or the history from the epistle, but also that there appears in the contents of the epistle positive evidence that neither was borrowed from the other. Titus, who bears a conspicuous part in the epistle, is not mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles at all. St. Paul’s sufferings, enumerated 2 Corinthians 11:24, “Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned; thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep,” cannot be made out from his history as delivered in the Acts; nor would this account have been given by a writer, who either drew his knowledge of St. Paul from that history, or who was careful to preserve a conformity with it. The account in the epistle, of St. Paul’s escape from Damascus, though agreeing in the main fact with the account of the same transaction in the Acts, is related with such difference of circumstance as renders it utterly improbable that one should be derived from the other. The two accounts, placed by the side of each other, stand as follows:—

2 Corinthians 11:32, 33. In Damascus, the governor, under Aretas the king, kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me; and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

Acts 9:23-25. And after many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him; but their laying in wait was known of Saul, and they watched the gates day and night to kill him: then the disciples took him by night and let him down by the wall in a basket.

Now, if we be satisfied in general concerning these two ancient writings, that the one was not known to the writer of the other, or not consulted by him, then the accordances which may be pointed out between them will admit of no solution so probable as the attributing of them to truth and reality, as to their Common foundation.

## SECTION 3.

The opening of this epistle exhibits a connection with the history, which alone would satisfy my mind that the epistle was written by St. Paul, and by St. Paul in the situation in which the history places him. Let it be remembered, that in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts, St. Paul is represented as driven away from Ephesus; or as leaving, however, Ephesus, in consequence of an uproar in that city, excited by some interested adversaries of the new religion. "Great is Diana of the Ephesians-And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia." When he was arrived in Macedonia, he wrote the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, which is now before us; and he begins his epistle in this wise: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God, etc. For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life; but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raiseth the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us." Nothing could be more expressive of the circumstances in which the history describes St. Paul to have been, at the time when the epistle purports to be written; or rather, nothing could be more expressive of the sensations arising from these circumstances, than this passage. It is the calm recollection of a mind emerged from the confusion of instant danger. It is that devotion and solemnity of thought which follows a recent deliverance. There is just enough of particularity in the passage to show that it is to be referred to the tumult at Ephesus: "We would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia." And there is nothing more; no mention of Demetrius, of the seizure of St. Paul's friends, of the interference of the town-clerk, of the occasion or nature of the danger which St. Paul had escaped, or even of the city where it happened; in a word, no recital upon which a suspicion could be conceived, either that the author of the epistle had made use of the narrative in the Acts; or, on the other hand, that he had sketched the

outline, which the narrative in the Acts only filled up. That the forger of an epistle, under the name of St. Paul, should borrow circumstances from a history of St. Paul, then extant; or, that the author of a history of St. Paul should gather materials from letters bearing St. Paul's name, may be credited: but I cannot believe that any forger whatever should fall upon an expedient so refined, as to exhibit sentiments adapted to a situation, and to leave his readers to seek out that situation from the history; still less that the author of a history should go about to frame facts and circumstances, fitted to supply the sentiments which he found in the letter.

#### SECTION 4.

It has already been remarked, that St. Paul's original intention was to have visited Corinth in his way to Macedonia: "I was minded to come unto you before, and to pass by you into Macedonia." (2 Corinthians 1:15, 16.) It has also been remarked, that he changed his intention, and ultimately resolved upon going through Macedonia first. Now upon this head there exists a circumstance of correspondency between our epistle and the history, which is not very obvious to the reader's observation; but which, when observed, will be found, I think, close and exact. Which circumstance is this: that though the change of St. Paul's intention be expressly mentioned only in the second epistle, yet it appears, both from the history and from this second epistle, that the change had taken place before the writing of the first epistle; that it appears however from neither, otherwise than by an inference, unnoticed perhaps by almost every one who does not sit down professedly to the examination.

First, then, how does this point appear from the history? In the nineteenth chapter of the Acts, and the twenty-first verse, {Acts 19:21} we are told that "Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem. So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus: but he himself stayed in Asia for a season." A short time after this, and evidently in pursuance of the same intention, we find (Acts 20:1, 2) that "Paul departed from Ephesus for to go into Macedonia; and that, when he had gone over those parts, he came into Greece." The resolution, therefore, of passing first through Macedonia, and from thence into Greece, was formed by St. Paul previous to the sending away of Timothy. The order in which the two

countries are mentioned shows the direction of his intended route, “when he passed through Macedonia and Achaia.” Timothy and Erastus, who were to precede him in his progress, were sent by him from Ephesus into Macedonia. He himself, a short time afterwards, and, as hath been observed, evidently in continuation and pursuance of the same design, “departed for to go into Macedonia.” If he had ever, therefore, entertained a different plan of his journey, which is not hinted in the history, he must have changed that plan before this time. But from the seventeenth verse of the fourth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, {1 Corinthians 4:17} we discover that Timothy had been sent away from Ephesus before that epistle was written: “For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son.” The change, therefore, of St. Paul’s resolution, which was prior to the sending away of Timothy; was necessarily prior to the writing of the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

Thus stands the order of dates as collected from the history, compared with the first epistle. Now let us inquire, secondly, how this manner is represented in the epistle before us. In the sixteenth verse of the first chapter of this epistle, {2 Corinthians 1:16} St. Paul speaks of the intention which he had once entertained of visiting Achaia, in his way to Macedonia: “In this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit; and to pass by you into Macedonia.” After protesting in the seventeenth verse {2 Corinthians 1:17} against any evil construction that might be put upon his laying aside of this intention, in the twenty-third verse {2 Corinthians 1:23} he discloses the cause of it: “Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.” And then he proceeds as follows: “But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness; for, if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me? And I wrote this same unto you, lest when I came I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all, for out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you; but if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me but in part, that I may not overcharge you all. Sufficient to such a man is this punishment; which was inflicted of many.”

In this quotation let the reader first direct his attention to the clause marked by Italics, “and I wrote this same unto you,” and let him consider, whether from the context, and from the structure of the whole passage, it be not evident that this writing was after St. Paul had “determined with himself that he would not come again to them in heaviness?” whether, indeed, it was not in consequence of this determination, or at least with this determination upon his mind? And in the next place, let him consider whether the sentence, “I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness,” do not plainly refer to that postponing of his visit to which he had alluded in the verse but one before, when he said, “I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth:” and whether this be not the visit of which he speaks in the sixteenth verse, {2 Corinthians 1:16} wherein he informs the Corinthians, “that he had been minded to pass by them into Macedonia;” but that, for reasons which argued no levity or fickleness in his disposition, he had been compelled to change his purpose. If this be so, then it follows that the writing here mentioned was posterior to the change of his intention. The only question, therefore, that remains, will be, whether this writing relate to the letter which we now have under the title of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, or to some other letter not extant. And upon this question I think Mr. Locke’s observation decisive; namely, that the second clause marked in the quotation by Italics, “I wrote unto you with many tears,” and the first clause so marked, “I wrote this same unto you,” belong to one writing, whatever that was; and that the second clause goes on to advert to a circumstance which is found in our present First Epistle to the Corinthians; namely, the case and punishment of the incestuous person. Upon the whole, then, we see that it is capable of being inferred from St. Paul’s own words, in the long extract which we have quoted, that the First Epistle to the Corinthians was written after St. Paul had determined to postpone his journey to Corinth; in other words, that the change of his purpose with respect to the course of his journey, though expressly mentioned only in the second epistle, had taken place before the writing of the first; the point which we made out to be implied in the history, by the order of the events there recorded, and the allusions to those events in the first epistle. Now this is a species of congruity of all others the most to be relied upon. It is not an agreement between two accounts of the same transaction, or between different statements of the same fact, for the fact

is not stated; nothing that can be called an account is given; but it is the junction of two conclusions deduced from independent sources, and deducible only by investigation and comparison.

### SECTION 5.

But if St. Paul had changed his purpose before the writing of the first epistle, why did he defer explaining himself to the Corinthians concerning the reason of that change until he wrote the second? This is a very fair question; and we are able, I think, to return to it a satisfactory answer. The real cause, and the cause at length assigned by St. Paul for postponing his visit to Corinth, and not travelling by the route which he had at first designed, was the disorderly state of the Corinthian Church at the time, and the painful severities which he should have found himself obliged to exercise if he had come amongst them during the existence of these irregularities. He was willing therefore to try, before he came in person, what a letter of authoritative objurgation would do amongst them, and to leave time for the operation of the experiment. That was his scheme in writing the first epistle. But it was not for him to acquaint them with the scheme. After the epistle had produced its effect; (and to the utmost extent, as it should seem, of the apostle's hopes;) when he had wrought in them a deep sense of their fault, and an almost passionate solicitude to restore themselves to the approbation of their teacher; when Titus (2 Corinthians 7:6, 7, 11) had brought him intelligence "of their earnest desire, their mourning, their fervent mind towards him, of their sorrow and their penitence; what carefulness, what clearing of themselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what revenge," his letter, and the general concern occasioned by it, had excited amongst them; he then opens himself fully upon the subject. The affectionate mind of the apostle is touched by this return of zeal and duty. He tells them that he did not visit them at the time proposed, lest their meeting should have been attended with mutual grief; and with grief to him embittered by the reflection that he was giving pain to those from whom alone he could receive comfort: "I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness; for, if I make you sorry, who is he that maketh me glad but the same which is made sorry by me?" (2 Corinthians 2:1, 2;) that he had written his former epistle to warn them beforehand of their

fault, "lest when he came he should have sorrow of them of whom he ought to rejoice:" (2 Corinthians 2:3:) that he had the farther view, though perhaps unperceived by them, of making an experiment of their fidelity, to know the proof of them, whether they are obedient in all things." (2 Corinthians 2:9.) This full discovery of his motive came very naturally from the apostle after he had seen the success of his measures, but would not have been a seasonable communication before. The whole composes a train of sentiment and of conduct resulting from real situation, and from real circumstance; and as remote as possible from fiction or imposture.

### SECTION 6.

2 Corinthians 11:9: "When I was present with you and wanted, I was chargeable to no man; for that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied." The principal fact set forth in this passage, the arrival at Corinth of brethren from Macedonia during St. Paul's first residence in that city, is explicitly recorded, Acts 18:1, 5. "After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth. And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ."

### SECTION 7.

The above quotation from the Acts proves that Silas and Timotheus were assisting St. Paul in preaching the Gospel at Corinth; with which correspond the words of the epistle, (2 Corinthians 1:19:) "For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me, and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea." I do admit that the correspondency, considered by itself, is too direct and obvious; and that an impostor, with the history before him, might, and probably would, produce agreements of the same kind. But let it be remembered that this reference is found in a writing which, from many discrepancies, and especially from those noted sec. ii., we may conclude, was not composed by any one who had consulted, and who pursued the history. Some observation also arises upon the variation of the name. We read Silas in the Acts, Silvanus in the epistle. The similitude of these two names, if they were the names of different persons, is greater than could easily have proceeded from accident; I mean, that it is not probable that

two persons placed in situations so much alike should bear names so nearly resembling each other. On the other hand, the difference of the name in the two passages negatives the supposition of either the passages, or the account contained in them, being transcribed from the other. That they were the same person is farther confirmed by 1 Thessalonians 1:1, compared with Acts 17:10.

### SECTION 8.

2 Corinthians 2:12, 13: "When I came to Troas to preach Christ's Gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit because I found not Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia."

To establish a conformity between this passage and the history, nothing more is necessary to be presumed than that St. Paul proceeded from Ephesus to Macedonia upon the same course by which he came back from Macedonia to Ephesus, or rather to Miletus, in the neighborhood of Ephesus; in other words, that in his journey to the peninsula of Greece he went and returned the same way. St. Paul is now in Macedonia, where he had lately arrived from Ephesus. Our quotation imports that in his journey he had stopped at Troas. Of this the history says nothing, leaving us only the short account, that "Paul departed from Ephesus for to go into Macedonia." But the history says that, in his return from Macedonia to Ephesus, "Paul sailed from Philippi to Troas! and that when the disciples came together on the first day of the week to break bread, Paul preached unto them all night; that from Troas he went by land to Assos; from Assos, taking ship, and coasting along the front of Asia Minor, he came by Mitylene to Miletus." Which account proves, first, that Troas lay in the way by which St. Paul passed between Ephesus to Macedonia; secondly, that he had disciples there. In one journey between these two places the epistle, and in another journey between the same places the history, makes him stop at this city. Of the first journey he is made to say, "that a door was in that city opened unto me of the Lord;" in the second, we find disciples there collected around him, and the apostle exercising his ministry with what was even in him more than ordinary zeal and labor. The epistle, therefore, is in this instance confirmed, if not by the terms, at least by the probability, of the history; a species of confirmation by no



means to be despised, because, as far as it reaches, it is evidently uncontrived.

### SECTION 9.

2 Corinthians 11:24, 26: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned; thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep."

These particulars cannot be extracted out of the Acts of the Apostles; which proves, as hath been already observed, that the epistle was not framed from the history: yet they are consistent with it, which, considering how numerically circumstantial the account is, is more than could happen to arbitrary and independent fictions. When I say that these particulars are consistent with the history, I mean, first, that there is no article in the enumeration which is contradicted by the history; secondly, that the history, though silent with respect to many of the facts here enumerated, has left space for the existence of these facts, consistent with the fidelity of its own narration.

First, no contradiction is discoverable between the epistle and the history. When St. Paul says, thrice was I beaten with rods, although the history record only one beating with rods, viz. at Philippi, Acts 16:22, yet is there no contradiction. It is only the omission in one book of what is related in another. But had the history contained accounts of four beatings with rods, at the time of writing this epistle, in which St. Paul says that he had only suffered three, there would have been a contradiction properly so called. The same observation applies generally to the other parts of the enumeration, concerning which the history is silent: but there is one clause in the quotation particularly deserving of remark; because, when confronted with the history, it furnishes the nearest approach to a contradiction, without a contradiction being actually incurred, of any I remember to have met with. "Once," saith St. Paul, "was I stoned." Does the history relate that St. Paul, prior to the writing of this epistle, had been stoned more than once? The history mentions distinctly one occasion upon which St. Paul was stoned, viz. at Lystra in Lycaonia. "Then came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people; and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he

had been dead.” (Acts 14:19.) And it mentions also another occasion, in which “an assault was made, both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them; but they were aware of it,” the history proceeds to tell us, “and fled into Lystra and Derbe.” This happened at Iconium, prior to the date of the epistle. Now, had the assault been completed; had the history related that a stone was thrown, as it relates that preparations were made both by Jews and Gentiles to stone Paul and his companions; or even had the account of this transaction stopped, without going on to inform us that Paul and his companions were “aware of their danger and fled,” a contradiction between the history and the epistle would have ensued. Truth is necessarily consistent; but it is scarcely possible that independent accounts, not having truth to guide them, should thus advance to the very brink of contradiction without falling into it.

Secondly, I say, that if the Acts of the Apostles be silent concerning many of the instances enumerated in the epistle, this silence may be accounted for, from the plan and fabric of the history. The date of the epistle synchronizes with the beginning of the twentieth chapter of the Acts. The part, therefore, of the history which precedes the twentieth chapter, is the only part in which can be found any notice of the persecutions to which St. Paul refers. Now it does not appear that the author of the history was with St. Paul until his departure from Troas, on his way to Macedonia, as related Acts 16:10; or rather indeed the contrary appears. It is in this point of the history that the language changes. In the seventh and eighth verses of this chapter {Acts 16:7, 8} the third person is used. “After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not; and they passing by Mysia, came to Troas:” and the third person is in like manner constantly used throughout the foregoing part of the history. In the tenth verse of this chapter {Acts 16:10} the first person comes in: “After Paul had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia; assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us to preach the Gospel unto them.” Now, from this time to the writing of the epistle, the history occupies four chapters; yet it is in these, if in any, that a regular or continued account of the apostle’s life is to be expected: for how succinctly his history is delivered in the preceding part of the book, that is to say, from the time of his conversion to the time

when the historian joined him at Troas, except the particulars of his conversion itself, which are related circumstantially, may be understood from the following observations:—

The history of a period of sixteen years is comprised in less than three chapters; and of these a material part is taken up with discourses. After his conversion he continued in the neighborhood of Damascus, according to the history, for a certain considerable though indefinite length of time, according to his own words (Galatians 1:18) for three years; of which no other account is given than this short one, that “straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God; that all that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem? that he increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus; and that, after many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him.” From Damascus he proceeded to Jerusalem: and of his residence there nothing more particular is recorded, than that “he was with the apostles, coming in and going out; that he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians, who went about to kill him.” From Jerusalem, the history sends him to his native city of Tarsus, (Acts 9:30.) It seems probable, from the order and disposition of the history, that St. Paul’s stay at Tarsus was of some continuance; for we hear nothing of him until, after a long apparent interval and much interjacent narrative, Barnabas, desirous of Paul’s assistance upon the enlargement of the Christian mission, “went to Tarsus for to seek him,” (Acts 11:25.) We cannot doubt that the new apostle had been busied in his ministry; yet of what he did or what he suffered during this period, which may include three or four years, the history professes not to deliver any information. As Tarsus was situated upon the seacoast, and as, though Tarsus was his home, it is probable he visited from thence many other places, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel, it is not unlikely that in the course of three or four years he might undertake many short voyages to neighboring countries, in the navigating of which we may be allowed to suppose that some of those disasters and shipwrecks befell him to which he refers in the quotation before us, “Thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep.” This last clause I am inclined to interpret of his being obliged to take to an open boat upon the loss of the ship, and his continuing out at sea in that

dangerous situation a night and a day. St. Paul is here recounting his sufferings, not relating miracles. From Tarsus, Barnabas brought Paul to Antioch, and there he remained a year: but of the transactions of that year no other description is given than what is contained in the last four verses of the eleventh chapter. {Acts 11:27-30} After a more solemn dedication to the ministry, Barnabas and Paul proceeded from Antioch to Cilicia, and from thence they sailed to Cyprus, of which voyage no particulars are mentioned. Upon their return from Cyprus they made a progress together through the Lesser Asia; and though two remarkable speeches be preserved, and a few incidents in the course of their travels circumstantially related, yet is the account of this progress, upon the whole, given professedly with conciseness; for instance, at Iconium it is said that they abode a long time, (Acts 14:3,) yet of this long abode, except concerning the manner in which they were driven away, no memoir is inserted in the history. The whole is wrapped up in one short summary: "They spake boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands." Having completed their progress, the two apostles returned to Antioch, "and there they abode long time with the disciples." Here we have another large portion of time passed over in silence. To this succeeded a journey to Jerusalem, upon a dispute which then much agitated the Christian Church, concerning the obligation of the law of Moses. When the object of that journey was completed, Paul proposed to Barnabas to go again and visit their brethren in every city where they had preached the word of the Lord. The execution of this plan carried our apostle through Syria, Cilicia, and many provinces of the Lesser Asia; yet is the account of the whole journey despatched in four verses of the sixteenth chapter.

### SECTION 10.

2 Corinthians 3:1: "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you?"

"As some others." Turn to Acts 18:27, and you will find that, a short time before the writing of this epistle, Apollos had gone to Corinth with letters of commendation from the Ephesian Christians: "And when Apollos was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him." Here the words of the epistle bear the appearance of

alluding to some specific instance, and the history supplies that instance; it supplies at least an instance as apposite as possible to the terms which the apostle uses, and to the date and direction of the epistle in which they are found. The letter which Apollos carried from Ephesus, was precisely the letter of commendation which St. Paul meant; and it was to Achaia, of which Corinth was the capital, and indeed to Corinth itself, (Acts 19:1,) that Apollos carried it; and it was about two years before the writing of this epistle. If St. Paul's words be rather thought to refer to some general usage which then obtained among Christian Churches, the case of Apollos exemplifies that usage, and affords that species of confirmation to the epistle, which arises from seeing the manners of the age, in which it purports to be written, faithfully preserved.

### SECTION 11.

2 Corinthians 13:1: "This is the third time I am coming to you;" **τριτον τουτο ερχομαι.**

Do not these words import that the writer had been at Corinth twice before? Yet, if they import this, they upset every congruity we have been endeavoring to establish. The Acts of the Apostles record only two journeys of St. Paul to Corinth. We have all along supposed, what every mark of time except this expression indicates, that the epistle was written between the first and second of these journeys. If St. Paul had been already twice at Corinth, this supposition must be given up; and every argument or observation which depends upon it, falls to the ground. Again, the Acts of the Apostles not only record no more than two journeys of St. Paul to Corinth, but do not allow us to suppose that more than two such journeys could be made or intended by him within the period which the history comprises; for, from his first journey into Greece to his first imprisonment at Rome, with which the history concludes, the apostle's time is accounted for. If, therefore, the epistle was written after the second journey to Corinth, and upon the view and expectation of a third, it must have been written after his first imprisonment at Rome, i.e. after the time to which the history extends. When I first read over this epistle with the particular view of comparing it with the history, which I chose to do without consulting any commentary whatever, I own that I felt myself confounded by the text. It appeared to contradict the opinion which I had

been led by a great variety of circumstances to form, concerning the date and occasion of the epistle. At length, however, it occurred to my thoughts to inquire whether the passage did necessarily imply that St. Paul had been at Corinth twice; or, whether, when he says, "This is the third time I am coming to you," he might mean only that this was the third time that he was ready, that he was prepared, that he intended to set out upon his journey to Corinth. I recollected that he had once before this purposed to visit Corinth, and had been disappointed in this purpose, which disappointment forms the subject of much apology and protestation in the first and second chapters of the epistle. Now, if the journey in which he had been disappointed was reckoned by him one of the times in which "he was coming to them," then the present would be the third time, i.e. of his being ready and prepared to come, although he had been actually at Corinth only once before. This conjecture being taken up, a farther examination of the passage and the epistle produced proofs which placed it beyond doubt. "This is the third time I am coming to you:" in the verse following these words, he adds, "I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present the second time; and being absent, now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare." In this verse the apostle is declaring beforehand what he would do in his intended visit; his expression therefore, "as if I were present the second time," relates to that visit. But, if his future visit would only make him present among them a second time, it follows that he had been already

ετοιμως εξω ελθειν of the twelfth chapter, and the **τριτον τουτο ερχομαι** of the thirteenth chapter, are equivalent expressions, were intended to convey the same meaning, and to relate to the same journey. The comparison of these phrases gives us St. Paul's own explanation of his own words; and it is that very explanation which we are contending for, viz. that **τριτον τουτο ερχομαι** does not mean that he was coming a third time, but that this was the third time he was in readiness to come, **τριτον ετοιμως εχω**. Upon the whole, the matter is sufficiently certain; nor do I propose it as a new interpretation of the text which contains the difficulty, for the same was given by Grotius long ago; but I thought it the clearest way of explaining the subject, to describe the manner in which the difficulty, the solution, and the proofs of that solution successively presented themselves to my inquiries. Now, in historical researches, a reconciled inconsistency becomes a positive argument: First, because an impostor generally guards against the appearance of inconsistency; and, secondly, because, when apparent inconsistencies are found, it is seldom that any thing but truth renders them capable of reconciliation. The existence of the difficulty proves the want or absence of that caution which usually accompanies the consciousness of fraud; and the solution proves that it is not the collusion of fortuitous propositions which we have to deal with, but that a thread of truth winds through the whole, which preserves every circumstance in its place.

## SECTION 12.

2 Corinthians 10:14-16: "We are come as far as to you also in preaching the Gospel of Christ, not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labors; but having hope, when your faith is increased that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you."

This quotation affords an indirect, and therefore unsuspecting, but at the same time a distinct and indubitable recognition of the truth and exactness of the history. I consider it to be implied, by the words of the quotation, that Corinth was the extremity of St. Paul's travels hitherto. He expresses to the Corinthians his hope that in some future visit he might "preach the Gospel to the regions beyond them;" which imports that he had not hitherto proceeded "beyond them," but that Corinth was as yet the

farthest point or boundary of his travels. Now, how is St. Paul's first journey into Europe, which was the only one he had taken before the writing of the epistle, traced out in the history? Sailing from Asia, he landed at Philippi; from Philippi, traversing the eastern coast of the peninsula, he passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica; from thence through Berea to Athens, and from Athens to Corinth, where he stopped; and from whence, after a residence of a year and a half, he sailed back into Syria. So that Corinth was the last place which he visited in the peninsula; was the place from which he returned into Asia; and was, as such, the boundary and limit of his progress. He could not have said the same thing, viz. "I hope hereafter to visit the regions beyond you," in an epistle to the Philippians, or in an epistle to the Thessalonians, inasmuch as he must be deemed to have already visited the regions beyond them, having proceeded from those cities to other parts of Greece. But from Corinth he returned home; every part therefore beyond that city might properly be said, as it is said in the passage before us, to be unvisited. Yet is this propriety the spontaneous effect of truth, and produced without meditation or design.

For St. Paul's journeys, the reader is referred to the map which accompanies the Acts of the Apostles.

Dr. Lightfoot, in his Chronology of the New Testament, has made some good observations on the date of this epistle, and the circumstances by which that date is ascertained; collating, as Dr. Paley has done, the epistle with those parts of the history in the Acts, which refer to it.

The following is the substance of what he says on this subject:—

A new year being now entered, and Paul intending for Syria, as soon as the spring was a little up, he sends Titus beforehand to Corinth, to hasten their collections for the saints in Judea, that they might be ready against Paul should come thither. And with Titus he sends two other brethren, and by them all, he sends the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. The proof that it was written and sent at this time, and in this manner, is plain, by these places and passages in it:—2 Corinthians 9:2-4: "I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia: yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain; lest haply they of Macedonia come with me," etc. 2



Corinthians 12:14: “Behold, the third time I am coming to you.” 2 Corinthians 13:1: “This is the third time I am coming to you.” And, 2 Corinthians 8:16: “But thanks be unto God, who put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.” 2 Corinthians 8:17: “Being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.” 2 Corinthians 8:18: “And with him we have sent the brother, whose praise is in the Gospel.” 2 Corinthians 8:22: “And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have often times proved diligent in many things,” etc.

The apostle, in this second epistle to Corinth, first excuses his not coming to them, according as he had promised in his first epistle, 1 Corinthians 16:5, clearing himself from all lightness in making, and from all unfaithfulness in breaking, that promise; and fixing the principal reason upon themselves and their present condition; because he had not yet intelligence, when he went first into Macedonia, of any reformation among them of those enormities that he had reproved in his first epistle; therefore he was unwilling to come to them in heaviness, and with a scourge. This, his failing to come according to his promise, had opened the mouths of several in his disgrace, and false teachers took any other occasion to vilify him, which he copiously satisfies, and vindicates himself all along in the epistle. His exceeding zealous plainness with them, and dealing so home and thoroughly against their misdemeanors as he did, was one advantage that his enemies took to open their mouths against him, and to withdraw the hearts of the Corinthians from him; and chiefly because he was so urgent against the works of the law as to justification, and those rites which the Jews, even the most of those that were converted to the Gospel, too much doated on.

After he had sent away this epistle by Titus, Erastus, and Mark, if our conjecture fail not, and had given notice to the Corinthians of his speedy coming to them, and warning them to get their collections ready against, he came, he provided for his journey into Syria, which he had intended so long: partly to visit the Churches in these parts, and partly to bring up the collections he had got for the poor of Judea; of which he had promised to the three ministers of the circumcision, Peter, James, and John, that he would be careful, Galatians 2:10.

Acts 20:4: “And there accompanied him into Asia, Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.” Acts 20:5: “These going before tarried for us at Troas.” Acts 20:6 “And we sailed away from Philippi, after the days of unleavened bread.”

But when Paul, and this his company, are all going for Asia together, why should they not set out together; but these go before, and tarry at Troas, and Paul and some other of his company come after? Nay, they were all to meet at Troas, as it appeareth, Acts 20:6. Why might they not then have gone altogether to Troas?

The reason of this was, because Paul himself was to go by Corinth; and not minding to stay there but very little, because he hastened to Jerusalem, he would not take his whole train thither, but send them off the next way they could go to Troas, himself promising and resolving to be speedily with them there. He had promised a long time to the Church of Corinth to come unto them, and he had newly sent word in that epistle that he had lately sent, that now his coming would be speedy, 2 Corinthians 12:14 “Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you;” and 2 Corinthians 13:1: “This is the third time that I am coming to you.” Not that he had been there twice before, for since his first departing thence, (when he had stayed a long time together, at his first planting of the Gospel in that place,) there is neither mention nor probability of his being there again; but this was the third time that he was coming, having promised and intended a journey thither once before, but was prevented, 2 Corinthians 1:15-17. But now he not only promises by the epistle that he will come, but staketh the three brethren that he had sent thither for witnesses and sureties of that promise, 2 Corinthians 13:1, 2, that in the mouth of these witnesses his promise might be established and assured. See the Introduction, section xi.

Now the time is come that he makes good his promise; and whilst the rest of his company go directly the next cut to Troas, he himself and Luke, and whom else he thought good to retain with him, go about by Corinth.

And now, to look a little farther into the reason of their thus parting company, and of Paul’s short stay at Corinth when he came there, we may take into our thoughts, (besides how much he hastened to Jerusalem,) the

jealousy that he had, lest he should not find all things at Corinth so comfortable to himself, and so creditable to them, before those that should come with him, as he desired. He has many passages in the second epistle that he wrote to them that glance that way; for though, as to the general, there was reformation wrought among them, upon the receiving his first epistle, and thereupon he speaks very excellent things of them; yet were there not a few that thought basely of him, 2 Corinthians 10:12, and traduced him and his doctrine, 2 Corinthians 11, and 12, and gave him cause to suspect that this boasting of that Church to the Churches of Macedonia might come off but indifferently, if the Macedonians should come with him to see how all things were there, 2 Corinthians 9:4. And therefore it was but the good policy of just fear, grief, and prudence to send them by another way, and he had very just cause to stay but a little while when he came there. — Lightfoot's Works, vol. i. p. 310, etc.

# PREFACE TO THE SECOND EPISTLE

## TO THE

## CORINTHIANS.

It is a general opinion among learned men that this epistle was written about a year after the former: and this seems to be supported by the words, 2 Corinthians 9:2: Achaia was ready a year ago; for the apostle having given instructions for that collection, to which he refers in these words at the close of the preceding epistle, they would not have had the forwardness there mentioned till a year had elapsed. As the apostle had purposed to stay at Ephesus till pentecost, 1 Corinthians 16:8; and he stayed some time in Asia after his purpose to leave Ephesus and go to Macedonia, Acts 9:21, 22; and yet making here his apology for not wintering in Corinth, as he thought to do, 1 Corinthians 16:6; this epistle must have been written after the winter, and consequently when a new year was begun. It therefore, says Dr. Whitby, seems to have been written after his second coming to Macedonia, mentioned Acts 20:3. For, (1.) It was written after he had been at Troas, and had left that place to return to Macedonia: now that was at his second going thither; see 2 Corinthians 2:12. (2.) It was written when Timothy was with him: now, when he left Ephesus to go into Macedonia, Timothy went not with him, but was sent before him, Acts 19:22; but at his second going through Macedonia, Timothy was with him, Acts 20:4. (3.) He speaks of some Macedonians who were likely to accompany him, 2 Corinthians 9:4. Now, at his second going from Macedonia, there accompanied him Aristarchus, Secundus, and Gaius of Thessalonica, the metropolis of Macedonia, Acts 20:4. (4.) The postscript says that this epistle was written from Philippi, where Paul was till the days of unleavened bread, Acts 20:6; it therefore seems to have been sent from thence to them by Titus, and some other person, not long before St. Paul's coming to them; which he speaks of as instant, 2

Corinthians 13:1; and that which he was now ready to do, 2 Corinthians 12:14; and did, according to Dr. Lightfoot, in his journey from Philippi to Troas; he sailing about from Philippi to Corinth, to make good his

III. — Of the ALMS that had been collected, and were yet to be collected, 2Cor 8, and 9.

IV. — His DEFENCE against the false apostle and his calumniators in general, 2Cor 10-12.

V. — MISCELLANEOUS matters, 2 Corinthians 13.

It may be remarked, once for all, that none of these or such artificial divisions are made by the apostle himself, no more than the divisions into chapters and verses. All these are the work of man, and certainly contribute nothing to a proper understanding of the epistle itself. The apostle appears to have sat down, and, under the influence of the Divine Spirit, he wrote on the different subjects treated of in the epistle just in the order that these things occurred to his mind, without intending particular heads, divisions or subdivisions. And, as he probably wrote the whole with very little intermission of time, his sense will be best apprehended by those who carefully read over the whole at one sitting.

## THE

## SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

## TO THE

## CORINTHIANS.

Chronological Notes relative to this Epistle. — Year of the Constantinopolitan era of the world, or that used by the emperors of the east in their diplomata, etc., and thence also called the “civil era of the Greeks,” εφξε (5565.) -Year of the Alexandrian era of the world, or ecclesiastical epoch of the Greeks, εφνθ’ (5559.) -Year of the Antiochian era of the world, εφμθ’ (5549). — Year of the Eusebian epoch of the creation, or that used in the Chronicon of Eusebius, and the Roman martyrology, δςπε (4285.) -Year of the Julian period, 4767. — Year of the world, according to Bedford and Kennedy, in their Scripture Chronology, 4065. — Year of the Usherian era of the world, or that used in the English Bibles, 4061. — Year of the world according to Scaliger, 4001. The difference of sixty years in the era of the world, as fixed by Scaliger and Usher, arises from the former chronologer placing the birth of Abraham in the 70th, and the latter in the 130th year of the life of his father Terah. For Scaliger’s computation, see on Genesis 11:26; and for Usher’s computation, see on Genesis 11:26, and Genesis 11:32, conferred with Acts 7:4. — Year of the minor Jewish era of the world, 3817. — Year of the greater Rabbinical era of the world, 4416. — Year since the Deluge, according to Archbishop Usher and the English Bible, 2405. — Year of the Cali Yuga, or Indian era of the Deluge, 3159. — Year of the era of Iphitus, who re-established the Olympic Games 338 years after their institution by Hercules, or about 884 years before the commencement of the Christian era, 997. — Year of the two hundred and ninth Olympiad, 1. This epoch commenced, according to the most accurate calculations of some of the

moderns, precisely 776 years before the Christian era, and 23 years before the building of Rome; and computations of time by it ceased about A. D. 440. — Year from the building of Rome, according to Fabius Pictor, who flourished about 225 years before Christ, and who is styled by Dionysius of Halicarnassus an accurate writer, 804. (This epoch is used by Diodorus Siculus.) -Year from the building of Rome, according to Polybius the historian, 808. — Year from the building of Rome, according to Cato and the *Fasti Consulares*, and adopted by Solinus, Eusebius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, etc., 809. — Year from the building of Rome, according to Varro, which was that adopted by the Roman emperors in their proclamations, by Plutarch, Tacitus, Dio Cassius, Gellius Censorinus, Onuphrius, Baronius, and by most modern chronologers, 810. N. B. Livy, Cicero, Pliny, and Velleius Paterculus, fluctuate between the Varronian and Catonian computations. — Year of the epoch of Nabonassar, king of Babylon, after the division of the Assyrian monarchy, or that used by Hipparchus, by Ptolemy in his astronomical observations, by Censorinus and others, 805. (The years of this era constantly contained 365 days, so that 1460 Julian were equal to 1461 Nabonassarean years. This epoch commenced on the IVth of the calends of March, (Feb. 26,) B. C. 747; and, consequently, the beginning of the 805th year of the era of Nabonassar coincided with the Vth of the Ides of August, (Aug. 9,) A. D. 57. — Year of the era of the Seleucidae, or since Seleucus, one of the generals of Alexander the Great, took Babylon and ascended the Asiatic throne, sometimes called the Grecian era, and the era of principalities, in reference to the division of Alexander's empire, 369. — Year of the Caesarean era of Antioch, 105. — Year of the Julian era, or year since the Calendar of Numa Pompilius, the second Roman king, was reformed by Julius Caesar, 102. — Year of the Spanish era, or since the second division of the Roman provinces among the Triumviri, 95. — Year since the defeat of Pompey, by Julius Caesar, at Pharsalia, called by Catrou and Rouille the commencement of the Roman empire, 105. — Year of the Actiac, or Actian era, or proper epoch of the Roman empire, commencing with the defeat of Antony by Augustus at Actium, 87. — Year from the birth of Jesus Christ, 61. — Year of the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 57. — Year of the Dionysian period or Easter Cycle, 58. — Common Golden Number, or year of the Grecian or Metonic Cycle of nineteen years, 1, or the first common year. — Jewish Golden Number, or year of the Rabbinical Cycle



of nineteen years, 17, or the sixth Embolismic. — Year of the Solar Cycle, 10. — Dominical Letter B; or, which is the same thing, the Calends of January, (Jan. 1,) happened on the Jewish Sabbath, or our Saturday. — Jewish Passover, (15th of Nisan, or Abib,) Tuesday, April 5, or on the Nones of April. — Number of Direction, or number of days that Easter Sunday happens after the 21st of March, 21; or the XIIth of the Calends of April. — Mean time of the Paschal Full Moon at Corinth, (its longitude being twenty-three degrees to the east of London,) according to Ferguson's Tables, which are sufficiently exact for this purpose, April 7, or the VIIth of the Ides of April, at forty-eight minutes and thirty-eight seconds past eight in the evening. True time of the Paschal Full Moon at Corinth, according to Ferguson's Tables, April 8, or the VIth of the Ides of April, at thirty-seven minutes and one second past five in the morning; the true time of the Paschal Full Moon being eight hours, forty-eight minutes, and twenty-three seconds after the mean. — Easter Sunday, April 10, or the IVth of the Ides of April. — Epact, or moon's age on the twenty-second of March, or the XIth of the Calends of April, (the day on which the earliest Easter happens,) 29. — Year of the reign of Nero Caesar, the Roman emperor, and fifth Caesar, 4. — Year of Claudius Felix, the Jewish governor, 5. — Year of the reign of Vologesus, king of the Parthians, or the family of the Arsacidae, 8. — Year of Caius Numidius Quadratus, governor of Syria, 7. — Year of Ishmael, high priest of the Jews, 3. — Year of the reign of Corbred I., king of the Scots, brother to the celebrated Caractacus, who was carried prisoner to Rome, but afterwards released by

year of the reign of Nero, aged 28. — Dioscorides, the physician; the age in which this physician lived is very uncertain. — Justus, of Tiberias, in Palestine. — Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian; born A. D. 37, died A. D. 93. — Silius Italicus, the poet who was several times consul; born about A. D. 23, died in the beginning of the reign of Trajan, aged 75. — Valerius Flaccus, the Latin poet; flourished under Vespasian. — C. Plinius Secundus, of Verona, born under Tiberius, flourished under Vespasian, and died under Titus, A. D. 79, aged 56. — Thraseus Paetus, the Stoic philosopher, famous for his independence and generous sentiments; slain by order of Nero, A. D. 66. — Quintius Curtius Rufus, the historian; the time when he flourished is uncertain, some placing him under Claudius, others under Vespasian, and others under Trajan. — Asconius Pedianus, the historian and annotator, died A. D. 76, aged 85. — Marcus Valerius Martialis, the epigrammatist; born about A. D. 29, died A. D. 104, aged 75. — Philo-Byblius, born about A. D. 53, died A. D. 133, aged 80. — Acusilaus, the rhetorician; flourished under Galba. — Afer, an orator and preceptor of Quintilian, died A. D. 59. — Afranius, the satirist, put to death by Nero, in the Pisonian conspiracy. — Marcus Aper, a Latin orator of Gaul, died A. D. 85. — Babilus, the astrologer, who caused the Emperor Nero to put all the leading men of Rome to death. — C. Balbillus, the historian of Egypt; flourished under Nero. — P. Clodius Quirinalis, the rhetorician, flourished under Nero. — Fabricus, the satirist; flourished under Nero. — Decius Junius Juvenalis, the satirist; born about A. D. 29, died A. D. 128, aged about 100 years. — Longinus, the lawyer, put to death by Nero. — Plutarch, the biographer and moralist; born about A. D. 50, died about A. D. 120, or A. D. 140, according to others. — Polemon, the rhetorician, and master of Persius the celebrated satirist, died in the reign of Nero. — Seleucus, the mathematician, intimate with the Emperor Vespasian. — Servilius Nonianus, the Latin historian; flourished under Nero. — Caius Cornelius Tacitus, the celebrated Roman historian; born in the reign of Nero, and died at an advanced age in the former part of the second century.

## CHAPTER 1.

*St. Paul encourages them to trust in God in all adversities, from a consideration of the support which he had granted them already in times of afflictions; and expresses his strong confidence of their fidelity, 1-7. Mentions the heavy tribulation which he had passed through in Asia; as also his deliverance, 8-11. Shows in what the exultation of a genuine Christian consists, 12. Appeals to their own knowledge of the truth of the things which he wrote to them, 13, 14. Mentions his purpose of visiting them; and how sincere he was in forming it; and the reason why he did not come, as he had purposed, 15-24.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 1.

**Verse 1. *Paul, an apostle***— Paul, commissioned immediately by Jesus Christ himself, according to the will of God, to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. See on 1 Corinthians 1:1.

***In all Achaia***— The whole of the Peloponnesus, or that country separated from the main land by the Isthmus of Corinth. From this we may learn that this epistle was not only sent to the Church at Corinth, but to all the Churches in that country.

**Verse 2. *Grace be to you and peace***— See Romans 1:7.

**Verse 3. *Blessed be God***— Let God have universal and eternal praise: 1. Because he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the gift of his endless love to man, John 1:16. 2. Because he is the Father of mercies, **ο πατηρ των οικτιρημων**, the source whence all mercy flows, whether it respect the body or the soul, time or eternity; the source of tender mercy; for so the word implies. See on Romans 12:1. And, 3. Because he is the God of all comfort—the Fountain whence all consolation, happiness, and bliss flow to angels and to men.

**Verse 4. *Who comforteth us***— Who shows himself to be the God of tender mercy, by condescending to notice us, who have never deserved

any good at his hand; and also the God of all consolation, by comforting us in all our tribulation—never leaving us a prey to anxiety, carking care, persecution, or temptation; but, by the comforts of his Spirit, bearing us up in, through, and above, all our trials and difficulties.

***That we may be able to comfort them***— Even spiritual comforts are not given us for our use alone; they, like all the gifts of God, are given that they may be distributed, or become the instruments of help to others. A minister's trials and comforts are permitted and sent for the benefit of the Church. What a miserable preacher must he be who has all his divinity by study and learning, and nothing by experience! If his soul have not gone through all the travail of regeneration, if his heart have not felt the love of God shed abroad in it by the Holy Ghost, he can neither instruct the ignorant nor comfort the distressed. See 2 Corinthians 1:6.

**Verse 5. *The sufferings of Christ***— Suffering endured for the cause of Christ: such as persecutions, hardships, and privations of different kinds.

***Our consolation also aboundeth***— We stood as well, as firmly, and as easily, in the heaviest trial, as in the lightest; because the consolation was always proportioned to the trial and difficulty. Hence we learn, that he who is upheld in a slight trial need not fear a great one; for if he be faithful, his consolation shall abound, as his sufferings abound. Is it not as easy for a man to lift one hundred pounds' weight, as it is for an infant to lift a few ounces? The proportion of strength destroys the comparative difficulty.

**Verse 6. *And whether we be afflicted***— See on 2 Corinthians 1:4.

***Which is effectual***— There is a strange and unusual variation in the MSS. and versions in this passage. Perhaps the whole should be read thus: For if we be afflicted, it is for your encouragement and salvation; and if we be comforted, it is also for your encouragement, which exerted itself by enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer.

This transposition of the middle and last clauses is authorized by the best MSS. and versions. The meaning seems to be this: While ye abide faithful to God, no suffering can be prejudicial to you; on the contrary, it will be advantageous; God having your comfort and salvation continually in view, by all the dispensations of his providence: and while you patiently endure, your salvation is advanced; sufferings and consolations all becoming

energetic means of accomplishing the great design, for all things work together for good to them that love God. See the variations in Griesbach.

**Verse 7. *And our hope of you is steadfast***— We have no doubt of your continuing in the truth; because we see that you have such a full, experimental knowledge of it, that no sufferings or persecutions can turn you aside. And we are sure that, as ye suffer, so shall ye rejoice.

**Verse 8. *Our trouble which came to us in Asia***— To what part of his history the apostle refers we know not: some think it is to the Jews lying in wait to kill him, Acts 20:3; others, to the insurrection raised against him by Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen, Acts 19:23; others, to his fighting with beasts at Ephesus, 1 Corinthians 15:32, which they understand literally; and others think that there is a reference here to some persecution which is not recorded in any part of the apostle's history.

***We were pressed out of measure, above strength***— The original is exceedingly emphatic: *καθ' υπερβολην βαρηθημεν υπερ δυναμιν*· we were weighed down beyond what is credible, even beyond what any natural strength could support. There is no part of St. Paul's history known to us which can justify these strong expressions, except his being stoned at Lystra; which if not what is here intended, the facts to which he refers are not on record. As Lystra was properly in Asia, unless he mean Asia Minor, and his stoning at Lystra did most evidently destroy his life, so that his being raised was an effect of the miraculous power of God; he might be supposed to refer to this. See the notes on Acts 14:19, etc. But it is very likely that the reference is to some terrible persecution which he had endured some short time before his writing this epistle; and with the outlines of which the Corinthians had been acquainted.

**Verse 9. *We had the sentence of death in ourselves***— The tribulation was so violent and overwhelming, that he had no hope of escaping death.

***That we should not trust in ourselves***— The tribulation was of such a nature as to take away all expectation of help but from GOD alone.

***But in God which raiseth the dead***— This is very like the business at Lystra; and would be sufficient to fix the apostle's reference to that fact could the time and other circumstances serve.

**Verse 10. *Who delivered us from so great a death***— For the circumstances were such that no human power could avail.

***Will yet deliver us***— Having had such a signal evidence of His interposition already, we will confide in him with an unshaken confidence that he will continue to support and deliver.

**Verse 11. *Ye also helping together by prayer***— Even an apostle felt the prayers of the Church of God necessary for his comfort and support. What innumerable blessings do the prayers of the followers of God draw down on those who are the objects of them!

***The gift bestowed-by the means of many persons***— The blessings communicated by means of their prayers.

***Thanks may be given by many***— When they who have prayed hear that their prayers are so particularly answered, then all that have prayed will feel themselves led to praise God for his gracious answers. Thus, the prayers of many obtain the gift; and the thanksgiving of many acknowledge the mercy.

The gift, or **χαρισμα**, which the apostle mentions, was his deliverance from the dangers and deaths to which he was exposed.

**Verse 12. *For our rejoicing is this***— ἡ καυχησις. Our boasting, exultation, subject of glorying.

***The testimony of our conscience***— μαρτυριον της συνειδησεως. That testimony or witness which conscience, under the light and influence of the Spirit of God, renders to the soul of its state, sincerity, safety, etc.

***In simplicity***— ἁπλοτητι· from **α**, denoting unity or together, and **πελω**, to be; or from **α**, negative, and **πολυς**, many; not compounded, having one end in view, having no sinister purpose, no by end to answer. Instead of **απλοτητι**, many MSS. and versions have **αγιοτητι**, holiness.

***In godly sincerity***— ειλικρινεια θεου. The sincerity of God: that is, such a sincerity as comes from his work in the soul. **ειλικρινεια**, sincerity, and **ειλικρινης**, sincere, come from **ειλη**, the splendor, or bright shining of the sun; and here signifies such simplicity of intention,

and purity of affection, as can stand the test of the light of God shining upon it, without the discovery being made of a single blemish or flaw.

***Not with fleshly wisdom***— The cunning and duplicity of man, who is uninfluenced by the Spirit of God, and has his secular interest, ease, profit, pleasure, and worldly honor in view.

***But by the grace of God***— Which alone can produce the simplicity and godly sincerity before mentioned, and inspire the wisdom that comes from above.

***We have had our conversation***— **ανεστραφημεν**. We have conducted ourselves. The word properly refers to the whole tenor of a man's life—all that he does says, and intends; and the object or end he has in view, and in reference to which he speaks, acts, and thinks; and is so used by the best Greek writers. The verb **αναστρεφω** is compounded of **ανα**, again, and **στρεφω**, to turn; a continual coming back again to the point from which he set out; a circulation; beginning, continuing, and ending every thing to the glory of God; setting out with Divine views, and still maintaining them; beginning in the Spirit, and ending in the Spirit; acting in reference to God, as the planets do in reference to the sun, deriving all their light, heat, and motion from him; and incessantly and regularly revolving round him. Thus acted Paul; thus acted the primitive Christians; and thus must every Christian act who expects to see God in his glory. The word conversation is not an unapt Latinism for the Greek term, as *conversatio* comes from *con*, together, and *verto*, I turn; and is used by the Latins in precisely the same sense as the other is by the Greeks, signifying the whole of a man's conduct, the tenor and practice of his life: and *conversiones caelestes*, is by CICERO used for the course of the stars and heavenly bodies. — De Leg. c. 8: Caelum una conversione atque eadem, ipse circum se torquetur et vertitur. — CIC de Univers., c. 8: "The heaven itself is, with one and the same revolution, whirled about, and revolves round itself."

***In the world***— Both among Jews and Gentiles have we always acted as seeing Him who is invisible.

***More abundantly to you-ward***.— That is, We have given the fullest proof of this in our conduct towards you; YOU have witnessed the holy manner

in which we have always acted; and GOD is witness of the purity of the motives by which we have been actuated; and our conscience tells us that we have lived in uprightness before him.

**Verse 13. *Than what ye read***— Viz. In the first epistle which he had sent them.

***Or acknowledge***— To be the truth of God; and which he hoped they would continue to acknowledge, and not permit themselves to be turned aside from the hope of the Gospel.

**Verse 14. *Have acknowledged us in part***— *απο μερους* may signify here not in part, but some of you; and it is evident, from the distracted state of the Corinthians, and the opposition raised there against the apostle, that it was only a part of them that did acknowledge him, and receive and profit by his epistles and advice.

***We are your rejoicing***, etc.— You boast of us as the ministers of Christ through whom ye have believed; as we boast of you as genuine converts to the Christian faith, and worthy members of the Church of God.

**Verse 15. *And in this confidence***— Under the conviction or persuasion that this is the case; that ye exult in us, as we do in you;

***I was minded***— I had purposed to come to you before, as he had intimated, 1 Corinthians 16:5; for he had intended to call on them in his way from Macedonia, but this purpose he did not fulfill; and he gives the reason, 2 Corinthians 1:23.

***A second benefit***— He had been with them once, and they had received an especial blessing in having the seed of life sown among them by the preaching of the Gospel; and he had purposed to visit them again that they might have a second blessing, in having that seed watered. Instead of *χαριτι*, grace or benefit, several MSS. read *χαραν* joy, pleasure; but the word grace or benefit, seems to express the apostle's meaning best.

**Verse 16. *To pass by you into Macedonia***— He had purposed to go to Macedonia first, and then from Macedonia return to them, and probably winter in Corinth. Therefore we must understand the *δι' υμων*, by you, as implying that he would sail up the AEgean Sea, leaving Corinth to the west; though he might have taken it in his way, and have gone by land



through Greece up to Macedonia. Some think that the meaning is, that he purposed to take Achaia in his way to Macedonia, without calling at Corinth; but Achaia was out of his way considerably, and he could scarcely go through Achaia without passing close by Corinth. I consider the words, therefore, as implying that he purposed not to call at Corinth at that time, but to pass by it, as before stated.

**Verse 17. *Did I use lightness?***— When I formed this purpose, was it without due consideration? and did I abandon it through fickleness of mind?

***That with me there should be yea,*** etc.— That I should act as carnal men, who change their purposes, and falsify their engagements, according as may seem best to their secular interest?

**Verse 18. *But as God is true***— Setting the God of truth before my eyes, I could not act in this way: and as sure as he is true, so surely were my purposes sincere; and it was only my uncertainty about your state that induced me to postpone my visit. See 2 Corinthians 1:23.

**Verse 19. *For the Son of God,*** etc.— If I could have changed my purpose through carnal or secular interests then I must have had the same interest in view when I first preached the Gospel to you, with Silvanus and Timotheus. But did not the whole of our conduct prove that we neither had, nor could have such interest in view?

**Verse 20. *For all the promises of God***— Had we been light, fickle, worldly-minded persons; persons who could only be bound by our engagements as far as comported with our secular interest; would God have confirmed our testimony among you? Did we not lay before you the promises of God? And did not God fulfill those promises by us—by our instrumentality, to your salvation and his own glory? God is true; therefore every promise of God is true; and consequently each must have its due fulfillment. God will not make use of trifling, worldly men, as the instruments by which he will fulfill his promises; but he has fulfilled them by us; therefore we are just and spiritual men, else God would not have used us.

***In him are yea, and in him amen***— All the promises which God has made to mankind are yea-true in themselves, and amen-faithfully fulfilled

to them who believe in Christ Jesus. The promises are all made in reference to Christ; for it is only on the Gospel system that we can have promises of grace; for it is only on that system that we can have mercy. Therefore, the promise comes originally by Christ, and is yea; and it has its fulfillment through Christ, and is amen; and this is to the glory of God, by the preaching of the apostles.

From what the apostle says here, and the serious and solemn manner in which he vindicates himself, it appears that his enemies at Corinth had made a handle of his not coming to Corinth, according to his proposal, to defame his character, and to depreciate his ministry; but he makes use of it as a means of exalting the truth and mercy of God through Christ Jesus; and of showing that the promises of God not only come by him, but are fulfilled through him.

**Verse 21. *Now he which stablisheth us with you***— It is God that has brought both us and you to this sure state of salvation through Christ; and he has anointed us, giving us the extraordinary influences of the Holy Ghost, that we might be able effectually to administer this Gospel to your salvation. Through this unction we know and preach the truth, and are preserved by it from dissimulation and falsity of every kind.

**Verse 22. *Who hath also sealed us***— Not only deeply impressed His truth and image upon our hearts; but, by the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, attested the truth of our extraordinary unction or calling to the ministry.

***And given the earnest of the Spirit***— *τον αρραβωνα του πνευματος*. From this unction and sealing we have a clear testimony in our souls, the Divine Spirit dwelling constantly in us, of our acceptance with God, and that our ways please him. The *αρραβων* of the apostle is the same as the *ערב* erabon of Moses, Genesis 38:17, 18, 20, which we there translate pledge. The word properly signifies an earnest of something promised; a part of the price agreed for between a buyer and seller, by giving and receiving of which the bargain was ratified; or a deposit, which was to be restored when the thing promised was given. From the use of the term in Genesis, which the apostle puts here in Greek letters, we may at once see his meaning above, and in Ephesians 1:14; the Holy Spirit being an earnest in the heart, and an earnest of the promised inheritance means a security

given in hand for the fulfillment of all God's promises relative to grace and eternal life. We may learn from this, that eternal life will be given in the great day to all who can produce the arrhabon, or pledge. He who is found then with the earnest of God's Spirit in his heart, shall not only be saved from death, but have that eternal life of which it is the pledge, the earnest, and the evidence. Without this arrhabon there can be no glory. See the whole case of Judah and Tamar, Genesis 38:13, etc., and the notes there.

**Verse 23. *I call God for a record upon my soul***— The apostle here resumes the subject which he left 2 Corinthians 1:16, and in the most solemn manner calls God to witness, and consequently to punish, if he asserted any thing false, that it was through tenderness to them that he did not visit Corinth at the time proposed. As there were so many scandals among them, the apostle had reason to believe that he should be obliged to use the severe and authoritative part of his function in the

apostle. It is certain that the faith which they had already received was preached by the apostles; and, therefore, in a certain sense, according to our meaning of the term, they had a right to propound to them the articles which they ought to believe; and to forbid them, in the most solemn manner, to believe any thing else as Christianity which was opposed to those articles. In that sense they had dominion over their faith; and this dominion was essential to them as apostles. But shall any others—persons who are not apostles, who are not under the unerring and infallible influence of the Holy Ghost, arrogate to themselves this dominion over the faith of mankind; not only by insisting on them to receive new doctrines, taught nowhere by apostles or apostolic men; but also threatening them with perdition if they do not credit doctrines which are opposed to the very spirit and letter of the word of God? These things men, not only not apostles, but wicked, profligate, and ignorant, have insisted on as their right. Did they succeed? Yes, for a time; and that time was a time of thick darkness; a darkness that might be felt; a darkness producing nothing but misery, and lengthening out and deepening the shadow of death. But the light of God shone; the Scriptures were read; those vain and wicked pretensions were brought to the eternal touchstone: and what was the consequence? The splendor of truth pierced, dissipated, and annihilated them for ever!

British Protestants have learned, and Europe is learning that the SACRED WRITINGS, and they alone, contain what is necessary to faith and practice; and that no man, number of men, society, church, council, presbytery, consistory, or conclave, has dominion over any man's faith. The word of God alone is his rule, and to its Author he is to give account of the use he has made of it.

***For by faith ye stand.***— You believe not in us, but in GOD. We have prescribed to you on his authority, what you are to believe; you received the Gospel as coming from Him, and ye stand in and by that faith.

THE subjects in this chapter which are of the most importance have been carefully considered in the preceding notes. That alone of the apostle's oath has been passed by with general observations only. But, that it is an oath has been questioned by some. An oath, properly speaking, is an appeal to God, as the Searcher of the hearts for the truth of what is

spoken; and an appeal to Him, as the Judge of right and wrong, to punish the falsity and perjury. All this appears to be implied in the awful words above: I call God for a record upon my soul; and this is not the only place in which the apostle uses words of the same import. See Romans 1:9; 9:1, and the note on this latter passage.

On this subject I have spoken pretty much at large at the end of the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy; but as it appears that there I have made a mistake in saying that the people called Quakers hold up their hand in a court of justice, when called upon to make affirmation, I take this opportunity to correct that expression, and to give the form of the oath, for so the law considers it, which the statute (7 and 8 of William III., cap. 34, sec. 1) required of this sect of Christians: "I, A. B., do declare in the presence of almighty God, the witness of the truth of what I say." Though this act was only intended at first to continue in force for seven years, yet it was afterwards made perpetual. See Burn, vol. iii., page 654.

A more solemn and more awful form of an oath was never presented nor taken by man than this; no kissing of the book, holding up of the hand, nor laying hand on the Bible, can add either solemnity or weight to such an oath! It is as awful and as binding as any thing can be; and him, who would break this, no obligation can bind.

But the religious people in question found their consciences aggrieved by this form, and made application to have another substituted for it; in consequence of this the form has undergone a little alteration, and the solemn affirmation which is to stand instead of an oath taken in the usual manner, as finally settled by the 8th Geo., cap. 6, is the following: "I, A. B., do solemnly, sincerely, and truly declare and affirm." Burn, vol. iii., page 656.

It may be well to examine this solemn affirmation, and see whether it does not contain the essential principles of an oath; and whether it should not be reputed by all people, as being equal to any oath taken in the common form, and sufficiently binding on every conscience that entertains the belief of a God, and the doctrine of a future state. The word solemnly refers to the presence and omniscience of GOD, before whom the affirmation is made; and the word sincerely to the consciousness that the person has of the uprightness of his own soul, and the total absence of

guile and deceit; and the word truly refers to the state of his understanding as to his knowledge of the fact in question. The word declare refers to the authority requiring, and the persons before whom this declaration is made; and the term affirm refers back to the words solemnly, sincerely, and truly, on which the declaration and affirmation are founded. This also contains all that is vital to the spirit and essence of an oath; and the honest man, who takes or makes it, feels that there is no form used among men by which his conscience can be more solemnly bound. As to the particular form, as long as it is not absurd or superstitious, it is a matter of perfect indifference as to the thing itself as long as the declaration or affirmation contains the spirit and essence of an oath; and that the law considers this as an oath, is evident from the following clause: "That if any one be convicted of having wilfully or falsely made this declaration or affirmation, such offender shall incur the same penalties and forfeitures as are enacted against persons convicted of wilful and corrupt perjury." I believe it may be said with strict truth, that few instances can be produced where this affirmation, which I must consider as a most solemn oath, was corruptly made by any accredited member of that religious society for whose peace and comfort it was enacted. And when this most solemn affirmation is properly considered, no man of reason will say that the persons who take it are not bound by a sufficient and available oath.

## CHAPTER 2.

*The apostle farther explains the reasons why he did not pay his intended visit to the Corinthians, 1. And why he wrote to them in the manner he did, 2-5. He exhorts them also to forgive the incestuous person, who had become a true penitent; and therefore he had forgiven him in the name of Christ, 6-11. He mentions the disappointment he felt when he came to Troas in not meeting with Titus, from whom he expected to have heard an account of the state of the Corinthian Church, 12, 13. Gives thanks to God for the great success he had in preaching the Gospel, so that the influence of the name of Christ was felt in every place, 14. Shows that the Gospel is a savour of life to them that believe, and of death to them that believe not, 15, 16. And that he and his brethren preached the pure, unadulterated doctrine of God among the people, 17.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 2.

**Verse 1.** *But I determined this*— The apostle continues to give farther reasons why he did not visit them at the proposed time. Because of the scandals that were among them he could not see them comfortably; and therefore he determined not to see them at all till he had reason to believe that those evils were put away.

**Verse 2.** *For if I make you sorry*— Should he have come and used his apostolical authority, in inflicting punishment upon the transgressors, this would have been a common cause of distress. And though he might expect that the sound part of the Church would be a cause of consolation to him, yet as all would be overwhelmed with trouble at the punishment of the transgressors, he could not rejoice to see those whom he loved in distress.

**Verse 3.** *And I wrote this same unto you*— This I particularly marked in my first epistle to you; earnestly desiring your reformation, lest, if I came before this had taken place, I must have come with a rod, and have inflicted punishment on the transgressors. See 1 Corinthians 5:1-13.

*My joy is the joy of you all.*— I know that ye wish my comfort as much as I wish yours.

**Verse 4. *For out of much affliction,*** etc.— It is very likely that the apostle's enemies had represented him as a harsh, austere, authoritative man; who was better pleased with inflicting wounds than in healing them. But he vindicates himself from this charge by solemnly asserting that this was the most painful part of his office; and that the writing of his first epistle to them cost him much affliction and anguish of heart, and many tears.

**Verse 5. *But, if any have caused grief***— Here he seems to refer particularly to the cause of the incestuous person.

*Grieved me, but in part*— I cannot help thinking that the *εκ μερους* and *απο μερους*, which we render in part, and which the apostle uses so frequently in these epistles, are to be referred to the people. A part of them had acknowledged the apostle, 2 Corinthians 1:14; and here, a part of them had given him cause of grief; and therefore he immediately adds, that I may not overcharge you all; as only a part of you has put me to pain, (viz. the transgressor, and those who had taken his part,) it would be unreasonable that I should load you all, *επιβαρω παντας υμας*, with the blame which attaches to that party alone.

**Verse 6. *Sufficient to such a man is this punishment***— That is, the man has already suffered sufficiently. Here he gives a proof of his parental tenderness towards this great transgressor. He had been disowned by the Church; he had deeply repented; and now the apostle pleads for him.

**Verse 7. *Ye ought rather to forgive him***— He had now suffered enough; for the punishment inflicted had answered the end for which it was inflicted; and there was some danger that, if this poor culprit were not restored to the bosom of the Church, his distress and anguish would destroy his life, or drive him to despair.

**Verse 8. *That ye would confirm your love toward him.***— You do love him, notwithstanding the reproach he has brought on the Gospel; and notwithstanding your love to him, ye were obliged to cut him off for the credit of the Gospel. Now that he has repented, I beseech you to confirm, *κυρωσαι*, to ratify, by a public act of the Church, your love to him; give



him the fullest proof that you do love him; by forgiving him and restoring him to his place in the Church.

**Verse 9. *For to this end also did I write***— *εγραψα*, I have written this also, the advices and commands which I now give you, that I might know whether ye be obedient in all things.

**Verse 10. *To whom ye forgive any thing***— Here he farther shows them that his sole object in the punishment inflicted on the transgressor, was his amendment and therefore promises to ratify, in the name and authority of Christ, the free pardon which he exhorts them to dispense.

***In the person of Christ***— As I believe Christ acts towards his penitent soul, so do I. Christ forgives his sin, and takes him to his favor; let us forgive him his offense against the Church, and restore him to its communion.

**Verse 11. *Lest Satan should get an advantage***— If the man who has given sufficient proof of the sincerity of his repentance be not restored, he may be overwhelmed with sorrow, and sink into despair; and then the discipline of the Church will be represented, not as emendatory, but as leading to destruction. Of this our enemies would most gladly avail themselves, as they wish to discredit this ministry; and there is always at hand a devil to suggest evil, and prompt men to do it; for in this respect we have thorough acquaintance with his devices. Let us therefore be careful to remove, both from Satan and his partisans, all those occasions which might turn to the disadvantage or disparagement of the Gospel of Christ.

**Verse 12. *When I came to Troas***— After having written the former epistle, and not having heard what effect it had produced on your minds; though the Lord had opened me a particular door to preach the Gospel, in which I so especially rejoice and glory;

**Verse 13. *I had no rest in my spirit***— I was so concerned for you, through the love I bear you, that I was greatly distressed because I did not find Titus returned to give me an account of your state.

*But taking my leave of them*— I went thence into Macedonia, expecting to find him there; and thither he did come; and gave me a joyous account of your state. See 2 Corinthians 8:6, 7.

**Verse 14.** *Now, thanks be unto God*— His coming dispelled all my fears, and was the cause of the highest satisfaction to my mind; and filled my heart with gratitude to God, who is the Author of all good, and who always causes us to triumph in Christ; not only gives us the victory, but such a victory as involves the total ruin of our enemies; and gives us cause of triumphing in him, through whom we have obtained this victory.

A triumph, among the Romans, to which the apostle here alludes, was a public and solemn honor conferred by them on a victorious general, by allowing him a magnificent procession through the city.

This was not granted by the senate unless the general had gained a very signal and decisive victory; conquered a province, etc. On such occasions the general was usually clad in a rich purple robe, interwoven with figures of gold, setting forth the grandeur of his achievements; his buskins were beset with pearls, and he wore a crown, which at first was of laurel, but was afterwards of pure gold. In one hand he had a branch of laurel, the emblem of victory; and in the other, his truncheon. He was carried in a magnificent chariot, adorned with ivory and plates of gold, and usually drawn by two white horses. (Other animals were also used: when Pompey triumphed over Africa, his chariot was drawn by elephants; that of Mark Antony, by lions; that of Heliogabalus, by tigers; and that of Aurelius, by deer.) His children either sat at his feet in the chariot, or rode on the chariot horses. To keep him humble amidst these great honors a slave stood at his back, casting out incessant railings, and reproaches; and carefully enumerating all his vices, etc. Musicians led up the procession, and played triumphal pieces in praise of the general; and these were followed by young men, who led the victims which were to be sacrificed on the occasion, with their horns gilded, and their heads and necks adorned with ribbons and garlands. Next followed carts loaded with the spoils taken from the enemy, with their horses, chariots, etc. These were followed by the kings, princes, or generals taken in the war, loaded with chains. Immediately after these came the triumphal chariot, before which, as it passed, the people strewed flowers, and shouted *Io, triumphe!*

The triumphal chariot was followed by the senate; and the procession was closed by the priests and their attendants, with the different sacrificial utensils, and a white ox, which was to be the chief victim. They then passed through the triumphal arch, along the via sacra to the capitol, where the victims were slain.

During this time all the temples were opened, and every altar smoked with offerings and incense.

The people at Corinth were sufficiently acquainted with the nature of a triumph: about two hundred years before this, Lucius Mummius, the Roman consul, had conquered all Achaia, destroyed Corinth, Thebes, and Chalcis; and, by order of the senate, had a grand triumph, and was surnamed Achaicus. St. Paul had now a triumph (but of a widely different kind) over the same people; his triumph was in Christ, and to Christ he gives all the glory; his sacrifice was that of thanksgiving to his Lord; and the incense offered on the occasion caused the savour of the knowledge of Christ to be manifested in every place. As the smoke of the victims and incense offered on such an occasion would fill the whole city with their perfume, so the odour of the name and doctrine of Christ filled the whole of Corinth and the neighboring regions; and the apostles appeared as triumphing in and through Christ, over devils, idols, superstition, ignorance, and vice, wherever they came.

**Verse 15. *For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ***— The apostle still alludes to the case of a triumph; the conqueror always represented the person of Jupiter; as even the heathens supposed that God alone could give the victory: and as the punishment of death was inflicted on some of the captives, who had often rebelled and broken leagues and covenants; so others were spared, made tributaries, and often became allies. Alluding to this, the apostle says: We are a sweet savour to God—we have fulfilled his will in faithfully proclaiming the Gospel, and fighting against sin. And as he has determined that those who believe shall be saved, and those who believe not shall perish, we are equally acceptable to him though we unsuccessfully preach the Gospel to some who obstinately reject it, and so perish, as we are in preaching to others who believe, and are saved.

**Verse 16. *To the one we are the savour of death unto death***— There are several sayings among the ancient Jewish writers similar to this. In

Debarim Rabba, sec. i. fol. 248, it is said: “As the bee brings home honey to its owner, but stings others; so it is with the words of the law;”  
 סם חיים לישראל: sam chaiyim leyisrael, “They are a savour of lives to the Israelites:”  
 וסם המות לאומות העולם vesam hammaveth leomoth haolam, “And a savour of death to the people of this world.” The learned reader may see much more to this effect in Schoettgen. The apostle’s meaning is plain: those who believe and receive the Gospel are saved; those who reject it, perish. The meaning of the rabbins is not less plain: the Israelites received the law and the prophets as from God, and thus possessed the means of salvation; the Gentiles ridiculed and despised them, and thus continued in the path of death. The same happens to the present day to those who receive and to those who reject the Gospel: it is the means of salvation to the former, it is the means of destruction to the latter; for they are not only not saved because they do not believe the Gospel, but they are condemned because they reject it. For how can they escape who neglect so great a salvation? The sun which nourishes the tree

*Who is sufficient for these things?*— Is it the false apostle that has been labouring to pervert you? Or, is it the men to whom God has given an extraordinary commission, and sealed it by the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost? That this is the apostle's meaning is evident from the following verse.

**Verse 17.** *For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God*— God has made US sufficient for these things by giving us his own pure doctrine, the ministry of reconciliation, which we conscientiously preserve and preach; and we act, not like many among you, who, having received that doctrine, corrupt it; mingling with it their own inventions, and explaining away its force and influence, so as to accommodate it to men of carnal minds.

The word *καπηλευοντες*, from *καπηλος*, a tavernkeeper, signifies acting like an unprincipled vintner; for this class of men have ever been notorious for adulterating their wines, mixing them with liquors of no worth, that thereby they might increase their quantity; and thus the mixture was sold for the same price as the pure wine. Isaiah 1:22, Thy wine is mixed with water, the Septuagint thus translate: *οι καπηλοι σου μισγουσι τον οινον υδατι*. “Thy vintners mix thy wine with water;” that is, thy false prophets and corrupt priests adulterate the word of God, and render it of none effect, by their explanations and traditions.

The word has been used, both among the Greeks and Latins, to signify a prostitution of what was right and just, for the sake of gain. So Herodian, lib. vi. cap. 11; *ειπηνην χρυσιου καπηλευοντες*, “Making peace for money.” So *cauponari bellum* is, “To make war for money.” In short, the word is used to signify any artifice employed to get gain by making a thing look more or better than it is; or mingling that which is excellent with what is not so to promote the gain of the adulterater.

It is used by Aristophanes, Plut. Act. iv., scene 5, ver. 1064, to express an old woman who was patched and painted to hide her deformity.

ου δητ', επει μεν νυν καπηλικως εχει·  
 ει δ' εκπλυνειται τουτο το φιμυθιον,  
 οφει καταδηλα του προσωπου γε τα ρακη.

*Not at all; the old woman is painted:  
 If the paint were washed off, then you  
 Would plainly see her wrinkled face.*

Where see the note of the Scholiast, who observes that the term is applied to those who deal in clothes, patching, mending, etc., as well as to those who mix bad wine with good.

καπηλικως εχει· πανουργικως· επει οι καπηλοι χριειν και αναποιειν τα ιματια ειωθασι, και τον οινον δε νωθυλευουσι, συμμιγνυντες αυτω σαπρον.

Vid. Kusteri Aristoph., page 45.

***But as of sincerity***— εξ ειλικρινειας. See the note on 2 Corinthians 1:12. We receive the doctrine pure from God; we keep it pure, and deliver it in its purity to mankind. For we speak in Christ—in the things of his Gospel, as being in the sight of God—our whole souls and all their motives being known to him. As the unprincipled vintner knows that he adulterates the wine, his conscience testifying this; so we know that we deliver the sincere truth of God, our conscience witnessing that we deliver it to you, as we receive it, by the inspiration of the Spirit of truth.

1. THAT St. Paul was a man of a very tender and loving spirit is evident from all his epistles; but especially from this, and particularly from the chapter before us. It was not an easy thing with him to give a reproof; and nothing but a sense of his duty to God and his Church could have led him to use his apostolical power, to inflict spiritual punishment on transgressors. He felt like a loving and tender father, who, being obliged to correct his forward and disobedient child, feels in his own heart the pain of a hundred blows for that occasioned by one laid on the body of his son. There are some ministers who think nothing of cutting off members from the Church of Christ; they seem to do it, if not cheerfully, yet with indifference and unconcern! How can this be? Nothing but absolute duty to God should induce any man to separate any person from the visible Church; and then it must be on the conviction that the case is totally

hopeless. And who, even in those circumstances, that knows the worth of a soul, can do it without torture of heart?

2. We must not only love the doctrines, but also the morality of the Gospel. He who loves this will not corrupt it; but, as Quesnel says truly, in order to love the truth a man must practice it; as in order to practice it he must love it. That a minister, says he, may preach the word of God in such a manner as is worthy of him, he must, with St. Paul, be always mindful of these three things: 1. That he be sent by God, and that he speak directly from him, and as his ambassador. 2. That he speak as in his presence, and under his immediate inspection. 3. That he consider himself as being in the place of Christ, and endeavor to minister to the souls of men, as he has reason to believe Christ would do, were he in the place; and as he knows Christ did, when he sojourned among men. The minister of the Gospel is Christ's ambassador; and he prays men in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God. See 2 Corinthians 5:20. The people should consider the nature of this embassy, and receive it as coming immediately from God, that it may accomplish the end for which he has sent it.

## CHAPTER 3.

*The apostle shows, in opposition to his detractors, that the faith and salvation of the Corinthians were sufficient testimony of his Divine mission; that he needed no letters of recommendation, the Christian converts at Corinth being a manifest proof that he was an apostle of Christ, 1-3. He extols the Christian ministry, as being infinitely more excellent than that of Moses, 4-12. Compares the different modes of announcing the truth under the law and under the Gospel: in the former it was obscurely delivered; and the veil of darkness, typified by the veil which Moses wore, is still on the hearts of the Jews; but when they turn to Christ this veil shall be taken away, 13-16. On the contrary, the Gospel dispensation is spiritual; leads to the nearest views of heavenly things; and those who receive it are changed into the glorious likeness of God by the agency of his Spirit, 17, 18.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 3.

**Verse 1.** *Do we begin again to commend*



**Verse 2. *Ye are our epistle***— I bear the most ardent love to you. I have no need to be put in remembrance of you by any epistles or other means; ye are written in my heart—I have the most affectionate remembrance of you.

***Known and read of all men***— For wherever I go I mention you; speak of your various gifts and graces; and praise your knowledge in the Gospel.

**Verse 3. *Manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ***— Ye are in our hearts, and Christ has written you there; but yourselves are the epistle of Christ; the change produced in your hearts and lives, and the salvation which you have received, are as truly the work of Christ as a letter dictated and written by a man in his work.

***Ministered by us***— Ye are the writing, but Christ used me as the pen; Christ dictated, and I wrote; and the Divine characters are not made with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God; for the gifts and graces that constitute the mind that was in Christ are produced in you by the Holy Ghost.

***Not in tables of stone***— Where men engrave contracts, or record events; but in fleshly tables of the heart—the work of salvation taking place in all your affections, appetites, and desires; working that change within that is so signally manifested without. See the parts of this figurative speech: 1. Jesus Christ dictates. 2. The apostle writes. 3. The hearts of the Corinthians are the substance on which the writing is made. And, 4. The Holy Spirit produces that influence by which the traces are made, and the mark becomes evident. Here is not only an allusion to making inscriptions on stones, where one dictates the matter, and another cuts the letters; (and probably there were certain cases where some colouring matter was used to make the inscription the more legible; and when the stone was engraved, it was set up in some public place, as monuments, inscriptions, and contracts were, that they might be seen, known, and read of all men;) but the apostle may here refer to the ten commandments, written by the finger of God upon two tables of stone; which writing was an evidence of the Divine mission of Moses, as the conversion of the Corinthians was an evidence of the mission of St. Paul. But it may be as well to take the words in a general sense, as the expression is not unfrequent either in the Old Testament, or in the rabbinical writers. See Schoettgen.

**Verse 4. *Such trust have we***— We have the fullest conviction that God has thus accredited our ministry; and that ye are thus converted unto him, and are monuments of his mercy, and proofs of the truth of our ministry.

**Verse 5. *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves***— We do not arrogate to ourselves any power to enlighten the mind or change the heart, we are only instruments in the hand of God. Nor was it possible for us apostles to think, to invent, such a scheme of salvation as is the Gospel; and if we even had been equal to the invention, how could we have fulfilled such promises as this scheme of salvation abounds with? God alone could fulfill these promises, and he fulfils only those which he makes himself. All these promises have been amen-ratified and fulfilled to you who have believed on Christ Jesus according to our preaching; therefore, ye are God's workmanship and it is only by God's sufficiency that we have been able to do any thing. This I believe to be the apostle's meaning in this place, and that he speaks here merely of the Gospel scheme, and the inability of human wisdom to invent it; and the words *λογισασθαι τι*, which we translate to think any thing, signify, properly, to find any thing out by reasoning; and as the Gospel scheme of salvation is the subject in hand, to that subject the words are to be referred and limited. The words, however, contain also a general truth; we can neither think, act, nor be, without God. From him we have received all our powers, whether of body or of mind, and without him we can do nothing. But we may abuse both our power of thinking and acting; for the power to think, and the power to act, are widely different from the act of thinking, and the act of doing. God gives us the power or capacity to think and act, but he neither thinks nor acts for us. It is on this ground that we may abuse our powers, and think evil, and act wickedly; and it is on this ground that we are accountable for our thoughts, words, and deeds.

**Verse 6. *Who hath made us able ministers***— This is a more formal answer to the question, Who is sufficient for these things? *προς ταυτα τις ικανος*; 1 Corinthians 2:16. God, says the apostle, has made us able ministers; *ικανωσεν ημας διακονους*, he has made us sufficient for these things; for the reader will observe that he uses the same word in both places. We apostles execute, under the Divine influence, what God himself has devised. We are ministers of the new covenant; of this new dispensation of truth, light, and life, by Christ Jesus; a system which not

only proves itself to have come from God, but necessarily implies that God himself by his own Spirit is a continual agent in it, ever bringing its mighty purposes to pass. On the words *καινη διαθηκη*, new covenant, see the PREFACE to the gospel of St. Matthew.

*Not of the letter, but of the Spirit*— The apostle does not mean here, as some have imagined, that he states himself to be a minister of the New Testament, in opposition to the Old; and that it is the Old Testament that kills, and the New that gives life; but that the New Testament gives the proper meaning of the Old; for the old covenant had its letter and its spirit, its literal and its spiritual meaning. The law was founded on the very supposition of the Gospel; and all its sacrifices, types, and ceremonies refer to the Gospel. The Jews rested in the letter, which not only afforded no means of life, but killed, by condemning every transgressor to death. They did not look at the spirit; did not endeavor to find out the spiritual meaning; and therefore they rejected Christ, who was the end of the law for justification; and so for redemption from death to every one that believes. The new covenant set all these spiritual things at once before their eyes, and showed them the end, object, and design of the law; and thus the apostles who preached it were ministers of that Spirit which gives life.

Every institution has its letter as well as its spirit, as every word must refer to something of which it is the sign or signicator. The Gospel has both its letter and its spirit; and multitudes of professing Christians, by resting in the LETTER, receive not the life which it is calculated to impart. Water, in baptism, is the letter that points out the purification of the soul; they who rest in this letter are without this purification; and dying in that state they die eternally. Bread and wine in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, are the letter; the atoning efficacy of the death of Jesus, and the grace communicated by this to the soul of a believer, are the spirit. Multitudes rest in this letter, simply receiving these symbols, without reference to the atonement, or to their guilt; and thus lose the benefit of the atonement and the salvation of their souls. The whole Christian life is comprehended by our Lord under the letter, Follow me. Does not any one see that a man, taking up this letter only, and following Christ through Judea, Galilee, Samaria, etc., to the city, temple, villages, seacoast, mountains, etc., fulfilled no part of the spirit; and might, with all this

following, lose his soul? Whereas the SPIRIT, viz. receive my doctrine, believe my sayings, look by faith for the fulfillment of my promises, imitate my example, would necessarily lead him to life eternal. It may be safely asserted that the Jews, in no period of their history, ever rested more in the letter of their law than the vast majority of Christians are doing in the letter of the Gospel. Unto multitudes of Christians Christ may truly say: Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life.

**Verse 7. *The ministration of death***— Here the apostle evidently intends the law. It was a ministration, *διακονια* or service of death. It was the province of the law to ascertain the duty of man; to assign his duties; to fix penalties for transgressions, etc.; and by it is the knowledge of sin. As man is prone to sin, and is continually committing it, this law was to him a continual ministration of death. Its letter killed; and it was only the Gospel to which it referred that could give life, because that Gospel held out the only available atonement.

Yet this ministration of death (the ten commandments, written on stones; a part of the Mosaic institutions being put for the whole) was glorious—was full of splendor; for the apostle refers to the thunderings, and lightnings, and luminous appearances, which took place in the giving of the law; so that the very body of Moses partook of the effulgence in such a manner that the children of Israel could not look upon his face; and he, to hide it, was obliged to use a veil. All this was intended to show the excellency of that law, as an institution coming immediately from God: and the apostle gives it all its heightenings, that he may compare it to the Gospel, and thereby prove that, glorious as it was, it had no glory that could be compared with that of the Gospel; and that even the glory it had was a glory that was to be done away—to be absorbed, as the light of the stars, planets, and moon, is absorbed in the splendor of the sun. See the notes on the 7th chapter of Romans; and see those on Exodus 19, 20, and Exodus 34:29, etc., where this subject is treated in all its details.

**Verse 8. *The ministration of the Spirit***— The Gospel dispensation, which gives the true spiritual sense of the law.

***Be rather glorious?***— Forasmuch as the thing signified is of infinitely more consequence than that by which it is signified. The THING bread will preserve a man alive; the WORD bread can give life to nothing.

**Verse 9. *The ministration of condemnation***— The law, which ascertained sin, and condemned it to just punishment.

***The ministration of righteousness***— The Gospel, the grand business of which was to proclaim the doctrine **δικαιοσύνης**, of justification; and to show how God could be just and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.

***Exceed in glory.***— For great, glorious, and awful as the law may be, in its opposition to sin, which is a reproach to man, and a dishonor to God; and in its punishment of sin; yet it must be vastly exceeded by that system which, evidencing an equal abhorrence of sin, finds out a method to forgive it; to take away its guilt from the conscience, and remove all its infection from the soul. That this could be done the law pointed out by its blood of bulls and of goats: but every considerate mind must see that it was impossible for these to take away sin; it is the Gospel that does what the law signified; and forasmuch as the performance of a promise is greater than the promise itself, and the substance of a man is greater than the shadow projected by that substance; so is the Gospel of Jesus Christ greater than the law, with all its promises, types, ceremonies, and shadows.

**Verse 10. *For even that which was made glorious***— The law, which was exhibited for a time in great glory and splendor, partly when it was given, and partly by the splendor of God in the tabernacle and first temple; but all this ceased and was done away; was intended to give place to the Gospel; and has actually given place to that system; so that now, in no part of the world is that law performed, even by the people who are attached to it and reject the Gospel.

***The glory that excelleth.***— The Gospel dispensation, giving supereminent displays of the justice, holiness, goodness, mercy, and majesty of God.

**Verse 11. *For if that which is done away***, etc.— Here is another striking difference between the law and the Gospel. The former is termed **το καταργουμενον**, that which is counterworked and abolished; the latter **το μενον**, that which continues, which is not for a particular time, place, and people, as the law was; but for ALL times, all places, and all people. As a

great, universal, and permanent GOOD vastly excels a good that is small, partial, and transitory; so does the Gospel dispensation, that of the law.

**Verse 12. *Seeing-we have such hope***— Such glorious prospects as those blessings which the Gospel sets before us, producing such confidence, as the fulfillment of so many promises has already done, that God will still continue to work for us and by us;

***We use great plainness of speech***— πολλη παρρησια χρωμεθα· We speak not only with all confidence, but with all imaginable plainness; keeping back nothing; disguising nothing; concealing nothing: and here we differ greatly from the Jewish doctors, and from the Gentile philosophers, who affect obscurity, and endeavor, by figures, metaphors, and allegories, to hide every thing from the vulgar. But we wish that all may hear; and we speak so that all may understand.

**Verse 13. *And not as Moses***— The splendor of Moses' countenance was so great that the Israelites could not bear to look upon his face, and therefore he was obliged to veil his face: this, it appears, he did typically, to represent the types and shadows by which the whole dispensation of which he was the minister was covered. So that the Israelites could not steadfastly look—could not then have the full view or discernment of that in which the Mosaic dispensation should issue and terminate.

**Verse 14. *But their minds were blinded***— By resting in the letter, shutting their eyes against the light that was granted to them, they contracted a hardness or stupidity of heart. And the veil that was on the face of Moses, which prevented the glory of his face from shining out, may be considered as emblematical of the veil of darkness and ignorance that is on their hearts, and which hinders the glory of the Gospel from shining in.

***Until this day remaineth the same veil***— They are still ignorant of the spiritual meaning and intention of their own law, called here παλαια διαθηκη, the old covenant. See the word explained in the preface to St. Matthew.

***In the reading of the Old Testament***— Here is an evident allusion to the conduct of the Jews in their synagogues: when they read the law they cover their whole head with a veil, which they term the טלית tallith, veil,

from טלל talal, to cover; and this voluntary usage of theirs, the apostle tells us, is an emblem of the darkness of their hearts while they are employed even in sacred duties.

***Which veil is done away in Christ.***— It is only by acknowledging Christ that the darkness is removed, and the end and spiritual meaning of the law discerned.

**Verse 16. *When it shall turn to the Lord***— When the Israelitish nation shall turn to the LORD Jesus, the veil shall be taken away; the true light shall shine; and they shall see all things clearly.

There is an evident allusion here to the case of Moses, mentioned Exodus 34:34. When he came from the Lord, and spoke to the Israelites, he put the veil over his face; but when he returned to speak with the Lord, then he took off the veil. So, when the Israelitish nation shall return to speak with and pray to the Lord Jesus, the veil of darkness and ignorance shall be taken away from their hearts; but never before that time. The words seem to imply: 1. That there will be a conversion of the Jews to Christianity; and, 2. That this conversion will be en masse; that a time will come when the whole nation of the Jews, in every place, shall turn to Christ; and then the Gentiles and Jews make one fold, under one Shepherd and Bishop of all souls.

**Verse 17. *Now the Lord is that Spirit***— In 2 Corinthians 3:6, 8, the word **το πνευμα**, spirit, evidently signifies the Gospel; so called because it points out the spiritual nature and meaning of the law; because it produces spiritual effects; and because it is especially the dispensation of the Spirit of God. Here Jesus Christ is represented as that Spirit, because he is the end of the law for justification to every one that believes; and because the residue of the Spirit is with him, and he is the dispenser of all its gifts, graces, and influences.

***And where the Spirit of the Lord is***— Wherever this Gospel is received, there the Spirit of the Lord is given; and wherever that Spirit lives and works, there is liberty, not only from Jewish bondage, but from the slavery of sin—from its power, its guilt, and its pollution. See John 8:33-36, and the notes there.

**Verse 18. *But we all, with open face***— The Jews were not able to look on the face of Moses, the mediator of the old covenant, and therefore he was obliged to veil it; but all we Christians, with face uncovered, behold, as clearly as we can see our own natural face in a mirror, the glorious promises and privileges of the Gospel of Christ; and while we contemplate, we anticipate them by desire and hope, and apprehend them by faith, and are changed from the glory there represented to the enjoyment of the thing which is represented, even the glorious image-righteousness and true holiness-of the God of glory.

***As by the Spirit of the Lord.***— By the energy of that Spirit of Christ which gives life and being to all the promises of the Gospel; and thus we are made partakers of the Divine nature and escape all the corruptions that are in the world. This appears to me to be the general sense of this verse: its peculiar terms may be more particularly explained.

The word **κατοπτρίζομενοι**, catoptrizomenoi, acting on the doctrine of catoptries, which we translate beholding in a glass, comes from **κατα**, against, and **οπτομαι**, I look; and properly conveys the sense of looking into a mirror, or discerning by reflected light. Now as mirrors, among the Jews, Greeks, and Romans, were made of highly polished metal, (see the note on 1 Corinthians 13:12,) it would often happen, especially in strong light, that the face would be greatly illuminated by this strongly reflected light; and to this circumstance the apostle seems here to allude. So, by earnestly contemplating the Gospel of Jesus, and believing on him who is its Author, the soul becomes illuminated with his Divine splendor, for this sacred mirror reflects back on the believing soul the image of Him whose perfections it exhibits; and thus we see the glorious form after which our minds are to be fashioned; and by believing and receiving the influence of his Spirit, **μεταμορφουμεθα**, our form is changed, **την αυτην εικονα**, into the same image, which we behold there; and this is the image of God, lost by our fall, and now recovered and restored by Jesus Christ: for the shining of the face of God upon us, i.e. approbation, through Christ, is the cause of our transformation into the Divine image.

DR. WHITBY, in his notes on this chapters produces six instances in which the apostle shows the Gospel to be superior to the law; I shall transcribe them without farther illustration:—



1. The glory appearing on mount Sinai made the people afraid of death, saying: Let not God speak to us any more, lest we die; Exodus 20:19; Deuteronomy 18:16; and thus they received the spirit of bondage to fear, Romans 8:15. Whilst we have given to us the spirit of power, and love, and of a sound mind, 2 Timothy 1:7; and the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father! and to this difference the Epistle to the Hebrews alludes, Hebrews 12:18-24.
2. Moses, with all his glory, was only the minister of the law, written on tables of stone; the apostles are ministers of the Gospel, written on the hearts of believers. Moses gave the Jews only the letter that killeth; the apostles gave the Gospel, which is accompanied with the spirit that gives life.
3. The glory which Moses received at the giving of the law did more and more diminish, because his law was to vanish away; but the glory which is received from Christ is an increasing glory; the doctrine and the Divine influence remaining for ever.
4. The law was veiled under types and shadows; but the Gospel has scarcely any ceremonies; baptism and the Lord's Supper being all that can be properly called such: and BELIEVE, LOVE, OBEY, the great precepts of the Gospel, are delivered with the utmost perspicuity. And indeed the whole doctrine of Christ crucified is made as plain as human language can make it.
5. The Jews only saw the shining of the face of Moses through a veil; but we behold the glory of the Gospel of Christ, in the person of Christ our Lawgiver, with open face.
6. They saw it through a veil, which prevented the reflection or shining of it upon them; and so this glory shone only on the face of Moses, but not at all upon the people. Whereas the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, shines as in a mirror which reflects the image upon Christian believers, so that they are transformed into the same image, deriving the glorious gifts and graces of the Spirit, with the Gospel, from Christ the Lord and Distributor of them, 1 Corinthians 12:5; and so, the glory which he had from the Father he has given to his genuine followers, John 17:22. It is, therefore, rather with true Christians as it was with Moses himself,

concerning whom God speaks thus: With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord (**την δoξαν κυριον**, the glory of the Lord) shall he behold; Numbers 12:8. For as he saw the glory of God apparently, so we with open face behold the glory of the Lord: as he, by seeing of this glory, was changed into the same likeness, and his face shone, or was **δεδοξασμενη**, made glorious; so we, beholding the glory of the Lord in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Corinthians 4:6, are changed into the same glory.

Thus we find that in every thing the Gospel has a decided superiority over the law and its institutions.

## CHAPTER 4.

*St. Paul shows the integrity with which he had preached the Gospel of Christ, 1, 2. And that, if it was unprofitable to any who had heard it, it was because their unbelieving hearts were blinded, 3, 4. How he preached, and how he was qualified for the work, 5-7. The troubles and difficulties he met with in his labors, and the hope and consolations by which he was supported, 8-15. And the prospect he had of eternal blessedness, 16-18.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 4.

**Verse 1. *Seeing we have this ministry***— The Gospel, of which he gave that noble account which we read in the preceding chapter.

***We faint not***— We meet with many tribulations, but are supported in and through all by the grace of the Gospel. Instead of **οὐκ ἐκκακουµεν**, we faint not, **οὐκ ἐγκακουµεν**, we act not wickedly, is the reading of ADFG, and some others. Wakefield thinks it the genuine reading; it certainly makes a very good sense with what goes before and what follows. If we follow this reading the whole verse may be read thus: Wherefore, as we have obtained mercy, or been graciously intrusted, **ἠλεθηµην**, with this ministry, we do not act wickedly, but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, etc.

**Verse 2. *But have renounced***— **ἀπειπαµεθα**. We have disclaimed the hidden things of dishonesty; **τὰ κρυπτα της αἰσχυνης**, the hidden things of shame; those things which wicked men do; and which they are ashamed to have known, and ashamed to own. Dr. Whitby thinks that the apostle refers to carnal abominations, of which the Jews and their rabbins were notoriously guilty. And it does appear from the first epistle that there were persons in Corinth who taught that fornication was no sin; and it appears also that several had taken the part of the incestuous person.

*Not walking in*

wickedness; persons who are mere heathens, or live like such, and yet such as Jesus Christ came to seek and save; for the word does not necessarily imply those that will perish eternally, but is a common epithet to point out a man without the Gospel and without God in the world. Christ commands his disciples in preaching the Gospel to go to **προβατα τα απολωλοτα**, the LOST sheep of the house of Israel; Matthew 10:6; for himself says, Matthew 18:11, and Luke 19:10: The Son of man is come **ζητησαι και σωσαι το απολωλος**, to seek and to SAVE that which is LOST. And such persons he represents under the parable of the lost sheep; for to find **το απολωλος**, that which is LOST, the good shepherd leaves the ninety-and-nine in the wilderness, and goes in search of it; Matthew 18:12; Luke 15:4. The word more properly signifies, in all those connections, and in the parallel passages, not those who ARE LOST, but those who are perishing; and will perish, if not sought and saved.

**Verse 4. *In whom the god of this world***, etc.— We see here that those whose minds are blinded, are they who believe not; and because they believe not, their minds continue in darkness, and are proper subjects for Satan to work on; and he deepens the darkness, and increases the hardness. But who is meant by the god of this world? It is generally answered, the same who is called the prince of this world, John 16:11. But the question recurs, who is the prince of this world? and the answer to both is, SATAN. The reader will do well to consult the notes on John 12:31, and the concluding observations on John 14:30. I must own I feel considerable reluctance to assign the epithet **ο θεος**, THE God, to Satan; and were there not a rooted prejudice in favor of the common opinion, the contrary might be well vindicated, viz. that by the God of this world the supreme Being is meant, who in his judgment gave over the minds of the unbelieving Jews to spiritual darkness, so that destruction came upon them to the uttermost. Satan, it is true, has said that the kingdoms of the world and their glory are his, and that he gives them to whomsoever he will; Matthew 4:8, 9. But has God ever said so? and are we to take this assertion of the boasting devil and father of lies for truth? Certainly not. We are not willing to attribute the blinding of men's minds to God, because we sometimes forget that he is the God of justice, and may in judgment remove mercies from those that abuse them; but this is repeatedly attributed to him in the Bible, and the expression before us is quite a parallel to the following, Isaiah 6:9:

Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. 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, etc. And see the parallel places, Matthew 13:14, 15; Mark 4:12; John 12:40; and particularly Romans 11:8-10: God HATH GIVEN THEM THE SPIRIT of SLUMBER, EYES that they SHOULD not SEE, and EARS that they SHOULD not HEAR; let their EYES be DARKENED, etc. Now all this is spoken of the same people, in the same circumstances of wilful rebellion and obstinate unbelief; and the great God of heaven and earth is he who judicially blinds their eyes; makes their hearts fat, i.e. stupid; gives them the spirit of slumber: and bows down their back, etc. On these very grounds it is exceedingly likely that the apostle means the true God by the words the god of this world.

And as to the expression this world, **αιωνος τουτου**, we are not to imagine that it necessarily means wicked men, or a wicked age; for it is frequently used to express the whole mundane system, and all that is called time: Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither **εν τουτω τω αιωνι**, in THIS WORLD, nor in the world to come; Matthew 12:32. In Luke 20:34, the children, **υιοι του αιωνος τουτου**, of THIS WORLD, mean simply mankind at large in their state of probation in this lower world, in opposition to their state in the world to come. The same meaning the word has in several other places, to which I need not refer; it simply implying the present state of things, governed by the Divine providence, in contradistinction from the eternal state: and it is very remarkable that, in 1 Timothy 1:17, God himself is called **βασιλευς των αιωνων**, the King of the WORLD; what we call King eternal; but here it evidently means him who governs both worlds, and rules in time and eternity. This character among the Asiatics is considered essential to God; and therefore in the very first surat of the Koran he is called (Arabic) Rubbi Alalameen, “the Lord of both worlds,” an expression perfectly similar to that above. But it is needless to multiply examples; they exist in abundance. Some, and particularly the ancient fathers, have connected **του αιωνος τουτου** with **των απιστων**, and have read the verse: But God hath blinded the minds of the unbelievers of this world, etc. Irenaeus, Tertullian, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Photius, Theophylact,

and Augustine, all plead for the above meaning; and St. Augustine says that it was the opinion of almost all the ancients.

***Lest the light of the glorious Gospel***— They have resisted the grace which God gave them, and have refused to yield to the evidences which amply prove the Messiahship of Jesus; and therefore their eyes were judicially darkened, as it is said in the prophet: He hath closed their eyes, and hath given them the spirit of slumber. That is, they have shut their eyes against the light, and their blindness and stupor are the consequence.

By glorious Gospel we are to understand the luminous Gospel; that which comes with so much light and evidence to every candid mind.

***Who is the image of God***— Christ is called, Hebrews 1:3, the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person. See the note there.

**Verse 5. *For we preach not ourselves***— We neither proclaim our own wisdom nor power; we have nothing but what we have received; we do not wish to establish our own authority, nor to procure our own emolument.

***But Christ Jesus the Lord***— We proclaim the author of this glorious Gospel as CHRIST, **ο χριστος**, the same as **מָשִׁיחַ** hammashiach, the MESSIAH, the Anointed One; him of whom the prophets wrote; and who is the expectation, as he is the glory, of Israel, We proclaim him as JESUS **יְהוֹשֻׁעַ** Yehoshua, the Savior and Deliverer, who saves men from their sins. See Matthew 1:21. And we proclaim Jesus of Nazareth to be the long-expected Messiah; and that there will be none other. And farther we proclaim this Jesus the Messiah to be the LORD, **ο κυριος**, the great Ruler who has all power in heaven and earth; who made and governs the world; and who can save to the uttermost all that come to God through him. Such was the Redeemer preached by St. Paul.

***And ourselves your servants***— Labouring as fervently and as faithfully for your eternal interests as your most trusty slaves can do for your secular welfare. And we do this for Christ's sake; for although we by our labor show ourselves to be your servants, yea, your slaves, **δουλους**, yet it is a voluntary service; and we are neither employed by you nor receive our wages from you. We belong to Jesus; and are your servants on his account, and by his order.

**Verse 6. *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness***— The apostle refers here to Genesis 1:3. For when God created the heavens and the earth DARKNESS was on the face of the deep; and God said, Let THERE BE LIGHT; and there was light. Thus he caused the light to shine out of darkness.

***Hath shined in our hearts***— He has given our hearts the glorious light of the Gospel, as he has given the world the glorious light of the sun. As sure, therefore, as God is the author of the light and the creator of the universe, so sure is he the author of the Gospel; it is no human invention; and is as far beyond the power of man's wisdom and might, as the creation of the world is beyond all created power, energy, and skill.

***The light of the knowledge***— To give us that light, that we might enlighten others; this appears to me to be the design of the apostle's **προς φωτισμον της γνωσεως της δοξης του θεου**, or, as Dr. Whitby paraphrases it, to give us, and enable us to give to others, the light of the knowledge of God through Christ.

***In the face of Jesus Christ.***— It is in and through Jesus that we can receive the Divine light, and it is in and by him that we can be made partakers of the Divine glory. The light mercy, holiness, and glory of God, are reflected upon and communicated to us through Jesus the Christ; and it is **εν προσωπω**, in the appearance and person of Jesus Christ that these blessings are communicated to us.

**Verse 7. *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels***— The original, **οστρακινοις σκευεσιν**, signifies, more literally, vessels made of shells, which are very brittle; and as the shell is the outward part of a fish, it is very fit, as Dr. Hammond observes, to resemble our bodies in which our souls dwell. The Platonists make two bodies of a man: the one they call **οξημα φυξης**, the chariot of the soul; the other, that which we see and touch; and this they call **οστρακινον** which is the same to us as the shell is to the fish. The word **οστρακον** not only signifies a shell, or vessel made of shell, but also **πηλος ωπημενος**, an earthen vessel which has been burnt in the kiln, and earthen vessels or pottery in general; the difference between **σκευη οστρακινα**, earthen ware, and **σκευη κεραμεως**, the potter's vessel, is this: the latter implies the vessel as it comes out of the hands of the potter BEFORE it is burnt; and the other is



the vessel AFTER it has passed through the kiln. St. Chrysostom, speaking of this difference, observes that the vessels once baked in the kiln, if broken, are incapable of being restored, **δια την εκ του πυρος εγγινομενην αυτοις απαξ αντιτυπιαν**, because of the hardness once gotten by fire; whereas the others are of clay unbaked, if they be spoiled **ραδιως προς το δευτερον επανελθη σχημα**, they may easily, by the skill of the potter, be restored to some second form. See Hammond. This comports excellently with the idea of St. Paul: our bodies are in a recoverable form: they are very frail, and easily marred; but by the skill of the workman they may be easily built up anew, and made like unto his glorious body. The light and salvation of God in the soul of man is a heavenly treasure in a very mean casket.

The rabbins have a mode of speech very similar to this. “The daughter of the emperor thus addressed Rabbi Joshua, the son of Chananiah: O! how great is thy skill in the law, and yet how deformed thou art! what a great deal of wisdom is laid up in a sordid vessel! The rabbi answered, Tell me, I pray thee, of what are those vessels in which you keep your wines? She answered, They are earthen vessels. He replied, How is it, seeing ye are rich, that ye do not lay up your wine in silver vessels, for the common people lay up their wine in earthen vessels? She returned to her father, and persuaded him to have all the wine put into silver vessels; but the wine turned acid; and when the emperor heard it he inquired of his daughter who it was that had given her that advice? She told him that it was Rabbi Joshua. The rabbi told the whole story to the emperor, and added this sentence: The wisdom and study of the law cannot dwell in a comely man. Caesar objected, and said, There are comely persons who have made great progress in the study of the law. The rabbi answered, Had they not been so comely they would have made greater progress; for a man who is comely has not an humble mind, and therefore he soon forgets the whole law.” See Schoettgen. There is a great deal of good sense in this allegory; and the most superficial reader may find it out.

***That the excellency of the power may be of God; and not of us.***— God keeps us continually dependent upon himself; we have nothing but what we have received, and we receive every necessary supply just when it is necessary; and have nothing at our own command. The good therefore that

is done is so evidently from the power of God, that none can pretend to share the glory with him.

**Verse 8. *We are troubled on every side***— We have already seen, in the notes on the ninth chapter of the preceding epistle, that St. Paul has made several allusions to those public games which were celebrated every fifth year at the Isthmus of Corinth; and those games have been in that place particularly described. In this and the three following verses the apostle makes allusion to the contests at those games; and the terms which he employs in these verses cannot be understood but in reference to those agonistical exercises to which he alludes. Dr. Hammond has explained the whole on this ground; and I shall here borrow his help. There are four pairs of expressions taken from the customs of the agones. 1. Troubled on every side, yet not distressed. 2. Perplexed, but not in despair. 3. Persecuted, but not forsaken. Cast down, but not destroyed. Three of these pairs belong to the customs of wrestling; the fourth, to that of running in the race.

***Troubled on every side***, etc.— *εν παντι θλιβομενοι*. The word *θλιβεσθαι*, belongs clearly to *παλη* wrestling. So says Aristotle, Rhet. lib. i. cap. 5, (and the Scholiast on that place,) *ο γαρ δυναμενος-θλιβειν και κατεχειν, παλαιστικος*: “He that can gripe his adversary, and take him up, is a good wrestler;” there being two dexterities in that exercise: 1. to gripe, and 2. to throw down, which Hesychius calls *ωθειν* and *κρατειν*; the first of these is here mentioned, and expressed by *θλιβεσθαι*, to be pressed down; to which is here opposed, as in a higher degree, *στενοχωρεισθαι*, to be brought to distress, as when one cannot get out of his antagonist’s hands, nor make any resistance against him. So in Isaiah: *στενοχωρουμενοι ου δυναμεθα μαχεσθαι*, we are brought to such extremities that we can fight no longer.

***Perplexed, but not in despair***— *απορουμενοι, αλλ’ ουκ εξαπορουμενοι*. The word *απορεισθαι*, to be in perplexity, is fit for the wrestler, who being puzzled by his antagonist’s skill knows not what to do: so in Hesychius, *απορουντες, αμηχανουντες*, they that are not able to do or attempt any thing, yet are not *εξαπορουμενοι*, they miscarry not finally, *ορθοι ισταμενοι*, stand after all upright; *ουκ απογινωσκοντες και ηττωμενοι*, despair not, nor are they overcome, but find a happy issue out of all, being at last conquerors.

**Verse 9. *Persecuted, but not forsaken***— διωκομενοι, αλλ' ουκ εγκαταλειπομενοι. The διωκομενοι, pursued, is peculiar to the δρομος, or race, when one being foremost others pursue, and get up close after him, endeavoring to outstrip him, but cannot succeed: this is the meaning of ουκ εγκαταλειπομενοι, not outstripped, or outgone, as the word implies. So in PLUTARCH: τους απολειφθεντας ου στεφανουσι, they do not crown them that are distanced or left behind. So says the apostle, 1 Corinthians 9:24: All run, but only ONE receiveth the PRIZE.

***Cast down, but not destroyed.***— καταβαλλομενοι αλλ' ουκ απολλυμενοι. This also belongs to wrestlers, where he that throws the other first is conqueror. And so Hesychius: καταβαλει, ζικησει, ριψει, to cast down is to overcome, to throw. And then, the being not destroyed signifies that, although they were thrown down-cast into troubles and difficulties, yet they rose again, and surmounted them all.

**Verse 10. *Always bearing about in the body***, etc.— Being every moment in danger of losing our lives in the cause of truth, as Jesus Christ was. We, in a word, bear his cross, and are ready to offer up our lives for him. There is probably an allusion here to the marks, wounds, and bruises which the contenders in those games got, and continued to carry throughout life.

***That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest***— That in our preservation, the success of our ministry, and the miracles we work, we might be able to give the fullest demonstration that Jesus is risen again from the dead; and that we are strengthened by him to do all these mighty works.

**Verse 11. *For we which live***— And yet, although we are preserved alive, we are in such continual dangers that we carry our life in our hands, and are constantly in the spirit of sacrifice. But the life-the preserving power, of Christ is manifest in our continual support.

**Verse 12. *Death worketh in us***, etc.— We apostles are in continual danger, and live a dying life; while you who have received this Gospel from us are in no danger.

**Verse 13. *We having the same spirit of faith***— As David had when he wrote Psalm 116:10: I believed, therefore have I spoken: we also believe that we shall receive the fulfillment of all God's promises; and being fully

convinced of the truth of the Christian religion, we speak and testify that our deliverance is from God; and that he does not fail those who trust in him, and that he saves to the uttermost them who come unto him through Christ Jesus.

**Verse 14. *Knowing that he which raised up the Lord***, etc.— And though we shall at last seal this truth with our blood, we fear not, being persuaded that as the body of Christ was raised from the dead by the power of the Father, so shall our bodies be raised, and that we shall have an eternal life with him in glory.

**Verse 15. *For all things are for your sakes***— We proclaim all these truths and bear all these sufferings for your sakes, thinking all our sufferings nothing if we can gain converts to Christ, and build believers up on their most holy faith.

***That the abundant grace***— ἡ χάρις πλεονασασα: The abounding benefit—the copious outpouring of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, by which you have been favored and enriched, may, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God: i.e. that the gratitude of the multitudes which have been converted may keep pace with the blessings which they have received, and περισσευση, abound, as these blessings have abounded.

**Verse 16. *For which cause we faint not***— ουκ εκκα κουμεν. See on 2 Corinthians 4:1. Here we have the same various reading; εγκακουμεν, we do no wickedness; and it is supported by BDEFG, and some others: but it is remarkable that Mr. Wakefield follows the common reading here, though the various-reading is at least as well supported in this verse as in verse first. The common reading, faint not, appears to agree best with the apostle's meaning.

***But though our outward man***— That is, our body—that part of us that can be seen, heard, and felt, perish—be slowly consumed by continual trials and afflictions, and be martyred at last;

***Yet the inward man***— Our soul—that which cannot be felt or seen by others, is renewed—is revived, and receives a daily increase of light and life from God, so that we grow more holy, more happy, and more meet for glory every day.

It was an opinion among the Jews that even spirits stood in need of continual renovation. They say that “God renews the angels daily, by putting them into the fiery river from which they proceeded, and then gives them the same name they had before.” And they add, that in like manner he renews the hearts of the Israelites every year, when they turn to him by repentance. It is a good antidote against the fear of death to find, as the body grows old and decays, the soul grows young and is invigorated. By the outward man and the inward man St. Paul shows that he was no materialist: he believed that we have both a body and a soul; and so far was he from supposing that when the body dies the whole man is decomposed, and continues so to the resurrection, that he asserts that the decays of the one lead to the invigorating of the other; and that the very decomposition of the body itself leaves the soul in the state of renewed youth. The vile doctrine of materialism is not apostolic.

**Verse 17. *For our light affliction***, etc.— Mr. Blackwall, in his sacred classics, has well illustrated this passage. I shall here produce his paraphrase as quoted by Dr. Dodd: “This is one of the most emphatic passages in all St. Paul’s writings, in which he speaks as much like an orator as he does as an apostle. The lightness of the trial is expressed by **το ελαφρον της θλιψεως**, the lightness of our affliction; as if he had said, it is even levity itself in such a comparison. On the other hand, the **καθ’ υπερβαλην εις υπερβολην**, which we render far more exceeding, is infinitely emphatical, and cannot be fully expressed by any translation. It signifies that all hyperboles fall short of describing that weight-eternal glory, so solid and lasting, that you may pass from hyperbole to hyperbole, and yet, when you have gained the last, are infinitely below it. It is every where visible what influence St. Paul’s Hebrew had on his Greek: **כבד** cabad, signifies to be heavy, and to be glorious; the apostle in his Greek unites these two significations, and says, **WEIGHT of GLORY.**”

St. Chrysostom’s observations on these words are in his very best manner, and are both judicious and beautiful: **τιθησι παραλληλα τα παροντα τοις μελλουσι· το παραυτικα προς το αιωνιον· το ελαφρον προς το βαρυ· την θλιψιν προς την δοξαν· και ουδε τουτοις αρκειται, αλλ’ ετεραν τιθησι λεξιν, διπλασιαζων αυτην, και λεγων, καθ’ υπερβολην εις επερβολην-τουτεστι, μεγεθος υπερβολικως υπερβολικον.**

“The apostle opposes things present to things future; a moment to eternity; lightness to weight; affliction to glory. Nor is he satisfied with this, but he adds another word, and doubles it, saying, **καθ’ υπερβολην εις υπερβολην**. This is a magnitude excessively exceeding.” See Parkhurst, sub voce **υπερβολη**.

**Verse 18.** *While we look not at the things which are seen*— **μη σκοπουντων**. While we aim not at the things which are seen; do not make them our object; are not striving to obtain them; for they are not worthy the pursuit of an immortal spirit, because they are seen; they are objects to which the natural eye can reach; and they are **προσκαιρα**, temporary; they are to have a short duration, and must have an end. But the things which we make our scope and aim are not seen; they are spiritual, and therefore invisible to the eye of the body; and besides, they are **αιωνια**, eternal-things that are permanent; that can have no end; they are things which belong to God; holiness, happiness, and the endless communication and fruition of himself.

But we must remark that the light afflictions work out this far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory only to those who do not look at the things which are seen. A man may be grievously afflicted, and yet have his eye bent on temporal good; from his afflictions he can derive no benefit; though many think that their glorification must be a necessary consequence of their afflictions, and hence we do not unfrequently hear among the afflicted poor, “Well, we shall not suffer both here and in the other world too.” Afflictions may be means of preparing us for glory, if, during them, we receive grace to save the soul; but afflictions of themselves have no spiritual nor saving tendency; on the contrary, they sour the unregenerated mind, and cause murmurings against the dispensations of Divine Providence. Let us, therefore, look to God, that they may be sanctified; and when they are, then we may say exultingly, These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. O world to come, in exchange for the present! O eternity, for a moment! O eternal communion in the holy, blessed, and eternal life of God, for the sacrifice of a poor, miserable, and corrupted life here on earth! Whoever sets no value on this seed of a blessed eternity knows not what it comprehends. That which the eyes of the flesh are capable of perceiving is not worthy of a soul capable of

possessing God. Nothing which is of a perishable nature can be the chief good of a being that was made for eternity!-Quesnel.

## CHAPTER 5.

*The apostle's strong hope of eternal glory, and earnest longings after that state of blessedness, 1-4. The assurance that he had of it from the Holy Spirit, and his carefulness to be always found pleasing to the Lord, 5-9. All must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, 10. Knowing that this awful event must take place, he labored to convince men of the necessity of being prepared to meet the Lord, being influenced to this work by his love of Christ, 11-13. Jesus Christ having died for all, is a proof that all were dead, 14. Those for whom he died should live to him, 15. We should know no man after the flesh, 16. They who are in Christ are new creatures, 17. The glorious ministry of reconciliation, 18-21.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 5.

**Verse 1.** *If our earthly house of this tabernacle*— By earthly house, the apostle most evidently means the body in which the soul is represented as dwelling or sojourning for a time, and from which it is to be liberated at death; for as death dissolves the tabernacle, it can then be no habitation for the soul. The apostle also alludes here to the ancient Jewish tabernacle, which, on all removals of the congregation, was dissolved and taken in pieces; and the ark of the covenant, covered with its own curtains, was carried by itself; and when they came to the place of rest, then the dissolved parts of the tabernacle were put together as before. When we consider this simile in connection with the doctrine of the resurrection, which the apostle has treated so much at large in these epistles, and which he keeps constantly in view, then we shall see that he intends to convey the following meaning: that as the tabernacle was taken down in order to be again put together, so the body is to be dissolved, in order to be re-edified; that as the ark of the covenant subsisted by itself, while the tabernacle was down, so can the soul when separated from the body; that as the ark had then its own veil for its covering, Exodus 40:21, so the soul is to have some vehicle in which it shall subsist till it receives its body at the resurrection.



***A building of God***— Some think this refers to a certain celestial vehicle with which God invests holy souls on their dismissal from the body; others suppose it relates to the resurrection body; and some imagine that it relates merely to the state of blessedness which the saints shall possess in the kingdom of glory. See the following note.

**Verse 2. *For in this we groan***— While in this state, and in this body, we are encompassed with many infirmities, and exposed to many trials, so that life is a state of discipline and affliction, and every thing within and around us says, “Arise and depart, for this is not your rest!” Those who apply these words to what they call the apostle’s sense of indwelling sin, abuse the passage. There is nothing of the kind either mentioned or intended.

***Desiring to be clothed upon with our house***— This and the following verses are, in themselves, exceedingly obscure, and can be only interpreted by considering that the expressions used by the apostle are all Jewish, and should be interpreted according to their use of them. Schoettgen has entered largely into the argument here employed by the apostle, and brought forth much useful information.

He observes, 1. That the Hebrew word **לבש** labash, which answers to the apostle’s **ενδυσασθαι**, to be clothed, signifies to be surrounded, covered, or invested with any thing. So, to be clothed with the uncircumcision, signifies to be uncircumcised. Yalcut Rubeni, fol. 163.

On the words, Exodus 24:18, Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount, Sohar Exod., fol. 77, has these words, He went into the midst of the cloud, as if one put on a garment; so he was CLOTHED with the CLOUD. Sohar Levit., fol. 29: “The righteous are in the terrestrial paradise, where their souls are clothed with the lucid crown;” i.e. they are surrounded, encompassed with light, etc.

2. The word **בית** beith, HOUSE, in Hebrew often denotes a cover, case, or clothing. So, in the Targum of Onkelos, **בית אפי** beith appei, the HOUSE or the FACE, is a veil; and so **בית אצבעים** beith etsbaim, the HOUSE OF the FINGERS, and **בית יד** beith yad, the HOUSE OF the HAND, signify gloves; **בית רגלים** beith regalim, the HOUSE OF the FEET, shoes.

Therefore, **οικητηριον-επενδυσασθαι**, to be clothed on with a house, may signify any particular qualities of the soul; what we, following the very same form of speech, call a habit, i.e. a coat or vestment. So we say the man has got a habit of vice, a habit of virtue, a habit of swearing, of humility, etc., etc.

3. The Jews attribute garments to the soul, both in this and the other world; and as they hold that all human souls pre-exist, they say that, previously to their being appointed to bodies, they have a covering which answers the same end to them before they come into life as their bodies do afterwards. And they state that the design of God in sending souls into the world is, that they may get themselves a garment by the study of the law and good works. See several proofs in Schoettgen.

4. It is plain, also, that by this garment or covering of the soul they mean simply what we understand by acquiring the image of God-being made holy. This image they assert “Adam lost by his fall, and they represent man in a sinful state as being naked.” So they represent the Israelites before their making the molten calf, as having received holy garments from Mount Sinai; but afterwards, having worshipped the calf, they were stripped of these, and left naked.

5. But notwithstanding they speak of this clothing as implying righteous and holy dispositions, and heavenly qualities, yet they all agree in assigning certain vehicles to separate spirits, in which they act; but of these vehicles they have strange notions; yet they acknowledge that without them, whether they be of light, fire, etc., or whatever else, they cannot see and contemplate the Supreme Wisdom. In Synopsis Sohar, page 137, we have these words: “When the time draws near in which a man is to depart from this world, the angel of death takes off his mortal garment and clothes him with one from paradise, in which he may see and contemplate the Supreme Wisdom; and therefore the angel of death is said to be very kind to man, because he takes off from him the garment of this world, and clothes him with a much more precious one prepared in paradise.”

When the apostle says that they earnestly desired to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, he certainly means that the great concern

of all the genuine followers of God was to be fully prepared to enjoy the beatific vision of their Maker and Redeemer.

**Verse 3. *If so be that being clothed***— That is, fully prepared in this life for the glory of God;

***We shall not be found naked.***— Destitute in that future state of that Divine image which shall render us capable of enjoying an endless glory.

**Verse 4. *For we that are in this tabernacle***— We who are in this state of trial and difficulty do groan, being burdened; as if he had said: The whole of human life is a state of suffering, and especially our lot; who are troubled on every side, perplexed, persecuted, cast down, bearing about in the body the dying of our Lord Jesus, and being always delivered unto death on the account of Jesus, 2 Corinthians 4:8-11. These were sufficient burdens, and sufficient causes of groaning.

***Not for that we would be unclothed***— We do not desire death, nor to die, even with the full prospect of eternal glory before our eyes, an hour before that time which God in his wisdom has assigned.

***But clothed upon***— To have the fullest preparation for eternal glory. We wish not to die, whatever tribulation we may be called to pass through, till the whole will of God is accomplished in us and by us.

***That mortality might be swallowed up of life.***— Being fully prepared for the eternal state we shall scarcely be said to die, all that is mortal being absorbed and annihilated by immortality and glory. See the notes on 1 Corinthians 15:51-56. From the use of these expressions among the Jews, this seems to be the general meaning of the apostle.

**Verse 5. *Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing***— God has given us our being and our body for this very purpose, that both might be made immortal, and both be glorified together. Or, God himself has given us this insatiable hungering and thirsting after righteousness and immortality. Mr. Addison has made a beautiful paraphrase of the sense of the apostle, whether he had his words in view or not:—

“ — Whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,  
 This longing after immortality?  
 Or whence this secret dread and inward horror  
 Of falling into nought? Why shrinks the soul  
 Back on herself, and startles at destruction?  
 ‘Tis the Divinity that stirs within us;  
 ‘Tis Heaven itself that points out an hereafter,  
 And intimates eternity to man. —  
 The soul, secured in her existence, smiles  
 At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.  
 The stars shall fade away, the sun himself  
 Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years;  
 But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,  
 Unhurt amidst the war of elements,  
 The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.”

*The earnest of the Spirit.* — See the note on 2 Corinthians 1:22.

**Verse 6.** *We are always confident* — **θαρρουντες ουν παντοτε**· We are always full of courage; we never despond; we know where our help lies; and, having the earnest of the Spirit, we have the full assurance of hope.

*Whilst we are at home in the body*, etc.— The original words in this sentence are very emphatic: **ενδημειν** signifies to dwell among one’s own people; **εκδημειν**, to be a sojourner among a strange people. Heaven is the home of every genuine Christian, and is claimed by them as such; see Philippians 1:23. Yet, while here below, the body is the proper home of the soul; but as the soul is made for eternal glory, that glory is its country; and therefore it is considered as being from its proper home while below in the body. As all human souls are made for this glory, therefore all are considered, while here, to be absent from their own country. And it is not merely heaven that they have in view, but the Lord; without whom, to an immortal spirit possessed of infinite desires, heaven would neither be a home nor a place of rest. We see plainly that the apostle gives no intimation of an intermediate state between being at home in the body and being present with the Lord. There is not the slightest intimation here that the soul sleeps, or rather, that there is no soul; and, when the body is decomposed, that there is no more of the man till the resurrection: I mean, according to the sentiments of those who do condescend to allow us a resurrection, though they deny us a soul. But this is a philosophy in which St. Paul got no lessons, either from Gamaliel, Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost, or in the third heaven, where he heard even unutterable things.

**Verse 7. *For we walk by faith***— While we are in the present state faith supplies the place of direct vision. In the future world we shall have sight—the utmost evidence of spiritual and eternal things; as we shall be present with them, and live in them. Here we have the testimony of God, and believe in their reality, because we cannot doubt his word. And to make this more convincing he gives us the earnest of his Spirit, which is a foretaste of glory.

**Verse 8. *We are confident***— We are of good courage, notwithstanding our many difficulties; because we have this earnest of the Spirit, and the unfailing testimony of God. And notwithstanding this, we are willing rather to be absent from the body—we certainly prefer a state of glory to a state of suffering, and the enjoyment of the beatific vision to even the anticipation of it by faith and hope; but, as Christians, we cannot desire to die before our time.

**Verse 9. *Wherefore we labor***— φιλοτιμουμεθα· from φιλος, loving, and τιμη, honor; we act at all times on the principles of honor; we are, in the proper sense of the word, ambitious to do and say every thing consistently with our high vocation: and, as we claim kindred to the inhabitants of heaven, to act as they do.

***We may be accepted of him.***— ευαρεστοι αυτω ειναι To be pleasing to him. Through the love we have to God, we study and labor to please him. This is and will be our heaven, to study to love, please, and serve him from whom we have received both our being and its blessings.

**Verse 10. *For we must all appear before the judgment seat***— We labor to walk so as to please him, because we know that we shall have to give a solemn account of ourselves before the judgment seat of Christ; where he, whose religion we profess, will judge us according to its precepts, and according to the light and grace which it affords.

***That every one may receive the things***— κομισηται εκαστος· That each may receive to himself, into his own hand, his own reward and his own wages.

***The things done in his body***— That is, while he was in this lower state; for in this sense the term body is taken often in this epistle. We may

observe also that the soul is the grand agent, the body is but its instrument. And it shall receive according to what it has done in the body.

**Verse 11. *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord***— This, I think, is too harsh a translation of *ειδοτες ουν τον φοβον του κυριου*, which should be rendered, knowing therefore the fear of the Lord; which, strange as it may at first appear, often signifies the worship of the Lord, or that religious reverence which we owe to him; Acts 9:31; Romans 3:18; 13:7; 1 Peter 1:17; 2:18; 3:2. As we know therefore what God requires of man, because we are favored with his own revelation, we persuade men to become Christians, and to labor to be acceptable to him, because they must all stand before the judgment seat; and if they receive not the grace of the Gospel here, they must there give up their accounts with sorrow and not with joy. In short, a man who is not saved from his sin in this life, will be separated from God and the glory of his power in the world to come. This is a powerful motive to persuade men to accept the salvation provided for them by Christ Jesus. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom; the terror of God confounds and overpowers the soul. We lead men to God through his fear and love, and with the fear of God the love of God is ever consistent; but where the terror of the Lord reigns there can neither be fear, faith, nor love; nay, nor hope either. Men who vindicate their constant declamations on hell and perdition by quoting this text, know little of its meaning; and, what is worse, seem to know but little of the nature of man, and perhaps less of the spirit of the Gospel of Christ. Let them go and learn a lesson from Christ, sweeping over Jerusalem: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered you together, as a hen would her brood under her wings!” And another from his last words on the cross, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!”

***But we are made manifest unto God***— God, who searches the heart, knows that we are upright in our endeavors to please him; and because we are fully persuaded of the reality of eternal things, therefore we are fully in earnest to get sinners converted to him.

***Manifest in your consciences.***— We have reason to believe that you have had such proof of our integrity and disinterestedness, that your consciences must acquit us of every unworthy motive, and of every sinister view.

**Verse 12. *For we commend not ourselves?***— I do not say these things to bespeak your good opinion, to procure your praise; but to give you an occasion to glory-to exult on our behalf; and to furnish you with an answer to all those who either malign us or our ministry, and who only glory in appearance-have no solid ground of exultation, and whose heart is dishonest and impure. St. Paul probably speaks here concerning the false apostle, who had been dividing the Church and endeavoring to raise a party to himself, by vilifying both the apostle and his doctrine.

**Verse 13. *Beside ourselves***— Probably he was reputed by some to be deranged. Festus thought so: Paul, thou art beside thyself; too much learning hath made thee mad. And his enemies at Corinth might insinuate not only that he was deranged, but attribute his derangement to a less worthy cause than intense study and deep learning.

***It is to God***— If we do appear, in speaking of the glories of the eternal world, to be transported beyond ourselves, it is through the good hand of our God upon us, and we do it to promote his honor.

***Whether we be sober***— Speak of Divine things in a more cool and dispassionate manner, it is that we may the better instruct and encourage you.

**Verse 14. *For the love of Christ constraineth us***— We have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, and this causes us to love God intensely, and to love and labor for the salvation of men. And it is the effect produced by this love which *συνεχει ημας*, bears us away with itself, which causes us to love after the similitude of that love by which we are influenced; and as God so loved the world as to give his Son for it, and as Christ so loved the world as to pour out his life for it, so we, influenced by the very same love, desire to spend and be spent for the glory of God, and the salvation of immortal souls. By the fear of God the apostles endeavored to persuade and convince men, and the love of Christ constrained them so to act.

***If one died for all, then were all dead***— The first position the apostle takes for granted; viz. that Jesus Christ died for ALL mankind. This no apostolic man nor primitive Christian ever did doubt or could doubt.

The second position he infers from the first, and justly too; for if all had not been guilty, and consigned to eternal death because of their sins there could have been no need of his death. Therefore, as he most certainly died for ALL, then all were dead, and needed his sacrifice, and the quickening power of his Spirit.

**Verse 15.** *And that he died for all, that they which live*, etc.— This third position he draws from the preceding: If all were dead, and in danger of endless perdition; and if he died for all, to save them from that perdition; then it justly follows that they are not their own, that they are bought by his blood; and should not live unto themselves, for this is the way to final ruin; but unto him who died for them, and thus made an atonement for their sins, and rose again for their justification.

**Verse 16.** *Know we no man after the flesh*— As we know that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and as we know that all are alienated from God, and are dead in trespasses and sins; therefore we esteem no man on account of his family relations, or the stock whence he proceeded, because we see all are shut up in unbelief, and all are children of wrath.

*Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh*— We cannot esteem a man who is a sinner, were he even allied to the blood royal of David, and were he of the same family with the man Christ himself; nor can we prize a man because he has seen Christ in the flesh; for many have seen him in the flesh to whom he will say; Depart from me, for I never knew you. So we: nothing weighs with us, nor in the sight of God, but redemption from this death, and living to him who died for them.

We know that the Jews valued themselves much in having Abraham for their father; and some of the Judaizing teachers at Corinth might value themselves in having seen Christ in the flesh, which certainly St. Paul did not; hence he takes occasion to say here that this kind of privilege availed nothing; for the old creature, however noble, or well descended in the sight of men, is under the curse; and the new creature only is such as God can approve.

**Verse 17.** *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*— It is vain for a man to profess affinity to Christ according to the flesh, while he is



unchanged in his heart and life, and dead in trespasses and sins; for he that is in Christ, that is, a genuine Christian, having Christ dwelling in his heart by faith, is a new creature; his old state is changed: he was a child of Satan, he is now a child of God; he was a slave of sin, and his works were death; he is now made free from sin, and has his fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. He was before full of pride and wrath; he is now meek and humble. He formerly had his portion in this life, and lived for this world alone; he now hath GOD for his portion, and he looks not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are eternal. Therefore, old things are passed away.

***Behold, all things are become new.***— The man is not only mended, but he is new made; he is a new creature, **καινη κτισις**, a new creation, a little world in himself; formerly, all was in chaotic disorder; now, there is a new creation, which God himself owns as his workmanship, and which he can look on and pronounce very good. The conversion of a man from idolatry and wickedness was among the Jews denominated a new creation. He who converts a man to the true religion is the same, says R. Eliezer, as if he had created him.

**Verse 18. *And all things are of God***— As the thorough conversion of the soul is compared to a new creation, and creation is the proper work of an all-wise, almighty Being; then this total change of heart, soul, and life, which takes place under the preaching of the Gospel, is effected by the power and grace of God: this is salvation, and salvation must ever be of the Lord; and therefore men should apply to him, who alone can work this wondrous change.

***Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ***— Having given Jesus Christ to die for sinners, they have through him access unto God; for his sake and on his account God can receive them; and it is only by the grace and Spirit of Christ that the proud, fierce, and diabolic nature of men can be changed and reconciled to God, and by and through this sacrifice God can be propitious to them. There is an enmity in the heart of man against sacred things; the grace of Christ alone can remove this enmity.

***The ministry of reconciliation***— **διακονιαν τη καταλλαγης**. The OFFICE or function of this reconciliation called, 2 Corinthians 5:19, the word; **τον λογον της καταλλαγης**. the DOCTRINE of this reconciliation.

καταλλαγή, reconciliation, comes from καταλλασσω, to change thoroughly; and the grand object of the Gospel is to make a complete change in men's minds and manners; but the first object is the removal of enmity from the heart of man, that he may be disposed to accept of the salvation God has provided for him, on the terms which God has promised. The enmity in the heart of man is the grand hinderance to his salvation.

**Verse 19. *That God was in Christ***— This is the doctrine which this ministry of reconciliation holds out, and the doctrine which it uses to bring about the reconciliation itself.

God was in Christ: 1. Christ is the same as Messiah, the Anointed One, who was to be prophet, priest, and king, to the human race; not to the Jews only, but also to the Gentiles. There had been prophets, priests, and kings, among the Jews and their ancestors; and some who had been priest and prophet, king and priest, and king and prophet; but none have ever sustained in his own person the threefold office except Christ; for none have ever ministered in reference to the whole world but he. The functions of all the others were restrained to the ancient people of God alone. 2. Now all the others were appointed of God in reference to this Christ; and as his types, or representatives, till the fullness of the time should come. 3. And that this Christ might be adequate to the great work of reconciling the whole human race to God, by making atonement for their sins, God was in him. The man Jesus was the temple and shrine of the eternal Divinity; for in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, Colossians 2:9; and he made peace by the blood of his cross. 4. Christ, by his offering upon the cross, made atonement for the sins of the world; and therefore one important branch of the doctrine of this reconciliation was to show that God would not impute or account their trespasses to them, so as to exact the penalty, because this Jesus had died in their stead.

The whole of this important doctrine was short, simple, and plain. Let us consider it in all its connections: 1. You believe there is a God. 2. You know he has made you. 3. He requires you to love and serve him. 4. To show you how to do this he has given a revelation of himself, which is contained in his law, etc. 5. You have broken this law, and incurred the penalty, which is death. 6. Far from being able to undo your offenses, or

make reparation to the offended majesty of God, your hearts, through the deceitfulness and influence of sin, are blinded, hardened, and filled with enmity, against your Father and your Judge. 7. To redeem you out of this most wretched and accursed state, God; in his endless love, has given his Son for you; who has assumed your nature, and died in your stead. 8. In consequence of this he has commanded repentance towards God, and remission of sins, to be published in his name in all the earth. 9. All who repent, and believe in Christ as having died for them as a sin-offering, (2 Corinthians 5:21,) shall receive remission of sins. 10. And if they abide in him they shall have an eternal inheritance among them that are sanctified.

**Verse 20. *We are ambassadors for Christ*— υπερ**

**χριστου-πρεσβευομεν.** We execute the function of ambassadors in Christ's stead. He came from the Father to mankind on this important embassy. He has left the world, and appointed us in his place.

Ambassador is a person sent from one sovereign power to another; and is supposed to represent the person of the sovereign by whom he is deputed. Christ while on earth represented the person of the Sovereign of the world; his apostles and their successors represent the person of Christ. Christ declared the will of the Father to mankind; apostles, etc., declare the will of Christ to the world. We are ambassadors for Christ.

***As though God did beseech you by us***— What we say to you we say on the authority of God; our entreaties are his entreaties; our warm love to you, a faint reflection of his infinite love; we pray you to return to God, it is his will that you should do so; we promise you remission of sins, we are authorized to do so by God himself. In Christ's stead we pray you to lay aside your enmity and be reconciled to God; i.e. accept pardon, peace, holiness, and heaven; which are all procured for you by his blood, and offered to you on his own authority.

“What unparalleled condescension and divinely tender mercies are displayed in this verse! Did the judge ever beseech a condemned criminal to accept of pardon? Does the creditor ever beseech a ruined debtor to receive an acquittance in full? Yet our almighty Lord, and our eternal Judge, not only vouchsafes to offer these blessings, but invites us, entreats us, and with the most tender importunity solicits us not to reject them.”  
The Rev. J. Wesley's notes in loc.

This sentiment is farther expressed in the following beautiful poetic version of this place, by the Rev. Charles Wesley:—

*“God, the offended God most high,  
Ambassadors to rebels sends;  
His messengers his place supply,  
And Jesus begs us to be friends.  
Us, in the stead of Christ, they pray,  
Us, in the stead of Christ, entreat,  
To cast our arms, our sins, away,  
And find forgiveness at his feet.  
Our God, in Christ, thine embassy  
And proffer’d mercy we embrace;  
And, gladly reconciled to thee,  
Thy condescending mercy praise.  
Poor debtors, by our Lord’s request  
A full acquittance we receive;  
And criminals, with pardon blest,  
We, at our Judge’s instance, live.”*

**Verse 21.** *For he hath made him to be sin for us*— **τον μη γνοντα αμαρτιαν, υπερ ημων αμαρτιαν εποησεν.** He made him who knew no sin, (who was innocent,) a sin-offering for us. The word **αμαρτια** occurs here twice: in the first place it means sin, i.e. transgression and guilt; and of Christ it is said, He knew no sin, i.e. was innocent; for not to know sin is the same as to be conscious of innocence; so, nil conscire sibi, to be conscious of nothing against one’s self, is the same as nulla pallescere culpa, to be unimpeachable.

In the second place, it signifies a sin-offering, or sacrifice for sin, and answers to the **חַטָּאת** chattaah and **חַטֹּאת** chattath of the Hebrew text; which signifies both sin and sin-offering in a great variety of places in the Pentateuch. The Septuagint translate the Hebrew word by **αμαρτια** in ninety-four places in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, where a sin-offering is meant; and where our version translates the word not sin, but an offering for sin. Had our translators attended to their own method of translating the word in other places where it means the same as here, they would not have given this false view of a passage which has been made the foundation of a most blasphemous doctrine; viz. that our sins were imputed to Christ, and that he was a proper object of the indignation of Divine justice, because he was blackened with imputed sin; and some have proceeded so far in this blasphemous career as to say, that Christ may be considered as the

greatest of sinners, because all the sins of mankind, or of the elect, as they say, were imputed to him, and reckoned as his own. One of these writers translates the passage thus: *Deus Christum pro maximo peccatore habuit, ut nos essemus maxime justi*, God accounted Christ the greatest of sinners, that we might be supremely righteous. Thus they have confounded sin with the punishment due to sin. Christ suffered in our stead; died for us; bore our sins, (the punishment due to them,) in his own body upon the tree, for the Lord laid upon him the iniquities of us all; that is, the punishment due to them; explained by making his soul-his life, an offering for sin; and healing us by his stripes.

But that it may be plainly seen that sin-offering, not sin, is the meaning of the word in this verse, I shall set down the places from the Septuagint where the word occurs; and where it answers to the Hebrew words already quoted; and where our translators have rendered correctly what they render here incorrectly. In EXODUS, Exodus 29:14, 36: LEVITICUS, Leviticus 4:3, 8, 20, 21, 24, 25, 29, 32-34; Leviticus 5:6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12; Leviticus 6:17, 25, 30; Leviticus 7:7, 37; Leviticus 8:2, 14; Leviticus 9:2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 15, 22; Leviticus 10:16, 17, 19; Leviticus 12:6, 8; Leviticus 14:13, 19, 22, 31; Leviticus 15:15, 30; Leviticus 16:3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 15, 25, 27; Leviticus 23:19: NUMBERS, Numbers 6:11, 14, 16; Numbers 7:16, 22, 28, 34, 40, 46, 52, 58, 70, 76, 82, 87; Numbers 8:8, 12; Numbers 15:24, 25, 27; Numbers 18:9; Numbers 28:15, 22; Numbers 29:5, 11, 16, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 38.

Besides the above places, it occurs in the same signification, and is properly translated in our version, in the following places:—

2 CHRONICLES, 2 Chronicles 29:21, 23, 24: EZRA, Ezra 6:17; Ezra 8:35: NEHEMIAH, Nehemiah 10:33: JOB, Job 1:5: EZEKIEL, Ezekiel 43:19, 22, 25; Ezekiel 44:27, 29; Ezekiel 45:17, 19, 22, 23, 25. In all, one hundred and eight places, which, in the course of my own reading in the Septuagint, I have marked.

*That we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*— The righteousness of God signifies here the salvation of God, as comprehending justification through the blood of Christ, and sanctification through his Spirit or, as the mountains of God, the hail of God, the wind of God, mean exceeding high mountains, extraordinary hail, and most tempestuous wind; so, here, the righteousness of God may mean a

thorough righteousness, complete justification, complete sanctification; such as none but God can give, such as the sinful nature and guilty conscience of man require, and such as is worthy of God to impart. And all this righteousness, justification, and holiness, we receive in, by, for, and through HiM, as the grand, sacrificial, procuring, and meritorious cause of these, and every other blessing. Some render the passage: We are justified through him; before God; or, We are justified, according to God's plan of justification, through him.

IN many respects, this is a most important and instructive chapter.

1. The terms house, building, tabernacle, and others connected with them, have already been explained from the Jewish writings. But it has been thought by some that the apostle mentions these as readily offering themselves to him from his own avocation, that of a tentmaker; and it is supposed that he borrows these terms from his own trade in order to illustrate his doctrine; This supposition would be natural enough if we had not full evidence that these terms were used in the Jewish theology precisely in the sense in which the apostle uses them here. Therefore, it is more likely that he borrowed them from that theology, than from his own trade.

2. In the terms tabernacle, building of God, etc., he may refer also to the tabernacle in the wilderness, which was a building of God, and a house of God, and as God dwelt in that building, so he will dwell in the souls of those who believe in, love, and obey him. And this will be his transitory temple till mortality is swallowed up of life, and we have a glorified body and soul to be his eternal residence.

3. The doctrines of the resurrection of the same body; the witness of the Spirit; the immateriality of the soul; the fall and miserable condition of all mankind; the death of Jesus, as an atonement for the sins of the whole world; the necessity of obedience to the Divine will, and of the total change of the human heart, are all introduced here: and although only a few words are spoken on each, yet these are so plain and so forcible as to set those important doctrines in the most clear and striking point of view.

4. The chapter concludes with such a view of the mercy and goodness of God in the ministry of reconciliation, as is no where else to be found. He

has here set forth the Divine mercy in all its heightenings; and who can take this view of it without having his heart melted down with love and gratitude to God, who has called him to such a state of salvation.

5. It is exceedingly remarkable that, through the whole of this chapter, the apostle speaks of himself in the first person plural; and though he may intend other apostles, and the Christians in general, yet it is very evident that he uses this form when only himself can be meant, as in verses 12 and 13, {2 Corinthians 5:12, 13} as well as in several places of the following chapter. This may be esteemed rather more curious than important.

## CHAPTER 6.

*We should not receive the grace of God in vain, having such promises of support from him, 1, 2. We should act so as to bring no disgrace on the Gospel, 3. How the apostles behaved themselves, preached, suffered, and rejoiced, 4-10. St. Paul's affectionate concern for the Corinthians, 11-13. He counsels them not to be yoked with unbelievers, and advances several arguments why they should avoid them, 14-16. Exhorts them to avoid evil companions and evil practices, on the promise that God will be their Father and that they shall be his sons and his daughters, 17, 18,*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 6.

**Verse 1.** *We then, as workers together with him*— *συνεργουντες δε και παρακαλουμεν*. The two last words, with him, are not in the text, and some supply the place thus: we then, as workers together WITH YOU, and the Armenian version seems to have read it so; but no MS. has this reading, and no other version. For my own part I see nothing wanting in the text if we only suppose the term apostles; we, (i.e. apostles,) being fellow workers, also entreat you not to receive the grace of God in vain.

By the grace of God, *την χαριν του θεου*, this grace or benefit of God, the apostle certainly means the grand sacrificial offering of Christ for the sin of the world, which he had just before mentioned in speaking of the ministry of reconciliation. We learn, therefore, that it was possible to receive the grace of God and not ultimately benefit by it; or, in other words, to begin in the Spirit and end in the flesh. Should any one say that it is the ministry of reconciliation, that is, the benefit of apostolic preaching, that they might receive in vain; I answer, that the apostolic preaching, and the whole ministry of reconciliation, could be no benefit to any man farther than it might have been a means of conveying to him the salvation of God. And it is most evident that the apostle has in view that grace or benefit that reconciles us to God, and makes us Divinely righteous. And this, and all other benefits of the death of Christ, may be received in vain.



**Verse 2. *For he saith***— That is, God hath said it, by the prophet Isaiah, Isaiah 49:8; which place the apostle quotes verbatim et literatim from the Septuagint. And from this we may at once see what is the accepted time, and what the day of salvation. The advent of the Messiah was the **תֵּת רִצּוֹ** eth ratson, the time of God's pleasure or benevolence, of which all the faithful were in expectation; and the day of salvation, **יּוֹם יְשׁוּעָה** yom yeshuah, was the time in which this salvation should be manifested and applied. The apostle therefore informs them that this is the time predicted by the prophet; and the ministry of reconciliation being exercised in full force is a proof that the prophecy is fulfilled; and therefore the apostle confidently asserts, Behold, Now is this accepted time, Now the Messiah reigns, Now is the Gospel dispensation, and therefore NOW is the day of salvation; that is, the very time in which the power of God is present to heal, and in which every sinner believing on the Lord Jesus may be saved.

I rather think that this second verse should be read immediately after the last verse of the preceding chapter; as where it now stands it greatly disturbs the connection between the first and the third verses. I will set down the whole in the order in which I think they should stand. 2 Corinthians 5:20: Now then we are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. For he hath made him a sin-offering for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him: for he saith, "I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. Immediately after this, the sixth chapter will very properly commence, and we shall see that the connection will be then undisturbed:—

We then, as fellow workers, beseech you also, that ye receive not this grace of God in vain, giving no offense in any thing, that this ministry be not blamed. This change of the place of the second verse, which every one allows must, if it stand here, be read in a parenthesis, preserves the whole connection of the apostle's discourse, and certainly sets his argument before us in a stronger light. Let us review the whole: 1. God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, 2 Corinthians 5:18. 2. He appointed the apostles to proclaim to mankind the doctrine of reconciliation, 2 Corinthians 5:19. 3. The apostles, in consequence, proclaim this doctrine; and show that Christ was a sacrifice for sin, and

that through him we may be perfectly saved, 2 Corinthians 5:20, 21. 4. They show also that all this was agreeable to the declaration of God by the prophet Isaiah, Isaiah 49:8, where he predicts the days of the Messiah, and the grace then to be communicated, 2 Corinthians 6:2. 5. The apostle then, speaking in the person of all his fellow laborers, who had this ministry of reconciliation intrusted to them, exhorts them not to receive such a benefit of God in vain, 2 Corinthians 6:1. He exhorts those who had embraced the Gospel not to put a stumbling block in the way of others, by acting irreligiously, lest this ministry of reconciliation should be reproached on their account, 2 Corinthians 6:3. 7. He shows what conscientious and scrupulous care he and his fellow apostles took to preach and walk so that this ministry might have its full effect, 2 Corinthians 6:4, etc.

This view of the subject, if I mistake not, shows a beautiful consistency throughout the whole.

**Verse 3. *Giving no offense***— The word *προσκοπη*, read *προσκομμα*, Romans 14:13, signifies a stumbling block in general, or any thing over which a man stumbles or falls; and here means any transgression or scandal that might take place among the ministers, or the Christians themselves, whereby either Jews or Gentiles might take occasion of offense, and vilify the Gospel of Christ.

**Verse 4. *But in all things approving ourselves***— The apostle now proceeds to show how conscientiously himself and his fellow laborers acted, in order to render the ministry of reconciliation effectual to the salvation of men. They not only gave no offense in any thing, but they labored to manifest themselves to be the genuine ministers of God, in much patience-bearing calmly up under the most painful and oppressive afflictions.

***In afflictions***— *εν φλιψεσιν*. This may signify the series of persecutions and distresses in general; the state of cruel suffering in which the Church of God and the apostles then existed.

***In necessities***— *εν αναγκαις*. Straits and difficulties; including all that want and affliction which arose from the impoverished state of the Church.

***In distresses***— *εν στενοχωριας*. Such straits and difficulties as were absolutely unavoidable and insurmountable. The word implies, being reduced to a narrow place, driven to a corner, hemmed in on every side, as the Israelites were at the Red Sea; the sea before them, Pharaoh and his host behind them, and Egyptian fortresses on either hand. God alone could bring them out of such difficulties, when their enemies themselves saw that the wilderness had shut them in. So was it often with the apostles; all human help failed, and their deliverance came from God alone.

**Verse 5. *In stripes, in imprisonments***— Of these the history of the Acts of the Apostles gives ample testimony; and there were doubtless many instances of persecution in various forms which are not on record.

***In tumults***— *ακαταστασιας*. Insurrections raised against them because of the Gospel. It is more natural to understand the word thus, than of agitations, or tossings to and fro in consequence of their unsettled state of life; or because of persecution, which obliged them to flee from place to place.

***In labors***— Both with our own hands to provide for ourselves the necessaries of life, that we might not be chargeable to others; and in labors to spread the Gospel of God through all countries where his providence opened our way.

***In watchings***— Passing many nights without sleep or rest.

***In fastings***— Partly constrained through want of food; and partly voluntary, as a means of obtaining an increase of grace both for ourselves and for the Churches.

**Verse 6. *By pureness***— *εν αγνοτητι*. In simplicity of intention, and purity of affection; together with that chastity and holiness of life which the Gospel enjoins.

***By knowledge***— Of the Divine mysteries.

***By long-suffering***— Under all provocations.

***By kindness***— To our most virulent persecutors, and to all men.

***By the Holy Ghost***— There are doubts among learned men whether the apostle here means that SPIRIT who is called the third person of the holy

TRINITY; or some grace, disposition, or quality of the soul, which was thus denominated, as implying a spirit wholly purified, and fitted to be a habitation of God.

Schoettgen quotes a passage from Rabbi Bechai, in which it appears to him to have this latter meaning: “Rabbi Pinchas, the son of Jair, said: Reflection leads to sedulity; sedulity to innocence; innocence to abstinence; abstinence to cleanness; cleanness to sanctity; sanctity to the fear of sin; fear of sin to humility; humility to piety; and piety to the Holy Spirit. Of these ten virtues five are external, or belong to the body; and five internal, or belonging to the soul; but all men prefer the tenth, which is רוח הקדש ruach haktodesh, the Holy Spirit.” Even allowing Rabbi Pinchas to be a person on whose judgment we could rely, and whose authority was decisive, there does not appear to me any reason why we should depart from the usual meaning of the term from any thing that is said here. It appears to me plain enough that the rabbi means the constant indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and St. Paul, in this place, may have the same thing in view, and with it the various gifts of the Holy Spirit by which he was enabled to work miracles.

***By love unfeigned***— εν αγαπη ανυποκριτω· Love without hypocrisy; such as disposed us at all times to lay down our life for the brethren, and to spend and be spent for the glory of God and the good of mankind.

**Verse 7. *By the word of truth***— The doctrine of truth received immediately from God, and faithfully and affectionately preached to men.

***By the power of God***— Confirming this doctrine, not only by the miracles which we were enabled to work, but also by the application of that truth to the souls of the people by the energy of God.

***By the armor of righteousness***— Such as that described by the apostle, Ephesians 6:13-17, which he calls there the whole armor of God, consisting of the following pieces: the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the Gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit.

***On the right hand and on the left***— Particularly, the shield and the sword; the former on the left arm, the latter in the right hand. We have the

doctrine of truth, and the power of God, as an armor to protect us on all sides, every where, and on all occasions.

It seems far-fetched to understand the right hand as signifying prosperity, and the left as signifying adversity; as if the apostle had said: We have this armor to defend us both in prosperity and adversity. By the doctrine of the Gospel, and by the power of God, the apostles were furnished with offensive and defensive weapons; they could ever defend themselves, and discomfit their foes.

**Verse 8. *By honor and dishonor***— By going through both; sometimes respected, sometimes despised.

***By evil report and good report***— Sometimes praised, at other times calumniated.

***As deceivers***— Said to carry about a false doctrine for our secular emolument.

***And yet true***— Demonstrated by the nature of the doctrine, as well as by our life and conversation, that we are true men; having nothing in view but God's glory and the salvation of the world.

**Verse 9. *As unknown***— Persons who are to be suspected as harbouring dark designs; persons of neither birth, parentage, nor respectable connections in life;

***And yet well known***— Proved by our whole conduct to have no such designs, and demonstrated to be holy, upright, and useful, by the whole train of our peregrinations, through which we can be readily traced from place to place; having preached openly, and done nothing in a corner.

***As dying***— Through continual dangers, fatigues, and persecutions;

***And, behold, we live***— We are preserved by the mighty power of God in the greatest dangers and deaths.

***As chastened***— As though we were disobedient children;

***And not killed***— Though we continue in the very same line of conduct that is supposed to bring on us those chastisements, and which, if it were

criminal, would justly expose us to death for incorrigible obstinacy; but our preservation is a proof that we please God.

**Verse 10. *As sorrowful***— Considerate men supposing, from our persecuted state and laborious occupation, (often destitute of the necessaries of life; seldom enjoying its conveniences; and scarcely ever, its comforts,) that we must be the most miserable of all men.

***Yet always rejoicing***— Having the consolation of God's Spirit at all times, and a glorious prospect of a blessed immortality.

***As poor***— Destitute of all worldly good and secular interest,

***Yet making many rich***— By dispensing to them the treasures of salvation; making them rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom.

The Gospel, when faithfully preached, and fully received, betters the condition of the poor. It makes them sober; so they save what before they profusely and riotously spent. It makes them diligent; and thus they employ time to useful purposes which they before squandered away. They therefore both save and gain by religion; and these must lead to an increase of property. Therefore they are made rich; at least in comparison with that sinful, profligate state in which they were before they received the truth of the Gospel.

***As having nothing***— Being the most abject of the poor,

***And yet possessing all things***.— That are really necessary to the preservation of our lives. For the wants under which we labor for a time are supplied again by a bountiful Providence. The man who possesses a contented spirit possesses all things; for he is satisfied with every dispensation of the providence of God; and "a contented mind is a continual feast."

**Verse 11. *O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you***— I speak to you with the utmost freedom and fluency, because of my affection for you.

***Our heart is enlarged***.— It is expanded to take you and all your interests in; and to keep you in the most affectionate remembrance.

The preceding verses contain a very fine specimen of a very powerful and commanding eloquence.

**Verse 12. *Ye are not straitened in us***— That is, Ye have not a narrow place in our affections: the metaphor here is taken from the case of a person pent up in a small or narrow place, where there is scarcely room to breathe.

*Ye are straitened in your own bowels.*— I have not the same place in your affections which you have in mine. The bowels are used in Scripture to denote the most tender affections. See the note on Matthew 9:36.

**Verse 13. *Now for a recompense in the same***— That you may, in some sort, repay me for my affection towards you, I speak to you as unto my children, whom I have a right to command, be ye also enlarged—love me as I love you.

**Verse 14. *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers***— This is a military term: keep in your own ranks; do not leave the Christian community to join in that of the heathens. The verb *ετεροζυγειν* signifies to leave one's own rank, place, or order, and go into another; and here it must signify not only that they should not associate with the Gentiles in their idolatrous feasts, but that they should not apostatize from Christianity; and the questions which follow show that there was a sort of fellowship that some of the Christians had formed with the heathens which was both wicked and absurd, and if not speedily checked would infallibly lead to final apostasy.

Some apply this exhortation to pious persons marrying with those who are not decidedly religious, and converted to God. That the exhortation may be thus applied I grant; but it is certainly not the meaning of the apostle in this place. Nevertheless, common sense and true piety show the absurdity of two such persons pretending to walk together in a way in which they are not agreed. A very wise and very holy man has given his judgment on this point: "A man who is truly pious, marrying with an unconverted woman, will either draw back to perdition, or have a cross during life." The same may be said of a pious woman marrying an unconverted man. Such persons cannot say this petition of the Lord's

prayer, Lead us not into temptation. They plunge into it of their own accord.

***For what fellowship***, etc.— As righteousness cannot have communion with unrighteousness, and light cannot dwell with darkness; so Christ can have no concord with Belial, nor can he that believeth have any with an infidel. All these points were self-evident; how then could they keep up the profession of Christianity, or pretend to be under its influence, while they associated with the unrighteous, had communion with darkness, concord with Belial, and partook with infidels?

**Verse 16. *What agreement hath the temple of God with idols***— Nothing could appear more abominable to a Jew than an idol in the temple of God: here, then, could be no agreement; the worship of the two is wholly incompatible. An idolater never worships the true God; a Christian never worships an idol. If ye join in idolatrous rites, it is impossible that ye should be Christians.

***Ye are the temple of the living God***— God intends to make the heart of every believer his own house.

***I will dwell in them, and walk in them***— The words are very emphatic: **ἐνοικησῶ ἐν αὐτοῖς** I will inhabit in them. I will not be as a wayfaring man, who turns aside to tarry as for a night, but I will take up my constant residence with them; I will dwell in and among them.

***I will be their God***— They shall have no other God, they shall have none besides me; and if they take me for their God, I will be to them all that an infinite, eternal, and self-sufficient Being can be to his intelligent offspring.

***They shall be my people***.— If they take me for their GOD, their supreme and eternal GOOD, I will take them for my people; and instruct, enlighten, defend, provide for, support, and bless them, as if I had none else to care for in the creation.

**Verse 17. *Wherefore come out from among them***— Is it not plain from this and the following verse that God would be their God only on the ground of their taking him for such, and that this depended on their being separated from the works and workers of iniquity? for God could not inhabit in them if they had concord with Belial, a portion with infidels; etc.



Those who will have the promises of God fulfilled to them must come under the conditions of these promises: if they are not separate—if they touch the unclean thing, God will not receive them; and therefore will not be their God, nor shall they be his people.

**Verse 18. *Will be a Father unto you***— I will act towards you as the most affectionate father can act towards his most tender and best beloved child.

***And ye shall be my sons and daughters***— Ye shall all be of the household of God, the family of heaven; ye shall be holy, happy, and continually safe.

***Saith the Lord Almighty***.— κυριος παντοκρατωρ' The Lord, the Governor of all things.

Earthly fathers, however loving and affectionate, may fail to provide for their children, because every thing is not at their disposal; they may frequently lack both the power and the means, though to will may be present with them; but the Lord who made and who governs all things can never lack will, power, nor means. The promise is sure to the children; and the children are those who take the Almighty for their God. For the promise belongs to no soul that is not separate from sinful ways, works, and men; those who touch the unclean thing, i.e. who do what God forbids, and hold communion with unrighteousness, can never stand in the endearing relation of children to God Almighty: and this is most forcibly stated by God himself, in these verses, and in the beginning of the following chapter, the first verse of which should conclude this.

To the Jews the promises were originally made; they would not have God for their God, but would work iniquity. What was the consequence? God cast them off; and those who were joined to iniquity were separated from him. "Then said God, Call his name Lo-ammi; for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God." Hosea 1:9. The Jews were therefore cast off, and the Gentiles taken in their place; but even these, under the new covenant, are taken in expressly under the same conditions as the apostle here most fully states. Those who apply these words in any other way pervert their meaning, and sin against their souls.

## CHAPTER 7.

*The apostle's inference from the preceding exhortation, 1. He presses them to receive him with affection, because of his great love towards them, 2-4. He tells them what distress he felt on their account in Macedonia, till he had met with Titus, and heard of their prosperity, 6-7. He rejoices that his first epistle was made the means of their reformation, 8, 9. States how they were affected by his letter, and the process of their reformation, 10, 11. Shows why he had written to them, 12. Rejoices that his boasting of them to Titus is found to be a truth; and takes occasion to mention the great affection of Titus for them, and his own confidence in them, 13-16.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 7.

**Verse 1. *Having therefore these promises***— The promises mentioned in the three last verses of the preceding chapter, to which this verse should certainly be joined.

***Let us cleanse ourselves***— Let us apply to him for the requisite grace of purification; and avoid every thing in spirit and practice which is opposite to the doctrine of God, and which has a tendency to pollute the soul.

***Filthiness of the flesh***— The apostle undoubtedly means, drunkenness, fornication, adultery, and all such sins as are done immediately against the body; and by filthiness of the spirit, all impure desires, unholy thoughts, and polluting imaginations. If we avoid and abhor evil inclinations, and turn away our eyes from beholding vanity, incentives to evil being thus lessened, (for the eye affects the heart,) there will be the less danger of our falling into outward sin. And if we avoid all outward occasions of sinning, evil propensities will certainly be lessened. All this is our work under the common aids of the grace of God. We may turn away our eyes and ears from evil, or we may indulge both in what will infallibly beget evil desires and tempers in the soul; and under the same influence we may avoid every act of iniquity; for even Satan himself cannot, by any power he has, constrain us to commit uncleanness, robbery, drunkenness, murder, etc.

These are things in which both body and soul must consent. But still withholding the eye, the ear, the hand, and the body in general, from sights, reports, and acts of evil, will not purify a fallen spirit; it is the grace and Spirit of Christ alone, powerfully applied for this very purpose, that can purify the conscience and the heart from all dead works. But if we do not withhold the food by which the man of sin is nourished and supported, we cannot expect God to purify our hearts. While we are striving against sin, we may expect the Spirit of God to purify us by his inspiration from all unrighteousness, that we may perfectly love and magnify our Maker. How can those expect God to purify their hearts who are continually indulging their eyes, ears, and hands in what is forbidden, and in what tends to increase and bring into action all the evil propensities of the soul?

***Perfecting holiness***— Getting the whole mind of Christ brought into the soul. This is the grand object of a genuine Christian's pursuit. The means of accomplishing this are, 1. Resisting and avoiding sin, in all its inviting and seducing forms. 2. Setting the fear of God before our eyes, that we may dread his displeasure, and abhor whatever might excite it, and whatever might provoke him to withhold his manna from our mouth. We see, therefore, that there is a strong and orthodox sense in which we may cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, and thus perfect holiness in the fear of God.

**Verse 2. *Receive us***— *χωρησατε ημας*. This address is variously understood. Receive us into your affections-love us as we love you. Receive us as your apostles and teachers; we have given you full proof that God hath both sent and owned us. Receive, comprehend, what we now say to you, and carefully mark it.

***We have wronged no man***— We have never acted contrary to the strictest justice.

***We have corrupted no man***— With any false doctrine or pernicious opinion.

***We have defrauded no man.***— Of any part of his property. But what have your false teachers done? They have beguiled you from the simplicity of the truth, and thus corrupted your minds. 2 Corinthians

11:3. They have brought you into bondage; they have taken of you; devoured you; exalted themselves against you, and ye have patiently suffered all this. 2 Corinthians 11:20. It is plain that he refers here to the false apostle or teacher which they had among them.

**Verse 3. *I speak not this to condemn you***— I do not speak to reproach but to correct you. I wish you to open your eyes and see how you are corrupted, spoiled, and impoverished by those whom ye have incautiously preferred to the true apostles of Jesus Christ.

***I have said before, that ye are in our hearts***— He has in effect and substance said this, 2 Corinthians 1:6-8; 2:4, 12; 3:2, 13; where see the passages at length, and the notes.

***To die and live with you.***— An expression which points out the strongest affection, as in cases where love blinds us to the faults of those whom we love, and causes us to prefer them to all others; like that in Horace:—

*Quanquam sidere pulchrior  
Ille est, tu levior cortice, et improbo  
Iracundior Adria.  
Tecum vivere amem, tecum obeam tibens.*

ODAR. lib. iii. Od. ix. ver. 21.

*“Though he exceed in beauty far  
The rising lustre of a star;  
Though light as cork thy fancy strays,  
Thy passions wild as angry seas  
When vex’d with storms; yet gladly I  
With thee would live, with thee would die.”*

FRANCIS.

From all appearance there never was a Church less worthy of an apostle’s affections than this Church was at this time; and yet no one ever more beloved. The above quotation applies to this case in full force.

**Verse 4. *Great is my boldness of speech***— He seems to refer to the manner in which he spoke of them to others.

***Great is my glorying of you***— They had probably been very loving and affectionate previously to the time in which they were perverted by their false apostle. He therefore had boasted of them in all the Churches.

***I am filled with comfort***— My affection for you has still the most powerful ascendancy in my soul. Here we may see the affection of the most tender father to his children.

***I am exceeding joyful***— **ὑπερπερισσευομαι**. I superabound in joy; I have a joy beyond expression. **ὑπερπερισσευω** is an extremely rare verb. I have not met with it in any Greek author; and it occurs no where in the New Testament but here and in Romans 5:20.

***In all our tribulation***.— Perhaps **επι** here should be rendered under instead of in, as it signifies, Mark 2:26; Luke 3:2; Acts 11:28. Under all our tribulations, I feel inexpressible joy on your account.

**Verse 5. *When we were come into Macedonia***— St. Paul, having left Ephesus, came to Troas, where he stopped some time; afterwards he came to Macedonia, whence he wrote this epistle,

***Our flesh had no rest***— So exceedingly anxious was he to know the success of his first epistle to them.

***Without were fightings***— The oppositions of pagans, Jews, and false brethren.

***Within were fears***.— Uncertain conjectures relative to the success of his epistle; fears lest the severity of it should alienate their affections utterly from him; fears lest the party of the incestuous person should have prevailed; fears lest the teaching of the false apostle should have perverted their minds from the simplicity of the truth; all was uncertainty, all apprehension; and the Spirit of God did not think proper to remove the causes of these apprehensions in any extraordinary way.

**Verse 6. *Comforted us by the coming of Titus***— Who brought him a most satisfactory account of the success of his epistle, and the good state of the Corinthian Church.

**Verse 7. *He told us your earnest desire***— To see me, and correct what was amiss among yourselves.

***Your mourning***— Because you had sinned.

***Your fervent mind***— The zeal you felt to testify your affectionate regard for me.

**Verse 8. *I do not repent, though I did repent***— Though I had many doubts in my mind concerning the success of my letter; and though I grieved that I was obliged to write with so much severity, the case absolutely requiring it; yet now I am not sorry that I have written that letter, because I find it has completely answered the end for which it was sent.

**Verse 9. *Ye sorrowed to repentance***— Ye had such a sorrow as produced a complete change of mind and conduct. We see that a man may sorrow, and yet not repent.

***Made sorry after a godly manner***— It was not a sorrow because ye were found out, and thus solemnly reprehended, but a sorrow because ye had sinned against God, and which consideration caused you to grieve more than the apprehension of any punishment.

***Damage by us in nothing***.— Your repentance prevented that exercise of my apostolic duty, which would have consigned your bodies to destruction, that your souls might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

**Verse 10. *For godly sorrow***— That which has the breach of God's holy law for its object.

***Worketh repentance***— A thorough change of mind unto salvation, because the person who feels it cannot rest till he finds pardon through the mercy of God.

***But the sorrow of the world worketh death***.— Sorrow for lost goods, lost friends, death of relatives, etc., when it is poignant and deep, produces diseases, increases those that already exist, and often leads men to lay desperate hands on themselves. This sorrow leads to destruction, the other leads to salvation; the one leads to heaven, the other to hell.

**Verse 11. *What carefulness it wrought in you***— Carefulness of obeying my directions, 2 Corinthians 7:15; yea, what clearing of yourselves from guilt by inflicting censures on the guilty person, and putting away evil from among you, 1 Corinthians 5:13; yea, what indignation against him who had dishonored his profession, and defiled the Church; yea, what fear of my displeasure, and the rod which I threatened, 1 Corinthians 4:21; yea, what vehement desire to rectify what was amiss in this matter, 2

Corinthians 7:7; yea, what zeal for me; yea, what revenge in punishing the delinquent. See Whitby.

***In all things***, etc.— In the whole of your conduct in this affair since ye have received my letter, ye have approved yourselves to be clear, *αγνους*; not only to be clear of contumacy and obstinate persistence in your former conduct, but to have done all in the compass of your power to rectify the abuses which had crept in among you. The Corinthians were not clear, i.e. innocent or void of blame in the fact, but they were clear of all blame in their endeavors to remove the evil.

**Verse 12. *Not for his cause that had done the wrong***— viz. the incestuous person.

***Nor for his cause that suffered wrong***— Some think the apostle means himself; others, that he means the Church at Corinth, the singular being put for the plural; others, the family of the incestuous person; and others, the father of the incestuous person. If this latter opinion be adopted, it would seem to intimate that the father of this person was yet alive, which would make the transgression more flagrant; but these words might be spoken in reference to the father, if dead, whose cause should be vindicated; as his injured honor might be considered, like Abel's blood, to be crying from the earth.

***But that our care for you-might appear***— It was not to get the delinquent punished, nor merely to do justice to those who had suffered in this business, that the apostle wrote his epistle to them, but that they might have the fullest proof of his fatherly affection for them, and his concern for the honor of God; and that they might thereby see how unnatural their opposition to him was, and what cause they had to prefer him, who was ready to give up his life in their service, to that false apostle or teacher who was corrupting their minds, leading them from the simplicity of the truth, and making a gain of them.

**Verse 13. *For the joy of Titus***— Titus, who had now met St. Paul in Macedonia, gave him the most flattering accounts of the improved state of the Corinthian Church; and indeed their kind usage of Titus was a full proof of their affection for St. Paul.

**Verse 14. *For if I have boasted***— The apostle had given Titus a very high character of this Church, and of their attachment to himself; and doubtless this was the case previously to the evil teacher getting among them, who had succeeded in changing their conduct, and changing in a great measure their character also; but now they return to themselves, resume their lost ground, so that the good character which the apostle gave them before, and which they had for a time forfeited, is now as applicable to them as ever. Therefore his boasting of them is still found a truth.

**Verse 15. *And his inward affection***— τα σπλαγγαχνα αυτου. Those bowels of his-his most tender affection. For the meaning of this word see the note on Matthew 9:36.

***Whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all***— This is a very natural picture; he represents Titus as overjoyed even while he is delivering his account of the Corinthian Church. He expatiated on it with extreme delight, and thereby showed at once both his love for St. Paul and his love for them. He loved them because they so loved the apostle; and he loved them because they had shown such kindness to himself; and he loved them because he found so many excellent and rare gifts, joined to so much humility, producing such an exemplary and holy life.

***With fear and trembling ye received him.***— Ye revered his authority; ye were obedient to his directions; and ye dreaded lest any thing should be undone or ill done which he had delivered to you in the name of God.

**Verse 16. *I have confidence in you, in all things.***— It appears that the apostle was now fully persuaded, from the accounts given by Titus, that every scandal had been put away from this Church; that the faction which had long distracted and divided them was nearly broken; that all was on the eve of being restored to its primitive purity and excellence; and that their character was now so firmly fixed, that there was no reason to apprehend that they should be again tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine.

1. THUS a happy termination was put to an affair that seemed likely to ruin the Christian Church, not only at Corinth, but through all Greece; for, if this bad man, who had been chief in opposing the apostle's authority, bringing in licentious doctrines, and denying the resurrection of the dead,



had ultimately succeeded at Corinth, his doctrine and influence might soon have extended over Greece and Asia Minor, and the great work of God which had been wrought in those parts would have been totally destroyed. This one consideration is sufficient to account for the apostle's great anxiety and distress on account of the divisions and heresies at Corinth. He knew it was a most pernicious leaven; and, unless destroyed, must destroy the work of God. The loss of the affections of the Church at Corinth, however much it might affect the tender, fatherly heart of the apostle, cannot account for the awful apprehensions, poignant distress, and deep anguish, which he, in different parts of these epistles, so feelingly describes; and which he describes as having been invariably his portion from the time that he heard of their perversion, till he was assured of their restoration by the account brought by Titus.

2. A scandal or heresy in the Church of God is ruinous at all times, but particularly so when the cause is in its infancy; and therefore the messengers of God cannot be too careful to lay the foundation well in doctrine, to establish the strictest discipline, and to be very cautious whom they admit and accredit as members of the Church of Christ. It is certain that the door should be opened wide to admit penitent sinners; but the watchman should ever stand by, to see that no improper person enter in. Christian prudence should ever be connected with Christian zeal. It is a great work to bring sinners to Christ; it is a greater work to preserve them in the faith; and it requires much grace and much wisdom to keep the Church of Christ pure, not only by not permitting the unholy to enter, but by casting out those who apostatize or work iniquity. Slackness in discipline generally precedes corruption of doctrine; the former generating the latter.

## CHAPTER 8.

*The apostle stirs them up to make a collection for the poor Christians at Jerusalem, by the very liberal contributions of the people of Macedonia for the same purpose, who were comparatively a poor people, 1-5. He tells them that he had desired Titus to finish this good work among them which he had begun; hoping that as they abounded in many excellent gifts and graces, they would abound in this also, 6-8. He exhorts them to this by the example of Jesus Christ, who, though rich, subjected himself to voluntary poverty, that they might be enriched, 9. He shows them that this contribution, which had been long ago begun, should have been long since finished, 10. And that they should do every thing with a ready and willing mind, according to the ability which God had given them; that abundance should not prevail on one hand, while pinching poverty ruled on the other; but that there should be an equality, 11-14. He shows from the distribution of the manna in the wilderness, that the design of God was, that every member of his spiritual household should have the necessaries of life, 15. He tells them that he had now sent Titus, and another with him, to Corinth, to complete this great work, 16-22. The character which he gives of Titus and the others employed in this business, 23, 24.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 8.

**Verse 1.** *Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit*— In all our dignified version very few ill-constructed sentences can be found; however here is one, and the worst in the book. We do you to wit is in the original **γνωρίζομεν δε υμιν**, we make known unto you. This is plain and intelligible, the other is not so; and the form is now obsolete.

*The grace of God bestowed*— Dr. Whitby has made it fully evident that the **χαρις θεου** signifies the charitable contribution made by the Churches in Macedonia, to which they were excited by the grace or influence of God upon their hearts; and that **δεδομενην εν** cannot signify bestowed on, but given in. That **χαρις** means liberality, appears from 2 Corinthians 8:6:

We desired Titus that as he had begun, so he would finish **την ξαριν ταυτην**, this charitable contribution. And 2 Corinthians 8:7: That ye abound **εν ταυτη τη χαριτι**, in this liberal contribution. And 2 Corinthians 8:19: Who was chosen of the Church to travel with us **συν τη χαριτι ταυτη**, with this charitable contribution, which is administered—which is to be dispensed, by us. So 2 Corinthians 9:8: God is able to make **πασαν χαριν**, all liberality, to abound towards you. And 1 Corinthians 16:3: To bring **την χαριν**, your liberality, to the poor saints. Hence **χαρις**, is by Hesychius and Phavorinus interpreted a gift, as it is here by the apostle: Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift, 2 Corinthians 9:15. This charity is styled the grace of God, either from its exceeding greatness, (as the cedars of God and mountains of God signify great cedars and great mountains, Psalm 36:6; 80:10;) or rather, it is called so as proceeding from God, who is the dispenser of all good, and the giver of this disposition; for the motive of charity must come from him. So, in other places, the zeal of God, Romans 10:2; the love of God, 2 Corinthians 5:14; the grace of God, Titus 2:11.

**The Churches of Macedonia**— These were Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, etc.

**Verse 2. *In a great trial of affliction***— The sense of this verse is the following: The Macedonians, though both poor and persecuted, rejoiced exceedingly that an opportunity was afforded them of doing good to their more impoverished and more persecuted brethren. We can scarcely ever speak of poverty and affliction in an absolute sense; they are only comparative. Even the poor are called to relieve those who are poorer than themselves; and the afflicted, to comfort those who are more afflicted than they are. The poor and afflicted Churches of Macedonia felt this duty, and therefore came forward to the uttermost of their power to relieve their more impoverished and afflicted brethren in Judea.

**Verse 3. *For to their power***, etc.— In their liberality they had no rule but their ability; they believed they were bound to contribute all they could; and even this rule they transgressed, for they went beyond their power—they deprived themselves for a time of the necessaries of life, in order to give to others who were destitute even of necessaries.

**Verse 4. *Praying us with much entreaty***— We had not to solicit them to this great act of kindness; they even entreated us to accept their bounty, and to take on ourselves the administration or application of it to the wants of the poor in Judea.

**Verse 5. *Not as we hoped***— They far exceeded our expectations, for they consecrated themselves entirely to the work of God; giving themselves and all they possessed first unto the Lord; and then, as they saw that it was the will of God that they should come especially forward in this charitable work, they gave themselves to us, to assist to the uttermost in providing relief for the suffering Christians in Judea.

**Verse 6. *That we desired Titus***— Titus had probably laid the plan of this contribution when he was before at Corinth, according to the direction given by the apostle, 1 Corinthians 16:1, etc.

***The same grace***— Liberality. See the note on 2 Corinthians 8:1.

**Verse 7. *As ye abound in every thing***— See the note on 1 Corinthians 1:5. In faith, crediting the whole testimony of God; in utterance, *λογω*, in doctrine, knowing what to teach: knowledge of God's will, and prudence to direct you in teaching and doing it; in diligence, to amend all that is wrong among you, and to do what is right; and in love to us, whom now ye prize as the apostles of the Lord, and your pastors in him.

***Abound in this grace also.***— Be as eminent for your charitable disposition as ye are for your faith, doctrine, knowledge, diligence, and love.

**Verse 8. *I speak not by commandment***— I do not positively order this; I assume no right or authority over your property; what you devote of your substance to charitable purposes must be your own work, and a free-will offering.

***The forwardness of others***— Viz. the Churches of Macedonia, which had already exerted themselves so very much in this good work. And the apostle here intimates that he takes this opportunity to apprise them of the zeal of the Macedonians, lest those at Corinth, who excelled in every other gift, should be outdone in this. Their own honor, if better motives were absent, would induce them to exert themselves, that they might not

be outdone by others. And then, as they had professed great love for the apostle, and this was a service that lay near his heart, they would prove the sincerity of that professed love by a liberal contribution for the afflicted and destitute Jewish Christians.

**Verse 9. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ***— This was the strongest argument of all; and it is urged home by the apostle with admirable address.

***Ye know***— Ye are acquainted with God's ineffable love in sending Jesus Christ into the world; and ye know the grace—the infinite benevolence of Christ himself.

***That, though he was rich***— The possessor, as he was the creator, of the heavens and the earth; for your sakes he became poor—he emptied himself, and made himself of no reputation, and took upon himself the form of a servant, and humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross; that ye, through his poverty—through his humiliation and death, might be rich—might regain your forfeited inheritance, and be enriched with every grace of his Holy Spirit, and brought at last to his eternal glory.

If Jesus Christ, as some contend, were only a mere man, in what sense could he be said to be rich? His family was poor in Bethlehem; his parents were very poor also; he himself never possessed any property among men from the stable to the cross; nor had he any thing to bequeath at his death but his peace. And in what way could the poverty of one man make a multitude rich? These are questions which, on the Socinian scheme, can never be satisfactorily answered.

**Verse 10. *Herein I give my advice***— For I speak not by way of commandment, 2 Corinthians 8:8.

***For this is expedient for you***— It is necessary you should do this to preserve a consistency of conduct; for ye began this work a year ago, and it is necessary that ye should complete it as soon as possible.

***Not only to do, but also to be forward***— *το ποιησαι-και το θελειν*, literally, to do and to will; but as the will must be before the deed, *θελειν*, must be taken here in the sense of delight, as it frequently means in the Old and New Testaments. See several examples in Whitby.

Some MSS. transpose the words: allowing this, there is no difficulty.

*A year ago.*— *απο περυσι*. It was about a year before this that the apostle, in his first epistle, 1 Corinthians 16:2, had exhorted them to make this contribution and there is no doubt that they, in obedience to his directions, had begun to lay up in store for this charitable purpose; he therefore wishes them to complete this good work, and thus show that they were not led to it by the example of the Macedonians, seeing they themselves had been first movers in this business.

**Verse 11.** *A readiness to will, so there may be a performance*— Ye have willed and purposed this; now perform it.

*Out of that which ye have.*— Give as God has enabled you; and give as God has disposed you. He requires each man to do as he can; and accepts the will where the means are wanting to perform the deed.

**Verse 12.** *According to that a man hath*— According to his real property; not taking that which belongs to his own family, and is indispensably necessary for their support; and not taking that which belongs to others; viz. what he owes to any man.

**Verse 13.** *That other men be eased*— I do not design that you should impoverish yourselves in order that others may live affluently.

**Verse 14.** *But by an equality*— That you may do to those who are distressed now, as, on a change of circumstances, you would wish them to do to you. And I only wish that of your abundance you would now minister to their wants; and it may be that there abundance may yet supply your wants; for so liable are all human affairs to change, that it is as possible that you rich Corinthians should need the charitable help of others as it is that those Jews, who once had need of nothing, should now be dependent on your bounty.

*That there may be equality*— That ye may exert yourselves so in behalf of those poor people that there may be between you an equality in the necessaries of life; your abundance supplying them with that of which they are utterly destitute.

**Verse 15.** *He that had gathered much, had nothing over*— On the passage to which the apostle alludes, Exodus 16:18, I have stated that,

probably, every man gathered as much manna as he could, and when he brought it home and measured it by the omer, (for this was the measure for each man's eating,) if he had a surplus it went to the supply of some other family that had not been able to collect enough; the family being large, and the time in which the manna might be gathered, before the heat of the day, not being sufficient to collect a supply for so numerous a household; several of whom might be so confined as not to be able to collect for themselves. Thus there was an equality among the Israelites in reference to this thing; and in this light these words of St. Paul lead us to view the passage. To apply this to the present case: the Corinthians, in the course of God's providence, had gathered more than was absolutely necessary for their own support; by giving the surplus to the persecuted and impoverished Christian Jews these would be an equality; both would then possess the necessaries of life, though still the one might have more property than the other.

**Verse 16. *But thanks be to God***— He thanks God who had already disposed the heart of Titus to attend to this business; and, with his usual address, considers all this as done in the behalf of the Corinthian Church; and that though the poor Christians in Judea are to have the immediate benefit, yet God put honor upon them in making them his instruments in supplying the wants of others. He who is an almoner to God Almighty is highly honored indeed.

**Verse 17. *He accepted the exhortation***— I advised him to visit you and excite you to this good work, and I found that he was already disposed in his heart to do it; God put this earnest care in the heart of Titus for you, 2 Corinthians 8:16.

**Verse 18. *The brother, whose praise is in the Gospel***— Who this brother was we cannot tell; some suppose it was St. Luke, who wrote a gospel, and who was the companion of St. Paul in several of his travels; others think it was Silas; others, Barnabas; others, Mark; and others, Apollos. Neither ancients nor moderns agree in either; but Luke, John, and Mark, seem to have the most probable opinions in their favor. Whoever the person was he was sufficiently known to the Corinthians, as we learn by what the apostle says of him in this place.

**Verse 19. *Chosen of the Churches to travel with us***— *χειροτονηθεις*; Appointed by a show of hands; from *χειρ* the hand, and *τεινω*, to extend. This appointment, by the suffrage of the Churches, seems to refer more to St. Luke than any one else; unless we suppose he refers to the transaction, Acts 15:40, 41, and then it would appear that Silas is the person intended.

***With this grace***— Liberal contribution. See on 2 Corinthians 8:1.

***Your ready mind***.— Your willingness to relieve them. But, instead of *υμων*, your, *ημων*, our, is the reading of almost all the best MSS. and all the versions. This is, doubtless, the reading.

**Verse 20. *Avoiding this, that no man should blame us***— Taking this prudent caution to have witnesses of our conduct, and such as were chosen by the Churches themselves, that we might not be suspected of having either embezzled or misapplied their bounty, See the note on 1 Corinthians 16:4.

**Verse 21. *Providing for honest things***— Taking care to act so as not only to be clear in the sight of God, but also to be clear in the sight of all men; avoiding even the appearance of evil. I wish the reader to refer to the excellent note on 1 Corinthians 16:4, which I have extracted from Dr. Paley.

**Verse 22. *We have sent with them***— Titus and, probably, Luke, our brother, probably Apollos.

***Now much more diligent***— Finding that I have the fullest confidence in your complete reformation and love to me, he engages in this business with alacrity, and exceeds even his former diligence.

**Verse 23. *Whether any do inquire of Titus***— Should it be asked, Who is this TITUS? I answer, he is my companion, and my fellow laborer in reference to you; 2 Corinthians 2:13; 7:6, 7. Should any inquire, Who are these brethren, Luke and Apollos? I answer, They are *αποστολοι*, apostles of the Churches, and intensely bent on promoting the glory of Christ.

**Verse 24. *Wherefore show ye to them, and before the Churches***, etc.— Seeing they are persons every way worthy in themselves, and coming to you on such an important occasion, and so highly recommended, receive



them affectionately; and let them thus see that the very high character I have given of you is not exaggerated, and that you are as ready in every work of charity as I have stated you to be. Act in this for your honor.

1. THE whole of this chapter and the following is occupied in exciting the richer followers of Christ to be liberal to the poorer; the obligation of each to be so, the reasons on which that obligation is founded, the arguments to enforce the obligation from those reasons, are all clearly stated, and most dexterously and forcibly managed. These two chapters afford a perfect model for a Christian minister who is pleading the cause of the poor.

2. In the management of charities a man ought carefully to avoid the least suspicion of avarice, self-interest, and unfaithfulness. How few persons are entirely free from the upbraidings of their own consciences in the matter of alms! But who will be able to hear the upbraidings of Christ at the time of death and judgment? No man can waste without injustice, or neglect without sin, those things of which he is only the dispenser and steward.

3. God has not settled an equality among men by their birth to the end that this equality might be the work of his grace. He has put the temporal portion of the poor into the hands of the rich, and the spiritual portion of the rich into the hands of the poor, on purpose to keep up a good understanding betwixt the members of the same body by a mutual dependence on one another. He who withholds the part belonging to the poor steals more from himself than from them. Let every one answer this admirable design of God, and labor to re-establish equality: the poor, in praying much for the rich; and the rich, in giving much to the poor. See Quesnel.

## CHAPTER 9.

*St. Paul intimates that so ready were the Corinthians to make this charitable contribution, that it was scarcely necessary for him to write, 1, 2. But lest they should not be ready when he came, he had sent the brethren, Titus, etc., beforehand; lest, if any of the Macedonians should come with him, they should find them not prepared, though he had boasted so much of their ready mind, 3-5. He gives them directions how they shall contribute; and the advantage to be gained by it, in the fulfillment of the promises of God, 6-11. He shows them that by this means the poor shall be relieved, God glorified, their Christian temper manifested, and the prayers of many engaged in their behalf, 12-14. And concludes with giving thanks to God for his unspeakable gift, 15.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 9.

**Verse 1.** *It is superfluous for me to write to you*— I need not enlarge, having already said enough. See the preceding chapter.

**Verse 2.** *I know the forwardness of your mind*— You have already firmly purposed to contribute to the support of the poor and suffering saints.

*That Achaia was ready a year ago*— The whole of the Morea was anciently called Achaia, the capital of which was Corinth. The apostle means, not only Corinth, but other Churches in different parts about Corinth; we know there was a Church at Cenchrea, one of the ports on the Corinthian Isthmus.

*Your zeal hath provoked very many.*— Hearing that the Corinthians were so intent on the relief of the sufferers in Palestine, other Churches, and especially they of Macedonia, came forward the more promptly and liberally.

**Verse 3.** *Yet have I sent the brethren*— Titus and his companions, mentioned in the preceding chapter.

**That, as I said, ye may be ready**— And he wished them to be ready, that they might preserve the good character he had given them: this was for their honor; and if they did not take care to do so, he might be reputed a liar; and thus both they and himself be ashamed before the Macedonians, should any of them at this time accompany him to Corinth.

**Verse 5. Whereof ye had notice before**— Instead of *προκατηγγελημενην*, spoken of before, BCDEFG, several others, with the Coptic, Vulgate, Itala, and several of the fathers, have *προεπηγγελημενην*, what was promised before. The sense is not very different; probably the latter reading was intended to explain the former. See the margin.

**Bounty, and not as of covetousness.**— Had they been backward, strangers might have attributed this to a covetous principle; as it would appear that they were loth to give up their money, and that they parted with it only when they could not for shame keep it any longer. This is the property of a covetous heart; whereas readiness to give is the characteristic of a liberal mind. This makes a sufficiently plain sense; and we need not look, as some have done, for any new sense of *πλεονεξια*, covetousness, as if it were here to be understood as implying a small gift.

**Verse 6. He which soweth sparingly**— This is a plain maxim: no man can expect to reap but in proportion as he has sowed. And here almsgiving is represented as a seed sown, which shall bring forth a crop. If the sowing be liberal, and the seed good, the crop shall be so too.

Sowing is used among the Jews to express almsgiving: so they understand Isaiah 32:20: Blessed are ye who sow beside all waters; i.e. who are ready to help every one that is in need. And Hosea 10:12, they interpret: Sow to yourselves almsgiving, and ye shall reap in mercy-if you show mercy to the poor, God will show mercy to you.

**Verse 7. Not grudgingly, or of necessity**— The Jews had in the temple two chests for alms; the one was *של תובה* of what was necessary, i.e. what the law required, the other was *של נרבה* of the free-will offerings. To escape perdition some would grudgingly give what necessity obliged them; others would give cheerfully, for the love of God, and through pity to the poor. Of the first, nothing is said; they simply did what the law required. Of the second, much is said; God loves them. The benefit of

almsgiving is lost to the giver when he does it with a grumbling heart. And, as he does not do the duty in the spirit of the duty, even the performance of the letter of the law is an abomination in the sight of God.

To these two sorts of alms in the temple the apostle most evidently alludes. See Schoettgen.

**Verse 8. *God is able to make all grace abound***— We have already seen, 2 Corinthians 8:1 that the word *χαρις*, in the connection in which the apostle uses it in these chapters, signifies a charitable gift; here it certainly has the same meaning: God is able to give you, in his mercy, abundance of temporal good; that, having a sufficiency, ye may abound in every good work. This refers to the sowing plenteously: those who do so shall reap plenteously—they shall have an abundance of God's blessings.

**Verse 9. *He hath dispersed abroad***— Here is still the allusion to the sower. He sows much; not at home merely, or among those with whom he is acquainted, but abroad—among the strangers, whether of his own or of another nation. The quotation is taken from Psalm 112:9.

***He hath given to the poor***— This is the interpretation of he hath scattered abroad; and therefore it is said, his righteousness remaineth for ever—his good work is had in remembrance before God. By righteousness we have already seen that the Jews understand almsgiving. See the note on Matthew 6:1.

**Verse 10. *Now he that ministereth seed to the sower***— The sower, as we have already seen, is he that gives alms of what he hath; and God, who requires him to give these alms, is here represented as providing him with the means. As in the creation, if God had not created the earth with every tree and plant with its seed in itself, so that a harvest came, without a previous ploughing and sowing, there could have been no seed to deposit in the earth; so, if God had not, in the course of his providence, given them the property they had, it would be impossible for them to give alms. And as even the well cultivated and sowed field would be unfruitful if God did not, by his unseen energy and blessing, cause it to bring forth, and bring to maturity; so would it have been with their property: it could not have increased; for without his blessing riches take wings and flee away, as an eagle towards heaven. Therefore, in every sense, it is God who ministers

seed to the sower, and multiplies the seed sown. And as all this properly comes from God, and cannot exist without him, he has a right to require that it be dispensed in that way which he judges best.

The word **ο-επιχορηγων**, he that ministereth, is very emphatic; it signifies he who leads up the chorus, from **επι**, to, and **χορηγω**, to lead the chorus; it means also to join to, associate, to supply or furnish one thing after another so that there be no want or chasm. Thus God is represented, in the course of his providence, associating and connecting causes and effects; keeping every thing in its proper place and state of dependence on another, and all upon himself; so that summer and winter, heat and cold, seed time and harvest, regularly succeed each other. Thus God leads up this grand chorus of causes and effects: provides the seed to the hand of the sower; gives him skill to discern the times when the earth should be prepared for the grain, and when the grain should be sowed; blesses the earth, and causes it to bring forth and bud, so that it may again minister seed to the sower and bread to the eater; and, by a watchful providence, preserves every thing. The figure is beautiful, and shows us the grand system of causes and effects, all directed by and under the immediate guidance and government of God himself.

There is a fine exemplification of this in the same figure thus produced by the prophet. Hosea 2:21, 22: I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens; and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel. See the note there.

**The fruits of your righteousness**— Your beneficence; for so **δικαιοσυνη** is here to be understood. See the note on Matthew 6:1, already referred to.

**Verse 11. *Being enriched in every thing***— Observe, Why does God give riches? That they may be applied to his glory, and the good of men. Why does he increase riches? That those who have them may exercise all bountifulness. And if they be enriched in every thing, what will be the consequence if they do not exercise all bountifulness? Why, God will curse their blessings; the rust shall canker them, and the moth shall consume their garments. But if, on the other hand, they do thus apply them, then they cause thanksgiving to God. The 9th and 10th verses should be read in a parenthesis, for this verse connects with the eighth. {2 Corinthians 9:8-11 }

**Verse 12. *For the administration of this service***— The poor are relieved, see the hand of God in this relief, and give God the glory of his grace.

**Verse 13. *By the experiment of this ministration***— In this, and in the preceding and following verses, the apostle enumerates the good effects that would be produced by their liberal almsgiving to the poor saints at Jerusalem. 1. The wants of the saints would be supplied. 2. Many thanksgivings would thereby be rendered unto God. 3. The Corinthians would thereby give proof of their subjection to the Gospel. And, 4. The prayers of those relieved will ascend up to God in the behalf of their benefactors.

**Verse 14. *The exceeding grace of God in you***.— By the *υπερβαλλουσαν χαριν*, superabounding or transcending grace, of God, which was in them, the apostle most evidently means the merciful and charitable disposition which they had towards the suffering saints. The whole connection, indeed the whole chapter, proves this; and the apostle attributes this to its right source, the grace or goodness of God. They had the means of charity, but God had given these means; they had a feeling, and charitable heart, but God was the author of it. Their charity was superabundant, and God had furnished both the disposition, the occasion, and the means by which that disposition was to be made manifest.

**Verse 15. *Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift***.— Some contend that Christ only is here intended; others, that the almsgiving is meant.

After all the difference of commentators and preachers, it is most evident that the *ανεκδιηγητος δωρεα*, unspeakable gift, is precisely the same with the *υπερβαλλουση χαρις*, superabounding grace or benefit, of the preceding verse. If therefore Jesus Christ, the gift of God's unbounded love to man, be the meaning of the unspeakable gift in this verse, he is also intended by the superabounding grace in the preceding. But it is most evident that it is the work of Christ in them, and not Christ himself, which is intended in the 14th verse {2 Corinthians 9:14}; and consequently, that it is the same work, not the operator, which is referred to in this last verse.

A FEW farther observations may be necessary on the conclusion of this chapter.

1. JESUS CHRIST, the gift of God's love to mankind, is an unspeakable blessing; no man can conceive, much less declare, how great this gift is; for these things the angels desire to look into. Therefore he may be well called the unspeakable gift, as he is the highest God ever gave or can give to man; though this is not the meaning of the last verse.

2. The conversion of a soul from darkness to light, from sin to holiness, from Satan to God, is not less inconceivable. It is called a new creation, and creative energy cannot be comprehended. To have the grace of God to rule the heart, subduing all things to itself and filling the soul with the Divine nature, is an unspeakable blessing; and the energy that produced it is an unspeakable gift. I conclude, therefore, that it is the work of Christ in the soul, and not Christ himself, that the apostle terms the superabounding or exceeding great grace, and the unspeakable gift; and Dr. Whitby's paraphrase may be safely admitted as giving the true sense of the passage. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift: i.e. this admirable charity (proceeding from the work of Christ in the soul) by which God is so much glorified, the Gospel receives such credit, others are so much benefited, and you will be by God so plentifully rewarded." This is the sober sense of the passage; and no other meaning can comport with it. The passage itself is a grand proof that every good disposition in the soul of man comes from God; and it explodes the notion of natural good, i.e. good which God does not work, which is absurd; for no effect can exist without a cause; and God being the fountain of good, all that can be called good must come immediately from himself. See James 1:17.

3. Most men can see the hand of God in the dispensations of his justice, and yet these very seldom appear. How is it that they cannot equally see his hand in the dispensations of his mercy, which are great, striking, and unremitting? Our afflictions we scarcely ever forget; our mercies we scarcely ever remember! Our hearts are alive to complaint, but dead to gratitude. We have had ten thousand mercies for one judgment, and yet our complaints to our thanksgivings have been ten thousand to one! How is it that God endures this, and bears with us? Ask his own eternal clemency; and ask the Mediator before the throne. The mystery of our preservation and salvation can be there alone explained.

## CHAPTER 10.

*The apostle vindicates himself against the aspersions cast on his person by the false apostle; and takes occasion to mention his spiritual might and authority, 1-6. He shows them the impropriety of judging after the outward appearance, 7. Again refers to his apostolical authority, and informs them that when he again comes among them he will show himself in his deeds as powerful as his letters intimated, 8-11. He shows that these false teachers sat down in other men's labors, having neither authority nor influence from God to break up new ground, while he and the apostles in general had the regions assigned to them through which they were to sow the seed of life; and that he never entered into any place where the work was made ready to his hand by others, 12-16. He concludes with intimating that the glorying of those false apostles was bad; that they had nothing but self-commendation; and that they who glory should glory in the Lord, 17, 18.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 10.

**Verse 1.** *I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness*— Having now finished his directions and advices relative to the collection for the poor, he resumes his argument relative to the false apostle, who had gained considerable influence by representing St. Paul as despicable in his person, his ministry, and his influence. Under this obloquy the apostle was supported by the meekness and gentleness of Christ; and through the same heavenly disposition he delayed inflicting that punishment which, in virtue of his apostolical authority, he might have inflicted on him who had disturbed and labored to corrupt the Christian Church.

*Who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you*— He seems to quote these as the words of his calumniator, as if he had said; “This apostle of yours is a mere braggadocio; when he is among you, you know how base and contemptible he is; when absent, see how he brags and boasts.” The word **ταπεινος**, which we render base, signifies lowly, and, as some think, short of stature. The insinuation is, that when



there was danger or opposition at hand, St. Paul acted with great obsequiousness, fearing for his person and authority, lest he should lose his secular influence. See the following verse.

**Verse 2. *Some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.***— As it is customary for cowards and overbearing men to threaten the weak and the timid when present; to bluster when absent; and to be very obsequious in the presence of the strong and courageous. This conduct they appear to have charged against the apostle, which he calls here walking after the flesh- acting as a man who had worldly ends in view, and would use any means in order to accomplish them.

**Verse 3. *Though we walk in the flesh***— That is: Although I am in the common condition of human nature, and must live as a human being, yet I do not war after the flesh-I do not act the coward or the poltroon, as they insinuate. I have a good cause, a good captain, strength at will, and courage at hand. I neither fear them nor their master.

**Verse 4. *The weapons of our warfare***— The apostle often uses the metaphor of a warfare to represent the life and trials of a Christian minister. See Ephesians 6:10-17; 1 Timothy 1:18; 2 Timothy 2:3-5.

***Are not carnal***— Here he refers to the means used by the false apostle in order to secure his party; he calumniated St. Paul, traduced the truth, preached false and licentious doctrines, and supported these with sophistical reasonings.

***But mighty through God***— Our doctrines are true and pure, they come from God and lead to him, and he accompanies them with his mighty power to the hearts of those who hear them; and the strong holds-the apparently solid and cogent reasoning of the philosophers, we, by these doctrines, pull down; and thus the fortifications of heathenism are destroyed, and the cause of Christ triumphs wherever we come; and we put to flight the armies of the aliens.

**Verse 5. *Casting down imaginations***— *δογισμούς*. Reasonings or opinions. The Greek philosophers valued themselves especially on their ethic systems, in which their reasonings appeared to be very profound and conclusive; but they were obliged to assume principles which were either such as did not exist, or were false in themselves, as the whole of their

mythologic system most evidently was: truly, from what remains of them we see that their metaphysics were generally bombast; and as to their philosophy, it was in general good for nothing. When the apostles came against their gods many and their lords many with the ONE SUPREME and ETERNAL BEING, they were confounded, scattered, annihilated; when they came against their various modes of purifying the mind—their sacrificial and mediatorial system, with the LORD JESUS CHRIST, his agony and bloody sweat, his cross and passion, his death and burial, and his glorious resurrection and ascension, they sunk before them, and appeared to be what they really were, as dust upon the balance, and lighter than vanity.

*Every high thing*— Even the pretendedly sublime doctrines, for instance, of Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics in general, fell before the simple preaching of Christ crucified.

*The knowledge of God*— The doctrine of the unity and eternity of the Divine nature, which was opposed by the plurality of their idols, and the generation of their gods, and their men-made deities. It is amazing how feeble a resistance heathenism made, by argument or reasoning, against the doctrine of the Gospel! It instantly shrunk from the Divine light, and called on the secular power to contend for it! Popery sunk before Protestantism in the same way, and defended itself by the same means. The apostles destroyed heathenism wherever they came; the Protestants confuted popery wherever their voice was permitted to be heard.

*Bringing into captivity every thought*— HEATHENISM could not recover itself; in vain did its thousands of altars smoke with reiterated hecatombs, their demons were silent, and their idols were proved to be nothing in the world. POKERY could never, by any power of self-reviviscence, restore itself after its defeat by the Reformation: it had no Scripture, consecutively understood; no reason, no argument; in vain were its bells rung, its candles lighted, its auto da fe's exhibited; in vain did its fires blaze; and in vain were innumerable human victims immolated on its altars! The light of God penetrated its hidden works of darkness, and dragged its three-headed Cerberus into open day; the monster sickened, vomited his henbane, and fled for refuge to his native shades.

*The obedience of Christ*— Subjection to idols was annihilated by the progress of the Gospel among the heathens; and they soon had but one

Lord, and his name one. In like manner the doctrines of the reformation, mighty through God, pulled down-demolished and brought into captivity, the whole papal system; and instead of obedience to the pope, the pretended vicar of God upon earth, obedience to Christ, as the sole almighty Head of the Church, was established, particularly in Great Britain, where it continues to prevail. Hallelujah! the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!

**Verse 6. *And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience***— I am ready, through this mighty armor of God, to punish those opposers of the doctrine of Christ, and the disobedience which has been produced by them.

***When your obedience is fulfilled.***— When you have in the fullest manner, discountenanced those men, and separated yourselves from their communion. The apostle was not in haste to pull up the tares, lest he should pull up the wheat also.

All the terms in these two verses are military. Allusion is made to a strongly fortified city, where the enemy had made his last stand; entrenching himself about the walls; strengthening all his redoubts and ramparts; raising castles, towers, and various engines of defense and offense upon the walls; and neglecting nothing that might tend to render his strong hold impregnable. The army of God comes against the place and attacks it; the strong holds *οχυροματα*, all the fortified places, are carried. The imaginations, *λογισμοι*, engines, and whatever the imagination or skill of man could raise, are speedily taken and destroyed. Every high thing, *πανυψωμα*, all the castles and towers are sapped, thrown down and demolished; the walls are battered into breaches; and the besieging army, carrying every thing at the point of the sword, enter the city, storm and take the citadel. Every where defeated, the conquered submit, and are brought into captivity, *αιχμαλωτιζοντες*, are led away captives; and thus the whole government is destroyed.

It is easy to apply these things, as far as may be consistent with the apostle's design. The general sense I have given in the preceding notes.

**Verse 7. *Do ye look on things after the outward appearance?***— Do not be carried away with appearances; do not be satisfied with show and parade.

***If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's***— Here, as in several other places of this and the preceding epistle, the **τις**, any or certain, person, most evidently refers to the false apostle who made so much disturbance in the Church. And this man trusted to himself-assumed to himself that he was Christ's messenger: it would not do to attempt to subvert Christianity at once; it had got too strong a hold of Corinth to be easily dislodged; he therefore pretended to be on Christ's side, and to derive his authority from him.

***Let him of himself***— Without any authority, certainly, from God; but, as he arrogates to himself the character of a minister of Christ, let him acknowledge that even so we are Christ's ministers; and that I have, by my preaching, and the miracles which I have wrought, given the fullest proof that I am especially commissioned by him.

**Verse 8. *For, though I should boast,*** etc.— I have a greater authority and spiritual power than I have yet shown, both to edify and to punish; but I employ this for your edification in righteousness, and not for the destruction of any delinquent. "This," says Calmet, "is the rule which the pastors of the Church ever propose to themselves in the exercise of their authority; whether to enjoin or forbid, to dispense or to oblige, to bind or to loose. They should use this power only as Jesus Christ used it—for the salvation, and not for the destruction, of souls."

**Verse 9. *That I may not seem,*** etc.— This is an elliptical sentence, and may be supplied thus: "I have not used this authority; nor will I add any more concerning this part of the subject, lest I should seem, as my adversary has insinuated, to wish to terrify you by my letters."

**Verse 10. *For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful***— He boasts of high powers, and that he can do great things. See on 2 Corinthians 10:1, 2.

***But his bodily presence is weak***— When you behold the man, you find him a feeble, contemptible mortal; and when ye hear him speak, his speech, **ο λογος**, probably, his doctrine, **εξουθενημενος**, is good for

nothing; his person, matter, and manner, are altogether uninteresting, unimpressive, and too contemptible to be valued by the wise and the learned. This seems to be the spirit and design of this slander.

Many, both among the ancients and moderns, have endeavored to find out the ground there was for any part of this calumny; as to the moral conduct of the apostle, that was invulnerable; his motives, it is true, were suspected and denounced by this false apostle and his partisans; but they could never find any thing in his conduct which could support their insinuations.

What they could not attach to his character, they disingenuously attached to his person and his elocution.

If we can credit some ancient writers, such as Nicephorus, we shall find the apostle thus described: *παυλος μικρος ην και συνεσταλμενος το του σωματος μεγαθος· και ωσπερ αγκυλον αυτο κεκτημενος· σμικρον δε, και κεκυφος· την οφιν λευκος, και το προσωπον προφερης, ψιλος την κεφαλην, κ. τ. λ.* Nicephor., lib. ii., cap. 17. “Paul was a little man, crooked, and almost bent like a bow; with a pale countenance, long and wrinkled; a bald head; his eyes full of fire and benevolence; his beard long, thick, and interspersed with grey hairs, as was his head, etc.” I quote from Calmet, not having Nicephorus at hand.

An old Greek writer, says the same author, whose works are found among those of Chrysostom, tom. vi. hom. 30, page 265, represents him thus: *-παυλος ο τριπηχυς ανθρωπος, και των ουρανων απτομενος·* “Paul was a man of about three cubits in height, (four feet six,) and yet, nevertheless, touched the heavens.” Others say that “he was a little man, had a bald head, and a large nose.” See the above, and several other authorities in Calmet. Perhaps there is not one of these statements correct: as to Nicephorus, he is a writer of the fourteenth century, weak and credulous, and worthy of no regard. And the writer found in the works of Chrysostom, in making the apostle little more than a pigmy, has rendered his account incredible.

That St. Paul could be no such diminutive person we may fairly presume from the office he filled under the high priest, in the persecution of the Church of Christ; and that he had not an impediment in his speech, but

was a graceful orator, we may learn from his whole history, and especially from the account we have, Acts 14:12, where the Lycaonians took him for Mercury, the god of eloquence, induced thereto by his powerful and persuasive elocution. In short, there does not appear to be any substantial evidence of the apostle's deformity, pigmy stature, bald head, pale and wrinkled face, large nose, stammering speech, etc., etc. These are probably all figments of an unbridled fancy, and foolish surmisings.

**Verse 11.** *Such as we are in word*— A threatening of this kind would doubtless alarm the false apostle; and it is very likely that he did not await the apostle's coming, as he would not be willing to try the fate of Elymas.

**Verse 12.** *We dare not make ourselves*, etc.— As if he had said: I dare neither associate with, nor compare myself to, those who are full of self-commendation. Some think this to be an ironical speech.

*But they, measuring themselves by themselves*— They are not sent of God; they are not inspired by his Spirit; therefore they have no rule to think or act by. They are also full of pride and self-conceit; they look within themselves for accomplishments which their self-love will soon find out; for to it real and fictitious are the same. As they dare not compare themselves with the true apostles of Christ, they compare themselves with each other; and, as they have no perfect standard, they can have no excellence; nor can they ever attain true wisdom, which is not to be had from looking at what we are but to what we should be; and if without a directory, what we should be will never appear, and consequently our ignorance must continue. This was the case with these self-conceited false apostles; but **ου συβιουσι**, are not wise, Mr. Wakefield contends, is an elegant Graecism signifying they are not aware that they are measuring themselves by themselves, etc.

**Verse 13.** *Things without our measure*— There is a great deal of difficulty in this and the three following verses, and there is a great diversity among the MSS.; and which is the true reading can scarcely be determined. Our version is perhaps the plainest that can be made of the text. By the measure mentioned here, it seems as if the apostle meant the commission he received from God to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles; a measure or district that extended through all Asia Minor and Greece, down to Achaia, where Corinth was situated, a measure to reach even unto you.

But the expressions in these verses are all agonistical, and taken from the stadium or race course in the Olympic and Isthmian games. The **μετρον**, or measure, was the length of the **δρομος**, or course; and the **κανων**, rule or line, 2 Corinthians 10:15, 16, was probably the same with the **γραμμα**, or white line, which marked out the boundaries of the stadium; and the verbs reach unto, stretch out, etc., are all references to the exertions made to win the race. As this subject is so frequently alluded to in these epistles, I have thought it of importance to consider it particularly in the different places where it occurs.

**Verse 14. *For we stretch not ourselves beyond***— We have not proceeded straight from Macedonia through Thessaly, and across the Adriatic Gulf into Italy, which would have led us beyond you westward; but knowing the mind of our God we left this direct path, and came southward through Greece, down into Achaia, and there we planted the Gospel. The false apostle has therefore got into our province, and entered into our labors, and there boasts as if the conversion of the heathen Achaians had been his own work. As there is an allusion here to the stadium, and to the Olympic games in general, we may consider the apostle as laying to the charge of the disturber at Corinth that he had got his name surreptitiously inserted on the military list; that he was not striving lawfully; had no right to the stadium, and none to the crown. See the observations at the end of 1 Corinthians 9; {1 Corinthians 9:27} and the note on ver. 13 of this chapter; {2 Corinthians 10:13}

**Verse 15. *Not boasting of things without our measure***— We speak only of the work which God has done by us; for we have never attempted to enter into other men's labors, and we study to convert those regions assigned to us by the Holy Spirit. We enter the course lawfully, and run according to rule. See above.

***When your faith is increased***— When you receive more of the life and power of godliness, and when you can better spare me to go to other places.

***We shall be enlarged by you***— **μεγαλυνθηναι** probably signifies here to be praised or commended; and the sense would be this; We hope that shortly, on your gaining an increase of true religion, after your long distractions and divisions, you will plainly see that we are the true

messengers of God to you, and that in all your intercourse with your neighbors, or foreign parts, you will speak of this Gospel preached by us as a glorious system of saving truth; and that, in consequence, the heathen countries around you will be the better prepared to receive our message; and thus our rule or district will be abundantly extended. This interpretation agrees well with the following verse.

**Verse 16. *To preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you***— He probably refers to those parts of the Morea, such as Sparta, etc., that lay southward of them; and to Italy, which lay on the west; for it does not appear that he considered his measure or province to extend to Libya, or any part of Africa. See the Introduction, sec. xii.

***Not to boast in another man's line***— So very scrupulous was the apostle not to build on another man's foundation, that he would not even go to those places where other apostles were labouring. He appears to think that every apostle had a particular district or province of the heathen world allotted to him, and which God commissioned him to convert to the Christian faith. No doubt every apostle was influenced in the same way; and this was a wise order of God; for by these means the Gospel was more quickly spread through the heathen provinces than it otherwise would have been. The apostles had deacons or ministers with them whose business it was to water the seed sown; but the apostles alone, under Christ, sowed and planted.

**Verse 17. *He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord***.— Instead of boasting or exulting even in your own success in preaching the Gospel, as none can be successful without the especial blessing of God, let God who gave the blessing have the glory. Even the genuine apostle, who has his commission immediately from God himself, takes no praise to himself from the prosperity of his work, but gives it all to God. How little cause then have your uncommissioned men to boast, to whom God has assigned no province, and who only boast in another man's line of things made ready to their hand!

**Verse 18. *Not he that commendeth himself***— Not the person who makes a parade of his own attainments; who preaches himself, and not Christ Jesus the Lord; and, far from being your servant for Christ's sake, affects to be your ruler; not such a one shall be approved of God, by an especial



blessing on his labors; but he whom the Lord commendeth, by giving him the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, and converting the heathen by his ministry. These were qualifications to which the false apostle at Corinth could not pretend. He had language and eloquence, and show and parade; but he had neither the gifts of an apostle nor an apostle's success.

1. DR. WHITBY observes that the apostle, in the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th verses, {2 Corinthians 10:13-16} endeavors to advance himself above the false apostles in the three following particulars:—

(1.) That whereas they could show no commission to preach to the Corinthians, no measure by which God had distributed the Corinthians to them as their province, he could do so. We have a measure to reach even to you, 2 Corinthians 10:13.

(2.) That whereas they went out of their line, leaping from one Church to another, he went on orderly, in the conversion of the heathens, from Judea through all the interjacent provinces, till he came to Corinth.

(3.) Whereas they only came in and perverted the Churches where the faith had already been preached, and so could only boast of things made ready to their hands, 2 Corinthians 10:16, he had labored to preach the Gospel where Christ had not been named, lest he should build on another man's foundation, Romans 15:20.

2. We find that from the beginning God appointed to every man his promise, and to every man his labor; and would not suffer even one apostle to interfere with another. This was a very wise appointment; for by this the Gospel was not only more speedily diffused over the heathen nations, as we have already remarked, but the Churches were better attended to, the Christian doctrine preserved in its purity, and the Christian discipline properly enforced. What is any man's work is no man's in particular; and thus the work is neglected. In every Church of God there should be some one who for the time being has the care of it, who may be properly called its pastor; and who is accountable for its purity in the faith, and its godly discipline.

3. Every man who ministers in holy things should be well assured of his call to the work; without this he can labor neither with confidence nor comfort. And he should be careful to watch over the flock, that no

destroying wolf be permitted to enter the sacred fold, and that the fences of a holy discipline be kept in proper repair.

4. It is base, abominable, and deeply sinful, for a man to thrust himself into other men's labors, and, by sowing doubtful disputations among a Christian people, distract and divide them, that he may get a party to himself. Such persons generally act as the false apostle at Corinth; preach a relaxed morality; place great stress upon certain doctrines which flatter and soothe self-love; calumniate the person, system of doctrines, and mode of discipline, of the pastor who perhaps planted that Church, or who in the order of God's providence has the oversight of it. This is an evil that has prevailed much in all ages of the Church; there is at present much of it in the Christian world, and Christianity is disgraced by it.

## CHAPTER 11.

*The apostle apologizes for expressing his jealousy relative to the true state of the Corinthians; still fearing lest their minds should have been drawn aside from the simplicity of the Gospel, 1-3; From this he takes occasion to extol his own ministry, which had been without charge to them, having been supported by the Churches of Macedonia while he preached the Gospel at Corinth, 4-11. Gives the character of the false apostles, 12-16. Shows what reasons he has to boast of secular advantages of birth, education, Divine call to the ministry, labors in that ministry, grievous persecutions, great sufferings, and extraordinary hazards, 16-33.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 11.

**Verse 1.** *Would to God ye could bear with me*— οφελον ηνειχεσθε μου μικρον. As the word God is not mentioned here, it would have been much better to have translated the passage literally thus: I wish ye could bear a little with me. The too frequent use of this sacred name produces a familiarity with it that is not at all conducive to reverence and godly fear.

*In my folly*— In my seeming folly; for, being obliged to vindicate his ministry, it was necessary that he should speak much of himself, his sufferings, and his success. And as this would appear like boasting; and boasting is always the effect of an empty, foolish mind; those who were not acquainted with the necessity that lay upon him to make this defense, might be led to impute it to vanity. As if he had said: Suppose you allow this to be folly, have the goodness to bear with me; for though I glory, I should not be a fool, 2 Corinthians 12:6. And let no man think me a fool for my boasting, 2 Corinthians 11:16.

**Verse 2.** *I am jealous over you*, etc.— The apostle evidently alludes either to the שושבִינים shoshabinim or paronyms among the Hebrews, whose office is largely explained in the notes on John 3:29, and the observations at the end of that chapter {John 3:36}; or to the harmosyni, a sort of magistrates among the Lacedemonians who had the care of virgins, and

whose business it was to see them well educated, kept pure, and properly prepared for married life.

***That I may present you as a chaste virgin***— The allusion is still kept up; and there seems to be a reference to Leviticus 21:14, that the high priest must not marry any one that was not a pure virgin. Here, then, Christ is the high priest, the spouse or husband; the Corinthian Church the pure virgin to be espoused; the apostle and his helpers the shoshabinim, or harmosyni, who had educated and prepared this virgin for her husband, and espoused her to him. See the observations already referred to at the end of the third chapter of John. {John 3:36}

**Verse 3. *As the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty***— This is a strong reflection on the false apostle and his teaching: he was subtle, **πανουργος** and by his subtlety (**πανουργια**, from **παν**, all, and **εργον**, work; his versatility of character and conduct, his capability of doing all work, and accommodating himself to the caprices, prejudices, and evil propensities of those to whom he ministered) he was enabled to corrupt the minds of the people from the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ; or, to follow the metaphor, he had seduced the pure, chaste, well educated virgin, from her duty, affection, and allegiance to her one only true husband, the high priest, Jesus Christ. And here he seems to intimate that the serpent had seduced the mind of Eve from her affections and allegiance to Adam, her true husband; and certainly from God, her creator and governor. See at the end of the chapter. {2 Corinthians 11:33}

**Verse 4. *For if he that cometh***— The false apostle, who came after St. Paul had left Corinth.

***Preacheth another Jesus***— Who can save more fully and more powerfully than that Jesus whom I have preached.

***Or if ye receive another spirit***— And if in consequence of believing in this new saviour ye receive another spirit, the gifts, graces, and consolations of which are greater than those which ye have received from the Holy Ghost, which has been given to you on your believing on the Christ whom we preached.

***Or another Gospel***— Containing more privileges, spiritual advantages, and stronger excitements to holiness, than that which we have preached and

which ye have accepted, ye might well bear with him. This would be a sufficient reason why you should not only bear with him, but prefer him to me.

Others think that the last clause should be rendered, Ye might well bear with ME-notwithstanding he brought you another Jesus, spirit, and gospel, ye might bear with me, who have already ministered so long to and done so much for you. But the former sense seems best.

**Verse 5. *I was not-behind the very chiefest apostles.***— That is: The most eminent of the apostles have not preached Christ, ministered the spirit, explained and enforced the doctrines of the Gospel in a more powerful and effectual manner than I have done.

**Verse 6. *But though I be rude in speech***— *ιδιωτης τω λογω* Though I speak like a common unlettered man, in plain unadorned phrase, studying none of the graces of eloquence; yet I am not unskilled in the most profound knowledge of God, of spiritual and eternal things, of the nature of the human soul, and the sound truths of the Gospel system: ye yourselves are witnesses of this, as in all these things I have been thoroughly manifested among you.

Inspired men received all their doctrines immediately from God, and often the very words in which those doctrines should be delivered to the world; but in general the Holy Spirit appears to have left them to their own language, preventing them from using any expression that might be equivocal, or convey a contrary sense to that which God intended.

That St. Paul wrote a strong, nervous, and sufficiently pure language, his own writings sufficiently testify; but the graces of the Greek tongue he appears not to have studied, or at least he did not think it proper to use them; for perhaps there is no tongue in the world that is so apt to seduce the understanding by its sounds and harmony, as the Greek. It is not an unusual thing for Greek scholars to the present day to be in raptures with the harmony of a Greek verse, the sense of which is but little regarded, and perhaps is little worth! I should suppose that God would prevent the inspired writers from either speaking or writing thus, that sound might not carry the hearer away from sense; and that the persuasive force of truth might alone prevail, and the excellence of the power appear to be of God

and not of man. Taking up the subject in this point of view, I see no reason to have recourse to the supposition, or fable rather, that the apostle had an impediment in his speech, and that he alludes to this infirmity in the above passage.

**Verse 7. *Have I committed an offense in abasing myself***— Have I transgressed in labouring with my hands that I might not be chargeable to you? and getting my deficiencies supplied by contributions from other Churches, while I was employed in labouring for your salvation? Does your false apostle insinuate that I have disgraced the apostolic office by thus descending to servile labor for my support? Well; I have done this that you might be exalted—that you might receive the pure doctrines of the Gospel, and be exalted to the highest pitch of intellectual light and blessedness. And will you complain that I preached the Gospel gratis to you? Surely not. The whole passage is truly ironical.

**Verse 8. *I robbed other Churches***— This part of the sentence is explained by the latter, taking wages to do you service. The word **οψωνιον** signifies the pay of money and provisions given daily to a Roman soldier. As if he had said: I received food and raiment, the bare necessaries of life, from other Churches while labouring for your salvation. Will you esteem this a crime?

**Verse 9. *And when I was present with you***— The particle **και** which we translate and, should be rendered for in this place: For when I was with you, and was in want, I was chargeable to no man. I preferred to be, for a time, even without the necessaries of life, rather than be a burden to you. To whom was this a reproach, to me or to you?

***The brethren which came from Macedonia***— He probably refers to the supplies which he received from the Church at Philippi, which was in Macedonia; of which he says, that in the beginning of the Gospel no Church communicated with me, as concerning giving and receiving, but you only; for even at Thessalonica ye sent once and again to my necessity, Philippians 4:15, 16. See the Introduction, sec. vi.

**Verse 10. *As the truth of Christ is in me***— **εστιν αληθεια χριστου εν εμοι**. The truth of Christ is in me. That is: I speak as becomes a Christian

man, and as influenced by the Gospel of Christ. It is a solemn form of asseveration, if not to be considered in the sense of an oath.

***In the regions of Achaia.***— The whole of the Peloponnesus, or Morea, in which the city of Corinth stood. From this it appears that he had received no help from any of the other Churches in the whole of that district.

**Verse 11. *Wherefore***— Why have I acted thus? and why do I propose to continue to act thus? is it because I love you not, and will not permit you to contribute to my support? God knoweth the contrary; I do most affectionately love you.

**Verse 12. *But what I do***, etc.— I act thus that I may cut off occasion of glorying, boasting, or calumniating from them—the false prophets and his partisans, who seek occasion—who would be glad that I should become chargeable to you, that it might in some sort vindicate them who exact much from you; for they bring you into bondage, and devour you, 2 Corinthians 11:20.

Nothing could mortify these persons more than to find that the apostle did take nothing, and was resolved to take nothing; while they were fleecing the people. It is certain that the passage is not to be understood as though the false apostles took nothing from the people, to whatever disinterestedness they might pretend, for the apostle is positive on the contrary; and he was determined to act so that his example should not authorize these deceivers, who had nothing but their self-interest in view, to exact contribution from the people; so that if they continued to boast, they must be bound even as the apostle, taking nothing for their labors; which could never comport with their views of gain and secular profit.

**Verse 13. *For such are false apostles***— Persons who pretend to be apostles, but have no mission from Christ.

***Deceitful workers***— They do preach and labor, but they have nothing but their own emolument in view.

***Transforming themselves***— Assuming as far as they possibly can, consistently with their sinister views, the habit, manner, and doctrine of the apostles of Christ.

**Verse 14. *And no marvel***— και ου θαυμαστον· And no wonder; it need not surprise you what the disciples do, when you consider the character of the master.

***Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.***— As in 2 Corinthians 11:3 the apostle had the history of the temptation and fall of man particularly in view, it is very likely that here he refers to the same thing. In what ever form Satan appeared to our first mother, his pretensions and professions gave him the appearance of a good angel; and by pretending that Eve should get a great increase of light, that is, wisdom and understanding, he deceived her, and led her to transgress. It is generally said that Satan has three forms under which he tempts men: 1. The subtle serpent. 2. The roaring lion. 3. The angel of light. He often, as the angel of light, persuades men to do things under the name of religion, which are subversive of it. Hence all the persecutions, faggots, and fires of a certain Church, under pretense of keeping heresy out of the Church; and hence all the horrors and infernalities of the inquisition. In the form of heathen persecution, like a lion he has ravaged the heritage of the Lord. And by means of our senses and passions, as the subtle serpent, he is frequently deceiving us, so that often the workings of corrupt nature are mistaken for the operations of the Spirit of God.

**Verse 15. *Whose end shall be according to their works.***— A bad way leads to a bad end. The way of sin is the way to hell.

**Verse 16. *Let no man think me a fool***— See the note on 2 Corinthians 11:1. As the apostle was now going to enter into a particular detail of his qualifications, natural, acquired, and spiritual; and particularly of his labors and sufferings; he thinks it necessary to introduce the discourse once more as he did 2 Corinthians 11:1.

**Verse 17. *I speak it not after the Lord***— Were it not for the necessity under which I am laid to vindicate my apostleship, my present glorying would be inconsistent with my Christian profession of humility, and knowing no one after the flesh.

**Verse 18. *Seeing that many glory after the flesh***— Boast of external and secular things.



**Verse 19. *Ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.***— A very fine irony. Ye are so profoundly wise as to be able to discern that I am a fool. Well, it would be dishonorable to you as wise men to fall out with a fool; you will therefore gladly bear with his impertinence and foolishness because of your own profound wisdom.

**Verse 20. *For ye suffer***— As you are so meek and gentle as to submit to be brought into bondage, to have your property devoured, your goods taken away, yourselves laid in the dust, so that others may exalt themselves over you, yea, and will bear from those the most degrading indignity; then of course, you will bear with one who has never insulted, defrauded, devoured, taken of you, exalted himself against you, or offered you any kind of indignity; and who only wishes you to bear his confident boasting, concerning matters which he can substantiate.

The expressions in this verse are some evidence that the false apostle was a Judaizing teacher. You suffer, says the apostle, if a man, *καταδουλοι*, bring you into bondage, probably meaning to the Jewish rites and ceremonies, Galatians 4:9; 5:1. If he devour you; as the Pharisees did the patrimony of the widows, and for a pretense made long prayers; if a man take of you, exact different contributions, pretendedly for the temple at Jerusalem, etc. If he exalt himself, pretending to be of the seed of Abraham, infinitely higher in honor and dignity than all the families of the Gentiles; if he smite you on the face-treat you with indignity, as the Jews did the Gentiles, considering them only as dogs, and not fit to be ranked with any of the descendants of Jacob.

**Verse 21. *I speak as concerning reproach***— Dr. Whitby thus paraphrases this verse: “That which I said of smiting you upon the face, I speak as concerning the reproach they cast upon you as profane and uncircumcised, whereas they all profess to be a holy nation; as though we had been weak-inferior to them in these things, not able to ascribe to ourselves those advantages as well as they. Howbeit, whereinsoever any is bold, and can justly value himself on these advantages, I am bold also, and can claim the same distinctions, though I speak foolishly in setting any value on those things; but it is necessary that I should show that such men have not even one natural good that they can boast of beyond me.”

**Verse 22. *Are they Hebrews***— Speaking the sacred language, and reading in the congregation from the Hebrew Scriptures? the same is my own language.

***Are they Israelites***— Regularly descended from Jacob, and not from Esau? I am also one.

***Are they the seed of Abraham***— Circumcised, and in the bond of the covenant? So am I. I am no proselyte, but I am a Hebrew of the Hebrews both by father and mother; and can trace my genealogy, through the tribe of Benjamin, up to the father of the faithful.

**Verse 23. *Are they ministers of Christ***— So we find that these were professors of Christianity; and that they were genuine Jews, and such as endeavored to incorporate both systems, and, no doubt, to oblige those who had believed to be circumcised; and this appears to have been the bondage into which they had brought many of the believing Corinthians.

***I am more***— More of a minister of Christ than they are, and have given fuller proofs of it. I have suffered persecution for the cross of Christ, and of the Jews too; and had I preached up the necessity of circumcision, I should have been as free from opposition as these are.

***In labors more abundant***— Far from sitting down to take my ease in a Church already gathered into Christ; I travel incessantly, preach every where, and at all risks, in order to get the heathen brought from the empire of darkness into the kingdom of God's beloved Son.

***In stripes above measure***— Being beaten by the heathen, who had no particular rule according to which they scourged criminals; and we find, from Acts 16:22, 23, that they beat Paul unmercifully with many stripes. See the note on the above passage.

***In prisons more frequent***— See Acts 21:11, and the whole of the apostle's history; and his long imprisonment of at least two years at Rome, Acts 28:16, 30. It does not appear that there is any one instance of a false apostle having been imprisoned for the testimony of Christ; this was a badge of the true apostles.

***In deaths oft.***— That is, in the most imminent dangers. See 1 Corinthians 15:31; 2 Corinthians 4:11. And see the apostle's history in the Acts.

**Verse 24.** *Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.*— That is, he was five times scourged by the Jews, whose law (Deuteronomy 25:3) allowed forty stripes; but they, pretending to be lenient, and to act within the letter of the law, inflicted but thirty-nine.

To except one stripe from the forty was a very ancient canon among the Jews, as we learn from Josephus, Antiq. lib. iv. ch. viii. sec. 21, who mentions the same thing: *πληγας μιας λειπουσης τεσσαπακοντα*: forty stripes, excepting one.

The Mishna gives this as a rule, MISH., Maccoth, fol. 22, 10: “How often shall he, the culprit, be smitten? Ans. *ארבעים תמר אתר* forty stripes, wanting one; i.e. with the number which is highest to forty.” Frequently a man was scourged according to his ability to bear the punishment; and it is a canon in the Mishna, “That he who cannot bear forty stripes should receive only eighteen, and yet be considered as having suffered the whole punishment.”

They also thought it right to stop under forty, lest the person who counted should make a mistake, and the criminal get more than forty stripes, which would be injustice, as the law required only forty.

The manner in which this punishment was inflicted is described in the Mishna, fol. 22, 2: “The two hands of the criminal are bound to a post, and then the servant of the synagogue either pulls or tears off his clothes till he leaves his breast and shoulders bare. A stone or block is placed behind him on which the servant stands; he holds in his hands a scourge made of leather, divided into four tails. He who scourges lays one third on the criminal’s breast, another third on his right shoulder, and another on his left. The man who receives the punishment is neither sitting nor standing, but all the while stooping; and the man smites with all his strength, with one hand.” The severity of this punishment depends on the nature of the scourge, and the strength of the executioner.

It is also observed that the Jews did not repeat scourgings except for enormous offenses. But they had scourged the apostle five times; for with those murderers no quarter would be given to the disciples, as none was given to the Master. See Schoettgen.

**Verse 25. *Thrice was I beaten with rods***— This was under the Roman government, as their lictors beat criminals in this way. We hear of the apostle's being treated thus once, namely at Philippi, Acts 16:22. See sec. 9 of the introduction.

***Once was I stoned***

***Perils in the sea***— The different voyages he took in narrow seas, such as the Mediterranean, about dangerous coasts, and without compass.

***False brethren***— Persons who joined themselves to the Church, pretending faith in Christ, but intending to act as spies, hoping to get some matter of accusation against him. He no doubt suffered much also from apostates.

**Verse 27. *In weariness and painfulness***— Tribulations of this kind were his constant companions. Lord Lyttleton and others have made useful reflections on this verse: “How hard was it for a man of a genteel and liberal education, as St. Paul was, to bear such rigours, and to wander about like a vagabond, hungry and almost naked, yet coming into the presence of persons of high life, and speaking in large and various assemblies on matters of the utmost importance!” Had not St. Paul been deeply convinced of the truth and absolute certainty of the Christian religion, he could not have continued to expose himself to such hardships.

**Verse 28. *Beside those things that are without***— Independently of all these outward things, I have innumerable troubles and mental oppressions.

***Which cometh upon me***— ἡ ἐπισυμβασις. This continual press of business; this insurrection of cases to be heard, solved, and determined, relative to the doctrine, discipline, state, persecution, and supply of all the Churches.

All his perils were little in comparison of what he felt relative to the peace, government, and establishment of all the Churches among the Gentiles; for as he was the apostle of the Gentiles, the government of all the Churches among these fell in some sort on him, whether they were of his own planting or of the planting of others. See Colossians 2:1. None but a conscientious minister, who has at heart the salvation of souls, can enter into the apostle’s feelings in this place.

**Verse 29. *Who is weak***— What Church is there under persecution, with which I do not immediately sympathize? or who, from his weakness in the faith, and scrupulousness of conscience, is likely to be stumbled, or turned out of the way, to whom I do not condescend, and whose burden I do not bear?

*Who is offended*— Or likely to be turned out of the way, and I burn not with zeal to restore and confirm him? This seems to be the sense of these different questions.

**Verse 30. *I will glory-which concern mine infirmities.***— I will not boast of my natural or acquired powers; neither in what God has done by me; but rather in what I have suffered for him.

Many persons have understood by infirmities what they call the indwelling sin of the apostle, and say that “he gloried in this, because the grace of Christ was the more magnified in his being preserved from ruin, notwithstanding this indwelling adversary.” And to support this most unholy interpretation, they quote those other words of the apostle, 2 Corinthians 12:9: Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, my indwelling corruptions, that the power of Christ, in chaining the fierce lion, may rest upon me. But it would be difficult to produce a single passage in the whole New Testament where the word **ασθενεια**, which we translate infirmity, has the sense of sin or moral corruption. The verb **ασθενω** signifies to be weak, infirm, sick, poor, despicable through poverty, etc. And in a few places it is applied to weakness in the faith, to young converts, who are poor in religious knowledge, not yet fully instructed in the nature of the Gospel; Romans 4:19; 14:1, 2. And it is applied to the works of the law, to point out their inability to justify a sinner, Romans 8:3. But to inward sin, and inward corruption it is never applied. I am afraid that what these persons call their infirmities may rather be called their strengths; the prevailing and frequently ruling power of pride, anger, ill-will, etc.; for how few think evil tempers to be sins! The gentle term infirmity softens down the iniquity; and as St. Paul, so great and so holy a man, say they, had his infirmities, how can they expect to be without theirs? These should know that they are in a dangerous error; that St. Paul means nothing of the kind; for he speaks of his sufferings, and of these alone. One word more: would not the grace and power of Christ appear more conspicuous in slaying the lion than in keeping him chained? in destroying sin, root and branch; and filling the soul with his own holiness, with love to God and man, with the mind—all the holy heavenly tempers, that were in himself; than in leaving these impure and unholy tempers, ever to live and often to reign in the

heart? The doctrine is discreditable to the Gospel, and wholly antichristian.

**Verse 31. *The God and Father of our Lord***— Here is a very solemn asseveration; an appeal to the ever blessed God for the truth of what he asserts. It is something similar to his asseveration or oath in ver. 10 of this chapter; {2 Corinthians 11:10} see also Romans 9:5, and Galatians 1:20. And from these and several other places we learn that the apostle thought it right thus to confirm his assertions on these particular occasions. But here is nothing to countenance profane swearing, or taking the name of God in vain, as many do in exclamations, when surprised, or on hearing something unexpected, etc.; and as others do who, conscious of their own falsity, endeavor to gain credit by appeals to God for the truth of what they say. St. Paul's appeal to God is in the same spirit as his most earnest prayer. This solemn appeal the apostle makes in reference to what he mentions in the following verses. This was a fact not yet generally known.

**Verse 32. *In Damascus the governor under Aretas***— For a description of Damascus see the note on Acts 9:2. And for the transaction to which the apostle refers see Acts 9:23. As to King Aretas, there were three of this name. The first is mentioned 2 Maccab. v. 8. The second by Josephus, Antiq. l. xiii. c. 15, sec. 2; and l. xvi. c. 1, sec. 4. The third, who is the person supposed to be referred to here, was the father-in-law of Herod Antipas, of whom see the notes, Acts 9:23, etc.

But it is a question of some importance, How could Damascus, a city of Syria, be under the government of an Arabian king? It may be accounted for thus: Herod Antipas, who married the daughter of Aretas, divorced her, in order to marry Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. Aretas, on this indignity offered to his family, made war upon Herod. Herod applied to Tiberius for help, and the emperor sent Vitellius to reduce Aretas, and to bring him alive or dead to Rome. By some means or other Vitellius delayed his operations, and in the meantime Tiberius died; and thus Aretas was snatched from ruin, Joseph., Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 5. What Aretas did in the interim is not known; but it is conjectured that he availed himself of the then favorable state of things, made an irruption into Syria, and seized on Damascus. See Rosenmuller; and see the introduction to this epistle, sec. ii.

**The governor**— εθναρχης: Who this ethnarch was, we cannot tell. The word ethnarch signifies the governor of a province, under a king or emperor.

**Desirous to apprehend me**— The enemies of the apostle might have represented him to the governor as a dangerous spy, employed by the Romans.

**Verse 33. Through a window in a basket**— Probably the house was situated on the wall of the city. See the notes on this history, Acts 9:23-25.

IN ver. 2 of this chapter {2 Corinthians 11:2} the apostle most evidently alludes to the history of the temptation, and fall of Adam and Eve, as related in Genesis 3:1, etc.; and which fall is there attributed to the agency of a being called נחש nachash, here, and in other places, translated οφεις, serpent. In my notes on Genesis I have given many, and, as I judge, solid reasons, why the word cannot be understood literally of a serpent of any kind; and that most probably a creature of the simia or ape genus was employed by the devil on this occasion. The arguments on this subject appeared to me to be corroborated by innumerable probabilities; but I left the conjecture afloat, (for I did not give it a more decisive name,) and placed it in the hands of my readers to adopt, reject, or amend, as their judgments might direct them. To several this sentiment appeared a monstrous heresy! and speedily the old serpent had a host of defenders. The very modest opinion, or conjecture, was controverted by some who were both gentlemen and scholars, and by several who were neither; by some who could not affect candour because they had not even the appearance of it, but would affect learning because they wished to be reputed wise. What reason and argument failed to produce they would supply with ridicule; and as monkey was a convenient term for this purpose, they attributed it to him who had never used it. What is the result? They no doubt believe that they have established their system; and their arguments are to them conclusive. They have my full consent; but I think it right to state that I have neither seen nor heard of any thing that has the least tendency to weaken my conjecture, or produce the slightest wavering in my opinion. Indeed their arguments, and mode of managing them, have produced a very different effect on my mind to what they



designed. I am now more firmly persuaded of the probability of my hypothesis than ever. I shall, however, leave the subject as it is: I never proposed it as an article of faith; I press it on no man. I could fortify it with many additional arguments if I judged it proper; for its probability appears to me as strong as the utter improbability of the common opinion, to defend which its abettors have descended to insupportable conjectures, of which infidels have availed themselves, to the discredit of the sacred writings. To those who choose to be wise and witty, and wish to provoke a controversy, this is my answer: I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease, while I leave it and come DOWN to YOU? Nehemiah 6:3.

## CHAPTER 12.

*St. Paul mentions some wonderful revelations which he had received from the Lord, 1-5. He speaks of his suffering in connection with these extraordinary revelations, that his character might be duly estimated, 6. That he might not be too much exalted, a messenger of Satan is sent to buffet him; his prayer for deliverance, and the Divine answer, 7-9. He exults in sufferings and reproaches, and vindicates his apostleship, 10-13. Promises to come and visit them, 14, 15. Answers some objections, 16-18. And expresses his apprehensions that when he visits them he shall find many evils and disorders among them, 19-21.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 12.

**Verse 1. *It is not expedient for me***— There are several various readings on this verse which are too minute to be noticed here; they seem in effect to represent the verse thus: “If it be expedient to glory, (which does not become me,) I will proceed to visions,” etc. The plain meaning of the apostle, in this and the preceding chapter, in reference to glorying is, that though to boast in any attainments, or in what God did by him, was in all possible cases to be avoided, as being contrary to the humility and simplicity of the Gospel; yet the circumstances in which he was found, in reference to the Corinthian Church, and his detractors there, rendered it absolutely necessary; not for his personal vindication, but for the honor of the Gospel, the credit of which was certainly at stake.

***I will come to visions***— **οπτασιας**. Symbolical representations of spiritual and celestial things, in which matters of the deepest importance are exhibited to the eye of the mind by a variety of emblems, the nature and properties of which serve to illustrate those spiritual things.

***Revelations***— **αποκαλυψεις**. A manifestation of things not before known, and such as God alone can make known, because they are a part of his own inscrutable counsels.

**Verse 2. *I knew a man in Christ***— I knew a Christian, or a Christian man; for to such alone God now revealed himself, for vision and prophecy had been shut up from the Jews.

***Fourteen years ago***— On what occasion or in what place this transaction took place we cannot tell; there are many conjectures among learned men concerning it, but of what utility can they be when every thing is so palpably uncertain? Allowing this epistle to have been written some time in the year 57, fourteen years counted backward will lead this transaction to the year 42 or 43, which was about the time that Barnabas brought Paul from Tarsus to Antioch, Acts 11:25, 26, and when he and Paul were sent by the Church of Antioch with alms to the poor Christians at Jerusalem. It is very possible that, on this journey, or while in Jerusalem, he had this vision, which was intended to be the means of establishing him in the faith, and supporting him in the many trials and difficulties through which he was to pass. This vision the apostle had kept secret for fourteen years.

***Whether in the body I cannot tell***— That the apostle was in an ecstasy or trance, something like that of Peter, Acts 10:9, etc., there is reason to believe; but we know that being carried literally into heaven was possible to the Almighty. But as he could not decide himself, it would be ridiculous

3. The CLOUDS, or AETHER, **שָׁקִים** “Where the mill-stones are which grind the manna for the righteous.” Psalm 78:23, etc.: Though he had commended the CLOUDS from above, and opened the doors of heaven, and had rained down manna, etc.

4. The HABITATION, **זְבוּל** “Where Jerusalem, and the temple, and the altar, were constructed and where Michael the great prince stands and offers sacrifices.” 1 Kings 8:13: I have surely built thee a HOUSE TO DWELL IN, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever. “But where is heaven so called?” Answer: In Isaiah 63:15: Look down from HEAVEN, and behold from the HABITATION, **מִזְבוּל**, of thy holiness.

5. The DWELLING-PLACE, **מַעוּ** “Where the troops of angels sing throughout the night, but are silent in the day time, because of the glory of the Israelites.” Psalm 42:8: The Lord will command his loving-kindness in the day time, and in the night his song shall be with me. “But how is it proved that this means heaven? “Answer: From Deuteronomy 26:15. Look down from thy holy habitation, **מִמַּעוּ**, the DWELLING-PLACE of thy holiness; and from heaven, **הַשָּׁמַיִם**, and bless thy people Israel.

6. The FIXED RESIDENCE, **מְבוּ** “Where are the treasures of snow and hail, the repository of noxious dews, of drops, and whirlwinds; the grotto of exhalations,” etc. “But where are the heavens thus denominated?” Answer: In 1 Kings 8:39, 49, etc.: Then hear thou in HEAVEN thy DWELLING-PLACE, **שְׁבַת מְבוּ**, thy FIXED RESIDENCE.

7. The ARABOTH, **עֲרֵבוֹת** Where are justice, judgment, mercy, the treasures of life; peace and blessedness; the souls of the righteous, the souls and spirits which are reserved for the bodies yet to be formed, and the dew by which God is to vivify the dead.” Psalm 89:14, Isaiah 59:17; Psalm 36:9, Judges 6:24; Psalm 24:4; 1 Samuel 25:29; Isaiah 57:20: All of which are termed Araboth, Psalm 68:4. Extol him who rideth on the heavens, **בְּעֲרֵבוֹת** ba ARABOTH, by his name Jah.

All this is sufficiently unphilosophical, and in several cases ridiculous.

In the sacred writings three heavens only are mentioned. The first is the atmosphere, what appears to be intended by **רְקִיעַ** rekia, the firmament or

expansion, Genesis 1:6. The second, the starry heaven; where are the sun, moon, planets, and stars; but these two are often expressed under the one term שמים shamayim, the two heavens, or expansions, and in Genesis 1:17, they appear to be both expressed by רקיע השמים rekia hashshamayim, the firmament of heaven. And, thirdly, the place of the blessed, or the throne of the Divine glory, probably expressed by the words שמי השמים shemei hashshamayim, the heavens of heavens. But on these subjects the Scripture affords us but little light; and on this distinction the reader is not desired to rely.

Much more may be seen in Schoettgen, who has exhausted the subject; and who has shown that ascending to heaven, or being caught up to heaven, is a form of speech among the Jewish writers to express the highest degrees of inspiration. They often say of Moses that he ascended on high, ascended on the firmament, ascended to heaven; where it is evident they mean only by it that he was favored with the nearest intimacy with God, and the highest revelations relative to his will, etc. If we may understand St. Paul thus, it will remove much of the difficulty from this place; and perhaps the unspeakable words, 2 Corinthians 12:4, are thus to be understood. He had the most sublime communications from God, such as would be improper to mention, though it is very likely that we have the substance of these in his epistles. Indeed, the two epistles before us seem, in many places, to be the effect of most extraordinary revelations.

**Verse 4. *Caught up into paradise***— The Jewish writers have no less than four paradises, as they have seven heavens; but it is needless to wade through their fables. On the word paradise see the note on Genesis 2:8. The Mohammedans call it (Arabic) jennet alferdoos, the garden of paradise, and say that God created it out of light, and that it is the habitation of the prophets and wise men.

Among Christian writers it generally means the place of the blessed, or the state of separate spirits. Whether the third heaven and paradise be the same place we cannot absolutely say; they probably are not; and it is likely that St. Paul, at the time referred to, had at least two of these raptures.

***Which it is not lawful for a man to utter.***— The Jews thought that the Divine name, the Tetragrammaton יהוה Yehovah, should not be uttered, and that it is absolutely unlawful to pronounce it; indeed they say that the true pronunciation is utterly lost, and cannot be recovered without an express revelation. Not one of them, to the present day, ever attempts to utter it; and, when they meet with it in their reading, always supply its place with אדני Adonai, Lord. It is probable that the apostle refers to some communication concerning the Divine nature and the Divine economy, of which he was only to make a general use in his preaching and writing. No doubt that what he learned at this time formed the basis of all his doctrines.

Cicero terms God illud inexprimibile, that inexpressible Being. And Hermes calls him ανεκκλαλητος. αρρητος, σιωπη φωνουμενος: The ineffable, the unspeakable, and that which is to be pronounced in silence. We cannot have views too exalted of the majesty of God; and the less frequently we pronounce his name, the more reverence shall we feel for his nature. It is said of Mr. Boyle that he never pronounced the name of God without either taking off his hat or making a bow. Leaving out profane swearers, blasphemers, and such like open-faced servants of Satan, it is distressing to hear many well intentioned people making unscripturally free with this sacred name.

**Verse 5. *Of such a one will I glory***— Through modesty he does not mention himself, though the account can be understood of no other person; for, did he mean any other, the whole account would be completely irrelevant.

**Verse 6. *I shall not be a fool***— Who that had got such honor from God would have been fourteen years silent on the subject?

***I will say the truth***— I speak nothing but truth; and the apostle seems to have intended to proceed with something else of the same kind, but, finding some reason probably occurring suddenly, says, I forbear-I will say no more on this subject.

***Lest any man should think of me above***— The apostle spoke of these revelations for two purposes: first, lest his enemies might suppose they had cause to think meanly of him; and, secondly, having said thus much,

he forbears to speak any farther of them, lest his friends should think too highly of him. It is a rare gift to discern when to speak, and when to be silent; and to know when enough is said on a subject, neither too little nor too much.

**Verse 7. *And lest I should be exalted***— There were three evils to be guarded against: 1. The contempt of his gifts and call by his enemies. 2. The overweening fondness of his friends. And, Self-exultation.

***A thorn in the flesh***— The word **σκολοψ** signifies a stake, and **ανασκολοπιζεσθαι**, to be tied to a stake by way of punishment; and it is used, says Schoettgen, to signify the most oppressive afflictions. Whatever it was, it was **τη σαρκι**, in the flesh, i.e. of an outward kind. It was neither sin nor sinfulness, for this could not be given him to prevent his being exalted above measure; for sin never had and never can have this tendency. What this thorn in the flesh might be has given birth to a multitude of conjectures: Tertullian thought it dolor auriculæ, the ear ache; Chrysostom, **κεφαλαλγια**, the head ache; Cyprian, *carnis et corporis multa ac gravia tormenta*, many and grievous bodily torments. I believe the apostle to refer simply to the distresses he had endured through the opposition he met with at Corinth; which were as painful and grievous to him as a thorn in his flesh, or his being bound to a stake; for, if he could have devoted himself to destruction, Romans 9:3, for his rebellious and unbelieving countrymen, what must he have suffered on account of an eminent Church being perverted and torn to pieces by a false teacher! God permitted this to keep the apostle humble, and at last completely delivered the Church out of the hands and influence of this deceiver; none, not even the incestuous person, having been turned finally out of the way by the false doctrines there preached.

***The messenger of Satan***— Another mode of expressing what he calls the thorn in the flesh; and he seems most plainly to refer to the false apostle at Corinth. The apostle himself was, as he styles himself to this Church, **αποστολος ιησου χριστου**, 2 Corinthians 1:1, the apostle of Jesus Christ. The person in question is styled here **αγγελος σαταν**, the apostle or angel of Satan. It is almost impossible to mistake the apostle's meaning and reference. JESUS CHRIST sent Paul to proclaim his truth, and found a Church at Corinth. SATAN, the adversary of God's truth, sent a man to

preach lies at the same place, and turn the Church of God into his own synagogue; and by his teaching lies and calumnies the apostle was severely buffeted. We need seek no other sense for these expressions. Many, however, think that the apostle had really some bodily infirmity that rendered him contemptible, and was the means of obstructing the success of his ministry; and that the false apostle availed himself of this to set St. Paul at nought, and to hold him out to ridicule. I have shown this, elsewhere, to be very unlikely.

The best arguments in favor of this opinion may be found in Whitby; but I forbear to transcribe them because I think the meaning given above is more correct. No infirmity of body nor corporeal sufferings can affect and distress a minister of the Gospel, equally to the perversion or scattering of a flock, which were the fruit of innumerable labors, watchings, fastings, prayers, and tears.

**Verse 8. *I besought the Lord***— That is, Christ, as the next verse absolutely proves, and the Socinians themselves confess. And if Christ be an object of prayer in such a case as this, or indeed in any case, it is a sure proof of his divinity; for only an omniscient Being can be made an object of prayer.

***Thrice***— Several suppose this to be a certain number for an uncertain; as if he had said, I often besought Christ to deliver me from this tormentor: or, which is perhaps more likely, the apostle may refer to three solemn, fixed, and fervent applications made to Christ at different times; at the last of which he received the answer which he immediately subjoins. It is worthy of remark, that our Lord in his agony acted in the same way: at three different times he applied to God that the cup might depart from him; and in each application he spoke the same words, Matthew 26:39-44. There is, therefore, a manifest allusion to our Lord's conduct in these words of the apostle.

**Verse 9. *My grace is sufficient for thee***— Thou shalt not be permitted to sink under these afflictions. Thy enemies shall not be able to prevail against thee.

***My strength is made perfect in weakness.***— The more, and the more violently, thou art afflicted and tried, being upheld by my power, and



prospered in all thy labors, the more eminently will my power be seen and acknowledged. For the weaker the instrument I use, the more the power of my grace shall be manifested. See at the end of this chapter. {2 Corinthians 12:21 }

***Will I rather glory in my infirmities***— Therefore, his infirmities do not mean his corruptions, or sins, or sinfulness of any kind; for it would be blasphemous for any man to say, I will rather glory that God leaves my corruptions in me, than that he should take them away.

***That the power of Christ may rest upon me.***— *επισκηνωση επ' εμε*. That it may overshadow me as a tent, or tabernacle; affording me shelter, protection, safety, and rest. This expression is like that, John 1:14: And the word was made flesh, *και εσκηνωσεν εν ημιν* and made his tabernacle among us—full of grace and truth. The same eternal WORD promised to make his tabernacle with the apostle, and gives him a proof that he was still the same—full of grace and truth, by assuring him that his grace should be sufficient for him. Paul, knowing that the promise of grace could not fail, because of the Divine truth, says: Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my afflictions, that such a power of Christ may overshadow and defend me.

The words are also similar to those of the Prophet Isaiah, Isaiah 4:5: On all the glory shall be a defense. God gives the glory, and God gives the defense of that glory. The apostle had much glory or honor; both Satan and his apostles were very envious; in himself the apostle, as well as all human beings, was weak, and therefore needed the power of God to defend such glory. Grace alone can preserve grace. When we get a particular blessing we need another to preserve it; and without this we shall soon be shorn of our strength, and become as other men. Hence the necessity of continual watchfulness and prayer, and depending on the all-sufficient grace of Christ. See on 2 Corinthians 11:30.

**Verse 10. *Therefore I take pleasure***— I not only endure them patiently, but am pleased when they occur; for I do it for Christ's sake—on his account; for on his account I suffer. For when I am weak—most oppressed with trials and afflictions, then am I strong; God supporting my mind with his most powerful influences, causing me to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

**Verse 11. *I am become a fool in glorying***— It is not the part of a wise or gracious man to boast; but ye have compelled me—I have been obliged to do it, in order to vindicate the cause of God.

***I ought to have been commended of you***— You should have vindicated both myself and my ministry against the detractors that are among you.

***The very chiefest apostles***— See 2 Corinthians 11:1.

***Though I be nothing***.— Though I have been thus set at nought by your false apostle; and though, in consequence of what he has said, some of you have been ready to consider me as nothing—what we call good for nothing. This must be the meaning of the apostle, as the following verses prove.

A kind of technical meaning has been imposed on these words, of which many good people seem very fond. I am nothing—I am all sin, defilement, and unworthiness in myself; but Jesus Christ is all in all. This latter clause is an eternal truth; the former may be very true also; the person who uses it may be all sin, defilement, etc., but let him not say that the apostle of the Gentiles was so too, because this is not true; it is false, and it is injurious to the character of the apostle and to the grace of Christ; besides, it is not the meaning of the text, and the use commonly made of it is abominable, if not wicked.

**Verse 12. *The signs of an apostle were wrought among you***— Though I have been reputed as nothing, I have given the fullest proof of my Divine mission by various signs, wonders, and miracles, and by that patience which I have manifested towards you: though I had power from God to inflict punishment on the transgressors, I have in every case forborne to do it. Is the man nothing who wrought such miracles among you?

**Verse 13. *For what is it wherein you were inferior***— This is a fine, forcible, yet delicate stroke. It was your duty and your interest to have supported your apostle; other Churches have done so: I did not require this from you; in this respect all other Churches are superior to you. I am the cause of your inferiority, by not giving you an opportunity of ministering to my necessities: forgive me the wrong I have done you. It is the privilege of the Churches of Christ to support the ministry of his Gospel among them. Those who do not contribute their part to the

support of the Gospel ministry either care nothing for it, or derive no good from it.

**Verse 14. *The third time I am ready***— That is, this is the third time that I am ready-have formed the resolution, to visit you. He had formed this resolution twice before, but was disappointed. See 1 Corinthians 16:5, and 2 Corinthians 1:15, 16. He now formed it a third time, having more probability of seeing them now than he had before. See 2 Corinthians 13:2.

***I seek not yours, but you***— I seek your salvation, I desire not your property; others have sought your property, but not your salvation. See 2 Corinthians 11:20.

***For the children ought not to lay up for the parents***— You may have many teachers, but you have but one FATHER; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel; see 1 Corinthians 4:15. Ye are my children, and I am your father. You have not contributed to my support, but I have been labouring for your life. I will act towards you as the loving father who works hard, and lays up what is necessary to enable his children to get their bread.

**Verse 15. *And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you***— I will continue to act as a loving father, who spends all he has upon his children, and expends his own strength and life in providing for them the things necessary for their preservation and comfort.

***Though the more abundantly I love you***— I will even act towards you with the most affectionate tenderness, though it happen to me, as it often does to loving fathers, that their disobedient children love them less, in proportion as their love to them is increased. Does it not frequently happen that the most disobedient child in the family is that one on which the parents' tenderness is more especially placed? See the parable of the prodigal son. It is in the order of God that it should be so, else the case of every prodigal would be utterly deplorable. The shepherd feels more for the lost sheep than for the ninety-nine that have not gone astray.

If I be asked, "Should Christian parents lay up money for their children?" I answer: It is the duty of every parent who can, to lay up what is necessary to put every child in a condition to earn its bread. If he neglect this, he undoubtedly sins against God and nature. "But should not a man

lay up, besides this, a fortune for his children, if he can honestly?" I answer: Yes, if there be no poor within his reach; no good work which he can assist; no heathen region on the earth to which he can contribute to send the Gospel of Jesus; but not otherwise. God shows, in the course of his providence, that this laying up of fortunes for children is not right; for there is scarcely ever a case where money has been saved up to make the children independent and gentlemen, in which God has not cursed the blessing. It was saved from the poor, from the ignorant, from the cause of God; and the canker of his displeasure consumed this ill-saved property.

**Verse 16. *But be it so, I did not burden you***— That is: You grant that I did not burden you, that I took nothing from you, but preached to you the Gospel freely; but you say that, BEING CRAFTY, I caught you with guile; i.e. getting from you, by means of others, what I pretended to be unwilling to receive immediately from yourselves.

Many persons suppose that the words, being crafty, I caught you with guile, are the words of the apostle and not of his slanderers; and therefore have concluded that it is lawful to use guile, deceit, etc., in order to serve a good and a religious purpose. This doctrine is abominable; and the words are most evidently those of the apostle's detractors, against which he defends his conduct in the two following verses.

**Verse 17. *Did I make a gain of you***— Did any person I ever sent to preach the Gospel to you, or help you in your Christian course, ever get any thing from you for me? Produce the proof if you can.

**Verse 18. *I desired Titus***— I never sent any to you but Titus and another brother; 2 Corinthians 8:6, 18. And did Titus make a gain of you? Did he get any thing from you, either for himself or for me? You know he did not. He was actuated by the same spirit, and he walked in the same steps.

**Verse 19. *Think ye that we excuse ourselves***— *απολογουμεθα*; That we make an apology for our conduct; or, that I have sent Titus and that brother to you because I was ashamed or afraid to come myself?

***We speak before God in Christ***— I have not done so; I speak the truth before God; he is judge whether I was actuated in this way by any sinister or unworthy motive.

**For your edifying.**— Whatever I have done in this or any other way, I have done for your edifying; not for any emolument to myself or friends.

**Verse 20. *I fear, lest, when I come***— I think the present time is used here for the past; the apostle seems most evidently to be giving them the reason why he had not come to them according to his former purposes, and why he sent Titus and his companion. He was afraid to come at that time lest he should have found them perverted from the right way, and he be obliged to make use of his apostolical rod, and punish the offenders; but, feeling towards them the heart of a tender father, he was unwilling to use the rod; and sent the first epistle to them, and the messengers above mentioned, being reluctant to go himself till he had satisfactory evidence that their divisions were ended, and that they had repented for and put away the evils that they had committed; and that he should not be obliged to bewail them who had sinned so abominably, and had not repented for their crimes. If this verse be understood in this way, all difficulty will vanish; otherwise, what is here said does seem to contradict what is said, 2 Corinthians 7:6, 16, etc.; as well as many things both in the eighth and ninth chapters.

**Debates, envyings**— From these different expressions, which are too plain to need interpretation, we see what a distracted and divided state the Church at Corinth must have been in. Brotherly love and charity seem to have been driven out of this once heavenly assembly. These debates, etc., are precisely the opposites to that love which the apostle recommends and explains by its different properties in the 13th chapter of his first epistle.

Mr. Wakefield translates the original thus: strifes, rivalries, passions, provocations, slanders, whisperings, swellings, quarrels.

**Verse 21. *Lest, when I come again***— And even after all that has been done for you, I fear that when I do come—when I pay you my second visit, my God will humble me—will permit me to be affected with deep sorrow through what I may see among you; as I have been by the buffetings of the apostle of Satan, who has perverted you. Humiliation is repeatedly used for affliction, and here **ταπεινωση** has certainly that meaning.

**Have sinned already**— **προημαρτηκων**. Who have sinned before; who were some of the first offenders, and have not yet repented.

*Of the uncleanness*, etc.— There must have been a total relaxation of discipline, else such abominations could not have been tolerated in the Christian Church. And although what is here spoken could only be the ease of a few; yet the many were ill disciplined, else these must have been cast out. On the whole, this Church seems to have been a composition of excellences and defects, of vices and virtues; and should not be quoted as a model for a Christian Church.

1. FROM St. Paul we receive two remarkable sayings of our Lord, which are of infinite value to the welfare and salvation of man; which are properly parts of the Gospel, but are not mentioned by any evangelist. The first is in Acts 20:35: I have showed you, the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, **IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE**. Every liberal heart feels this in bestowing its bounty; and every poor man, who is obliged to receive help, and whose independency of spirit is still whole in him, feels this too. To the genuine poor, it is more burdensome to receive a kindness, than it is to the generous man who gives it. The second is recorded in the ninth verse of this chapter {2 Corinthians 12:9}: He said unto me, **MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR THEE; FOR MY STRENGTH IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS**. Of these two most blessed sayings, St. Paul is the only evangelist. This last is of general application. In all states and conditions of life God's grace is sufficient for us. If in any case we miscarry, it is because we have not sought God earnestly. Let no man say that he is overcome by sin through want of grace; God's grace was sufficient for him, but he did not apply for it as did St. Paul, and therefore he did not receive it. Men often lay the issue of their own infidelity to the charge of God, they excuse their commission of sin through their scantiness of grace; whereas the whole is owing to their carelessness, and refusal to be saved in God's own way; and in this way alone will God save any man, because it is the only effectual way.

2. The apostle must have been brought into a blessed state of subjection to God, when he could say, I take pleasure in infirmities; that is, in afflictions and sufferings of different kinds. Though this language was spoken on earth, we may justly allow, with one, that he learned it in HEAVEN.

3. St. Paul preached the Gospel without being burdensome. In every case the laborer is worthy of his hire. He who labors for the cause of God

should be supported by the cause of God; but wo to that man who aggrandizes himself and grows rich by the spoils of the faithful! And to him especially who has made a fortune out of the pence of the poor! In such a man's heart the love of money must have its throne. As to his professed spirituality, it is nothing; he is a whited sepulchre, and an abomination in the sight of the Lord. If a man will love the world, (and he does love it who makes a fortune by the offerings of the poor,) the love of the Father is not in him.

## CHAPTER 13.

*The apostle again says that this is the third time he has purposed to come and see them; and threatens that he will, by the power of Christ, punish every incorrigible sinner, 1-4. Exhorts them to examine themselves, whether they be in the faith, 5, 6. Prays that they may do no evil, 7. And shows how ardently he wished their complete restoration to unity and purity, 8, 9. Tells them for what reason he writes to them, 10. Bids them farewell, 11, Gives them some directions, and concludes with his apostolical benediction, 12-14.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 13.

**Verse 1.** *This is the third time I am coming to you.*— These words are nearly the same with those 2 Corinthians 12:14; and probably refer to the purpose which he had twice before formed of seeing them. But the latter clause seems to attach a different meaning to the passage; at least so it has been understood by some learned men.

Schoettgen thus interprets the whole: the first coming of the apostle to Corinth was when he personally visited them, and there founded the Christian Church. By his second coming we are to understand his first epistle to them; and, by his being now ready to come to them the third time, we are to understand this second epistle, which he was then going to send them. These were the two witnesses, and the apostle the third, which he gave to the Corinthians concerning the truth of his own ministry, or the falsity of the ministry of the pretended apostle.

Calmet contends that the apostle had been twice before at Corinth, and that he now purposed to go a third time; and that these visits were the two or three witnesses to which the apostle appeals.

Dr. Lightfoot thinks that the two or three witnesses were Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, sent to assure them of his coming. But this opinion cannot be supported.



With respect to the two or three witnesses establishing the subject, Dr. Whitby says. "Though these words seem to be cited from Deuteronomy 19:15, rather than from Matthew 18:16, it being rare to find this apostle citing any thing from the New Testament, without calling it an ordinance of the Lord, yet it is probable that he here alludes to the practice there prescribed for the reclaiming of offenders. And then his first epistle being written with this introduction: Paul an apostle, and Sosthenes; his second

apostle; and therefore he could, with great propriety, say that this power of Christ, far from being weak, was mighty among them.

**Verse 4.** *For though he was crucified through weakness*— It is true

his power, his mind, if ye be Christians; and the Spirit of Christ bears witness with your spirit that ye are the children of God. And this is the case except ye be reprobates; **αδοκιμοι**, base counterfeit coin; mongrel Christians. This metaphor holds excellently here. They had a Judaizing Christian among them; such, presumptively, was the false apostle: they had received his Judaico-Christian doctrine, and were what the prophet said of some of the Israelites in his time. Reprobate silver, adulterated coin, shall men call them, Jeremiah 6:30. And thus, when they were brought to the test, they were found reprobate; that is, adulterated with this mixture of bad doctrine. There is no other kind of reprobation mentioned here than that which refers to the trial and rejection of adulterated coin; and, by way of metaphor, to the detection of false Christianity. This reprobation came of the people themselves: they, not God, adulterated the pure metal. Man pollutes himself; then God reprobates the polluted.

**Verse 6. *Ye shall know that we are not reprobates.***— Ye have had, and ye shall have, the fullest proof that I have preached the true faith among you; and that God has confirmed it by his testimony; and thus that I am proved and manifested to be what I ought to be, and shown to be approved of God.

**Verse 7. *I pray to God that ye do no evil***— That ye do not persist in that course which will oblige me to use the power of Christ, with which I am endowed, to punish you. Some apply this prayer to the apostle himself: Now I pray to God that I may do YOU no evil—that I may not be obliged to use my apostolic rod, and inflict evil upon you.

***Not that we should appear approved***— We do not wish to give this proof that we are approved of God, by inflicting this punishment on the transgressors.

***But that ye should do that which is honest***— That ye may do that which is right and seemly, **το καλον**, though we should be, in consequence of that, as reprobates—as persons not approved of God; because your reformation will prevent the exercise of this power, which would otherwise have given an awful proof that we are approved of God.

**Verse 8. *For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.***— As we are the apostles of God, we cannot bring to you any false doctrine; and, as we profess to be under the influence of God’s Spirit, we cannot do any thing that is opposed to that truth, or which might be prejudicial to it. On the contrary, what we say and do is for that truth, to propagate and establish it. The Gospel of Jesus is truth; and my testimony concerning it is truth also. In my coming, and in my rod, you have nothing to fear, if you retain and abide in this truth.

**Verse 9. *For we are glad, when we are weak***— It will give me indescribable pleasure that I should still appear to be poor, despicable, and destitute of this extraordinary power with which God has clothed me, so that you be strong in all the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit.

***And this also we wish, even your perfection.***— We cannot be satisfied that persons, with such eminent endowments, and who have once received the truth as it is in Jesus, should be deficient in any of the graces that constitute the mind of Christ; such as brotherly love, charity, harmony, unity, and order. I have given the above paraphrase to this verse, because of the last term **καταρτισιν**, which we render perfection. **καταρτισις**, from **κατα**, intensive, and **αρτιζω**, to fit or adapt, signifies the reducing of a dislocated limb to its proper place; and hence, as Beza says on this passage: “The apostle’s meaning is, that whereas the members of the Church were all, as it were, dislocated and out of joint, they should be joined together in love; and they should endeavor to make perfect what was amiss among them, either in faith or morals.”

It is a metaphor, also, taken from a building; the several stones and timbers being all put in their proper places and situations, so that the whole building might be complete, and be a proper habitation for the owner. The same figure, though not in the same terms, the apostle uses, Ephesians 2:20-22.

The perfection or rejoining which the apostle wishes is that which refers to the state of the Church in its fellowship, unity, order, etc. And perfection in the soul is the same, in reference to it, as perfection in the Church is to its order and unity. The perfection or rejoining of the soul implies its purification, and placing every faculty, passion, and appetite in its proper place; so that the original order, harmony, unity, and purity of

the soul may be restored; and the whole builded up to be a habitation of God through the Spirit, Ephesians 2:22.

**Verse 10. *Therefore I write these things***— I only threaten you now, by this epistle, to put you on your guard, and lead you to reformation before I visit you that I may not then have to use sharpness, **αποτομια**, a cutting off, employing thus my apostolical authority to inflict punishment; a power which God has given me, rather to be employed in your edification than in your destruction.

**Verse 11. *Finally***— **δοιπον**· All that remains for me now to write is, to wish you all manner of happiness, and so to take my leave.

***Farewell.***— A good wish, from our old mother tongue, compounded of (Anglo-Saxon), to go, and (Anglo-Saxon), fairly, properly, or (Anglo-Saxon), with felicity; go on prosperously! This is the spirit of this good wish.

The Greek **χαριετε** signifies nearly the same thing. **χαρω** means to be very joyous; **χαριετε**, be joyous and happy, be ever prosperous; this was among the last words which Cyrus, when dying, spoke to his friends.

***Be perfect***— **καταρτιζεσθε**· Be compact; get into joint again; let unity and harmony be restored. See the note on 2 Corinthians 13:9.

***Be of good comfort***— **παρακαλεισθε**· Receive admonition; for **παρακαλεω** signifies to admonish, beg, entreat, and also to comfort. Receive admonition, that ye may receive comfort. If ye take my advice, ye shall have consolation; if ye do not, ye will have nothing but misery and wo.

***Be of one mind***— **το αυτο φρονειτε**· Think the same; let there be no dissensions among you. Be of the same creed, and let disputes about that religion which should be the bond of peace for ever subside.

***Live in peace***— **ειρηνευετε**· Cultivate peace; or, as he says elsewhere, Follow peace, and pursue it, Hebrews 12:14. Cultivate a peaceable disposition, and neither say nor do any thing which has a tendency to irritate each other.

***And the God of love and peace shall be with you.***— While ye are full of contentions, dissensions, and discord, peace can have no place among you; and as to love, the fulfilling of the law, that worketh no ill to its neighbor, it has necessarily taken its flight. Love cannot live, neither exist, where there are brawls, contentions, and divisions. And where neither peace nor love is to be found, there God cannot be. And if HE be not there, yourselves and the devil make the whole assembly.

**Verse 12. *Greet one another with a holy kiss.***— Use every means by which a good understanding may be brought about. Let the spirit of friendship live among you, and encourage its continuance by every friendly act. See the note on Romans 16:16.

**Verse 13. *All the saints***— The Christians of Macedonia or Philippi, from which he wrote this epistle. In the primitive Church a saint and a Christian were the same thing; for the Christian religion calls every man to be holy.

**Verse 14. *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ***— All the favor and beneficence that come from and through the Redeemer of the world; as the LORD, the ruler and governor of all things; as JESUS, the Savior of all men by his passion and death; as Christ, the distributor of all that Divine unction which enlightens, comforts, harmonizes, and purifies the mind. May this most exalted, glorious, and all-sufficient Savior, be ever with you!

***And the love of God***— GOD, your Maker, in that infinite love which induced him to create the world, and form man in his own image and in his own likeness, that he might be capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying him for ever; and God in the fullest manifestations of that love which caused him to give his only begotten Son, to the end that they who believe

**κοινωνία**, which we translate fellowship and communion, signifies properly participation; having things in common; partaking with each other. This points out the astonishing privileges of true believers: they have communion with God's Spirit; share in all its gifts and graces; walk in its light; through him they have the fullest confidence that they are of God, that he is their father and friend, and has blotted out all their iniquities: this they know by the Spirit which he has given them. And is it possible that a man shall be a partaker with the Holy Ghost, and not know it! that he shall be full of light and love, and not know it! that he shall have the spirit of adoption, by which he can cry, Abba! Father! and yet know nothing of his relationship to God, but by inference from indirect proofs! In a word, that he shall have the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost with him, and all the while know nothing certain of the grace, as to his portion in it; feel nothing warming from the love, as to its part in him; and nothing energetic from the communion, as to his participation in the gifts and graces of this Divine energy! This is all as absurd as it is impossible. Every genuine Christian, who maintains a close walk with God, may have as full an evidence of his acceptance with God as he has of his own existence. And the doctrine that explains away this privilege, or softens it down to nothing, by making the most gracious and safe state consistent with innumerable doubts and fears and general uncertainty, is not of God. It is a spurious gospel, which, under the show of a voluntary humility, not only lowers, but almost annihilates, the standard of Christianity.

This text, as well as that, Matthew 3:16, 17, and that other, Matthew 28:19, strongly marks the doctrine of the holy TRINITY. See the note on this latter text. And had not the apostle been convinced that there was a personality in this ever-blessed and undivided Trinity, he could not have expressed himself thus. And had not our Lord intended to be understood in this way, he would not have given such a commission to his apostles, to baptize the nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The doctrine is the teaching of God, let men make of it what they please. And the genuine Church of God have ever received and understood it in this way.

*Amen*.— This word is wanting, as usual, in almost every MS. of authority. Amen seems to have been anciently added at the conclusion of books, exactly as we add the word, *finis*, both merely signifying the end.

As to the inscription, it is wanting, either in whole or in part, in almost all the ancient MSS. The principal forms in which it exists are the following:—

To the Corinthians, the second. — The second to the Corinthians is completed. — The second to the Corinthians is finished. — To the Corinthians, the second, written from Philippi. — Written from Philippi by Titus. — Written from Philippi by Titus and Luke. — By Titus, Barnabas, and Luke. — The Second Epistle to the Corinthians was written from Philippi of Macedonia, and sent by Titus, SYRIAC. — The End of the Epistle. It was written from the city of Philippi by Titus and Luke. Praise be to God for ever, ARABIC. — In the VULGATE there is no subscription; nor in the ETHIOPIC. — Written in Philippi of Macedonia, and sent by Titus and Luke, COPTIC. — The Second Epistle to the Corinthians is ended; which was written from Philippi of Macedonia, by Titus and Luke, SYR. PHILOX.

It has been often remarked that no dependence can be placed on many of the subscriptions to the sacred books, which are found in MSS. and versions, because those subscriptions were not written by the authors of those books, but were afterwards added by the transcribers or copiers, who followed either tradition or their own judgment. It is generally allowed that this second epistle was written from Macedonia; and probably from the city of Philippi, in that province. See the introduction and preface to this epistle.

Finished the correction for a new edition, Dec. 13th, 1831. A. C.



# INTRODUCTION

TO THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

GALATIANS.

THE authenticity of this epistle is ably vindicated by Dr. Paley: the principal part of his arguments I shall here introduce, and doubt not that they will be considered demonstrative evidence by every candid and unprejudiced reader.

## SECTION 1.

The argument of this epistle in some measure proves its antiquity. It will hardly be doubted that it was written whilst the dispute concerning the circumcision of Gentile converts was fresh in men's minds; for, even supposing it to have been a forgery, the only credible motive that can be assigned for the forgery was, to bring the name and authority of the apostle into this controversy. No design could be so insipid, or so unlikely to enter into the thoughts of any man, as to produce an epistle written earnestly and pointedly upon one side of a controversy, when the controversy itself was dead, and the question no longer interesting to any description of readers whatever. Now the controversy concerning the circumcision of the Gentile Christians was of such a nature that, if it arose at all, it must have arisen in the beginning of Christianity. As Judea was the scene of the Christian history; as the author and preachers of Christianity were Jews; as the religion itself acknowledged and was founded upon the Jewish religion, in contradistinction to every other

religion then professed amongst mankind; it was not to be wondered at that some of its teachers should carry it out in the world rather as a sect and modification of Judaism, than as a separate original revelation; or that they should invite their proselytes to those observances in which they lived themselves. This was likely to happen; but if it did not happen at first, if, whilst the religion was in the hands of Jewish teachers, no such claim was advanced, no such condition was attempted to be imposed, it is not probable that the doctrine would be started, much less that it should prevail, in any future period. I likewise think that those pretensions of Judaism were much more likely to be insisted upon whilst the Jews continued a nation, than after their fall and dispersion; whilst Jerusalem and the temple stood, than after the destruction brought upon them by the Roman arms, the total cessation of the sacrifice and the priesthood, the humiliating loss of their country, and, with it, of the great rites and symbols of their institution. It should seem, therefore, from the nature of the subject, and the situation of the parties, that this controversy was carried on in the interval between the preaching of Christianity to the Gentiles and the invasion of Titus; and that our present epistle, which was undoubtedly intended to bear a part in this controversy, must be referred to the same period.

But again: the epistle supposes that certain designing adherents of the Jewish law had crept into the Churches of Galatia, and had been endeavoring, and but too successfully, to persuade the Galatic converts that they had been taught the new religion imperfectly, and at second hand; that the founder of their Church himself possessed only an inferior and deputed commission, the seat of truth and authority being in the apostles and elders of Jerusalem; moreover, that, whatever he might profess amongst them, he had himself, at other times and in other places, given way to the doctrine of circumcision. The epistle is unintelligible without supposing all this. Referring therefore to this, as to what had actually passed, we find St. Paul treating so unjust an attempt to undermine his credit, and to introduce amongst his converts a doctrine which he had uniformly reprobated, in terms of great asperity and indignation. And, in order to refute the suspicions which had been raised concerning the fidelity of his teaching, as well as to assert the independency and Divine original of his mission, we find him appealing to

the history of his conversion, to his conduct under it, to the manner in which he had conferred with the apostles when he met with them at Jerusalem; alleging that, so far was his doctrine from being derived from them, or they from exercising any superiority over him, that they had simply assented to what he had already preached amongst the Gentiles, and which preaching was communicated not by them to him, but by himself to them; that he had maintained the liberty of the Gentile Church, by opposing upon one occasion an apostle to the face, when the timidity of his behavior seemed to endanger it; that from the first, that all along, that to that hour, he had constantly resisted the claims of Judaism; and that the persecutions which he daily underwent, at the hands or by the instigation of the Jews, and of which he bore in his person the marks and scars, might have been avoided by him, if he had consented to employ his labors in bringing, through the medium of Christianity, converts over to the Jewish institution; for then would the offense of the cross have ceased." Now an impostor, who had forged the epistle for the purpose of producing St. Paul's authority in the dispute, which, as hath been observed, is the only credible motive that can be assigned for the forgery, might have made the apostle deliver his opinion upon the subject in strong and decisive terms, or might have put his name to a train of reasoning and argumentation upon that side of the question which the imposture was intended to recommend. I can allow the possibility of such a scheme as that. But for a writer, with this purpose in view, to feign a series of transactions supposed to have passed amongst the Christians of Galatia, and then to counterfeit expressions of anger and resentment excited by these transactions; to make the apostle travel back into his own history, and into a recital of various passages of his life, some indeed directly, but others obliquely, and others even obscurely bearing upon the point in question; in a word, to substitute narrative for argument, expostulation and complaint for dogmatic positions and controversial reasoning, in a writing properly controversial, and of which the aim and design was to support one side of a much agitated question, is a method so intricate, and so unlike the methods pursued by all other impostors, as to require the very flagrant proofs of imposition to induce us to believe it to be one.

## SECTION 2.

In this section I shall endeavor to prove,—

1. That the Epistle to the Galatians and the Acts of the Apostles were written without any communication with each other.
2. That the epistle, though written without any communication with the history, by recital, implication, or reference, bears testimony to many of the facts contained in it.
1. The epistle and the Acts of the Apostles were written without any communication with each other.

To judge of this point we must examine those passages in each which describe the same transaction; for, if the author of either writing derived his information from the account which he had seen in the other, when he came to speak of the same transaction he would follow that account. The history of St. Paul at Damascus, as read in the Acts, and as referred to by the epistle, forms an instance of this sort. According to the Acts, Paul (after his conversion) was certain days with the “disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said: Is not this he which destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, confounding the Jews which were at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ. And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him. But their laying wait was known to Saul; and they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket. And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples.” Acts 9:19-26.

According to the epistle, “When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his own Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus; then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem.”

Besides the difference observable in the terms and general complexion of these two accounts, “the journey into Arabia,” mentioned in the epistle, and omitted in the history, affords full proof that there existed no correspondence between these writers. If the narrative in the Acts had been made up from the epistle, it is impossible that this journey should have been passed over in silence; if the epistle had been composed out of what the author had read of St. Paul’s history in the Acts, it is unaccountable that it should have been inserted. (13)

(13) N.B. The Acts of the Apostles simply inform us that St. Paul left Damascus in order to go to Jerusalem, “after many days were fulfilled.” If any one doubt whether the words “many days” could be intended to express a period which included a term of three years, he will find a complete instance of the same phrase, used with the same latitude, in 1 Kings 2:38, 39: “And Shimei dwelt at Jerusalem many days; and it came to pass at the end of three years, that two of the servants of Shimei ran away:”

The journey to Jerusalem related in the second chapter of the epistle (“then, fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem”) supplies another example of the same kind. Either this was the journey described in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts, when Paul and Barnabas were sent from Antioch to Jerusalem, to consult the apostles and elders upon the question of the Gentile converts, or it was some journey of which the history does not take notice. If the first opinion be followed, the discrepancy in the two accounts is so considerable, that it is not without difficulty they can be adapted to the same transaction, so that upon this supposition there is no place for suspecting that the writers were guided or assisted by each other. If the latter opinion be preferred, we have then a journey to Jerusalem, and a conference with the principal members of the Church there, circumstantially related in the epistle, and entirely omitted in the Acts; and we are at liberty to repeat the observation, which we before made, that the omission of the material a fact in the history is inexplicable if the historian had read the epistle, and that the insertion of it in the epistle, if the writer derived his information from the history, is not less so.

St. Peter’s visit to Antioch, during which the dispute arose between him and St. Paul, is not mentioned in the Acts.

If we connect with these instances the general observation, that no scrutiny can discover the smallest trace of transcription or imitation, either in things or words, we shall be fully satisfied in this part of our case, namely, that the two records, be the facts contained in them true or false, come to our hands from independent sources,

Secondly, I say that the epistle, thus proved to have been written without any communication with the history, bears testimony to a great variety of particulars contained in the history.

1. St. Paul in the early part of his life had addicted himself to the study of the Jewish religion, and was distinguished by his zeal for the institution and for the traditions which had been incorporated with it. Upon this part of his character the history makes St. Paul speak thus: "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous towards God, as ye all are this day." Acts 22:3.

The epistle is as follows: "I profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." Galatians 1:14.

2. St. Paul before his conversion had been a fierce persecutor of the new sect. "As for Saul, he made havoc of the Church; entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison." Acts 8:3.

This is the history of St. Paul, as delivered in the Acts; in the recital of his own history in the epistle, "Ye have heard," says he, "of my conversation in times past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God." Galatians 1:13.

3. St. Paul was miraculously converted on his way to Damascus. "And as he journeyed he came near to Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Acts 9:3-6. With these compare the epistle, Galatians 1:15-17: "When 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; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood, neither went I up to Jerusalem, to them that were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus."

In this quotation from the epistle, I desire it to be remarked how incidentally it appears that the affair passed at Damascus. In what may be called the direct part of the account no mention is made of the place of his conversion at all; a casual expression at the end, and an expression brought in for a different purpose, alone fixes it to have been at Damascus: "I returned again to Damascus." Nothing can be more like simplicity and undesignedness than this is. It also draws the agreement between the two quotations somewhat closer, to observe that they both state St. Paul to have preached the Gospel immediately upon his call: "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God;" Acts 9:20. "When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." Galatians 1:15-16.

4. The course of the apostle's travels after his conversion was this: He went from Damascus to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem into Syria and Cilicia. "At Damascus the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket; and when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples; Acts 9:25-26. Afterwards, "when the brethren knew the conspiracy formed against him at Jerusalem, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus, a city in Cilicia;" Acts 9:30. In the epistle St. Paul gives the following brief account of his proceedings within the same period: "After three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days; afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia." The history had told us that Paul passed from Caesarea to Tarsus: if he took this journey by land, it would carry him through Syria into Cilicia; and he would come, after his visit at Jerusalem, "into the regions of Syria and Cilicia," in the very order in which he mentions them in the epistle. This supposition of his going from Caesarea to Tarsus by land clears up also another point. It accounts for what St. Paul says in the same place concerning the Churches of Judea: "Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, and was unknown

by face unto the Churches of Judea which were in Christ; but they had heard only that he which persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed; and they glorified God in me.” Upon which passage I observe, first, that what is here said of the Churches of Judea is spoken in connection with his journey into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. Secondly, that the passage itself has little significancy, and that the connection is inexplicable, unless St. Paul went through Judea(14) (though probably by a hasty journey) at the time that he came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. Suppose him to have passed by land from Caesarea to Tarsus, all this, as hath been observed, would be precisely true.

(14) Dr. Doddridge thought that the Caesarea here mentioned was not the celebrated city of that name upon the Mediterranean Sea, but Caesarsa Philippi, near the borders of Syria, which lies in a much more direct line from Jerusalem to Tarsus than the other. The objection to this, Dr. Benson remarks, is, that Caesarea, without any addition, usually denotes Caesarea Palestinae.

5. Barnabas was with St. Paul at Antioch. “Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the Church;” Acts 11:25, 26. Again, and upon another occasion, “They (Paul and Barnabas) sailed to Antioch; and there they continued a long time with the disciples;” Acts 14:26.

Now what says the epistle? “When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed; and the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation;” Galatians 2:11, 13.

6. The stated residence of the apostle was at Jerusalem. “At that time there was a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles;” Acts 8:1. “They (the Christians at Antioch) determined that Paul and Barnabas should go up to Jerusalem, unto the apostles and elders, about this question;” Acts 15:2. With these accounts agrees the declaration in the epistle: “Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me;” Galatians 1:17; for this declaration



implies, or rather assumes it to be known, that Jerusalem was the place where the apostles were to be met with.

7. There were at Jerusalem two apostles, or at least two eminent members of the Church, of the name of James. This is directly inferred from the Acts of the Apostles, which in the second verse of the twelfth chapter (Acts 12:2) relates the death of James, the brother of John; and yet in the fifteenth chapter, and in a subsequent part of the history, records a speech delivered by James in the assembly of the apostles and elders. It is also strongly implied by the form of expression used in the epistle: "Other apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother;" i.e. to distinguish him from James, the brother of John.

To us, who have been long conversant in the Christian history as contained in the Acts of the Apostles, these points are obvious and familiar; nor do we readily apprehend any greater difficulty in making them appear in a letter purporting to have been written by St. Paul, than there is in introducing them into a modern sermon. But to judge correctly of the argument before us, we must discharge this knowledge from our thoughts. We must propose to ourselves the situation of an author who sat down to the writing of the epistle without having seen the history; and then the concurrences we have deduced will be deemed of importance. They will, at least, be taken for separate confirmations of the several facts, and not only of these particular facts, but of the general truth of the history.

For what is the rule with respect to corroborative testimony which prevails in courts of justice, and which prevails only because experience has proved that it is a useful guide to truth? A principal witness in a cause delivers his account; his narrative, in certain parts of it, is confirmed by witnesses who are called afterwards. The credit derived from their testimony belongs not only to the particular circumstances in which the auxiliary witnesses agree with the principal witness, but in some measure to the whole of his evidence; because it is improbable that accident or fiction should draw a line which touched upon truth in so many points.

In like manner, if two records be produced, manifestly independent, that is, manifestly written without any participation of intelligence, an agreement between them, even in few and slight circumstances, (especially

if from the different nature and design of the writings few points only of agreement, and those incidental, could be expected to occur,) would add a sensible weight to the authority of both, in every part of their contents.

2. The history relates that when Saul was come from Damascus, “he was with the disciples coming in and going out;” Acts 9:28. The epistle, describing the same journey, tells us, “that he went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days;” Galatians 1:18.

3. The history relates that, when Paul was come to Jerusalem, “Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles;” Acts 9:27. The epistle, “that he saw Peter; but other of the apostles saw he none, save James the Lord’s brother;” Galatians 1:19.

Now this is as it should be. The historian delivers his account in general terms, as of facts to which he was not present. The person who is the subject of that account, when he comes to speak of these facts himself, particularizes time, names, and circumstances.

4. The like notation of places, persons, and dates, is met with in the account of St. Paul’s journey to Jerusalem, given in the second chapter of the epistle. It was fourteen years after his conversion; it was in company with Barnabas and Titus; it was then that he met with James, Cephas, and John; it was then also that it was agreed amongst them that they should go to the circumcision, and he unto the Gentiles.

5. The dispute with Peter, which occupies the sequel of the second chapter, is marked with the same particularity. It was at Antioch; it was after certain came from James; it was whilst Barnabas was there, who was carried away by their dissimulation. These examples negative the insinuation that the epistle presents nothing but indefinite allusions to public facts.

#### SECTION 4.

Galatians 4:11-16: “I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain. Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am, for I am as ye are. Ye have not injured me at all. Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel unto you at first; and my temptation which was in the flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessedness YOU SPAKE OF? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out

your own eyes, and have given them unto me. Amos I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"

With this passage compare 2 Corinthians 12:1-9: "It is not expedient for me, doubtless, to glory; I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth;) such a one was caught up to the third heaven; and I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth,) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one will I glory, yet of myself will I not glory, but in mine infirmities; for, though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth. But now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

There can be no doubt that "the temptation which was in the flesh," mentioned in the Epistle to the Galatians, and "the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him," mentioned in the epistle to the Corinthians, were intended to denote the same thing. Either, therefore, it was, what we pretend it to have been, the same person in both—that is, we are reading the letters of a real apostle; or it was that a sophist, who had seen the circumstance in one epistle, contrived, for the sake of correspondency, to bring it into another; or, lastly, it was a circumstance in St. Paul's personal condition supposed to be well known to those into whose hands the epistle was likely to fall, and for that reason introduced into a writing designed to bear his name. I have extracted the quotations at length, in order to enable the reader to judge accurately of the manner in which the mention of this particular occurs in each; because that judgment, I think, will acquit the author of the epistle of the charge of having studiously inserted it, either with a view of producing an apparent agreement between them, or for any other purpose whatever.

The context, by which the circumstance before us is introduced, is in the two places totally different, and without any mark of imitation; yet in both places does the circumstance rise aptly and naturally out of the context, and that context from the train of thought carried on in the epistle.

The Epistle to the Galatians, from the beginning to the end, runs in a strain of angry complaint of their defection from the apostle, and from the principles which he had taught them. It was very natural to contrast with this conduct the zeal with which they had once received him; and it was not less so to mention, as a proof of their former disposition towards him, the indulgence which, whilst he was amongst them, they had shown to his infirmity: "My temptation which was in the flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessedness you spake of, i.e. the benedictions which you bestowed upon me? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me."

In the two epistles to the Corinthians, especially in the second, we have the apostle contending with certain teachers in Corinth, who had formed a party in that Church against him. To vindicate his personal authority, as well as the dignity and credit of his ministry amongst them, he takes occasion (but not without apologizing repeatedly for the folly, that is, for the indecorum of pronouncing his own panegyric) to meet his adversaries in their boastings: "Whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they the ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft." Being led to the subject, he goes on, as was natural, to recount his trials and dangers, his incessant cares and labors in the Christian mission. From the proofs which he had given of his zeal and activity in the service of Christ, he passes (and that with the same view of establishing his claim to be considered as "not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles") to the visions and revelations which from time to time had been vouchsafed to him. And then, by a close and easy connection, comes in the mention of his infirmity: "Lest I should be exalted," says he, "above measure, through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me."

Thus, then, in both epistles the notice of his infirmity is suited to the place in which it is found. In the epistle to the Corinthians the train of thought draws up the circumstance by a regular approximation; in this epistle it is suggested by the subject and occasion of the epistle itself. Which observation we offer as an argument to prove that it is not, in either epistle, a circumstance industriously brought forward for the sake of procuring credit to an imposture.

A reader will be taught to perceive the force of this argument, who shall attempt to introduce a given circumstance into the body of a writing. To do this without abruptness, or without betraying marks of design in the transition, requires, he will find, more art than he expected to be necessary; certainly more than any one can believe to have been exercised in the composition of these epistles.

### SECTION 5.

Galatians 4:29: "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now."

Galatians 5:11: "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? Then is the offense of the cross ceased."

Galatians 6:17: "From henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

From these several texts it is apparent that the persecutions which our apostle had undergone were from the hands or by the instigation of the Jews; that it was not for preaching Christianity in opposition to heathenism, but it was for preaching it as distinct from Judaism, that he had brought upon himself the sufferings which had attended his ministry. And this representation perfectly coincides with that which results from the detail of St. Paul's history as delivered in the Acts. At Antioch, in Pisidia, the "word of the Lord was published throughout all the region; but the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts." (Acts 13:50.) Not long after, at Iconium, "a great multitude of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed; but the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the

brethren.” (Acts 14:1, 2.) “At Lystra there came certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people; and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.” (Acts 14:19.) The same enmity, and from the same quarter, our apostle experienced in Greece: “At Thessalonica, some of them (the Jews) believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few: but the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city in an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.” (Acts 17:4, 5.) Their persecutors follow them to Berea: “When the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came hither also, and stirred up the people.” (Acts 17:13.) And, lastly, at Corinth, when Gallio was deputy of Achaia, “the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat.” I think it does not appear that our apostle was ever set upon by the Gentiles, unless they were first stirred up by the Jews, except in two instances; in both which the persons who began the assault were immediately interested in his expulsion from the place. Once this happened at Philippi, after the cure of the Pythoness: “When the masters saw the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the market-place unto the rulers.” (Acts 16:19.) And a second time at Ephesus, at the instance of Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines for Diana, “who called together workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth; moreover ye see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded away much people, saying, that they be no gods which are made with hands; so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.”

## SECTION 6.

I observe an agreement in a somewhat peculiar rule of Christian conduct as laid down in this epistle, and as exemplified in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. It is not the repetition of the same general precept, which

would have been a coincidence of little value; but it is the general precept in one place, and the application of that precept to an actual occurrence in the other. In the sixth chapter and first verse of this epistle, {Galatians 6:1} our apostle gives the following direction: “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness.” In 2 Corinthians 2:6-8, he writes thus: “Sufficient to such a man (the incestuous person mentioned in the first epistle) is this punishment, which was inflicted of many; so that, contrariwise, ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with over-much sorrow.”

#### SECTION 7.

This epistle goes farther than any of St. Paul’s epistles, for it avows in direct terms the supersession of the Jewish law as an instrument of salvation, even to the Jews themselves. Not only were the Gentiles exempt from its authority, but even the Jews were no longer either to place any dependence upon it, or consider themselves as subject to it on a religious account. “Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed: wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith; but, after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster; Galatians 3:23-25. This was undoubtedly spoken of Jews, and to Jews. In like manner, Galatians 4:1-5: “Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the father: even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world; but when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” These passages are nothing short of a declaration, that the obligation of the Jewish law, considered as a religious dispensation, the effects of which were to take place in another life, had ceased, with respect even to the Jews themselves. What then should be the conduct of a Jew (for such St. Paul was) who preached this doctrine? To be consistent with himself, either he would no longer comply, in his own person, with the directions of the law; or, if he did comply, it would be for some other reason than any confidence which



he placed in its efficacy, as a religious institution. Now so it happens, that, whenever St. Paul's compliance with the Jewish law is mentioned in the history, it is mentioned in connection with circumstances which point out the motive from which it proceeded; and this motive appears to have been always exoteric, namely, a love of order and tranquillity, or an unwillingness to give unnecessary offense. Thus, Acts 16:3: "Him (Timothy) would Paul have to go forth with him, and took and circumcised him, because of the Jew's which were in those quarters." Again, Acts 21:26, when Paul consented to exhibit an example of public compliance with a Jewish rite, by purifying himself in the temple, it is plainly intimated that he did this to satisfy "many thousands of Jews, who believed, and who were all zealous of the law." So far the instances related in one book correspond with the doctrine delivered in another.

### SECTION 8.

Galatians 1:18: "Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days."

The shortness of St. Paul's stay at Jerusalem is what I desire the reader to remark. The direct account of the same journey in the Acts, Acts 9:28, determines nothing concerning the time of his continuance there: "And he was with them (the apostles) coming in and going out, at Jerusalem; and he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him; which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Caesarea." Or rather, this account, taken by itself would lead a reader to suppose that St. Paul's abode at Jerusalem had been longer than fifteen days. But turn to the twenty-second chapter of the Acts, {Acts 22:17, 18} and you will find a reference to this visit to Jerusalem, which plainly indicates that Paul's continuance in that city had been of short duration: "And it came to pass, that when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance, and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me." Here we have the general terms of one text so explained by a distinct text in the same book, as to bring an indeterminate expression into a close conformity with a specification delivered in another book—a species of consistency not, I think, usually found in fabulous relations.

**SECTION 9.**

Galatians 6:11: "Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand."

These words imply that he did not always write with his own hand; which is consonant to what we find intimated in some other of the epistles. The Epistle to the Romans was written by Tertius: "I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord;" Romans 16:22. The First Epistle to the Corinthians, the Epistle to the Colossians, and the second to the Thessalonians, have all, near the conclusion, this clause: "The salutation of me, Paul, with mine own hand; which must be understood, and is universally understood, to import that the rest of the epistle was written by another hand. I do not think it improbable that an impostor, who had marked this subscription in some other epistle, should invent the same in a forgery; but that is not done here. The author of this epistle does not imitate the manner of giving St. Paul's signature; he only bids the Galatians observe how large a letter he had written to them with his own hand. He does not say this was different from his ordinary usage; that is left to implication. Now, to suppose that this was an artifice to procure credit to an imposture, is to suppose that the author of the forgery, because he knew that others of St. Paul's were not written by himself, therefore made the apostle say that this was; which seems an odd turn to give to the circumstance, and to be given for a purpose which would more naturally and more directly have been answered, by subjoining the salutation or signature in the form in which it is found in other epistles.

**SECTION 10.**

An exact conformity appears in the manner in which a certain apostle or eminent Christian, whose name was James, is spoken of in the epistle and in the history. Both writings refer to a situation of his at Jerusalem, somewhat different from that of the other apostles—a kind of eminence or presidency in the Church there, or, at least, a more fixed and stationary residence. Galatians 2:12: "When Peter was at Antioch, before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles." This text plainly attributes a kind of pre-eminence to James; and as we hear of him twice in the same epistle dwelling at Jerusalem, Galatians 1:19; 2:9, we must apply

it to the situation which he held in that Church. In the Acts of the Apostles divers intimations occur, conveying the same idea of James's situation. When Peter was miraculously delivered from prison, and had surprised his friends by his appearance among them, after declaring unto them how the Lord had brought him out of prison, "Go, show," says he, "these things unto James, and to the brethren;" Acts 12:17. Here James is manifestly spoken of in terms of distinction. He appears again with like distinction in the twenty-first chapter and the seventeenth and eighteenth verses: {Acts 21:17, 18} "And when we (Paul and his company) were come to Jerusalem, the day following Paul went in with us unto James, and all the elders were present." In the debate which took place upon the business of the Gentile converts, in the council at Jerusalem, this same person seems to have taken the lead. It was he who closed the debate, and proposed the resolution in which the council ultimately concurred: "Wherefore my sentence is, etc."

Upon the whole, that there exists a conformity in the expressions used concerning James, throughout the history and in the epistle, is unquestionable. This proves that the circumstance itself is founded in truth; viz. that James was a real person, who held a situation of eminence in a real society of Christians at Jerusalem. It confirms also those parts of the narrative which are connected with this circumstance. Suppose, for instance, the truth of the account of Peter's escape from prison was to be tried upon the testimony of a witness who, among other things, made Peter, after his deliverance, say, "Go, show these things to James and to the brethren;" would it not be material, in such a trial, to make out by other independent proofs, or by a comparison of proofs, drawn from independent sources, that there was actually at that time, living at Jerusalem, such a person as James; that this person held such a situation in the society amongst whom these things were transacted as to render the words which Peter is said to have used concerning him proper and natural? If this would be pertinent in the discussion of oral testimony, it is still more so in appreciating the credit of remote history.

# PREFACE

TO THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

## GALATIANS.

GALATIA was anciently a part of Phrygia and the neighboring countries. It had its name from the Gauls, who, having in several bodies invaded Asia Minor, as Pausanius (*Attic.*, cap. iv.) relates, conquered this country and settled in it. As these were mixed with various Grecian families, the country was also called Gallograecia, see Justin, lib. xxiv. 4; xxv. 2; xxvii. 3; xxviii. 3; and Strabo, xiv. Under the reign of Augustus Caesar, about the year of Rome 727, and 26 years before our Lord, it was reduced into the form of a Roman colony, and was governed by a propraetor, appointed by the emperor.

This country is bounded on the east by Cappadocia; on the west by Bithynia; on the south by Pamphylia; and on the north by the Euxine Sea. These are its limits according to Strabo, which some think too extensive; but the different provinces of Asia Minor being the subjects of continual contentions and inroads, very frequently changed their boundaries as well as their masters, and were seldom at one stay.

The Galatae were divided into three tribes, the Tectosages, the Trocmi, and the Tolistobogi. According to Pliny their country was divided into 195 tetrarchies, and, according to Strabo, each of the three divisions above mentioned was subdivided into four cantons, each of which had a tetrarch; and besides these twelve tetrarchs, there was a general council of the

nation, consisting of 300 senators. These tetrarchs were at last reduced in number to three, then to two, and lastly to one; the last tetrarch and king of Galatia was Amyntas, who, from being secretary to Dejotarus, the first person that possessed the whole tetrarchy, was made king of Pisidia in the year of Rome 714. And in the year 718, Mark Antony made him tetrarch of Galatia. After the death of Amyntas, Galatia was ranked by Augustus among the Roman provinces, and governed as aforesaid. The administration of the propraetors continued till the reign of Theodosius the Great, or Valens; and, under the Christian emperors, it was divided into two provinces, Galatia prima being subject to a consul; Galatia secunda, or salutaris, governed by a president.

The religion of the ancient Galatae was extremely corrupt and superstitious; and they are said to have worshipped the mother of the gods under the name of Agdistis, and to have offered human sacrifices of the prisoners they took in war.

They are mentioned by historians as a tall and valiant people, who went nearly naked; and used for arms only a sword and buckler. The impetuosity of their attack is stated to have been irresistible; and this generally made them victorious.

It appears, from the Acts of the Apostles, that St. Paul visited this country more than once. Two visits to this region are particularly marked in the Acts, viz. the first about A. D. 53, Acts 16:6: "Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia," etc.; the second about A. D. 56, Acts 18:23: "He went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples."

St. Paul was probably the first who had preached the Gospel in this region, as appears pretty evident from Galatians 1:6: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that CALLED YOU INTO THE GRACE OF CHRIST;?" and from Galatians 4:13: "Ye know how, through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the Gospel unto you at the first." Others suppose that it is not unlikely that St. Peter had preached the Gospel there to the Jews or Helenists only, as his first epistle is directed "to the strangers who were scattered abroad throughout Pontus, GALATIA, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia;" and it is supposed, also, that the persons converted by St. Peter probably occasioned those differences among the Galatian converts,

which induced St. Paul to write this epistle, in which he takes pains to establish his own character as an apostle, which had been disputed by some, with a view of placing him below Peter, who preached generally to the Jews only, and observed the law. See Calmet and the New Encyclopedia, article GALATIA. That St. Peter thought at first that the Gospel should be confined to the Jews is sufficiently evident from the Acts of the Apostles; but after his Divine vision, which happened about A. D. 41, related Acts 10, he saw that God had also called the Gentiles into the Church; and his first epistle, which was written in A. D. 64, was probably twelve years posterior to that written by St. Paul to the Galatians.

As to the precise time in which this epistle was written, there have been various opinions among learned men. Some of the ancients believed it to be the very first written of all St. Paul's epistles. See Epiphanius, tom. i., Haeres. 42. Others have supposed that it was written after his second journey to Galatia, Acts 18:23, which in the chronology I have placed in A. D. 54; and others, with more probability, after his first journey, see Acts 16:6, which in the chronology I have placed in A. D. 53. That it was written soon after one of the apostle's visits to that region seems evident from the following complaint: "I marvel that ye are so SOON removed from him that hath called you," Galatians 1:6; it has been therefore conjectured that only one or two years had elapsed from that time, and that the epistle must have been written about A. D. 52 or 53. Beausobre and L'Enfant speak very judiciously on this subject: "We do not find in the Epistle to the Galatians any mark that can enable us to determine with certainty at what time or in what place it was written. It is dated at Rome in some printed copies and MSS., but there is nothing in the epistle itself to confirm this date. Paul does not here make any mention of his bonds, as he does in all his epistles written from Rome. He says, indeed, Galatians 6:17: 'I bear about in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus;' but he had often suffered before he came to Rome. Some learned chronologers think that it was written between the third and fourth journey of St. Paul to Jerusalem, and between his first and second into Galatia; which opinion appears very probable; for, since the apostle says, he wonders that they were so soon turned to another gospel, this epistle must have been written a short time after he had preached in Galatia.

“Nor can we discern in the epistle any notice of the second journey which St. Paul made into this country. For this reason it is thought that the Epistle to the Galatians was written at Corinth, where the apostle made a long stay, or else in some city of Asia, particularly Ephesus, where he stayed some days on his way to Jerusalem, Acts 18:19-21; therefore, in all probability the epistle was written from Corinth, or from Ephesus, in the year 52 or 53.”

Dr. Lardner confirms this opinion by the following considerations:—

1. St. Paul says to the Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 16:1: “Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the Churches of Galatia, so do ye;” which shows that at the writing of that epistle to the Corinthians, in 56, he had a good opinion of his converts in Galatia; and that he had no doubt of their respect to his directions, which probably had been sent to them from Ephesus during his long abode there.

2. And now we shall be better able to account for what appears very remarkable: when Paul left Corinth, after his long stay there, he went to Jerusalem, having a vow; in his way he came to Ephesus, Acts 18:10-21: “And when they desired him to tarry longer with them, he consented not, but bade them farewell saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh at Jerusalem; but I will return unto you again, if God will.” When we read this, we might be apt to think that Paul should hasten back to Ephesus and return thither presently, after he had been at Jerusalem; but instead of doing so, after he had been at Jerusalem, he went down to Antioch; “And after he had spent some time there he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening the disciples,” Acts 18:22, 23. We now seem to see the reason of this course. At Corinth he heard of the defection of many in Galatia, whereupon he sent a sharp letter to them; but, considering the nature of the case, he judged it best to take the first opportunity to go to Galatia, and support the instructions of his letter; and both together had a good effect. Galatians 4:19, 20: “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again—I desire to be present with you, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you;” or, I am perplexed for you. Now, then, we see the reason of the apostle’s not coming directly from Jerusalem to Ephesus. However, he was not unmindful of his promise, and came thither after he had been in Galatia.

3. Upon the whole, the Epistle to the Galatians is an early epistle, and, as seems to me most probable, was written at Corinth near the end of A. D. 52, or the very beginning of 53, before St. Paul set out to go to Jerusalem by the way of Ephesus.

But if any should rather think that it was written at Ephesus, during the apostle's short stay there, on his way from Corinth to Jerusalem, that will make but very little difference; for still, according to our computation, the epistle was written at the beginning of the year 53. See Lardner's Works, vol. vi., page 309.

Every thing considered, I feel no hesitation to place this epistle in the 52nd or 53rd year of our Lord; either the end of the former or the beginning of the latter.

From the complexion of this epistle it appears to have been written to the Jews who were dispersed in Galatia; see Acts 2:9. And although in Galatians 4:8, it is said that the persons to whom the apostle writes did not know God, and did service to them which by nature were no gods; this must be understood of those who had been proselytes to the Jewish religion, as Galatians 4:9 sufficiently shows; for, after they had been converted to Christianity, they turned AGAIN to the weak and beggarly elements.

These Galatians were doubtless converted by St. Paul; see Acts 16:6; 18:23; but, after his departure from them, some teachers had got in among them who endeavored to persuade them, and successfully too, that they should be circumcised and keep the Mosaic law. See Galatians 1:6; 4:9, 10, 21; 5:1, 2; 6:12. And the apostle labors to bring them back from the errors of these false teachers.

The arguments which the apostle uses to prove the truth of the Christian religion, as well as the nullity of the Mosaic institutions, are the following:—

1. That himself, immediately after his conversion, without having any conference with any of the apostles, preached the pure doctrines of Christianity doctrines strictly conformable to those preached by the genuine disciples of the Lord; and this was a proof that he had received



them by immediate inspiration, as he could have known them no other way.

2. That he was led to oppose Peter because he had withdrawn himself from communion with the converted Gentiles, and thereby gave occasion to some to suppose that he considered the law as still binding on those who believed; and that the Gentiles were not to be admitted to an equality of religious privileges with the Jews.

3. That no rites or ceremonies of the Jewish law could avail any thing in the justification of a sinner; and that faith in Christ was the only means of justification.

4. That their own works could avail nothing towards their justification:—

(1.) For the Spirit of God was given them in consequence of receiving the Christian doctrine, Galatians 3:2-5.

(2.) That the works of the law cannot justify, because Abraham was justified by faith long before the law of Moses was given, Galatians 3:6, 7.

(3.) That the curse of the law, under which every sinner lives, is not removed but by the sacrifice of Christ, Galatians 3:8, 9.

5. That it is absurd for the sons of God to become slaves to Mosaic rites and ceremonies.

The rest of the epistle is of a practical nature. Although subjects of this kind may be gathered out of the epistle, yet it is very evident that the apostle himself has observed no technical division or arrangement of his matter; his chief design being, To vindicate his own apostleship, and to show that he was not inferior to Peter himself, whom their false teachers appear to have set up in opposition to St. Paul. 2. To assert and maintain justification by faith in opposition to all Judaizing teachers. To call them back to the liberty of the Gospel, from which, and its privileges, they had shamelessly apostatized. And, 4. To admonish and exhort them to walk worthy of their vocation, by devoting themselves to the glory of God and the benefit of their brethren. Lastly, he asserts his own determination to be faithful, and concludes with his apostolical benediction.

**THE**

**EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE**

**TO THE**

**GALATIANS.**

Chronological Notes relative to this Epistle. Usherian year of the world, 4056. — Alexandrian era of the world, 5554. — Antiochian era of the world, 5544. — Constantinopolitan era of the world, 5560. — Year of the Eusebian epocha of the Creation, 4280. — Year of the Julian period, 4762. — Year of the minor Jewish era of the world, 3812. — Year of the greater Rabbinical era of the world, 4411. — Year from the Flood, according to Archbishop Usher, and the English Bible, 2400. — Year of the Cali yuga, or Indian era of the Deluge, 3154. — Year of the era of Iphitus, or since the first commencement of the Olympic games, 992. — Year of the Nabonassarean era, 799. — Year of the era of the Seleucidae, 364. — Year of the Spanish era, 90. — Year of the Actiac or Actian era, 83. — Year of the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 52. — Year from the building of Rome, according to Varro, 805. — Year of the CCVIIth Olympiad, 4. — Year of Ananias, high priest of the Jews, 8. — Common Golden Number, 15. — Jewish Golden Number, 12. — Year of the Solar Cycle, 5. — Dominical Letters; it being Bissextile or Leap year, BA. — Jewish Passover, April 1st. — Easter Sunday, April 2nd. — Epact, or the moon's age on the 22nd of March, or the Xth of the Calends of April, 4. — Year of the reign of Claudius Caesar, the fifth emperor of the Romans, 12. — In the last year of Ventidius Cumanus, governor of the Jews. — Year of Vologesus, king of the Parthians, 2. — Year of Cains Numidius Quadratus, governor of Syria, 1. — Roman Consuls; Publius Cornelius Sylla Faustus, and Lucius Salvius Otho Titianus; and for the following year, viz. A. D. 53, (which is supposed by some to be the date of the epistle,) Decimus Junius Silanus, and Quintus Haterius Antoninus.



## CHAPTER 1.

*St. Paul shows that he was especially called of God to be an apostle, 1. Directs his epistle to the Churches through the regions of Galatia, 2. Commends them to the grace of Christ, who gave himself for their sins, 3-5. marvels that they had so soon turned away from the grace of the Gospel of Christ, to what falsely pretended to be another gospel, 6, 7. Pronounces him accursed who shall preach any other doctrine than that which he had delivered to them, 8, 9. Shows his own uprightness, and that he received his doctrine from God, 10-12. Gives an account of his conversion and call to the apostleship, 13-17. How three years after his conversion he went up to Jerusalem, and afterwards went through the regions of Syria and Cilicia, preaching the faith of Christ to the great joy of the Christian Churches in Judea, 18-24.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 1.

**Verse 1. *Paul, an apostle, not of men***— Not commissioned by any assembly or council of the apostles.

***Neither by man***— Nor by any one of the apostles; neither by James, who seems to have been president of the apostolic council at Jerusalem; nor by Peter, to whom, in a particular manner, the keys of the kingdom were intrusted.

***But by Jesus Christ***— Having his mission immediately from Christ himself, and God the Father who raised him from the dead, see Acts 22:14, 15, and commanded him to go both to the Jews and to the Gentiles, to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might obtain remission of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified. See Acts 9:1, etc., and the notes there.

**Verse 2.** *And all the brethren which are with me*— It is very likely that this refers to those who were his assistants in preaching the Gospel, and not to any private members of the Church.

*Churches of Galatia*— Galatia was a region or province of Asia Minor; there was neither city nor town of this name. See the preface. But as, in this province, St. Paul had planted several Churches, he directs the epistle to the whole of them; for it seems they were all pretty nearly in the same state, and needed the same instructions.

**Verse 3.** *Grace be to you*, etc.— See on Romans 1:7.

**Verse 4.** *Who gave himself for our sins*— Who became a sin-offering to God in behalf of mankind, that they might be saved from their sins.

*Deliver us from this present evil world*— These words cannot mean created nature, or the earth and its productions, nor even wicked men. The former we shall need while we live, the latter we cannot avoid; indeed they are those who, when converted, form the Church of God; and, by the successive conversion of sinners is the Church of Christ maintained; and the followers of God must live and labor among them, in order to their conversion. The apostle, therefore, must mean the Jews, and their system of carnal ordinances; statutes which were not good, and judgments by which they could not live; Ezekiel 20:25; and the whole of their ecclesiastical economy, which was a burden neither they nor their fathers were able to bear, Acts 15:10. Schoettgen contends that the word *πονηρος*, which we translate evil, should be translated laborious or oppressive, as it comes from *πονος*, labor, trouble, etc. The apostle takes occasion, in the very commencement of the epistle, to inform the Galatians that it was according to the will and counsel of God that circumcision should cease, and all the other ritual parts of the Mosaic economy; and that it was for this express purpose that Jesus Christ gave himself a sacrifice for our sins, because the law could not make the comers thereunto perfect. It had pointed out the sinfulness of sin, in its various ordinances, washings, etc.; and it had showed forth the guilt of sin in its numerous sacrifices; but the common sense, even of its own votaries, told them that it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin. A higher atonement was necessary; and when God provided that, all its

shadows and representations necessarily ceased. See the note on Galatians 4:3.

**Verse 5. *To whom be glory for ever***— Let him have the glory to whom alone it is due, for having delivered us from the present evil world, and from all bondage to Mosaic rites and ceremonies.

**Verse 6. *I marvel that ye are so soon removed***— It was a matter of wonder to the apostle that a people, so soundly converted to God, should have so soon made shipwreck of their faith. But mutability itself has not a more apt subject to work upon than the human heart; the alternate workings of different passions are continually either changing the character, or giving it a different colouring. Reason, not passion, the word of God, not the sayings of men, should alone be consulted in the concerns of our salvation.

***From him that called you***— The apostle seems here to mean himself. He called them into the grace of Christ; and they not only abandoned that grace, but their hearts became greatly estranged from him; so that, though at first they would have plucked out their eyes for him, they at last counted him their enemy, Galatians 4:14-16.

***Another gospel***— It is certain that in the very earliest ages of the Christian Church there were several spurious gospels in circulation, and it was the multitude of these false or inaccurate relations that induced St. Luke to write his own. See Luke 1:1. We have the names of more than seventy of these spurious narratives still on record, and in ancient writers many fragments of them remain; these have been collected and published by Fabricius, in his account of the apocryphal books of the New Testament, 3 vols. 8vo. In some of these gospels, the necessity of circumcision, and subjection to the Mosaic law in unity with the Gospel, were strongly inculcated. And to one of these the apostle seems to refer.

**Verse 7. *Which is not another***— It is called a gospel, but it differs most essentially from the authentic narratives published by the evangelists. It is not gospel, i.e. good tidings, for it loads you again with the burdens from which the genuine Gospel has disencumbered you. Instead of giving you peace, it troubles you; instead of being a useful supplement to the Gospel

of Christ, it perverts that Gospel. You have gained nothing but loss and damage by the change.

**Verse 8. *But though we, or an angel***— That Gospel which I have already preached to you is the only true Gospel; were I to preach any other, I should incur the curse of God. If your false teachers pretend, as many in early times did, that they received their accounts by the ministry of an angel, let them be accursed; separate them from your company, and have no religious communion with them. Leave them to that God who will show his displeasure against all who corrupt, all who add to, and all who take from the word of his revelation.

Let all those who, from the fickleness of their own minds, are ready to favor the reveries of every pretended prophet and prophetess who starts up, consider the awful words of the apostle. As, in the law, the receiver of stolen goods is as bad as the thief; so the encouragers of such pretended revelations are as bad, in the sight of God, as those impostors themselves. What says the word of God to them? Let them be accursed. Reader, lay these things to heart.

**Verse 9. *Let him be accursed.***— Perhaps this is not designed as an imprecation, but a simple direction; for the word here may be understood as implying that such a person should, have no countenance in his bad work, but let him, as Theodoret expresses it, *αλλοτριος εστω του κοινου σωματος της εκκλησιας*, be separated from the communion of the Church. This, however, would also imply that unless the person repented, the Divine judgments would soon follow.

**Verse 10. *Do I now persuade men, or God?***— The words *πειθειν τον θεον* may be rendered to court or solicit the favor of God as the after clause sufficiently proves. This acceptance of *πειθειν* is very common in Greek authors. While the apostle was a persecutor of the Christians, he was the servant of men, and pleased men. When he embraced the Christian doctrine, he became the servant of GOD, and pleased HIM. He therefore intimates that he was a widely different person now from what he had been while a Jew.

**Verse 11. *But I certify you, brethren,*** etc.— I wish you fully to comprehend that the Gospel which I preached to you is not after man;

there is not a spark of human invention in it, nor the slightest touch of human cunning.

**Verse 12. *I neither received it of man***— By means of any apostle, as was remarked Galatians 1:1. No man taught me what I have preached to you.

***But by the revelation of Jesus Christ.***— Being commissioned by himself alone; receiving the knowledge of it from Christ crucified.

**Verse 13. *Ye have heard of my conversation***— την εμην αναστροφην· My manner of life; the mode in which I conducted myself.

***Beyond measure I persecuted the Church***— For proofs of this the reader is referred to Acts 9:1, 2; 22:4, and the notes there. The apostle tells them that they had heard this, because, being Jews, they were acquainted with what had taken place in Judea, relative to these important transactions.

**Verse 14. *And profited in the Jews' religion***— The apostle does not mean that he became more exemplary in the love and practice of the pure law of God than any of his countrymen, but that he was more profoundly skilled in the traditions of the fathers than most of his fellow students were, or, as the word συνηλικιωτας may mean his contemporaries.

**Verse 15. *Who separated me from my mother's womb***— Him whom I acknowledge as the GOD of nature and the GOD of grace; who preserved me by his providence when I was a helpless infant, and saved me by his grace when I was an adult persecutor. For some useful remarks on these passages see the introduction, sec. ii.

**Verse 16. *To reveal his Son in me***— To make me know Jesus Christ, and the power of his resurrection.

***That I might preach him among the heathen***— For it was to the Gentiles, and the dispersed Jews among the Gentiles, that St. Paul was especially sent. Peter was sent more particularly to the Jews in the land of Judea; Paul to those in the different Greek provinces.

***I conferred not with flesh and blood***— I did not take counsel with men; σαρξ και αιμα, which is a literal translation of the Hebrew בשר ודם basar vedam, flesh and blood, is a periphrasis for man, any man, a human being, or beings of any kind. Many suppose that the apostle means he did



not dally, or take counsel, with the erroneous suggestions and unrenewed propensities of his own heart, or those of others; but no such thing is intended by the text. St. Paul was satisfied that his call was of God; he had therefore no occasion to consult man.

**Verse 17. *Neither went I up to Jerusalem***— The aim of the apostle is to show that he had his call so immediately and pointedly from God himself, that he had no need of the concurrence even of the apostles, being appointed by the same authority, and fitted to the work by the same grace and Spirit, as they were.

***But I went into Arabia.***— That part of Arabia which was contiguous to Damascus, over which Aretas was then king. Of this journey into Arabia we have no other account. As St. Luke was not then with him, it is not inserted in the Acts of the Apostles. See introduction to this epistle. Jerusalem was the stated residence of the apostles; and, when all the other believers were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, we find the apostles still remaining, unmolested, at Jerusalem! Acts 8:1.

**Verse 18. *After three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter***— These three years may be reckoned either from the departure of Paul from Jerusalem, or from his return from Arabia to Damascus.

To see Peter- **ιστορησαι πετρος**, to become personally acquainted with Peter; for this is the proper import of the verb **ιστορειν**, from which we have the word **ιστορια**, history, which signifies a relation of things from personal knowledge and actual acquaintance. How far this is, now, from the sense in which we must take the word, ninety-nine of every hundred of our histories sufficiently show. They are any thing but true relations of facts and persons.

***And abode with him fifteen days.***— It was not, therefore, to get religious knowledge from him that he paid him this visit. He knew as much of the Jewish religion as Peter did, if not more; and as to the Gospel, he received that from the same source, and had preached it three years before this.

**Verse 19. *James the Lord's brother.***— Dr. Paley observes: There were at Jerusalem two apostles, or at least two eminent members of the Church, of the name of James. This is distinctly inferred from the Acts of the Apostles, Acts 12:2, where the historian relates the death of James, the

brother of John; and yet, in Acts 15:13-21, and in Acts 21:18, he records a speech delivered by James in the assembly of the apostles and elders. In this place JAMES, the Lord's brother, is mentioned thus to distinguish him from JAMES the brother of John. Some think there were three of this name:-1. JAMES, our Lord's brother, or cousin, as some will have it; 2. JAMES, the son of Alphaeus; and 3. JAMES, the son of Zebedee. But the two former names belong to the same person.

**Verse 20. *Before God I lie not.***— This he speaks in reference to having seen only Peter and James at Jerusalem; and consequently to prove that he had not learned the Gospel from the assembly of the apostles at Jerusalem, nor consequently received his commission from them.

**Verse 21. *Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria,*** etc.— The course of the apostle's travels, after his conversion, was this: He went from Damascus to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem into Syria and Cilicia. "At Damascus the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket; and when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples;" Acts 9:25, 26. Afterwards, when the brethren knew the conspiracy formed against him at Jerusalem, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, Acts 9:30. This account in the Acts agrees with that in this epistle.

**Verse 22. *And was unknown by face***— I was not personally acquainted with any of the Churches of Judea; I was converted in another place, and had not preached the Gospel in any Christian congregation in that country; I knew only those at Jerusalem.

**Verse 23. *They had heard only***— As a persecutor of the Church of Christ, I was well known; and as a convert to Christ I was not less so. The fame of both was great, even where I was personally unknown.

**Verse 24. *They glorified God in me.***— Hearing now that I preached that faith which before I had persecuted and endeavored to destroy, they glorified God for the grace which had wrought my conversion. I owe nothing to them; I owe all to God; and they themselves acknowledge this. I received all from God, and God has all the glory.

1. It appeared of great importance to St. Paul to defend and vindicate his Divine mission. As he had none from man, it was the more necessary that

he should be able to show plainly that he had one from God. Paul was not brought into the Christian ministry by any rite ever used in the Christian Church. Neither bishop nor presbyter ever laid hands on him; and he is more anxious to prove this, because his chief honor arose from being sent immediately by God himself: his conversion and the purity of his doctrine showed whence he came. Many since his time, and in the present day, are far more anxious to show that they are legitimately appointed by MAN than by GOD; and are fond of displaying their human credentials. These are easily shown; those that come from God are out of their reach. How idle and vain is a boasted succession from the apostles, while ignorance, intolerance, pride, and vain-glory prove that those very persons have no commission from heaven! Endless cases may occur where man sends and yet God will not sanction. And that man has no right to preach, nor administer the sacraments of the Church of Christ, whom God has not sent; though the whole assembly of apostles had laid their hands on him. God never sent, and never will send, to convert others, a man who is not converted himself. He will never send him to teach meekness, gentleness, and long suffering, who is proud, overbearing, intolerant, and impatient. He, in whom the Spirit of Christ does not dwell, never had a commission to preach the Gospel; he may boast of his human authority, but God will laugh him to scorn. On the other hand, let none run before he is sent; and when he has got the authority of God, let him be careful to take that of the Church with him also.

2. The apostle was particularly anxious that the Gospel should not be corrupted, that the Church might not be perverted. Whatever corrupts the GOSPEL, subverts the CHURCH. The Church is a spiritual building, and stands on a spiritual foundation. Its members are compared to stones in a building, but they are living stones—each instinct with the spirit of a Divine life; Jesus is not only the foundation and the head-stone, but the spirit that quickens and animates all. A Church, where the members are not alive to God, and where the minister is not filled with the meekness and gentleness of Jesus, differs as much from a genuine Church as a corpse does from an active human being. False teachers in Galatia corrupted the Church, by introducing those Jewish ceremonies which God had abolished; and the doctrine of justification by the use of those ceremonies which God had shown by the death of his Son to be of none effect. “If those,” says

Quesnel, “are justly said to pervert the Gospel of Christ, who were for joining with it human ceremonies which God himself instituted, what do those do, who would fondly reconcile and blend it with the pomps of the devil? The purity of the Gospel cannot admit of any mixture. Those who do not love it, are so far from building up that they trouble and overturn all. There is no ground of trust and confidence for such workmen.”

3. If he be a dangerous man in the Church who introduces Jewish or human ceremonies which God has not appointed, how much more is he to be dreaded who introduces any false doctrine, or who labors to undermine or lessen the influence of that which is true? And even he who does not faithfully and earnestly preach and inculcate the true doctrine is not a true pastor. It is not sufficient that a man preach no error; he must preach the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

4. How is it that we have so many Churches like those in Galatia? Is it not because, on one hand, we disturb the simplicity of the Christian worship by Jewish, heathenish, or improper rites and ceremonies; and on the other, corrupt the purity of its doctrines by the inventions of men? How does the apostle speak of such corrupters? Let them be accursed. How awful is this! Let every man who officiates as a Christian minister look well to this. His own soul is at stake; and, if any of the flock perish through his ignorance or neglect, their blood will God require at the watchman’s hand.

5. St. Paul well knew that, if he endeavored to please man, he could not be the servant of Christ. Can any minor minister hope to succeed, where even an apostle, had he followed that line, could not? The interests of Christ and those of the world are so opposite, that it is impossible to reconcile them; and he who attempts it shows thereby that he knows neither Christ nor the world, though so deeply immersed in the spirit of the latter.

6. God generally confounds the expectations of men-pleasing ministers; they never ultimately succeed even with men. God abhors them, and those whom they have flattered find them to be dishonest, and cease to trust them. He who is unfaithful to his God should not be trusted by man.

## CHAPTER 2.

*The apostle mentions his journey to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus, 1. Shows that he went thither by revelation; and what he did while there, and the persons with whom he had intercourse, 2-8. How the apostles gave him the right hand of fellowship, 9, 10. Here he opposes Peter at Antioch, and the reason why, 11-14. Shows that the Jews as well as the Gentiles must be justified by faith, 15, 16. They who seek this justification should act with consistency, 17, 18. Gives his own religious experience, and shows, that through the law he was dead to the law, and crucified with Christ, 19, 20. Justification is not of the law, but by the faith of Christ, 21.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 2.

**Verse 1. *Then fourteen years after***— There is a considerable difference among critics concerning the time specified in this verse; the apostle is however generally supposed to refer to the journey he took to Jerusalem, about the question of circumcision, mentioned in Acts 15:4-5, etc. These years, says Dr. Whitby, must be reckoned from the time of his conversion, mentioned here Galatians 1:18, which took place A.D. 35 (33;) his journey to Peter was A.D. 38 (36,) and then between that and the council of Jerusalem, assembled A.D. 49 (52,) will be fourteen intervening years. The dates in brackets are according to the chronology which I follow in the Acts of the Apostles. Dr. Whitby has some objections against this chronology, which may be seen in his notes.

Others contend that the journey of which the apostle speaks is that mentioned Acts 11:27, etc., when Barnabas and Saul were sent by the Church of Antioch with relief to the poor Christians in Judea; there being at that time a great dearth in that land. St. Luke's not mentioning Titus in that journey is no valid objection against it: for he does not mention him in any part of his history, this being the first place in which his name occurs. And it does seem as if St. Paul did intend purposely to supply that defect,

by his saying, I went up with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. The former St. Luke relates, Acts 11:30; the latter St. Paul supplies.

**Verse 2. *I went up by revelation***— This either means, that he went up at that time by an express revelation from God that it was his duty to do so, made either to the Church of Antioch to send these persons to Jerusalem, or to these persons to go according to the directions of that Church; or the apostle here wishes to say, that, having received the Gospel by revelation from God, to preach Christ among the Gentiles, he went up according to that revelation, and told what God had done by him among the Gentiles: or it may refer to the revelation made to certain prophets who came to Antioch, and particularly Agabus, who signified by the Spirit that there would be a dearth; in consequence of which the disciples purposed to send relief to their poor brethren at Jerusalem. See Acts 11:27-30.

***But privately to them which were of reputation***— **τοις δοκουσι**. To the chief men; those who were highest in reputation among the apostles. **δοκουντες**, according to Hesychius, is **οι ενδοξοι**, the honorable. With these the apostle intimates that he had some private conferences.

***Lest by any means***— And he held these private conferences with those more eminent men, to give them information how, in consequence of his Divine call, he had preached the Gospel to the Gentiles, and the great good which God had wrought by his ministry; but they, not knowing the nature and end of his call, might be led to suppose he had acted wrong, and thus labored in vain; and that, if he still continued to act thus, he should labor in vain. It was necessary, therefore, that he should give the apostolic council the fullest information that he had acted according to the Divine mind in every respect, and had been blessed in his deed.

**Verse 3. *But neither Titus, who was with me***— The apostle proceeds to state that his account was so satisfactory to the apostles, that they not only did not require him to insist on the necessity of circumcision among the Gentiles, but did not even require him to have Titus, who was a Greek, circumcised; though that might have appeared expedient, especially at Jerusalem, to have prevented false brethren from making a handle of his uncircumcision, and turning it to the prejudice of the Gospel in Judea.

*To spy out our liberty*— The Judaizing brethren got introduced into the assembly of the apostles, in order to find out what was implied in the liberty of the Gospel, that they might know the better how to oppose St. Paul and his fellows in their preaching Christ to the Gentiles, and admitting them into the Church without obliging them to observe

immediately from the same source; and therefore gave to me and to Barnabas the right hand of fellowship.

**The Gospel of the uncircumcision**— They saw, to their utmost satisfaction, that I was as expressly sent by God to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, as Peter was to preach it to the Jews.

**Verse 8. For he that wrought effectually**— ο ενεργησας πετρο, ενηργησε και εμοι· He who wrought powerfully with Peter, wrought powerfully also with me. He gave us both those talents which were suited to our work, and equal success in our different departments.

**Verse 9. James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars**— οι δοκουντες στυλοι ειναι· Who were known to be very eminent, and acknowledged as chief men among the apostles. See the note on Luke 8:18, for the meaning of the verb δοκειν, and see before on Galatians 2:6.

Among the Jews, persons of great eminence and importance are represented as pillars and foundations of the world. So Abraham is said to be עמוד העולם ammud heolam, “the pillar of the universe; for by him to this day are the earth and heavens supported.” Yalcut Rubeni, fol. 29. “Rabbi Simeon said, Behold, we are the pillars of the world.” Idra Rabba, s. 23.

“When Rabbi Jochanan ben Zachai was near death, he wept with a loud voice. His disciples said unto him, O Rabbi, thou high pillar, thou light of the world, thou strong hammer, why dost thou weep?” Aboth. R. Nathan, chap. 24.

So, in Sohar Genes, fol. 5, it is said: “And he saw that Rab. Eleazar went up, and stood there, and with him שאר עמודי shear ammudin, the rest of the pillars (eminent men) who sat there.”

Ibid., fol. 13: “These are the seven righteous men who cleave to the holy blessed God with a pure heart, and they are the seven pillars of the world.”

Ibid., fol. 21, on the words bearing fruit, Genesis 1:11, it is said: “By this we are to understand the just one, who is the pillar of the world.” See Schoettgen, who adds: “These pillars must be distinguished from the



foundation. The foundation of the Church is Jesus Christ alone; the pillars are the more eminent teachers, which, without the foundation, are of no value.”

***The right hands of fellowship***— Giving the right hand to another was the mark of confidence, friendship, and fellowship. See Leviticus 6:2: If a soul-lie unto his neighbor in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, בתְּשׁוּמֶת יָד bithsumeth yad, “in giving the hand.”

**Verse 10. *Only they would that we should remember the poor***— They saw plainly that God had as expressly called Barnabas and me to go to the Gentiles as he had called them to preach to the Jews; and they did not attempt to give us any new injunctions, only wished us to remember the poor in Judea; but this was a thing to which we were previously disposed.

**Verse 11. *When Peter was come to Antioch***— There has been a controversy whether *πετρος*, Peter, here should not be read *κηφας*, Kephaz; and whether this Kephaz was not a different person from Peter the apostle. This controversy has lasted more than 1500 years, and is not yet settled. Instead of *πετρος*, Peter, ABCH, several others of good note, with the Syriac, Erpenian, Coptic, Sahidic, AEthiopic, Armenian, later Syriac in the margin, Vulgate, and several of the Greek fathers, read *κηφας*. But whichever of these readings we adopt, the controversy is the same; for the great question is, whether this Peter or Kephaz, no matter which name we adopt, be the same with Peter the apostle?

I shall not introduce the arguments pro and con, which may be all seen in Calmet’s dissertation on the subject, but just mention the side where the strength of the evidence appears to lie.

That Peter the apostle is meant, the most sober and correct writers of antiquity maintain; and though some of the Catholic writers have fixed the whole that is here reprehensible on one Kephaz, one of the seventy disciples, yet the most learned of their writers and of their popes, believe that St. Peter is meant. Some apparently plausible arguments support the contrary opinion, but they are of no weight when compared with those on the opposite side.

**Verse 12. *Before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles***— Here was Peter’s fault. He was convinced that God had pulled

down the middle wall of partition that had so long separated the Jews and Gentiles, and he acted on this conviction, associating with the latter and eating with them; but when certain Jews came from James, who it appears considered the law still to be in force, lest he should place a stumbling-block before them he withdrew from all commerce with the converted Gentiles, and acted as if he himself believed the law to be still in force, and that the distinction between the Jews and the Gentiles should still be kept up.

**Verse 13. *And the other Jews dissembled likewise***— That is: Those who were converted to Christianity from among the Jews, and who had also been convinced that the obligation of the Jewish ritual had ceased, seeing Peter act this part, and also fearing them that were of the circumcision, they separated themselves from the converted Gentiles, and acted so as to convince the Jews that they still believed the law to be of moral obligation; and so powerful was the torrent of such an example, that the gentle, loving-hearted Barnabas was carried away by their dissimulation, **αὐτῶν τῆ ὑποκρίσει**, with their hypocrisy-feigning to be what they really were not.

**Verse 14. *That they walked not uprightly***— **οὐκ ὀρθοποδοῦσι**. They did not walk with a straight step—they did not maintain a firm footing.

***According to the truth of the Gospel***— According to that true doctrine, which states that Christ is the end of the law for justification to every one that believes; and that such are under no obligation to observe circumcision and the other peculiar rites and ceremonies of the law.

***If thou, being a Jew, livest***— This was a cutting reproof. He was a Jew, and had been circumstantially scrupulous in every thing relative to the law, and it required a miracle to convince him that the Gentiles were admitted, on their believing in Christ, to become members of the same Church, and fellow heirs of the hope of eternal life; and in consequence of this, he went in with the Gentiles and ate with them; i.e. associated with them as he would with Jews. But now, fearing them of the circumcision, he withdrew from this fellowship.

***Why compellest thou the Gentiles***— Thou didst once consider that they were not under such an obligation, and now thou actest as if thou didst

consider the law in full force; but thou art convinced that the contrary is the case, yet attest differently! This is hypocrisy.

**Verse 15. *We who are Jews by nature***— We who belong to the Jewish nation—who have been born, bred, and educated Jews.

***And not sinners of the Gentiles***— **αμαρτωλοι**. Not without the knowledge of God, as they have been. **αμαρτωλος** often signifies a heathen, merely one who had no knowledge of the true God. But among the nations or Gentiles many Jews sojourned; who in Scripture are known by the name of Hellenists, and these were distinguished from those who were termed **εξ εθνων αμαρτωλοι**, sinners of the Gentiles—heathens, in our common sense of the word; while the others, though living among them, were worshippers of the true God, and addicted to no species of idolatry. Some have translated this passage thus: We Jews, and not Gentiles, by nature sinners; for it is supposed that **φυσει** here refers to that natural corruption which every man brings into the world. Now, though the doctrine be true, (and the state of man, and universal experience confirm it,) yet it can neither be supported from this place, nor even from Ephesians 2:3. See the note on Romans 2:16. It appears, from the use of this word by some of the best Greek authors, that **φυσει** did not signify by nature, as we use the word, but expressed the natural birth, family, or nation of a man; to distinguish him from any other family or nation. I can give a few instances of this, which are brought to my hand in a small elegant pamphlet, written by Dr. Munter, the present bishop of Zealand, entitled *Observationum ex marmoribus Graecis Sacrarum Specimen*, and which has been lent to me by the right honorable Lord Teignmouth, to whose condescension, kindness, and learning, many of my studies have been laid under particular obligation.

The word in question is the xxviii<sup>th</sup> example in the above pamphlet, the substance of which is as follows: In an inscription on a Greek marble, given by Dr. Chandler, page 27, we find these words **ο γαμβρος μου λεων αρτεμεισιου, ο επικαλουμενος ιασων, οικονει μεν μειλησιος, φυσει δε ιασευς**. “My son-in-law, Leo, the son of Artemisius, who is called a Jasian, is of the house of Milesius, though by nature he is from Jaso.” That is: Jaso being a town of Caria, this Leo is said to be **φυσει ιασευς**, by nature a Jasian, although he sprang from the

Milesian family. The following examples will place this in a clearer light. Josephus, Ant. Jud., lib. xi. cap. vi. sec. 5, speaking of Amanes, the Amalekite, says: *και γαρ φυσει τοις ιουδαιοις απηχθανετο, οτι και το γενοσ των αμαλεκιτων, εξ ων ην αυτοσ, υπ αυτων διεφθαρο*. “For he was by nature incensed against the Jews, because the nation of the Amalekites, from whom he sprang, had been destroyed by them;” that is, he had a national prejudice or hatred to the Jewish people on the above account. The following example from Dio Chrysostom, Orat. xxxi., is also to the point: *οιγε (αθηναιοι) τον δεινα μεν ολυμπιον κεκληκασι, ουδε φυσει πολιτην εαυτων*. “For they (the Athenians) called this person an Olympian, though by nature he was not their citizen;” that is, he was called an Olympian, though he was not naturally of that city, or, in other words, he was not born there. From these examples, and the scope of the place, we may argue that the words, we who are Jews by nature, mean, we who were born in the land of Judea, and of Jewish parents. And hence the passage in Ephesians 2:3, which speaks most evidently of the heathens, “and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others,” may be thus understood: Being Gentiles, and brought up in gross darkness, without any knowledge of God, abandoned to all sensual living, we were, from our very condition, and practical state, exposed to punishment. This sense is at least equally good with that given of the words in Romans 2:16, where it is proved that *φυσει*, in several connections, means truly, certainly, incontestably; “we were, beyond all controversy, exposed to punishment, because we had been born among idolaters, and have lived as they did. Here both senses of the word apply.

**Verse 16. *Knowing that a man is not justified***— See the notes on Romans 1:17; 3:24, 27; 8:3. And see on Acts 13:38, 39, in which places the subject of this verse is largely discussed. Neither the works of the Jewish law, nor of any other law, could justify any man; and if justification or pardon could not have been attained in some other way, the world must have perished. Justification by faith, in the boundless mercy of God, is as reasonable as it is Scriptural and necessary.

**Verse 17. *But if while we seek to be justified***— If, while we acknowledge that we must be justified by faith in Christ, we ourselves are found sinners, enjoining the necessity of observing the rites and ceremonies of the law, which never could and never can justify, and yet, by submitting to

circumcision, we lay ourselves under the necessity of fulfilling the law, which is impossible, we thus constitute ourselves sinners; is, therefore, Christ the minister of sin? Christ, who has taught us to renounce the law, and expect justification through his death?. God forbid! that we should either act so, or think so.

**Verse 18. *For if I build again the things which I destroyed***— If I act like a Jew, and enjoin the observance of the law on the Gentiles, which I have repeatedly asserted and proved to be abolished by the death of Christ, then I build up what I destroyed, and thus make myself a transgressor, by not observing the law in that way in which I appear to enjoin the observance of it upon others.

**Verse 19. *For I through the law am dead to the law***— In consequence of properly considering the nature and requisitions of the law, I am dead to all hope and expectation of help or salvation from the law, and have been obliged to take refuge in the Gospel of Christ. Or, probably the word **νομος**, LAW, is here put for a system of doctrine; as if he had said, I through the Gospel am dead to the law. The law itself is consigned to death, and another, the Gospel of Christ, is substituted in its stead. The law condemns to death, and I have embraced the Gospel that I might be saved from death, and live unto God.

**Verse 20. *I am crucified with Christ***— The death of Christ on the cross has showed me that there is no hope of salvation by the law; I am therefore as truly dead to all expectation of justification by the law, as Christ was dead when he gave up the ghost upon the cross. Through him alone I live-enjoy a present life, and have a prospect of future glory.

***Yet not I***— It is not of my natural life I speak, nor of any spiritual things which I myself have procured; but Christ liveth in me. God made man to be a habitation of his own Spirit: the law cannot live in me so as to give me a Divine life; it does not animate, but kill; but Christ lives in me; he is the soul of my soul; so that I now live to God. But this life I have by the faith of the Son of God-by believing on Christ as a sacrifice for sin; for he loved me, and because he did so he gave himself for me-made himself a sacrifice unto death, that I might be saved from the bitter pains of death eternal.

**Verse 21. *I do not frustrate***— οὐκ αθετῶ· I do not contemn, despise, or render useless, the grace of God—the doctrine of Christ crucified; which I must do if I preach the necessity of observing the law.

***For if righteousness***— If justification and salvation come by an observance of the law, then Christ is dead in vain; his death is useless if an observance of the law can save us; but no observance of the law can save us, and therefore there was an absolute necessity for the death of Christ.

1. THE account of the prevarication of Peter in the preceding chapter teaches us a most useful lesson. Let him who assuredly standeth take heed lest he fall. No person in a state of probation is infallible; a man may fall into sin every moment; and he will, if he do not walk with God. Worldly prudence and fleshly wisdom would have concealed this account of the prevarication of Peter; but God tells truth. This the fountain of it; and from him we are to expect not only nothing but the truth, but also the whole truth. If the Gospel were not of God we had never heard of the denial and prevarication of Peter, nor of the contention between Paul and Barnabas. And these accounts are recorded, not that men may justify or excuse their own delinquencies by them, but that they may avoid them; for he must be inexcusable who, with these histories before his eyes, ever denies his Master, or acts the part of a hypocrite. Had the apostles acted in concert to impose a forgery on the world as a Divine revelation, the imposture would have now come out. The falling out of the parties would have led to a discovery of the cheat. This relation, therefore, is an additional evidence of the truth of the Gospel.

2. On, I through the law am dead to the law, etc., pious Quesnel makes the following useful reflections:

“The ceremonial law, which is no more than a type and shadow of him, destroys itself by showing us Jesus Christ, who is the truth and the substance. The moral law, by leaving us under our own inability under sin and the curse, makes us perceive the necessity of the law of the heart, and of a Savior to give it. The law is for the old man, as to its terrible and servile part; and it was crucified and died with Christ upon the cross as well as the old man. The new man, and the new law, require a new sacrifice. What need has he of other sacrifices who has Jesus Christ? They in whom this sacrifice lives, do themselves live to God alone; but none can

live to him except by faith; and this life of faith consists in dying with Christ to the things of the present world, and in expecting, as co-heirs with him, the blessings of the eternal world. And who can work all this in us but only he who lives in us? That man has arrived to a high degree of mortification, who can say Christ liveth in me, and I am crucified to the world. Such a one must have renounced not only earthly things, but his own self also.”

3. Is there, or can there be, any well grounded hope of eternal life but what comes through the Gospel? In vain has the ingenuity of man tortured itself for more than 5000 years, to find out some method of mending the human heart: none has been discovered that even promised any thing likely to be effectual. The Gospel of Christ not only mends but completely cures and new makes infected nature. Who is duly apprised of the infinite excellency and importance of the Gospel? What was the world before its appearance? What would it be were this light extinguished? Blessed Lord! let neither infidelity nor false doctrine rise up to obscure this heavenly splendor!

## CHAPTER 3.

*The apostle inquires how they could be so foolish as to renounce the Gospel of Christ and turn back to the law, after having heard, received, and suffered so much for the Gospel, 1-5. Asserts the doctrine of justification by faith, on the example of Abraham, 6-9. Shows that all who are under the law are under the curse, from which Christ alone redeems us; and the promise made to Abraham comes to the Gentiles who believe, 10-14. For the covenant is not by the works of the law, but by promise, 15-18. The law was given to show the sinfulness of sin, and to act as a schoolmaster till Christ should come, 19-25. It is by faith only that any become children of God, 26. And under the Gospel, all those distinctions which subsisted under the law are done away; and genuine believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, are one in Christ Jesus, and accounted the genuine children of Abraham, 27-29.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 3.

**Verse 1. *O foolish Galatians***— O infatuated people; you make as little use of reason as those who have none; you have acted in this business as those do who are fascinated—they are led blindly and unresistingly on to their own destruction.

***That ye should not obey the truth***— This clause is wanting in ABD\*FG, some others, the Syriac, Erpenian, Coptic, Sahidic, Itala, Vulgate MS., and in the most important of the Greek and Latin fathers. Of the clause Professor White says, Certissime delenda, “It should certainly be expunged.”

There are several various readings on this verse, from which it appears that the verse in the best ancient MSS. and versions was read thus: O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you? Before whose eyes Jesus Christ crucified hath been plainly set forth.

***Among you?***— *εν υμιν* is wanting in ABC, several others, the Syriac, Erpenian, Coptic, Sahidic, AEthiopic, Armenian, Vulgate MS., one copy



of the Itala, and in several of the fathers. The words appear to disturb the sense, and have obliged commentators to have recourse to a sort of technical meaning; viz. “The doctrine of the Gospel had been so fully preached among these people that it might be said Jesus Christ had been crucified among them; so fully had his sufferings been detailed, and the design of them pointed out.”

**Verse 2. *Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law***— This may refer to the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, which were very common in the apostolic Church. Did ye receive these extraordinary gifts in consequence of your circumcision, and observing the Mosaic precepts? or was it by the hearing of the Gospel, prescribing faith in Christ crucified? It may also refer to the spirit of adoption, and consequently to their sonship.

**Verse 3. *Having begun in the Spirit***— Having received a spiritual religion, which refined and purified your hearts; and having received the Holy Spirit of God, by which ye were endued with various miraculous influences; and the spirit of adoption, by which he were assured of the remission of sins, and incorporation with the family of God:

***Are ye now made perfect by the flesh?***— Are ye seeking to complete that spiritual religion, and to perfect these spiritual gifts, by the carnal rite of circumcision? It appears that by the Spirit, here, not only the Holy Spirit, but his gifts, are to be understood; and by the flesh, *illud membrum in quo circumcisio peragitur*; and, by a metonymy, circumcision itself.

**Verse 4. *Have ye suffered so many things in vain?***— Have ye received and lost so much good? The verb *πάσχω*, as compounded with *εὖ*, well, or *κακῶς*, ill, and often without either, signifies to suffer pain or loss, or to possess and enjoy. In such a case the man is considered as the patient, and the good or ill acts upon him. Though it is possible that the Galatians had suffered some persecution for the truth of Christ, yet it is as likely that the apostle refers to the benefits which they had received. Ye have received faith, the pardon of your sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and with it many extraordinary gifts and graces; and have ye suffered the loss of all these things? Have ye received all these in vain? if yet in vain-if it be credible that ye have sacrificed so many excellent benefits for an imaginary good.

**Verse 5. *He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit***— The apostle means himself: he had been the means of conveying the Holy Spirit to them, and by that Spirit he wrought miracles among them; and he did all this, not as a Jew, (for as such he had no power,) but he did all as a believer in Christ. The word *ἐπιχορηγῶν*, which we translate ministereth, is very emphatic, and signifies leading up the chorus, bringing up one after another, adding grace to grace, benefit to benefit; so that it appears that they had not only some, but many benefits; God, by means of his apostle, having greatly enriched them with various spiritual blessings.

**Verse 6. *Abraham believed God***— This is quoted from Genesis 15:6, where see the note; and St. Paul produces it, Romans 4:3-5, where also see the notes. Abraham, while even uncircumcised, believed in God, and his faith was reckoned to him for justification; and Abraham is called the father of the faithful, or, of believers. If, then, he was justified without the deeds of the law, he was justified by faith; and if he was justified by faith, long before the law was given then the law is not necessary to salvation.

It is remarkable that the Jews themselves maintained that Abraham was saved by faith. Mehilta, in Yalcut Simeoni, page 1, fol. 69, makes this assertion: “It is evident that Abraham could not obtain an inheritance either in this world or in the world to come, but by faith.”

**Verse 8. *The Scripture, foreseeing***— See the notes on Romans 4:3-16. As God intended to justify the heathen through faith, he preached the Gospel that contains the grand display of the doctrine of salvation by faith, before, to Abraham, while he was in his heathen state; and thus he is called the father of believers: therefore it must refer to them who shall believe the same Gospel among the Gentiles; and, as the door of faith was open to all the Gentiles, consequently the promise was fulfilled: In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

**Verse 9. *They which be of faith***— All who believe, as Abraham has believed, are made partakers of Abraham’s blessings.

**Verse 10. *As many as are of the works of the law***— All that seek salvation by the performance of the works of the law are under the curse, because it is impossible for them to come up to the spiritual meaning and intent of the law; and the law pronounces them cursed that continue not in

all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. Hence, every Jew is necessarily under the curse of God's broken law; and every sinner is under the same curse, though he be not a Jew, who does not take refuge in the salvation provided for him by the Gospel. It is worthy of remark that no printed copy of the Hebrew Bible preserves the word כָּל col, ALL, in Deuteronomy 27:26, which answers to the apostle's word *πανσι*, all, here. St. Jerome says that the Jews suppressed it, lest it should appear that they were bound to perform all things that are written in the book of the law. Of the genuineness of the reading there is no cause to doubt: it exists in six MSS. of Kennicott and Deuteronomy Rossi, in the Samaritan text, in several copies of the Targum, in the Septuagint, and in the quotation made here by the apostle, in which there is no variation either in the MSS. or in the versions.

**Verse 11. *But that no man is justified by the law***— By the observance of the law, suppose he had even continued in all things that are written in it to do them, is evident; for the Prophet Habakkuk, Habakkuk 2:4, has declared, under the direct influence of the Spirit of God, The just shall live by faith; or, he who is just by faith shall live: therefore this justification comes not by works, or the observance of the law, but by faith.

**Verse 12. *And the law is not of faith***— It promises no forgiveness to believing, but requires obedience. It is not, What do you believe? but, What have you done? The man that doeth them perfectly, at all times, and in all places, he shall live in them; but if in any case he fails, he forfeits his life. See the notes on Romans 1:17, etc.

**Verse 13. *Christ hath redeemed us***— *εξηγορασεν*. Hath bought us with a price; viz. his blood, or life.

***Being made a curse for us***— Being made an atonement for our sins; for whatever was offered as an atonement for sin was considered as bearing the punishment due to sin, and the person who suffered for transgression was considered as bearing the curse in his body; therefore, in the same day in which a criminal was executed it was ordered that his body should be buried, that the land might not be polluted, because he that was hanged, which was the case with every heinous culprit, was considered accursed of God, Deuteronomy 21:22, 23; hence the necessity of removing the accursed THING out of sight.

**Verse 14. *That the blessing of Abraham***— That is, justification or the pardon of sin, with all other blessings consequent on it, such as peace with God, spiritual life, and eternal glory.

***Might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ***— So we find that he was made a curse for us, that the blessings promised to Abraham might be given to them who believe on him, as having been made a curse; i.e. an expiatory victim for them.

***The promise of the Spirit***— The spirit of adoption, sonship with God; and the Spirit of God to attest that sonship. And all this was through faith. Hence, from the beginning God had purposed that salvation should be through faith, and never expected that any soul of man should be justified by the works of the law; and only gave that law that the exceeding sinfulness of sin might appear, and that man might be prepared to welcome the Gospel, which proclaimed salvation to a lost world through the atoning passion and death of Christ.

**Verse 15. *I speak after the manner of men***— I am about to produce an example taken from civil transactions. If it be confirmed-If an agreement or bond be signed, sealed, and witnessed, and, in this country, being first duly stamped;

***No man disannulleth***— It stands under the protection of the civil law, and nothing can be legally erased or added.

**Verse 16. *Now to Abraham and his seed***— The promise of salvation by faith was made to Abraham and his posterity.

***He saith not, And to seeds***— It was one particular kind of posterity which was intended: but as of one-which is Christ; i.e. to the spiritual head, and all believers in him, who are children of Abraham, because they are believers, Galatians 3:7. But why does the apostle say, not of seeds, as of many? To this it is answered, that Abraham possessed in his family two seeds, one natural, viz. the members of his own household; and the other spiritual, those who were like himself because of their faith. The promises were not of a temporal nature; had they been so, they would have belonged to his natural seed; but they did not, therefore they must have belonged to the spiritual posterity. And as we know that promises of justification, etc., could not properly be made to Christ in himself, hence

we must conclude his members to be here intended, and the word Christ is put here for Christians. It is from Christ that the grace flows which constitutes Christians. Christians are those who believe after the example of Abraham; they therefore are the spiritual seed. Christ, working in and by these, makes them the light and salt of the world; and through them, under and by Christ, are all the nations of the earth blessed. This appears to be the most consistent interpretation, though every thing must be understood of Christ in the first instance, and then of Christians only through him.

**Verse 17. *Confirmed before of God in Christ***— i.e. The promise of justification, etc., made to believers in Christ Jesus, who are the spiritual seed of Christ, as they are children of Abraham, from the similitude of their faith. Abraham believed in God, and it was reckoned to him for justification; the Gentiles believed in Christ, and received justification. Probably the word Christ is to be taken, both here and in the preceding verse, for Christians, as has already been hinted. However it be taken, the sense is plainly the same; the promise of salvation must necessarily be to them who believe in Christ, for he is the promised seed, Genesis 3:15, through whom every blessing is derived on mankind; and through his spiritual seed—the true Christians, the conquests of the cross are daily spreading over the face of the earth. The present unparalleled dispersion of the sacred writings, in all the regular languages of the universe, is a full proof that all the nations of the earth are likely to be blessed through them; but they have nothing but what they have received from and through Christ.

***Four hundred and thirty years after***— God made a covenant with Abraham that the Messiah should spring from his posterity. This covenant stated that justification should be obtained by faith in the Messiah. The Messiah did not come till 1911 years after the making of this covenant, and the law was given 430 years after the covenant with Abraham, therefore the law, which was given 1481 years before the promise to Abram could be fulfilled, (for so much time elapsed between the giving of the law and the advent of Christ,) could not possibly annul the Abrahamic covenant. This argument is absolute and conclusive. Let us review it. The promise to Abraham respects the Messiah, and cannot be fulfilled but in him. Christians say the Messiah is come, but the advent of

him whom they acknowledge as the Messiah did not take place till 1911 years after the covenant was made, therefore no intermediate transaction can affect that covenant. But the law was an intermediate transaction, taking place 430 years after the covenant with Abraham, and could neither annul nor affect that which was not to have its fulfillment till 1481 years after. Justification by faith is promised in the Abrahamic covenant, and attributed to that alone, therefore it is not to be expected from the law, nor can its works justify any, for the law in this respect cannot annul or affect the Abrahamic covenant. But suppose ye say that the law, which was given 430 years after the covenant with Abraham, has superseded this covenant, and limited and confined its blessings to the Jews; I answer: This is impossible, for the covenant most specifically refers to the Messiah, and takes in, not the Jewish people only, but all nations; for it is written, In thy seed—the Messiah and his spiritual progeny, shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. This universal blessedness can never be confined, by any figure of speech, or by any legal act, to the Jewish people exclusively; and, as the covenant was legally made and confirmed, it cannot be annulled, it must therefore remain in reference to its object.

In opposition to us, the Jews assert that the Messiah is not yet come; then we assert, on that ground, that the promise is not yet fulfilled; for the giving of the law to one people cannot imply the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant, because that extends to all nations. However, therefore, the case be argued, the Jewish cause derives no benefit from it; and the conclusion still recurs, salvation cannot be attained by the works of the law, forasmuch as the covenant is of faith; and he only, as your prophets declare, who is justified by faith, shall live, or be saved. Therefore we still conclude that those who are only under the law are under the curse; and, as it says, he that doeth these things shall live in them, and he that sinneth shall die, there is no hope of salvation for any man from the law of Moses. And the Gospel of Jesus Christ, proclaiming salvation by faith to a sinful and ruined world, is absolutely necessary, nor can it be superseded by any other institution, whether human or Divine.

How we arrive at the sum of 430 years may be seen in the note on Exodus 12:40. Dr. Whitby also gives a satisfactory view of the matter. “The apostle refers to the promise made, Genesis 12:3, since from that only are the 430 years to be computed, for then Abraham was 75 years old,

Genesis 12:4; from thence to the birth of Isaac, which happened when Abraham was 100 years old, (Genesis 21:5,) 25 years; from his birth to the birth of Jacob, 60 years, for Isaac was 60 years old when Rebecca bare him, Genesis 25:26. From Jacob's birth to the descent into Egypt, 130 years, as he said to Pharaoh, Genesis 47:9. The abode of him and his posterity in Egypt was 215 years; so that, with their sojourning in Canaan, was 430 years;" the sum given here, and in Exodus 12:40, where see the notes.

**Verse 18.** *For if the inheritance be of the law*— See the preceding arguments, in which this is proved.

**Verse 19.** *Wherefore then serveth the law?*— If the law does not annul the Abrahamic covenant, and cannot confer salvation on its votaries, why did God give it? This was a very natural objection, and must arise in the mind of any Jew who had paid attention to the apostle's reasoning.

*It was added because of transgressions*— It was given that we might know our sinfulness, and the need we stood in of the mercy of God. The law is the right line, the straight edge, that determines the obliquity of our conduct. See the notes on Romans 4:15; and especially on Romans 5:20, where this subject is largely discussed, and the figure explained.

*Till the seed should come*— The law was to be in force till the advent of the Messiah. After that it was to cease.

*It was ordained by angels*— The ministry of angels was certainly used in giving the law; see Psalm 68:17; Acts 7:53; and Hebrews 2:2; but they were only instruments for transmitting; Moses was the mediator between God and the people, Deuteronomy 5:5.

**Verse 20.** *A mediator is not a mediator of one*— As a mediator, μεσιτης, signifies a middle person, there must necessarily be two parties, between whom he stands, and acts in reference to both, as he is supposed to have the interests of both equally at heart.

This verse is allowed to be both obscure and difficult; and it is certain that there is little consent among learned men and critics in their opinions concerning it. Rosenmuller thinks that the opinion of Nosselt is to be preferred to all others.

He first translates the words **ο δε μεσιτης ενος ουκ εστιν** thus: But he (viz. Moses) is not the mediator of that one race of Abraham, viz. the Christians; for **ενος** relates to the **σπερμα ω επηγγελται**, the seed that should come, Galatians 3:19, of which he said, **ως εφ' ενος**, as of one, Galatians 3:16. If Paul had written **ο δε μεσιτης του ενος εκεινου ουκ εστι**, he is not the mediator of one, no person would have had any doubt that **σπερματος**, seed, ought to be supplied after **ενος**, of one, Galatians 3:19-20. The same mode of speaking Paul uses, Romans 5:17; **ο δε**, but he, **ο** for **αυτος**, Matthew 12:3, 11, 39, **ο δε ειπεν**, but he said. Though Moses was the Mediator between God and the Israelites, yet he was not the mediator between God and that one seed which was to come; viz. the Gentiles who should believe in Christ.

**But God is one.**— He is the one God, who is the Father of the spirits of all flesh; the God of the Gentiles as well as the God of the Jews. That this is St. Paul's meaning is evident from his use of the same words in other places, 1 Timothy 2:5: **εις γαρ θεος**, etc., for there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, that is, there is only one God and one mediator for the whole human race; Ephesians 4:5, 6: One Lord, one faith, one baptism, **εις θεος και πατηρ παντων**, ONE GOD and Father of ALL. The sense of the whole is: Moses was the mediator of one part of Abraham's seed, viz. the Israelites; but of the other seed, the Gentiles, he was certainly not the mediator; for the mediator of that seed, according to the promise of God, and covenant made with Abraham, is Christ.

Though Nosselt has got great credit for this interpretation, it was given in substance long before him by Dr. Whitby, as may be seen in the following words: "But this mediator (Moses) was only the mediator of the Jews, and so was only the mediator of one party, to whom belonged the blessings of Abraham, Galatians 3:8, 14. But GOD, who made the promise that in one should all the families of the earth be blessed, IS ONE; the God of the other party, the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews, **επειπερ εις ο θεος**, seeing he is ONE GOD, who will justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith, Romans 3:30." This exposition is so plain, and so well supported by the different scriptures already quoted, that there can be but small, if any, doubt of its propriety. The clause has been translated thus: "Now a mediator supposes two parties, of which God is but one."



**Verse 21. *Is the law then against the promises of God?***— Is it possible that the intervention of the law, in reference to one part of the Abrahamic seed, should annul the promise made to the other? It is impossible.

***For if there had been a law***, etc.— If any law or rule of life could have been found out that would have given life-saved sinners from death, and made them truly happy, then righteousness- justification, should have been by that law.

**Verse 22. *But the scripture hath concluded***— All the writings of the prophets have uniformly declared that men are all sinners, and the law declares the same by the continual sacrifices which it prescribes. All, therefore have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; and, being tried and found guilty, **συνεκλεισεν η γραφη**, the Scripture hath shut them up-put them in prison, and locked them up, till the time should come in which the sentence of the law should be executed upon them: (See Romans 3:9-20, and the notes there; and particularly Romans 11:32, where the apostle uses the same metaphor, and which in the note is particularly explained.)

That the promise of justification, by faith of Jesus Christ, might be given to them that believe.

**Verse 23. *But before faith came***— Before the Gospel was published.

***We were kept under the law, shut up***— **εφρουρουμεθα**. We were kept as in a strong hold, **συγκεκλεισμενοι**, locked up, unto the faith-the religion of the Lord Jesus, which should afterwards be revealed. Here the same metaphor is used as above, and for its explanation I must refer the reader to the same place, Romans 11:32.

**Verse 24. *The law was our schoolmaster***— **ο νομος παιδαγωγος ημων γεγονεν εις χριστον**. The law was our pedagogue unto Christ. The **παιδαγωγος**, pedagogue, is not the schoolmaster, but the servant who had the care of the children to lead them to and bring them back from school, and had the care of them out of school hours. Thus the law did not teach us the living, saving knowledge; but, by its rites and ceremonies, and especially by its sacrifices, it directed us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. This is a beautiful metaphor, and highly illustrative of

the apostle's doctrine. See the note on Romans 10:4, where this figure is farther explained.

**Verse 25. *But, after that faith is come***— When Christ was manifested in the flesh, and the Gospel was preached, we were no longer under the pedagogue; we came to Christ, learned of him, became wise unto salvation, had our fruit unto holiness, and the end eternal life.

It is worthy of remark that, as ο νομος, the LAW, is used by St. Paul to signify, not only the law, properly so called, but the whole of the Mosaic economy, so η πιστις, the FAITH, is used by him to express, not merely the act of believing in Christ, but the whole of the Gospel.

**Verse 26. *For ye, who have believed the Gospel, are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.***— But no man is a child of God by circumcision, nor by observance of the Mosaic law.

**Verse 27. *As many of you as have been baptized into Christ***— All of you who have believed in Christ as the promised Messiah, and received baptism as a public proof that ye had received Christ as your Lord and Savior, have put on Christ—have received his Spirit, and entered into his interests, and copied his manners. To put on, or to be clothed with one, is to assume the person and character of that one; and they who do so are bound to act his part, and to sustain the character which they have assumed. The profession of Christianity is an assumption of the character of Christ; he has left us an example that we should follow his steps, and we should, as Christians, have that mind in us which was in him. See the notes on Romans 6:3, 4; and especially those on Romans 13:14, where this phrase is farther explained.

**Verse 28. *There is neither Jew nor Greek***— ἑλλην, Greek, is put here for εθνικος, heathen. Under the Gospel all distinctions are done away, as either helping or hindering; all are equally welcome to Christ, and all have an equal need of him; all persons of all sects, and conditions, and sexes, who believe in him, become one family through him; they are one body, of which he is the head.

***Neither male nor female***— With great reason the apostle introduces this. Between the privileges of men and women there was a great disparity among the Jews. A man might shave his head, and rend his clothes in the

time of mourning; a woman was not permitted to do so. A man might impose the vow of nasirate upon his son; a woman could not do this on her daughter. A man might be shorn on account of the nasirate of his father; a woman could not. A man might betroth his daughter; a woman had no such power. A man might sell his daughter; a woman could not. In many cases they were treated more like children than adults; and to this day are not permitted to assemble with the men in the synagogues, but are put up in galleries, where they can scarcely see, nor can they be seen. Under the blessed spirit of Christianity, they have equal rights, equal privileges, and equal blessings; and, let me add, they are equally useful.

**Verse 29. *And if ye be Christ's***— Or, as several good MSS. read, If ye be one in Christ. If ye have all received justification through his blood, and the mind that was in him, then are ye Abraham's seed; ye are that real, spiritual posterity of Abraham, that other seed, to whom the promises were made; and then heirs, according to that promise, being fitted for the rest that remains for the people of God, that heavenly inheritance which was typified by the earthly Canaan, even to the Jews.

1. THE Galatians, it appears, had begun well, and for a time run well, but they permitted Satan to hinder, and they stopped short of the prize. Let us beware of those teachers who would draw us away from trusting in Christ crucified. By listening to such the Galatians lost their religion.
2. The temptation that leads us astray may be as sudden as it is successful. We may lose in one moment the fruit of a whole life! How frequently is this the case, and how few lay it to heart! A man may fall by the means of his understanding, as well as by means of his passions.
3. How strange is it that there should be found any backslider! that one who once felt the power of Christ should ever turn aside! But it is still stranger that any one who has felt it, and given in his life and conversation full proof that he has felt it, should not only let it slip, but at last deny that he ever had it, and even ridicule a work of grace in the heart! Such instances have appeared among men.
4. The Jewish covenant, the sign of which was circumcision, is annulled, though the people with whom it was made are still preserved, and they preserve the rite or sign. Why then should the covenant be annulled? This

question admits a twofold answer. This covenant was designed to last only for a time, and when that time came, having waxed old, it vanished away. 2. It was long before that void, through want of the performance of the conditions. The covenant did not state merely, ye shall be circumcised, and observe all the rites and ceremonies of the law; but, ye shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and your neighbor as yourself. This condition, which was the very soul of the covenant, was universally broken by that people. Need they wonder, therefore, that God has cast them off? Jesus alone can restore them, and him they continue to reject. To us the new covenant says the same things: Ye shall love the Lord, etc.; if we do not so, we also shall be cut off. Take heed, lest he who did not spare the natural branches, spare not thee; therefore, make a profitable use of the goodness and severity of God.

## CHAPTER 4.

*The apostle shows that, as an heir in nonage is under tutors and guardians, so were the Galatians while under the law; and, as the heir when he comes of age is no longer under guardians, so they, when the Gospel came, arrived at full maturity, and were redeemed from the law, 1-3. He shows, farther, that when the fullness of the time came God sent forth his Son, that we might obtain the adoption of sons, and have the strongest evidence of that adoption, 4-6. Those who are children of God are heirs of heaven, 7. He compares their former and latter state, and shows the reason he had to fear that his labor on their behalf was in vain, 8-11. He mentions his trials among them, and their kindness to him, 12-16. Shows his tender affection for them, and exhorts them to return to the Gospel, 17-20. Shows the excellence of the Gospel beyond that of the law, by the allegory of Mount Sinai and Jerusalem, 21-27. Shows also that the believing Gentiles are children of the promise, as Isaac was; and have been elected in the place of the Jews, who have been cast out according to the Scriptures, 28-31.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 4.

**Verse 1.** *The heir, as long as He is a child*— Though he be appointed by his father's will heir of all his possessions yet till he arrive at the legal age he is master of nothing, and does not differ from one of the common domestics.

**Verse 2.** *But is under tutors*— **ἐπιτροπούς**· Guardians and governors; **οἰκονομούς**· those who have the charge of the family. These words are nearly similar; but we may consider the first as executor, the last as the person who superintends the concerns of the family and estate till the heir become of age; such as we call trustee.

*Until the time appointed of the father.*— The time mentioned in the father's will or testament.

**Verse 3. *Even so we***— The whole Jewish people were in a state of nonage while under the law.

***The elements of the world***— A mere Jewish phrase, יסודי עולם הזה, yesodey olam hazzeh, “the principles of this world;” that is, the rudiments or principles of the Jewish religion. The apostle intimates that the law was not the science of salvation, it was only the elements or alphabet of it; and in the Gospel this alphabet is composed into a most glorious system of Divine knowledge: but as the alphabet is nothing of itself, unless compounded into syllables, words, sentences, and discourses; so the law, taken by itself, gives no salvation; it contains indeed the outlines of the Gospel, but it is the Gospel alone that fills up these outlines.

**Verse 4. *When the fullness of the time was come***— The time which God in his infinite wisdom counted best; in which all his counsels were filled up; and the time which his Spirit, by the prophets, had specified; and the time to which he intended the Mosaic institutions should extend, and beyond which they should be of no avail.

***God sent forth his Son***— Him who came immediately from God himself, made of a woman, according to the promise, Genesis 3:15; produced by the power of God in the womb of the Virgin Mary without any intervention of man; hence he was called the Son of God. See Luke, Luke 1:35, and the note there.

***Made under the law***— In subjection to it, that in him all its designs might be fulfilled, and by his death the whole might be abolished; the law dying when the Son of God expired upon the cross.

**Verse 5. *To redeem them***— εξαγοραση. To pay down a price for them, and thus buy them off from the necessity of observing circumcision, offering brute sacrifices, performing different ablutions, etc., etc.

***That we might receive the adoption of sons.***— Which adoption we could not obtain by the law; for it is the Gospel only that puts us among the children, and gives us a place in the heavenly family. On the nature of adoption see the notes on Romans 8:15.

**Verse 6. *And because ye are sons***— By faith in Christ Jesus, being redeemed both from the bondage and curse of the law; GOD-the Father, called generally the first person of the glorious TRINITY, hath sent forth the SPIRIT-the Holy Ghost, the second person of that Trinity, of his SON-Jesus Christ, the third person of the Trinity-crying, Abba, Father! from the fullest and most satisfactory evidence that God, the Father, Son, and Spirit, had become their portion. For the explanation of the phrase, and why the Greek and Syriac terms are joined together here, see the notes on Mark 14:36, and on Romans 8:15.

**Verse 7. *Thou art no more a servant***— Thou who hast believed in Christ art no longer a slave, either under the dominion of sin or under obligation to the Mosaic ritual; but a son of God, adopted into the heavenly family.

***And if a son, then an heir***— Having a right to the inheritance, because one of the family, for none can inherit but the children; but this heirship is the most extraordinary of all: it is not an heirship of any tangible possession, either in heaven or earth; it is not to possess a part or even the whole of either, it is to possess Him who made all things; not God's works, but God himself: heirs of GOD through Christ.

**Verse 8. *When ye knew not God***— Though it is evident, from the complexion of the whole of this epistle, that the great body of the Christians in the Churches of Galatia were converts from among the Jews or proselytes to Judaism; yet from this verse it appears that there were some who had been converted from heathenism; unless we suppose that the apostle here particularly addresses those who had been proselytes to Judaism and thence converted to Christianity; which appears to be most likely from the following verses.

**Verse 9. *Now, after that ye have known God***— After having been brought to the knowledge of God as your Savior.

***Or rather are known of God***— Are approved of him, having received the adoption of sons.

***To the weak and beggarly elements***— After receiving all this, will ye turn again to the ineffectual rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law-rites too weak to counteract your sinful habits, and too poor to purchase pardon and eternal life for you? If the Galatians were turning again to them, it is

evident that they had been once addicted to them. And this they might have been, allowing that they had become converts from heathenism to Judaism, and from Judaism to Christianity. This makes the sense consistent between the 8th and 9th verses. {Galatians 4:8-9.}

**Verse 10. *Ye observe days***— Ye superstitiously regard the Sabbaths and particular days of your own appointment;

***And months***— New moons; times-festivals, such as those of tabernacles, dedication, passover, etc.

***Years***.— Annual atonements, sabbatical years, and jubilees.

**Verse 11. *I am afraid of you***— I begin now to be seriously alarmed for you, and think you are so thoroughly perverted from the Gospel of Christ, that all my pains and labor in your conversion have been thrown away.

**Verse 12. *Be as I am***— Thoroughly addicted to the Christian faith and worship, from the deepest conviction of its truth.

***For I am as ye are***— I was formerly a Jew, and as zealously addicted to the rites and ceremonies of Judaism as ye are, but I am saved from that mean and unprofitable dependence: “Be therefore as I am now; who was once as you now are.” Others think the sense to be this: “Be as affectionate to me as I am to you; for ye were once as loving to me as I am now to you.”

***Ye have not injured me at all***.— I do not thus earnestly entreat you to return to your Christian profession because your perversion has been any loss to me, nor because your conversion can be to me any gain: ye have not injured me at all, ye only injure yourselves; and I entreat you, through the intense love I bear to you, as my once beloved brethren in Christ Jesus, to return to him from whom ye have revolted.

**Verse 13. *Ye know how through infirmity***— The apostle seems to say that he was much afflicted in body when he first preached the Gospel to them. And is this any strange thing, that a minister, so laborious as St. Paul was, should be sometimes overdone and overcome by the severity of his labors? Surely not. This might have been only an occasional affliction, while laboring in that part of Asia Minor; and not a continual and incurable infirmity, as some have too hastily conjectured.



**Verse 14.** *And my temptation which was in my flesh*— On this verse there are a great many various readings, as there are various opinions.

Instead of μου, MY temptation, ABC\*D\*FG, some others, with the Coptic, Vulgate, Itala, and several of the primitive fathers, have υμων, YOUR temptation.

The word *πειρασμον*, which we translate temptation, signifies trial of any kind. The verse therefore may be read, “Ye despised not the trial which was in my flesh;” or, “Ye despised not your trial, which was in my flesh;” i.e. what my flesh suffered on your account, the afflictions I passed through in consequence of my severe labors on your account. You did not consider me less an apostle of God on account of my sinking for a time under the weight of my work. Had they been disaffected towards him at that time, they would have used this to the prejudice of his apostolic mission. “What! do you pretend to be an extraordinary messenger from God, and yet are suffered to fall into sickness under the severity of your labor? If God sent you, would he not sustain you?” This would have been quite natural, had they not been well affected toward him. But, on the contrary, notwithstanding these afflictions, they received him as an angel of God — as a messenger from heaven, and as Jesus Christ himself. This appears to me to be the simple meaning of the apostle, and that he neither alludes to a bodily nor mental infirmity, which generally or periodically afflicted him, as some have imagined. Nor does he appear at all to speak of the same case as that mentioned 2 Corinthians 12:7, where I wish the reader to consult the notes. That St. Paul had frequent and severe afflictions, in consequence of his constant and severe exertions in the Gospel ministry, we may readily believe, and of this his own words bear sufficient testimony.

See his affecting account, 2 Corinthians 11:23-29, and the notes there.

**Verse 15.** *Where is then the blessedness ye spake of?*— Ye spake of should be in italics, there being no corresponding word in the Greek text. Perhaps there is not a sentence in the New Testament more variously translated than this. I shall give the original: *τις σου ην ο μακαρισμος υμων*. What was then your blessedness! Or, How great was your happiness at that time! Or, What blessings did ye then pour on me! It is worthy of remark, that, instead of *τις*, what, ABCFG, several others, the

older Syriac, the later Syriac in the margin, the Armenian, Vulgate, one copy of the Itala, and some of the fathers, have **πov**, where; and **ηv**, was, is omitted by ACD, several others, also the Vulgate, Itala, and the Latin fathers. According to these authorities the text should be read thus: Where then is your blessedness? Having renounced the Gospel, you have lost your happiness. What have your false teachers given you to compensate the loss of communion with God, or that Spirit of adoption, that Spirit of Christ, by which you cried Abba, Father! If, however, we understand the words as implying the benedictions they then heaped on the apostle, the sense will be sufficiently natural, and agree well with the concluding part of the verse; for I bear you record, that, if possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. You had then the strongest affection for me; you loved God, and you loved me for God's sake, and were ready to give me the most unequivocal proof of your love.

Dearer than one's eyes, or to profess to give one's eyes for the sake of a person, appears to have been a proverbial expression, intimating the highest tokens of the strongest affection. We find a similar form of speech in Terence, *Adelphi*, act iv., scene 5, ver. 67.

— *Di me pater Omnes oderint, ni magis te  
quam oculos nunc ego amo meos.*

“*O father, may all the gods hate me,  
if I do not love you now more than my own eyes.*”

**Verse 16. *Amos I therefore become your enemy***— How is it that you are so much altered towards me, that you now treat me as an enemy, who formerly loved me with the most fervent affection? Is it because I tell you the truth; that very truth for which you at first so ardently loved me?

**Verse 17. *They zealously affect you, but not well***— It is difficult for common readers to understand the meaning of these words: perhaps it would be better to translate **ζηλουσιν υμας ου καλως**, these false teachers endeavor to conciliate your esteem, but not in honest or true principles; they work themselves into your good graces; they wish you to place all your affection upon themselves.

***They would exclude you***— They wish to shut you out from the affection of your apostle, that you might affect them, **ινα αυτους ζηλουτε**, that

you might love them alone, hear them alone, abide by their directions only, and totally abandon him who called you into the grace of the Gospel of Christ. Some MSS. read **ημας**, us, instead of **υμας**, you; they wish to shut us entirely out from among you, that you may receive and believe them alone. The sense is nearly the same but the former appears to be the more authentic reading.

**Verse 18. *It is good to be zealously affected***— It is well to have a determined mind and an ardent heart in reference to things which are laudable and good.

***Not only when I am present***— You were thus attached to me when I was among you, but now ye have lost both your reverence and affection for me. Your false teachers pretended great concern for you, that you might put all your confidence in them; they have gained their end; they have estranged you from me, and got you to renounce the Gospel, and have brought you again into your former bondage.

**Verse 19. *My little children***— **τεκνια μου**· My beloved children. As their conversion to God had been the fruit of much labor, prayers, and

**Verse 21. *Ye that desire to be under the law***— Ye who desire to incorporate the Mosaic institutions with Christianity, and thus bring yourselves into bondage to circumcision, and a great variety of oppressive rites.

***Do ye not hear the law?***— Do ye not understand what is written in the Pentateuch relative to Abraham and his children. It is evident that the word law is used in two senses in this verse. It first means the Mosaic institutions; secondly, the Pentateuch, where the history is recorded to which the apostle refers.

**Verse 22. *For it is written***— Viz. in Genesis 16:15; 22:1, etc., that Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac; the one, Ishmael, by a bond maid, Hagar; the other, Isaac, by a free woman, Sarah.

**Verse 23. *Was born after the flesh***— Ishmael was born according to the course of nature, his parents being both of a proper age, so that there was nothing uncommon or supernatural in his birth: this is the proper meaning of the apostle's *κατα σαρκα*, after or according to the flesh, and answers to the Hebrew phrase, *בשר על דרך* al derec basar, according to the manner of the flesh, i.e. naturally, according to the common process of nature.

***By promise.***— Both Abraham and Sarah had passed that age in which the procreation of children was possible on natural principles. The birth, therefore, of Isaac was supernatural; it was the effect of an especial promise of God; and it was only on the ground of that promise that it was either credible or possible.

**Verse 24. *Which things are an allegory***— They are to be understood spiritually; more being intended in the account than meets the eye.

Allegory, from *αλλος*, another, and *αγορευω*, or *αγορευω*, to speak, signifies a thing that is a representative of another, where the literal sense is the representative of a spiritual meaning; or, as the glossary expresses it, *ετερως κατα μεταφρασιν νοουμενα, και ου κατα την αναγνωσιν*· “where the thing is to be understood differently in the interpretation than it appears in the reading.”

Allegories are frequent in all countries, and are used by all writers. In the life of Homer, the author, speaking of the marriage of Jupiter and Juno, related by that poet, says: **δοκει ταυτα αλληγορεισθαι, οτι ἡρα μεν νοειται ο αηρ-ξευς δε, ο αιθηρ.** “It appears that these things are to be understood allegorically; for Juno means the air, Jupiter the aether.”

Plutarch, in his treatise Deuteronomy Iside et Osir., says: **ωσπερ ἕλληνες κρονον αλληγορουσι τον χρονον.** “As the Greeks allegorize Cronos (Saturn) into Chronos (Time.)” It is well known how fond the Jews were of allegorizing. Every thing in the law was with them an allegory. Their Talmud is full of these; and one of their most sober and best educated writers, Philo, abounds with them. Speaking (Deuteronomy Migrat. Abrah., page 420) of the five daughters of Zelophehad, he says: **αυ αλληγορουντες αισθησεις ειναι φαμεν.** “which, allegorizing, we assert to be the five senses!”

It is very likely, therefore, that the allegory produced here, St. Paul had borrowed from the Jewish writings; and he brings it in to convict the Judaizing Galatians on their own principles; and neither he nor we have any thing farther to do with this allegory than as it applies to the subject for which it is quoted; nor does it give any license to those men of vain and superficial minds who endeavor to find out allegories in every portion of the sacred writings, and, by what they term spiritualizing, which is more properly carnalizing, have brought the testimonies of God into disgrace. May the spirit of silence be poured out upon all such corrupters of the word of God!

***For these are the two covenants***— These signify two different systems of religion; the one by Moses, the other by the Messiah.

***The one from the Mount Sinai***— On which the law was published; which was typified by Hagar, Abraham’s bond maid.

***Which gendereth to bondage***— For as the bond maid or slave could only gender-bring forth her children, in a state of slavery, and subject also to become slaves, so all that are born and live under those Mosaic institutions are born and live in a state of bondage—a bondage to various rites and ceremonies; under the obligation to keep the whole law, yet, from its severity and their frailness, obliged to live in the habitual breach of it, and in consequence exposed to the curse which it pronounces.

**Verse 25. *For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia***— το γαρ αγαρ σινα ορος εστιν εν τη αραβια. This is the common reading; but it is read differently in some of the most respectable MSS., versions, and fathers; thus: το γαρ σινα ορος εστιν εν τη αραβια, for this Sinai is a mountain of Arabia; the word αγαρ, Agar, being omitted. This reading is supported by CFG, some others, the AEthiopic, Armenian, Vulgate, and one copy of the Itala; by Epiphanius, Damascenus, Ambrosiaster, Jerome, Augustine, Hilary, Sedulius, and Bede; and the word is sometimes, though not always, omitted by Cyril and Origen, which proves that in their time there were doubts concerning the common reading.

Of the word Agar in this verse, which renders the passage very obscure and difficult, Professor White says, forsitan delendum, “probably it should be expunged.” Griesbach has left it in the text with a note of doubtfulness.

***Answereth to Jerusalem***— Hagar, the bond maid, bringing forth children in a state of slavery, answereth to Jerusalem that now is, συστοιχει, points out, or, bears a similitude to, Jerusalem in her present state of subjection; which, with her children — her citizens, is not only in bondage to the Romans, but in a worse bondage to the law, to its oppressive ordinances, and to the heavy curse which it has pronounced against all those who do not keep them.

**Verse 26. *But Jerusalem which is above***— The apostle still follows the Jewish allegory, showing not only how the story of Hagar and Sarah, Ishmael and Isaac, was allegorized, but pointing out also that even Jerusalem was the subject of allegory; for it was a maxim among the rabbins, that “whatsoever was in the earth, the same was also found in heaven for there is no matter, howsoever small, in this world, that has not something similar to it in the spiritual world.” On this maxim, the Jews imagine that every earthly thing has its representative in heaven; and especially whatever concerns Jerusalem, the law, and its ordinances. Rab. Kimchi, speaking of Melchizedec, king of Salem, says: של מעלה זו ירושלם zu Yerushalem shel malah, “This is the Jerusalem that is from above.” This phrase frequently occurs among these writers, as may be seen in Schoettgen, who has written an express dissertation upon the subject. Hor. Hebr., vol. i. page 1205.

*Is free, which is the mother of us all.*— There is a spiritual Jerusalem, of which this is the type; and this Jerusalem, in which the souls of all the righteous are, is free from all bondage and sin: or by this, probably, the kingdom of the Messiah was intended; and this certainly answers best to the apostle's meaning, as the subsequent verse shows. There is an earthly Jerusalem, but this earthly Jerusalem typifies a heavenly Jerusalem: the former, with all her citizens, is in bondage; the latter is a free city, and all her inhabitants are free also. And this Jerusalem is our mother; it signifies the Church of Christ, the metropolis of Christianity, or rather the state of liberty into which all true believers are brought. The word *παντων*, of all, is omitted by almost every MS. and version of antiquity and importance, and by the most eminent of the fathers who quote this place; it is undoubtedly spurious, and the text should be read thus: But Jerusalem, which is above, is free, which is our mother.

**Verse 27. *Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not***— This quotation is taken from Isaiah 54:1, and is certainly a promise which relates to the conversion of the Gentiles, as the following clause proves; for the desolate — the Gentile world, hath many more children — is a much larger and more numerous Church, than she-Jerusalem, the Jewish state, which hath a husband — has been so long in covenant with God, living under his continual protection, and in possession of a great variety of spiritual advantages; and especially those offered to her by the Gospel, which she has rejected, and which the Gentiles have accepted.

**Verse 28. *Now we***— Who believe in the Lord Jesus, are the children of promise — are the spiritual offspring of the Messiah, the seed of Abraham, in whom the promise stated that all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

**Verse 29. *But as then he***— Ishmael, who was born after the flesh — whose birth had nothing supernatural in it, but was according to the ordinary course of nature,

***Persecuted him***— Isaac, who was born after the Spirit — who had a supernatural birth, according to the promise, and through the efficacy, of the Holy Spirit, giving effect to that promise—Sarah shall have a son, Genesis 17:16-21; 21:1, etc.

Persecuted him; the persecution here referred to is that mentioned Genesis 21:9. It consisted in mocking his brother Isaac.

***Even so it is now.***— So the Jews, in every place, persecute the Christians; and show thereby that they are rather of the posterity of Hagar than of Sarah.

**Verse 30. *What saith the Scripture?***— (In Genesis 21:10:) Cast out the bond woman and her son: and what does this imply in the present case? Why, that the present Jerusalem and her children shall be cast out of the favor of God, and shall not be heirs with the son of the free woman — shall not inherit the blessings promised to Abraham, because they believe not in the promised seed.

**Verse 31. *So then***— We — Jews and Gentiles, who believe on the Lord Jesus, are not children of the bond woman — are not in subjection to the Jewish law, but of the free; and, consequently, are delivered from all its bondage, obligation, and curse.

Thus the apostle, from their own Scripture, explained by their own allegory, proves that it is only by Jesus Christ that they can have redemption; and because they have not believed in him, therefore they continue to be in bondage; and that shortly God will deliver them up into a long and grievous captivity: for we may naturally suppose that the apostle has reference to what had been so often foretold by the prophets, and confirmed by Jesus Christ himself; and this was the strongest argument he could use, to show the Galatians their folly and their danger in submitting again to the bondage from which they had escaped, and exposing themselves to the most dreadful calamities of an earthly kind, as well as to the final ruin of their souls. They desired to be under the law; then they must take all the consequences; and these the apostle sets fairly before them.

1. WE sometimes pity the Jews, who continue to reject the Gospel. Many who do so have no pity for themselves; for is not the state of a Jew, who systematically rejects Christ, because he does not believe him to be the promised Messiah, infinitely better than his, who, believing every thing that the Scripture teaches concerning Christ, lives under the power and guilt of sin? If the Jews be in a state of nonage, because they believe not



the doctrines of Christianity, he is in a worse state than that of infancy who is not born again by the power of the Holy Ghost. Reader, whosoever thou art, lay this to heart.

2. The 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th verses of this chapter (Galatians 4:4-7) contain the sum and marrow of Christian divinity. (1.) The determination of God to redeem the world by the incarnation of his Son. (2.) The manifestation of this Son in the fullness of time. (3.) The circumstances in which this Son appeared: sent forth; made of a woman; made under the law; to be a sufferer; and to die as a sacrifice. (4.) The redemption of the world, by the death of Christ: he came to redeem them that were under the law, who were condemned and cursed by it. (5.) By the redemption price he purchases sonship or adoption for mankind. (6.) He, God the Father, sends the Spirit, God the Holy Ghost, of God the Son, into the hearts of believers, by which they, through the full confidence of their adoption, call him their Father. (7.) Being made children, they become heirs, and God is their portion throughout eternity. Thus, in a few words, the whole doctrine of grace is contained, and an astonishing display made of the unutterable mercy of God. See the notes on these verses.

3. While the Jews were rejecting the easy yoke of Christ, they were painfully observing days, and months, and times and years. Superstition has far more labor to perform than true religion has; and at last profits nothing! Most men, either from false views of religion, or through the power and prevalency of their own evil passions and habits, have ten thousand times more trouble to get to hell, than the followers of God have to get to heaven.

4. Even in the perverted Galatians the apostle finds some good; and he mentions with great feeling those amiable qualities which they once possessed. The only way to encourage men to seek farther good is to show them what they have got, and to make this a reason why they should seek more. He who wishes to do good to men, and is constantly dwelling on their bad qualities and graceless state, either irritates or drives them to despair. There is, perhaps, no sinner on this side perdition who has not something good in him. Mention the good-it is God's work; and

especially be used in addressing Christian societies, and particularly those which are in a declining state.

5. The Galatians were once the firm friends of the apostle, and loved him so well that they would have even plucked out their eyes for him; and yet these very people cast him off, and counted and treated him as an enemy! O sad fickleness of human nature! O uncertainty of human friendships! An undesigned word, or look, or action, becomes the reason to a fickle heart why it should divest itself of the spirit of friendship; and he who was as dear to them as their own souls, is neglected and forgotten! Blessed God! hast thou not said that there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother? Where is he? Can such a one be trusted long on this unkindly earth? He is fit for the society of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect; and thou takest him in mercy lest he should lose his friendly heart, or lest his own heart should be broken in losing that of his friend. Hasten, Lord, a more perfect state, where the spirit of thy own love in thy followers shall expand, without control or hinderance, throughout eternity! Amen.

6. On allegorizing, in explaining the word of God, something has already been said, under Galatians 4:24; but on the subject of allegory in general much might be said. The very learned and accurate critic, Dr. Lowth, in his work, *Deuteronomy Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum*, has entered at large into the subject of allegory, as existing in the sacred writings, in which he has discovered three species of this rhetorical figure. 1. That which rhetoricians term a continued metaphor. See Solomon's portraiture of old age, Ecclesiastes 12:2-6. A second kind of allegory is that which, in a more proper and restricted sense, may be called parable. See Matthew 13, and the note on Matthew 13:3, etc. The third species of allegory is that in which a double meaning is couched under the same words. These are called mystical allegories, and the two meanings are termed the literal and mystical senses. For examples of all these kinds I must refer to the learned prelate above named.

## CHAPTER 5.

*The apostle exhorts the Galatians to stand fast in the liberty of the Gospel, and not by receiving circumcision bring themselves into a yoke of bondage, 1-4. Shows the superior excellence of Christianity, 5, 6. Mentions their former steadiness, and warns them against the bad doctrine which was then preached among them, 7-9. Expresses his confidence that they will yet return; and shows that he who perverted them shall bear his own punishment, 10-12. States that they are called to liberty, and that love is the fulfilling of the law, 13, 14. Warns them against dissensions, and enumerates the fruits of the flesh, which exclude those who bear them from the kingdom of God, 15-21. Enumerates also the fruits of the Spirit, which characterize the disciples of Christ, 22-24. Exhorts them to live in the Spirit, and not provoke each other, 25, 26.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 5.

**Verse 1. *Stand fast therefore in the liberty***— This is intimately connected with the preceding chapter: the apostle having said, just before, So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond woman, but of the free, immediately adds, Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. Hold fast your Christian profession; it brings spiritual liberty: on the contrary, Judaism brings spiritual bondage. Among the Jews, the Messiah's reign was to be a reign of liberty, and hence the Targum, on Lamentations 2:22, says: "Liberty shall be publicly proclaimed to thy people of the house of Israel, **על יד משיחא** al yad Mashicha, by the hand of the Messiah, such as was granted to them by Moses and Aaron at the time of the passover."

The liberty mentioned by the apostle is freedom from Jewish rites and ceremonies, called properly here the yoke of bondage; and also liberty from the power and guilt of sin, which nothing but the grace of Christ can take away.

**Verse 2. *If ye be circumcised***— By circumcision you take on you the whole obligation of the Jewish law, and consequently profess to seek salvation by means of its observances; and therefore Christ can profit you nothing; for, by seeking justification by the works of the law, you renounce justification by faith in Christ.

**Verse 3. *He is a debtor to do the whole law***.— Lays himself, by receiving circumcision, under the obligation to fulfill all its precepts, ordinances, etc.

**Verse 4. *Christ is become of no effect unto you***— It is vain for you to attempt to unite the two systems. You must have the law and no Christ, or Christ and no law, for your justification.

***Ye are fallen from grace***.— From the Gospel. They had been brought into the grace of the Gospel; and now, by readopting the Mosaic ordinances, they had apostatized from the Gospel as a system of religion, and had lost the grace communicated to their souls, by which they were preserved in a state of salvation. The peace and love of God, received by Jesus Christ, could not remain in the hearts of those who had rejected Christ. They had, therefore, in every sense of the word, fallen from grace; and whether some of them ever rose again is more than we can tell.

**Verse 5. *For we, Christians, through the Spirit***— Through the operation of the Holy Ghost, under this spiritual dispensation of the Gospel, wait for the hope of righteousness — expect that which is the object of our hope, on our being justified by faith in Christ. Righteousness, **δικαιοσυνη**, may here, as in many other places of St. Paul's epistles, mean justification, and the hope of justification, or the hope excited and inspired by it, is the possession of eternal glory; for, says the apostle, Romans 5:1, 2, Being justified by faith, we have peace with God-and rejoice in HOPE of the GLORY of GOD. But, as this glory is necessarily future, it is to be waited for; but this waiting, in a thorough Christian, is not only a blessed expectation, but also a continual anticipation of it; and therefore the apostle says, **απεκδεχομεθα**, we receive out if it, from **απο**, from **εκ**, out of, and **δεχομαι**, I receive. This is no fanciful derivation; it exists in the experience of every genuine Christian; he is continually anticipating or receiving foretastes of that glory, the fullness of which he expects after death. Thus they are receiving the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls. 1 Peter 1:9.

That they could not have the Holy Spirit without faith, was a doctrine also of the Jews; hence it is said, Mechilta, fol. 52: “That faith was of great consequence with which the Israelites believed in Him who, with one word, created the universe; and because the Israelites believed in God, the Holy Spirit dwelt in them; so that, being filled with God, they sang praises to him.” Cicero, Deuteronomy Nat. Deor., lib. ii., has said: *Nemo vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu divino unquam fuit*: “There never was a great man who had not some measure of the Divine influence.” However true this may be with respect to the great men of the Roman orator, we may safely assert there never was a true Christian who had not the inspiration of God’s Holy Spirit.

**Verse 6. *For in Jesus Christ***— By the dispensation of the Gospel all legal observances, as essential to salvation, are done away; and uncircumcision, or the Gentile state, contributes as much to salvation as circumcision or the Jewish state; they are both equally ineffectual; and nothing now avails in the sight of God but that faith *δι’ ἀγαπῆς ενεργουμένη*, which is made active, or energetic, by love. God acknowledges no faith, as of the operation of his Spirit, that is not active or obedient; but the principle of all obedience to God, and beneficence to man, is love; therefore faith cannot work unless it be associated with love. Love to God produces obedience to his will: love to man worketh no ill; but, on the contrary, every act of kindness. Faith which does not work by love is either circumcision or uncircumcision, or whatever its possessor may please to call it; it is, however, nothing that will stand him in stead when God comes to take away his soul. It availeth nothing. This humble, holy, operative, obedient LOVE, is the grand touchstone of all human creeds and confessions of faith. Faith without this has neither soul nor operation; in the language of the Apostle James, it is dead, and can perform no function of the spiritual life, no more than a dead man can perform the duties of animal or civil life.

**Verse 7. *Ye did run well***— Ye once had the faith that worked by love—ye were genuine, active, useful Christians.

***Who doth hinder***— Who prevented you from continuing to obey the truth? Ye could only be turned aside by your own consent. St. Paul here,

as in 1 Corinthians 9:24, compares Christianity to a race. See the notes on the above text.

**Verse 8. *This persuasion***— Of the necessity of your being circumcised and obeying the law of Moses, is not of him that calleth you. I never preached such a doctrine to you; I called you out of bondage to liberty, from a galling yoke to a cheerful service. Some translate *πεισμονη*, obedience or subjection. This subjection of yours to the Mosaic law is opposed to the will of God, and never was preached by me.

**Verse 9. *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump***.— A proverbial expression, see 1 Corinthians 5:6, very aptly applied to those who receive the smallest tincture of false doctrine, relative to the things essential to salvation, which soon influences the whole conduct, so that the man becomes totally perverted. They might have argued, “It is a small thing, and should not be made a subject of serious controversy, whether we be circumcised or not.” Granted, that in itself it is a small matter; but, as every man who is circumcised is a debtor to do the whole law, Galatians 5:3, then your circumcision leads necessarily to your total perversion; as the little portion of leaven, mixed with the batch, soon leavens the whole lump.

**Verse 10. *I have confidence in you***— I now feel a persuasion from the Lord that I shall not be permitted to expostulate with you in vain; that ye will be none otherwise minded — that ye will be aware of the danger to which ye are exposed, that ye will retreat in time, and recover the grace which ye have lost.

***But he that troubleth you***— The false teacher, who sowed doubtful disputations among you, and thus has troubled the repose of the whole Church, shall bear his judgment — shall meet with the punishment he deserves, for having sown his tares among God’s wheat.

**Verse 11. *If I yet preach circumcision***— it is very likely that some of the false apostles, hearing of Paul’s having circumcised Timothy, Acts 16:3, which must have been done about this time, reported him as being an advocate for circumcision, and by this means endeavored to sanction their own doctrine. To this the apostle replies: Were it so, that I am a friend to this measure, is it likely that I should suffer persecution from the Jews?

But I am every where persecuted by them, and I am persecuted because I am known to be an enemy to circumcision; were I a friend to this doctrine, the offense of the cross — preaching salvation only through the sacrifice of Christ, would soon cease; because, to be consistent with myself, if I preached the necessity of circumcision I must soon cease to preach Christ crucified, and then the Jews would be no longer my enemies.

**Verse 12.** *I would they were even cut off which trouble you.*— This saying has puzzled many, and different interpretations of the place have been proposed by learned men.

At first sight it seems as if the apostle was praying for the destruction of the false teachers who had perverted the Churches of Galatia. Mr. Wakefield thought *οφελον αποκοπονται* might be translated, I wish that they were made to weep; and in his translation of the New Testament the passage stands thus: “I wish that they who are unsettling you may lament it.” I believe the apostle never meant any such thing. As the persons who were breeding all this confusion in the Churches of Galatia were members of that Church, the apostle appears to me to be simply expressing his desire that they might be cut off or excommunicated from the Church. Kypke has given an abundance of examples where the word is used to signify amputating; cutting off from society, office, etc.; excluding. In opposition to the notion of excommunication, it might be asked: “Why should the apostle wish these to be excommunicated when it was his own office to do it?” To this it may be answered: The apostle’s authority was greatly weakened among that people by the influence of the false teachers, so that in all probability he could exercise no ecclesiastical function; he could therefore only express his wish. And the whole passage is so parallel to that, 1 Corinthians 5:6, 7, that I think there can be no reasonable doubt of the apostle’s meaning: Let those who are unsettling the Church of Christ in your district be excommunicated; this is my wish, that they should no longer have any place among you.”

**Verse 13.** *Ye have been called unto liberty*— A total freedom from all the burthensome rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law. Only use not that liberty for an occasion to the flesh. By flesh, here, we may understand all the unrenewed desires and propensities of the mind; whatsoever is not under the influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit of God. Your liberty is

from that which would oppress the spirit; not from that which would lay restraints on the flesh. The Gospel proclaims liberty from the ceremonial law: but binds you still faster under the moral law. To be freed from the ceremonial law is the Gospel liberty; to pretend freedom from the moral law is Antinomianism.

***By love serve one another.***— Having that faith which worketh by love, serve each other to the uttermost of your power: δουλευετε, serve each other, when necessary, as slaves serve their masters. Several excellent MSS. and versions, instead of δια της αγαπης, by love, have τη αγαπη του πνευματος, in the love of the Spirit serve one another.

**Verse 14. *For all the law***— Which respects our duty to our fellows, is fulfilled — is comprehended, in one word: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. See the notes on Matthew 19:19, and Romans 13:9.

**Verse 15. *If ye bite and devour one another***— These Churches seem to have been in a state of great distraction; there were continual altercations among them. They had fallen from the grace of the Gospel; and, as Christ no longer dwelt in their hearts by faith, pride, anger, ill-will, and all unkind and uncharitable tempers, took possession of their souls, and they were in consequence alternately destroying each other. Nothing is so destructive to the peace of man, and to the peace of the soul, as religious disputes; where they prevail, religion in general has little place.

**Verse 16. *Walk in the Spirit***— Get back that Spirit of God which you have grieved and lost; take up that spiritual religion which you have abandoned.

***Ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.***— If the Spirit of God dwell in and rule your heart, the whole carnal mind will be destroyed; and then, not only carnal ordinances will be abandoned, but also the works and propensities of the flesh.

**Verse 17. *For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit***— God still continues to strive with you, notwithstanding your apostasy, showing you whence you have fallen, and exciting you to return to him; but your own obstinacy renders all ineffectual; and through the influence of these different principles, you are kept in a state of self-opposition and self-distraction, so that you cannot do the things that ye would. You are convinced of what



is right, and ye wish to do it; but, having abandoned the Gospel and the grace of Christ, the law and its ordinances which ye have chosen in their place afford you no power to conquer your evil propensities. It was on this ground that the apostle exhorted them, Galatians 5:16, to walk in the Spirit, that they might not fulfill the lust of the flesh; as without the grace of God they could do nothing. Who can suppose that he speaks this of adult Christians?

**Verse 18. *But, if ye be led of the Spirit***— If ye receive again the Gospel and the grace of Christ, and permit yourselves to be influenced by the Holy Spirit whom you are now grieving, ye are not under the law — ye will not feel those evil propensities which now disgrace and torment you; but they must prevail while you are not under the influence of the grace and Spirit of Christ.

**Verse 19. *Now the works of the flesh are manifest***— By flesh we are to understand the evil and fallen state of the soul, no longer under the guidance of God's Spirit and right reason, but under the animal passions; and they are even rendered more irregular and turbulent by the influence of sin; so that man is in a worse state than the brute: and so all-commanding is this evil nature that it leads men into all kinds of crimes; and among them the following, which are manifest — known to all, and most prevalent; and, though these are most solemnly forbidden by your law, the observance of its ordinances gives no power to overcome them, and provides no pardon for the guilt and condemnation produced by them.

**Adultery**— *μοιχεια*. Illicit connection with a married person. This word is wanting in this place in the best MSS., versions, and fathers; the next term often comprehending both.

**Fornication**— *πορνεια*. Illicit connection between single or unmarried persons; yet often signifying adultery also.

**Uncleanness**— *ακαθασια*. Whatever is opposite to purity; probably meaning here, as in Romans 1:24; #2 Corinthians 12:21, unnatural practices; sodomy, bestiality.

**Lasciviousness**— *ασελγεια*. Whatever is contrary to chastity; all lewdness.

**Verse 20. *Idolatry***— Worshipping of idols; frequenting idol festivals; all the rites of Bacchus, Venus, Priapus, etc., which were common among the Gentiles.

***Witchcraft***— **φαρμακεια**, from **φαρμακον**, a drug or poison; because in all spells and enchantments, whether true or false, drugs were employed. As a drug, **φαρμακον**, might either be the means of removing an evil, or inflicting one, etymologists have derived it from **φερον ακος**, bringing ease, or **φερον αχος**, bringing pain. So spells and incantations were used sometimes for the restoration of the health; at others, for the destruction of an enemy. Sometimes, these **φαρμακα** were used to procure love; at other times, to produce hatred.

***Hatred***— **εχθραι**. Aversions and antipathies, when opposed to brotherly love and kindness.

***Variance***— **ερεις**. Contentions, where the principle of hatred proceeds to open acts; hence contests, altercations, lawsuits, and disputes in general.

***Emulations***— **ζηλοι**. Envy or emulations; that is strife to excel at the expense of another; lowering others to set up one's self; unholy zeal, fervently adopting a bad cause, or supporting a good one by cruel means. Inquisitions, pretending to support true religion by torturing and burning alive those who both profess and practice it.

***Wrath***— **θυμοι**. Turbulent passions, disturbing the harmony of the mind, and producing domestic and civil broils and disquietudes.

***Strife***— **επιθειαι**. Disputations, janglings, logomachics, or strife about words.

***Seditions***— **διχοστασιαι**. Divisions into separate factions; parties, whether in the Church or state.

***Heresies***— **αιρεσεις**. Factions; parties in the Church separating from communion with each other, and setting up altar against altar. The word, which is harmless in itself, is here used in a bad sense. In stead of **αιρεσεις** the Slavonic has **σκανδαλα**, scandals, offenses or stumbling-blocks.

**Verse 21. *Envyings***— φθονοι· “Pain felt, and malignity conceived, at the sight of excellence or happiness.” A passion the most base and the least curable of all that disgrace or degrade the fallen soul. See on Romans 13:13.

***Murders***— φονοι· Similarity of sound to the preceding seems to have suggested the word in this association; it is wanting in several MSS. Murder signifies the destruction of human life; and as he who hates his brother in his heart is ready to take away his life, so he is called a murderer. After all the casuistry of man, it does not appear that the right of taking away a human life on any pretense, except for the crime of murder belongs to any but the Maker and Judge of all men.

***Drunkeness***— μεθαι· Taking more wine or any kind of inebriating liquor than is necessary for health; whatever unfits for public, domestic, or spiritual duties; even the cares of the world, when they intoxicate the mind. See on Romans 13:13.

***Revellings***— κωμοι· Lascivious feastings, with obscene songs, music, etc. See on Romans 13:13.

***And such like***— και τα ομοια τουτοις· All that proceeds from the evil passions of a fallen spirit, besides those above specified; and all that the law of God specifies and condemns.

***Of the which I tell you before***— When I first preached the Gospel to you.

***As I have also told you in time past***— When I paid my second visit to you; for the apostle did visit them twice. See Acts 16:6; 18:23; and see preface, p. 385.

***Shall not inherit***— They are not children of God, and therefore cannot inherit the kingdom which belongs only to the children of the Divine family.

**Verse 22. *But the fruit of the Spirit***— Both flesh — the sinful dispositions of the human heart and spirit — the changed or purified state of the soul, by the grace and Spirit of God, are represented by the apostle as trees, one yielding good the other bad fruit; the productions of each being according to the nature of the tree, as the tree is according to the nature of the seed from which it sprung. The bad seed produced a bad tree, yielding all manner of bad fruit; the good seed produced a good tree,

bringing forth fruits of the most excellent kind. The tree of the flesh, with all its bad fruits, we have already seen; the tree of the Spirit, with its good fruits, we shall now see.

**Love**— *αγαπη*. An intense desire to please God, and to do good to mankind; the very soul and spirit of all true religion; the fulfilling of the law, and what gives energy to faith itself. See Galatians 5:6.

**Joy**— *χαρα*. The exultation that arises from a sense of God's mercy communicated to the soul in the pardon of its iniquities, and the prospect of that eternal glory of which it has the foretaste in the pardon of sin. See Romans 5:2.

**Peace**— *ειρηνη*. The calm, quiet, and order, which take place in the justified soul, instead of the doubts, fears, alarms, and dreadful forebodings, which every true penitent less or more feels, and must feel till the assurance of pardon brings peace and satisfaction to the mind. Peace is the first sensible fruit of the pardon of sin. See Romans 5:1, and the notes there.

**Long-suffering**— *μακροθυμια*. Long-mindedness, bearing with the frailties and provocations of others, from the consideration that God has borne long with ours; and that, if he had not, we should have been speedily consumed: bearing up also through all the troubles and difficulties of life without murmuring or repining; submitting cheerfully to every dispensation of God's providence, and thus deriving benefit from every occurrence.

**Gentleness**— *χρηστοτης*. Benignity, affability; a very rare grace, often wanting in many who have a considerable share of Christian excellence. A good education and polished manners, when brought under the influence of the grace of God, will bring out this grace with great effect.

**Goodness**— *αγαθωσυνη*. The perpetual desire and sincere study, not only to abstain from every appearance of evil, but to do good to the bodies and souls of men to the utmost of our ability. But all this must spring from a good heart — a heart purified by the Spirit of God; and then, the tree being made good, the fruit must be good also.

**Faith**— **πιστις**, here used for fidelity — punctuality in performing promises, conscientious carefulness in preserving what is committed to our trust, in restoring it to its proper owner, in transacting the business confided to us, neither betraying the secret of our friend, nor disappointing the confidence of our employer.

**Verse 23. Meekness**— **πραοτης**. Mildness, indulgence toward the weak and erring, patient suffering of injuries without feeling a spirit of revenge, an even balance of all tempers and passions, the entire opposite to anger.

**Temperance**— **εγκρατεια**. Continnence, self-government, or moderation, principally with regard to sensual or animal appetites. Moderation in eating, drinking, sleeping, etc.

Several very respectable MSS., as D\*EFG, with the Vulgate, most copies of the Itala and several of the fathers, add **αγνεια**, chastity. This we are sure cannot be separated from the genuine Christian character, though it may be included in the word **εγκρατεια**, continence or moderation, immediately preceding.

**Against such there is no law.**— Those, whose lives are adorned by the above virtues, cannot be condemned by any law, for the whole purpose and design of the moral law of God is fulfilled in those who have the Spirit of God, producing in their hearts and lives the preceding fruits.

**Verse 24. And they that are Christ's**— All genuine Christians have crucified the flesh — are so far from obeying its dictates and acting under its influence, that they have crucified their sensual appetites; they have nailed them to the cross of Christ, where they have expired with him; hence, says St. Paul, Romans 6:6, our old man — the flesh, with its affections and lusts, is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. By which we see that God has fully designed to save all who believe in Christ from all sin, whether outward or inward, with all the affections, **παθημασι**, irregular passions, and lusts, **επιθυμιας**, disorderly wishes and desires. All that a man may feel contrary to love and purity; and all that he may desire contrary to moderation and that self-denial peculiar to the Christian character.

**Verse 25. *If we live in the Spirit***— If we profess to believe a spiritual religion, let us walk in the Spirit — let us show in our lives and conversation that the Spirit of God dwells in us.

**Verse 26. *Let us not be desirous of vain glory***— *κενοδοξοι*. Let us not be vain glorious — boasting of our attainments; vaunting ourselves to be superior to others; or seeking honor from those things which do not possess moral good; in birth, riches, eloquence, etc., etc.

***Provoking one another***— What this may refer to we cannot tell; whether to the Judaizing teachers, endeavoring to set themselves up beyond the apostle, and their attempts to lessen him in the people's eyes, that they might secure to themselves the public confidence, and thus destroy St. Paul's influence in the Galatian Churches; or whether to some other matter in the internal economy of the Church, we know not. But the exhortation is necessary for every Christian, and for every Christian Church. He who professes to seek the honor that comes from God, should not be desirous of vain glory. He who desires to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, should not provoke another. He who knows that he never deserved any gift or blessing from God should not envy another those blessings which the Divine goodness may have thought proper to bestow upon him. May not God do what he will with his own? If Christians in general would be content with the honor that comes from God, if they would take heed to give no provocations to their fellow Christians, if they would cease from envying those on whom either God or man bestows honors or advantages, we should soon have a happier and more perfect state of the Christian Church than we now see. Christianity requires us to esteem each other better than ourselves, or in honor to prefer one another. Had not such a disposition been necessary to the Christian character, and to the peace and perfection of the Church of Christ, it would not have been so strongly recommended. But who lays this to heart, or even thinks that this is indispensably necessary to his salvation? Where this disposition lives not, there are both the seed and fruit of the flesh. Evil tempers are the bane of religion and totally contrary to Christianity.

## CHAPTER 6.

*The apostle teaches them to be tender and affectionate towards any who, through surprise and the violence of temptation, had fallen into sin; and to bear each other's burdens, 1, 2. To think humbly of themselves, and to conclude concerning their own character rather from the evidence of their works than from any thing else, 3-5. To minister to the support of those who instruct them in righteousness, 6. He warns them against self-deception, because whatever a man soweth that he shall reap, 7, 8. Exhorts them not to be weary in well doing, and to embrace every opportunity to do good, 9, 10. Intimates that his love to them led him to write this whole epistle with his own hand, 11. Points out the object that those had in view who wished them to be circumcised, 12, 13. He exults in the cross of Christ, and asserts that a new creation of the soul is essential to its salvation; and wishes peace to them who act on this plan, 14-16. States that he bears in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus, 17. And concludes with his apostolical benediction, 18.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 6.

**Verse 1. Brethren, if a man be overtaken**— εαν προληφθη. If he be surprised, seized on without warning, suddenly invaded, taken before he is aware: all these meanings the word has in connections similar to this. Strabo, lib. xvi., page 1120, applies it to the rhinoceros, in its contests with the elephant: he suddenly rips up the belly of the elephant, αν μη προληφθη τη προβοσκειοι, that he may not be surprised with his trunk. For, should the elephant seize him with his trunk first, all resistance would be afterwards in vain; therefore he endeavors to rip up the elephant's belly with the horn which is on his nose, in order to prevent this. It is used also by Arrian, in Peripl. Mar. Eryth., page 164, and page 168, to signify a vessel being suddenly agitated and whirled by the waves, and then dashed on the rocks. See Kypke.

**Ye which are spiritual**— Ye who still retain the grace of the Gospel, and have wisdom and experience in Divine things;

**Restore such a one**— *καταρτιζετε τον τοιουτον*. Bring the man back into his place. It is a metaphor taken from a dislocated limb, brought back by the hand of a skillful and tender surgeon into its place.

**In the spirit of meekness**— Use no severity nor haughty carriage towards him; as the man was suddenly overtaken, he is already deeply humbled and distressed, and needs much encouragement and lenient usage. There is a great difference between a man who being suddenly assailed falls into sin, and the man who transgressed in consequence of having WALKED in the counsel of the UNGODLY, or STOOD in the way of SINNERS.

**Considering thyself**— *σκοπων σεαυτον*. Looking to thyself; as he fell through a moment of unwatchfulness, look about, that thou be not surprised; AS he fell, so mayest thou: thou art now warned at his expense; therefore keep a good look out.

**Lest thou also be tempted.**— And having had this warning, thou wilt have less to plead in extenuation of thy offense. It is no wonder if a harsh and cruel censurer of a weak, backsliding brother, should be taught moderation and mercy by an awful proof of his own frailty. Such a one may justly dread the most violent attacks from the arch enemy; he will disgrace him if he can, and if he can overtake him he will have no small triumph. Consider the possibility of such a case, and show the mercy and feeling which thou wouldst then wish to receive from another. From the consideration of what we are, what we have been, or what we may be, we should learn to be compassionate. The poet Mantuanus has set this in a fine light in his Eclogue, Deuteronomy *honesto Amore*:—

*Id commune malum; semel insanivimus omnes:  
Aut sumus, aut fuimus, aut possemus omne quod hic est.*

*“This is a common evil; at one time or other we have all done wrong.  
Either we are, or have been, or may be, as bad as he whom we condemn.”*

**Verse 2. Bear ye one another's burdens**— Have sympathy; feel for each other; and consider the case of a distressed brother as your own.

**And so fulfill the law of Christ.**— That law or commandment, Ye shall love one another; or that, Do unto all men as ye would they should do unto you. We should be as indulgent to the infirmities of others, as we can be consistently with truth and righteousness: our brother's infirmity may



be his burden; and if we do not choose to help him to bear it, let us not reproach him because he is obliged to carry the load.

**Verse 3. *If a man think himself to be something***— i.e. To be a proper Christian man; when he is nothing; being destitute of that charity which beareth, hopeth, and endureth all things. See 1 Corinthians 13:1, etc. Those who suppose themselves to excel all others in piety, understanding, etc., while they are harsh, censorious, and overbearing, prove that they have not the charity that thinketh no evil; and in the sight of God are only as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. There are no people more censorious or uncharitable than those among some religious people who pretend to more light and a deeper communion with God. They are generally carried away with a sort of sublime, high sounding phraseology, which seems to argue a wonderfully deep acquaintance with Divine things; stripped of this, many of them are like Samson without his hair.

**Verse 4. *Prove his own work***— Let him examine himself and his conduct by the words and example of Christ; and if he find that they bear this touchstone, then he shall have rejoicing in himself alone, feeling that he resembles his Lord and Master, and not in another — not derive his consolation from comparing himself with another who may be weaker, or less instructed than himself. The only rule for a Christian is the word of Christ; the only pattern for his imitation is the example of Christ. He should not compare himself with others; they are not his standard. Christ hath left us an example that we should follow his steps.

**Verse 5. *Every man shall bear his own burden.***— All must answer for themselves, not for their neighbors. And every man must expect to be dealt with by the Divine Judge, as his character and conduct have been. The greater offenses of another will not excuse thy smaller crimes. Every man must give account of himself to God.

**Verse 6. *Let him that is taught in the word***— He who receives instructions in Christianity by the public preaching of the word;

***Communicate unto him that teacheth***— Contribute to the support of the man who has dedicated himself to the work of the ministry, and who gives up his time and his life to preach the Gospel. It appears that some of the believers in Galatia could receive the Christian ministry without

contributing to its support. This is both ungrateful and base. We do not expect that a common schoolmaster will give up his time to teach our children their alphabet without being paid for it; and can we suppose that it is just for any person to sit under the preaching of the Gospel in order to grow wise unto salvation by it, and not contribute to the support of the spiritual teacher? It is unjust.

**Verse 7. *Be not deceived***— Neither deceive yourselves, nor permit yourselves to be deceived by others. He seems to refer to the Judaizing teachers.

***God is not mocked***— Ye cannot deceive him, and he will not permit you to mock him with pretended instead of real services.

***Whatsoever a man soweth***— Whatsoever kind of grain a man sows in his field, of that shall he reap; for no other species of grain can proceed from that which is sown. Darnel will not produce wheat, nor wheat, darnel.

**Verse 8. *He that soweth to his flesh***— In like manner, he that sows to the flesh — who indulges his sensual and animal appetites, shall have corruption as the crop: you cannot expect to lead a bad life and go to heaven at last. According as your present life is, so will be your eternal life whether your sowing be to the flesh or to the Spirit, so will your eternal reaping be. To sow, here, means transacting the concerns of a man's natural life. To reap, signifies his enjoyment or punishment in another world. Probably by flesh and Spirit the apostle means Judaism and Christianity. Circumcision of the flesh was the principal rite of the former; circumcision in the heart, by the Spirit, the chief rite of the latter; hence the one may have been called flesh, the other, Spirit. He who rejects the Gospel, and trusts only in the rites and ceremonies of the law for salvation, will reap endless disappointment and misery. He who trusts in Christ, and receives the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, shall reap life everlasting.

**Verse 9. *Let us not be weary***— Well-doing is easier in itself than ill-doing; and the danger of growing weary in the former arises only from the opposition to good in our own nature, or the outward hinderances we may meet with from a gainsaying and persecuting world.

***In due season we shall reap***— As the husbandman, in ploughing, sowing, and variously laboring in his fields, is supported by the hope of a plentiful harvest, which he cannot expect before the right and appointed time; so every follower of God may be persuaded that he shall not be permitted to pray, weep, deny himself, and live in a conformity to his Maker's will, without reaping the fruit of it in eternal glory. And although no man obtains glory because he has prayed, etc., yet none can expect glory who do not seek it in this way. This is sowing to the Spirit; and the Spirit and the grace are furnished by Christ Jesus, and by him the kingdom of heaven is opened to all believers; but only those who believe, love, and obey, shall enter into it.

**Verse 10. *As we have opportunity***— While it is the time of sowing let us sow the good seed; and let our love be, as the love of Christ is, free, manifested to all. Let us help all who need help according to the uttermost of our power; but let the first objects of our regards be those who are of the household of faith—the members of the Church of Christ, who form one family, of which Jesus Christ is the head. Those have the first claims on our attention, but all others have their claims also, and therefore we should do good unto all.

**Verse 11. *Ye see how large a letter***— There is a strange diversity of opinions concerning the apostle's meaning in this place. Some think he refers to the length of the epistle, others to the largeness of the letters in which this epistle is written, others to the inadequacy of the apostle's writing. It appears plain that most of his epistles were written by an amanuensis, and simply subscribed by himself; but the whole of the Epistle to the Galatians was written by his own hand. To say that the apostle was unskilled in Greek, and especially in the Greek characters, is in my opinion absurd. He was born in Tarsus, a city which, according to Strabo, rivaled both Athens and Alexandria in philosophy, and in arts and sciences; and therefore he could not be ignorant of a tongue which must have been the very means of conveying all this instruction. As to writing it, there was in his time nothing difficult, because the uncial character was that which was alone in use in those days, and this character is as easily made as the capitals in the Roman alphabet, which have been taken from it. I conclude, therefore, that what the apostle says must be understood of the length of the epistle, in all probability the largest he had ever written

with his own hand; though several, much larger, have been dictated by him, but they were written by his scribe or amanuensis.

**Verse 12. *A fair show in the flesh.***— The Jewish religion was general in the region of Galatia, and it was respectable, as it appears that the principal inhabitants were either Jews or proselytes. As it was then professed and practiced among the Jews, this religion had nothing very grievous to the old man; an unrenewed nature might go through all its observances with little pain or cross-bearing. On the other hand, Christianity could not be very popular; it was too strict. A Jew made a fair show there, according to his carnal system, and it was a temptation to a weak Christian to swerve into Judaism, that he might be exempted from persecution, and be creditable among his countrymen. This is what the apostle intimates: “They constrain you to be circumcised, lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.”

**Verse 13. *Neither they themselves who are circumcised***— They receive circumcision and profess Judaism, not from a desire to be conformed to the will of God; but Judaism was popular, and the more converts the false teachers could make; the more occasion of glorying they had, and they wished to get those Christian converts, who had been before proselytes of the gate, to receive circumcision, that they might glory in their flesh. Behold my converts! Thus they gloried, or boasted, not that the people were converted to God, but that they were circumcised.

**Verse 14. *But God forbid that I should glory***— Whatever others may do, or whatever they may exult or glory in, God forbid that I should exult, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; in the grand doctrine, that justification and salvation are only through Christ crucified, he having made an atonement for the sin of the world by his passion and death. And I glory, also, in the disgrace and persecution which I experience through my attachment to this crucified Christ.

***By whom the world is crucified unto me***— Jewish rites and Gentile vanities are equally insipid to me; I know them to be empty and worthless. If Jews and Gentiles despise me, I despise that in which they trust; through Jesus, all are crucified to me — their objects of dependence are as vile and execrable to me, as I am to them, in whose sight these things are of great account.

**Verse 15. *In Christ Jesus***— Under the dispensation of the Gospel, of which he is head and supreme, neither circumcision — nothing that the Jew can boast of, nothing that the Gentile can call excellent, availeth any thing — can in the least contribute to the salvation of the soul.

***But a new creature.***— *ἀλλὰ καινή κτίσις*. But a new creation; not a new creature merely, (for this might be restrained to any new power or faculty,) but a total renewal of the whole man, of all the powers and passions of the soul; and as creation could not be effected but by the power of the Almighty, so this change cannot be effected but by the same energy; no circumcision can do this; only the power that made the man at first can new make him. See the note on 1 Corinthians 7:19, and on 2 Corinthians 5:17.

**Verse 16. *As many as walk according to this rule***— *τῷ κανόνι τούτῳ*. This canon; viz. what is laid down in the preceding verses, that redemption is through the sacrifice of Christ; that circumcision and uncircumcision are equally unavailable; and that none can be saved without being created anew. This is the grand canon or rule in Christianity.

***Peace be on them***— Those who act from this conviction will have the peace and mercy of God; for it is in this way that mercy is communicated and peace obtained.

***The Israel of God.***— The true Christians, called here the Israel of God, to distinguish them from Israel according to the flesh. See the notes on Romans 2:29; 4:12.

**Verse 17. *From henceforth let no man trouble me***— Put an end to your contentions among yourselves; return to the pure doctrine of the Gospel; abandon those who are leading you astray; separate from the Church those who corrupt and disturb it; and let me be grieved no longer with your defections from the truth.

***I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.***— The *στιγματα*, stigmata, of which the apostle speaks here, may be understood as implying the scars of the wounds which he had received in the work of the ministry; and that he had such scars, we may well conceive, when we know that he had been scourged, stoned, and maltreated in a variety of ways. The writer could show such scars himself, received in the same way. Or, the apostle may

allude to the stigmata or marks with which servants and slaves were often impressed, in order to ascertain whose property they were. A Burman servant often has indelible marks on his thighs and elsewhere, which ascertain to whose service he belongs. “Do not trouble me; I bear the marks of my Lord and Master, Jesus; I am his, and will remain so. You glory in your mark of circumcision; I glory in the marks which I bear in my body for the testimony of the Lord; I am an open, professed Christian, and have given full proof of my attachment to the cause of Christianity.”

The first sense appears to be the best: “I have suffered already sufficiently; I am suffering still; do not add any more to my afflictions.”

**Verse 18. *The grace***— Favor, benevolence, and continual influence of the Lord Jesus, be with your spirit — may it live in your heart, enlighten and change your souls, and be conspicuous in your life!

***Amen.***— So let it be; and the prayer which I offer up for you on earth, may it be registered in heaven!

***Unto the Galatians, written from Rome.***— This, or the major part of it, is wanting in the best and most ancient MSS. Written from Rome is wanting in ACDEFG, and others. Claudius Antissiodor, has *εγραφη απ' εφεσου*. Written from Ephesus. Some add, by the hands of Paul, others, by Titus. The SYRIAC has, The end of the Epistle to the Galatians, which was written from the city of Rome. The AETHIOPIC, To the Galatians. The COPTIC, Written from Rome. The VULGATE, nothing. The ARABIC, Written from the city of Rome by Titus and Luke.

Little respect is to be paid to these subscriptions. The epistle was written by Paul himself, not Titus, Luke nor Tychicus; and there is no evidence that it was written from Rome, but rather from Corinth or Ephesus. See the preface, page 385.

THE great similarity between the Epistle to the Romans and that to the Galatians has been remarked by many; and indeed it is so obvious, that the same mode of interpretation may be safely pursued in the elucidation of both; as not only the great subject, but the phraseology, in many respects, is the same. The design of the apostle is to show that God has called the Gentiles to equal privileges with the Jews, pulling down the partition wall that had separated them and the Gentiles, calling all to believe in Christ

Jesus, and forming out of the believers of both people one holy and pure Church, of which, equally, himself was the head; none of either people having any preference to another, except what he might derive from his personal sanctity and superior usefulness. The calling of the Gentiles to this state of salvation was the mystery which had been hidden from all ages, and concerning which the apostle has entered into such a laborious discussion in the Epistle to the Romans; justifying the reprobation as well as the election of the Jews, and vindicating both the justice and mercy of God in the election of the Gentiles. The same subjects are referred to in this epistle, but not in that detail of argumentation as in the former. In both, the national privileges of the Jews are a frequent subject of consideration; and, as these national privileges were intended to point out spiritual advantages, the terms which express them are used frequently in both these senses with no change; and it requires an attentive mind, and a proper knowledge of the analogy of faith, to discern when and where they are to be restricted exclusively to one or the other meaning, as well as where the one is intended to shadow forth the other; and where it is used as expressing what they ought to be, according to the spirit and tenor of their original calling.

Multitudes of interpreters of different sects and parties have strangely mistaken both epistles, by not attending to these most necessary, and to the unprejudiced, most obvious, distinctions and principles. Expressions which point out national privileges have been used by them to point out those which were spiritual; and merely temporal advantages or disadvantages have been used in the sense of eternal blessings or miseries. Hence, what has been spoken of the Jews in their national capacity has been applied to the Church of God in respect to its future destiny; and thus, out of the temporal election and reprobation of the Jews, the doctrine of the irrespectively and eternal election of a small part of mankind, and the unconditional and eternal reprobation of the far greater part of the human race, has been formed. The contentions produced by these misapprehensions among Christians have been uncharitable and destructive. In snatching at the shadow of religion in a great variety of metaphors and figures, the substance of Christianity has been lost: and the man who endeavors to draw the contending parties to a consistent and rational interpretation of those expressions, by showing the grand nature

and design of these epistles, becomes a prey to the zealots of both parties! Where is truth in the mean time? It is fallen in the streets, and equity is gone backwards; for the most sinister designs and most heterodox opinions have been attributed to those who, regarding the words of God only, have refused to swim with either torrent; and, without even consulting their own peculiar creed, have sought to find out the meaning of the inspired writers, and with simplicity of heart, and purity of conscience, to lay that meaning before mankind.

The Israelites were denominated a peculiar treasure unto God, above all people; a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation, Exodus 19:5, 6. A holy people whom he had chosen to be a special people unto himself, above all the people who were upon the face of the earth, Deuteronomy 7:6. This was their calling, this was their profession, and this was their denomination; but how far they fell practically short of this character their history most painfully proves. Yet still they were called a holy people, because called to holiness, (Leviticus 11:44; 19:2; 20:7,) and separated from the impure and degrading idolatries of the neighboring nations.

Under the New Testament, all those who believe in Christ Jesus are called to holiness — to have their fruit unto holiness, that their end may be eternal life; and hence they are called saints or holy persons. And the same epithets are applied to them as to the Israelites of old; they are lively stones, built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ; they are also called a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that should show forth the praises of him who had called them from darkness into his marvelous light, 1 Peter 2:5, 9. All this they were called to, all this was their profession, and to have all these excellences was their indisputable privilege.

As they professed to be what God had called them to be, they are often denominated by their profession; and this denomination is given frequently to those who, in experience and practice, fall far short of the blessings and privileges of the Gospel. The Church of Corinth, which was in many respects the most imperfect, as well as the most impure, of all the apostolic Churches, is nevertheless denominated the Church of God, sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, 1 Corinthians 1:2. That



there were many saints in the Corinthian Church, and many sanctified in Christ Jesus both in it and in the Churches of Galatia, the slightest perusal of the epistles to those Churches will prove: but that there were many, and in the Galatian Churches the majority, of a different character, none can doubt; yet they are all indiscriminately called the Churches of God, saints, etc. And, even in those early times, saint appears to have been as general an appellative for a person professing faith in Christ Jesus, as the term Christian is at the present day, which is given to all who profess the Christian religion; and yet these terms, taken in their strict and proper sense, signify, a holy person, and one who has the Spirit and mind of Christ.

In my notes on the Epistle to the Romans I have entered at large into a discussion of the subjects to which I have referred in these observations; and, to set the subject in a clear point of view, I have made a copious extract from Dr. Taylor's Key to that epistle; and I have stated, that a consistent exposition of that epistle cannot be given but upon that plan. I am still of the same opinion. It is by attending to the above distinctions, which are most obvious to all unprejudiced persons, that we plainly see that the doctrines of eternal, unconditional reprobation and election, and the impossibility of falling finally from the grace of God, have no foundation in the Epistle to the Romans. Dr. Taylor has shown that the phrases and expressions on which these doctrines are founded refer to national privileges, and those exclusive advantages which the Jews, as God's peculiar people, enjoyed during the time in which that peculiarity was designed to last; and that it is doing violence to the sense in which those expressions are generally used, to apply them to the support of such doctrines. In reference to this, I have quoted Dr. Taylor; and those illustrations of his which I have adopted, I have adopted on this ground, taking care never to pledge myself to any peculiar or heterodox opinions, by whomsoever held; and, where I thought an expression might be misunderstood, I took care to guard it by a note or observation.

Now I say that it is in this sense I understand the quotations I have made, and in this sense alone these quotations ought to be understood; and my whole work sufficiently shows that neither Dr. Taylor's nor any person's peculiar theological system makes any part of mine; that, on the doctrine of the fall of man or original sin, the doctrine of the eternal deity of Jesus

Christ, the doctrine of justification by faith in the atoning blood, and the doctrine of the inspiration and regenerating influence of the Holy Ghost, I stand on the pure orthodox creed, diametrically opposite to that of the Arians and Socinians. Yet this most distinguishing difference cannot blind me against the excellences I find in any of their works, nor can I meanly borrow from Dr. Taylor, or any other author, without acknowledging my obligation; nor could I suppress a name, however obnoxious that might be, as associated with any heterodox system, when I could mention it with deference and respect. Let this be my apology for quoting Dr. Taylor, and for the frequent use I have made of his industry and learning in my exposition of the Epistle to the Romans. If I have quoted, to illustrate the sacred writings, passages almost innumerable from Greek and Roman heathens; from Jewish Talmudists and rabbinical expositors; from the Koran; from Mohammedan writers, both Arabic and Persian; and from Brahminical polytheists; and these illustrations have been well received by the Christian public; surely I may have liberty to use, in the same way, the works of a very learned man, and a most conscientious believer in the books of Divine revelation, however erroneous he may appear to be in certain doctrines which I myself deem of vital importance to the creed of an experimental Christian. Let it not be said that, by thus largely quoting from his work, I tacitly recommend an Arian creed, or any part of that system of theology peculiar to him and his party; I no more do so than the Indian matron who, while she gives the nourishing farina of the cassava to her household, recommends them to drink the poisonous juice which she has previously expressed from it.

After this declaration, it will be as disingenuous as unchristian for either friends or foes to attribute to me opinions which I never held, or an indifference to those doctrines which (I speak as a fool) stand in no work of the kind, in any language, so fully explained, fortified, and demonstrated, as they do in that before the reader. On such a mode of judgment and condemnation as that to which some resort in matters of this kind, I might have long ago been reputed a Pagan or a Mohammedan, because I have quoted heathen writers and the Koran. And, by the same mode of argumentation, St. Paul might be convicted of having abandoned his Jewish creed and Christian faith, because he had quoted the heathen poets Aratus and Cleanthes. The man is entitled to my pity who refuses

to take advantage of useful discoveries in the philosophical researches of Dr. Priestley, because Dr. Priestley, as a theologian, was not sound in the faith.

I have made that use of Dr. Taylor which I have done of others; and have reason to thank God that his Key, passing through several wards of a lock which appeared to me inextricable, has enabled me to bring forth and exhibit, in a fair and luminous point of view, objects and meanings in the Epistle to the Romans which, without this assistance, I had perhaps been unable to discover.

I may add, farther, that I have made that use of Dr. Taylor which himself has recommended to his readers: some of his censors will perhaps scarcely believe that the four following articles constitute the charge with which this learned man commences his theological lectures:—

I. “I do solemnly charge you, in the name of the God of truth, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life, and before whose judgment seat you must in no long time appear, that, in all your studies and inquiries of a religious nature, present or future, you do constantly, carefully, impartially, and conscientiously attend to evidence, as it lies in the Holy Scriptures, or in the nature of things and the dictates of reason, cautiously guarding against the sallies of imagination, and the fallacy of ill-grounded conjecture.

II. “That you admit, embrace, or assent to no principle or sentiment, by me taught or advanced, but only so far as it shall appear to you to be justified by proper evidence from revelation, or the reason of things.

III. “That if at any time hereafter any principle or sentiment by me taught or advanced, or by you admitted or embraced, shall, upon impartial and faithful examination, appear to you to be dubious or false, you either suspect or totally reject such principle or sentiment.

IV. “That you keep your mind always open to evidence; that you labor to banish from your breast all prejudice, prepossession, and party zeal; that you study to live in peace and love with all your fellow Christians; and that you steadily assert for yourself, and freely allow to others, the unalienable rights of judgment and conscience.”-Taylor’s Scheme of Scripture Divinity, preface, page vi.

Thus I have done with Dr. Taylor's works; and thus I desire every intelligent reader to do with my own.

When I was a child I had for a lesson the following words: Despise not advice, even from the meanest; the cackling of geese once preserved the Roman state. And since I became a man, I have learned wisdom from that saying: Blessed are ye who sow beside ALL WATERS; that send forth thither the feet of the OX and the ASS. May He, who is the way, the truth, and the life, lead the reader into all truth, and bring him to life everlasting! Amen.

Finished the correction for a new edition, Dec. 14th, 1831. — A. C.

# INTRODUCTION

TO THE

**EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE**

TO THE

**EPHESIANS.**

IN many points of view the Epistle to the Ephesians presents a variety of difficulties. A learned man calls it “the most inartificial piece of composition in the universe:” this is not correct if it be intended to convey a censure on the composition itself; for the subject (which is a vindication of the providence and mercy of God, in admitting the Gentiles into his Church, and forming one flock of them and the converted Jews, giving them the same privileges which his peculiar people had enjoyed almost exclusively for 2000 years) has led the apostle to make such a variety of references to the Mosaic economy and its peculiarities, as, without this consideration, will make many parts of the epistle seem obscure to most readers; and this obscurity may be very improperly laid to the charge of inartificial composition: good judges, however, have allowed it to be one of the most sublime compositions of the kind that ever came from the pen of man. This was the opinion of Grotius.

The subject in this and the Epistle to the Colossians is certainly the same; and as it is supposed that they were written about the same time, it is natural to expect a similarity of expression. This subject, and others connected with these epistles, Dr. Paley has discussed with his usual sagacity; the substance of whose reasonings I beg leave to present to the reader.

**SECTION 1.**

This epistle and the Epistle to the Colossians appear to have been transmitted to their respective Churches by the same messenger: “But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things; whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts;” Ephesians 6:21, 22. This text, if it do not expressly declare, clearly (I think) intimates, that the letter was sent by Tychicus. The words made use of in the Epistle to the Colossians are very similar to these, and afford the same implication that Tychicus, in conjunction with Onesimus, was the bearer of the letter to that Church: “All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord; whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts; with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things which are done here;” Colossians 4:7-9. Both epistles represent the writer as under imprisonment for the Gospel, and both treat of the same general subject. The Epistle therefore to the Ephesians and the Epistle to the Colossians import to be two letters written by the same person, at or nearly at the same time, and upon the same subject, and to have been sent by the same messenger. Now, every thing in the sentiments, order, and diction of the two writings, corresponds with what might be expected from this circumstance of identity or cognation in their original. The leading doctrine of both epistles is the union of Jews and Gentiles under the Christian dispensation; and that doctrine in both is established by the same arguments, or, more properly speaking, illustrated by the same similitudes: “one head,” “one body,” “one new man,” “one temple,” are in both epistles the figures under which the society of believers in Christ, and their common relation to him as such, is represented. The ancient, and, as had been thought, the indelible distinction between Jew and Gentile, in both epistles, is declared to be “now abolished by his cross.” Beside this consent in the general tenor of the two epistles, and in the run also and warmth of thought with which they are composed, we may naturally expect, in letters produced under the circumstances in which these appear to have been written, a closer resemblance of style and diction than between other letters of the same person but of distant dates, or between letters adapted to different occasions. In particular, we may look for many

of the same expressions, and sometimes for whole sentences being alike; since such expressions and sentences would be repeated in the second letter (whichever that was) as yet fresh in the author's mind, from the writing of the first. This repetition occurs in the following examples:—

Ephesians 1:7: “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.”

Colossians 1:14: “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.”

Besides the sameness of the words, it is farther remarkable that the sentence is, in both places, preceded by the same introductory idea. In the Epistle to the Ephesians it is the “Beloved,” (ἠγαπημενω,) in that to the Colossians it is “his dear Son,” (υιου της αγαπης αυτου, the Son of his love,) “in whom we have redemption.” The sentence appears to have been suggested to the mind of the writer, by the idea which had accompanied it before.

Ephesians 1:10: “All things, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him.”

Colossians 1:20: “All things by him, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.”

This quotation is the more observable, because the connecting of things in earth with things in heaven is a very singular sentiment, and found nowhere else but in these two epistles. The words also are introduced and followed by a train of thought nearly alike. They are introduced by describing the union which Christ had effected; and they are followed by telling the Gentile Churches that they were incorporated into it.

Ephesians 3:2: “The dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me to you-ward.”

Colossians 1:25: “The dispensation of God, which is given to me for you.”

Of these sentences it may likewise be observed, that the accompanying ideas are similar. In both places they are immediately preceded by the mention of his present sufferings; in both places they are immediately

followed by the mention of the mystery which was the great subject of his preaching.

Ephesians 5:19: "In psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

Colossians 3:16: "In psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

Ephesians 6:22: "Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts."

Colossians 4:8: "Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts."

In these examples we do not perceive a cento of phrases gathered from one composition and strung together in the other; but the occasional occurrence of the same expression to a mind a second time revolving the same ideas.

2. Whoever writes two letters, or two discourses, nearly upon the same subject, and at no great distance of time, but without any express recollection of what he had written before, will find himself repeating some sentences in the very order of the words in which he had already used them; but he will more frequently find himself employing some principal terms, with the order inadvertently changed, or with the order disturbed by the intermixture of other words and phrases expressive of ideas rising up at the time; or in many instances repeating not single words, nor yet whole sentences, but parts and fragments of sentences. Of all these varieties, the examination of these two epistles will furnish plain examples; and I should rely upon this class of instances more than upon the last; because, although an impostor might transcribe into a forgery entire sentences and phrases, yet the dislocation of words, the partial recollection of phrases and sentences, the intermixture of new terms and new ideas with terms and ideas before used, which will appear in the examples that follow, and which are the natural properties of writings produced under the circumstances in which these epistles are represented to have been composed, would not, I think, have occurred to the invention of a forger; nor, if they had occurred, would they have been so easily executed. This studied variation was a refinement in forgery which I believe did not exist; or if we can suppose it to have been practiced in the



instances adduced below, why, it may be asked, was not the same art exercised upon those which we have collected in the preceding class?

Ephesians 1:19-2:5: “Towards us who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead; (and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet; and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all;) and you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, (wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,) even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.”

Colossians 2:12, 13: “Through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead: and you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of the flesh, hath he quickened together with him.”

Out of the long quotation from the Ephesians, take away the parentheses, and you have left a sentence almost in terms the same as the short quotation from the Colossians. The resemblance is more visible in the original than in our translation; for what is rendered in one place “the working,” and in another “the operation,” is the same Greek term, **ενεργεια**: in one place it is **τους πιστευοντας κατα την ενεργειαν**; in the other **δια της πιστεως ενεργειας**. Here, therefore, we have the same sentiment, and nearly in the same words; but, in the Ephesians, twice broken or interrupted by incidental thoughts, which St. Paul, as his manner was enlarges upon by the way, and then returns to the thread of his discourse. It is interrupted the first time by a view which breaks in upon his mind of the exaltation of Christ, and the second time by a description of heathen depravity. I have only to remark, that Griesbach, in his very accurate edition, gives the parentheses very nearly in the same manner in

which they are here placed; and that without any respect to the comparison which we are proposing.

Ephesians 4:2-4: “With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.”

Colossians 3:12-15: “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye: and, above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness; and let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body.”

In these two quotations the words **ταπεινοφροσυνη, πραστης, μακροθυμια, ανεχομενοι αλληλων**, lowliness, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, occur in exactly the same order: **αγαπη**, love, is also found in both, but in a different connection; **συνδεσμος της ειρηνης**, the bond of peace, answers to **συνδεσμος της τελειοτητος**, the bond of perfectness; **εκκληθητε εν ενι σωματι**, called into one spirit, to **εν σωμα καθως και εκκληθητε εν μια ελπιδι**, one body, even as ye are called into one hope; yet is this similitude found in the midst of sentences otherwise very different.

Ephesians 4:16: “From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body.”

Colossians 2:19: “From which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.”

In these quotations are read **εξ ου παν το σωμα συμβιβαζομενον**, from whom the whole body fitly joined together, in both places; **επιχορηγουμενον** answering to **επιχορηγιας: διατων αφων** to **δια πασης αφης: αυξει την αυξησιν** to **ποιειται την αυξησιν**: and yet the sentences are considerably diversified in other parts.

Ephesians 4:32: “And be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another; even as God, for Christ’s sake, hath forgiven you.”

Colossians 3:13: “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.”

Here we have “forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ’s sake (εν χριστω) hath forgiven you,” in the first quotation, substantially repeated in the second. But in the second the sentence is broken by the interposition of a new clause, “If any man have a quarrel against any;” and the latter part is a little varied; instead of “God in Christ,” it is “Christ hath forgiven you.”

Ephesians 4:22-24: “That ye put on, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

Colossians 3:9, 10: “Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.”

In these quotations, “putting off the old man, and putting on the new,” appears in both. The idea is farther explained by calling it a renewal; in the one, “renewed in the spirit of your mind,” in the other, “renewed in knowledge.” In both, the new man is said to be formed according to the same model; in the one, he is “after God created in righteousness and true holiness;” in the other, “he is renewed after the image of him who created him.” In a word, it is the same person writing upon a kindred subject, with the terms and ideas which he had before employed still floating in his memory.

In these comparisons we often perceive the reason why the writer, though expressing the same idea, uses a different term; namely, because the term before used is employed in the sentence under a different form: thus, in the quotations under our eye, the new man is **καινος ανθρωπος** in the Ephesians, and **τον νεον** in the Colossians; but then it is because **τον καινον** is used in the next word, **ανακαινουμενον**, being renewed.

Ephesians 5:6-8: “Because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience: be not ye therefore partakers with them; for ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord walk as children of light.”

Colossians 3:6-8: “For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience; in the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these.”

These verses afford a specimen of that partial resemblance which is only to be met with when no imitation is designed, when no studied recollection is employed; but when the mind, exercised upon the same subject, is left to the spontaneous return of such terms and phrases as, having been used before, may happen to present themselves again. The sentiment of both passages is throughout alike; half of that sentiment, the denunciation of God’s wrath, is expressed in identical words; the other half, viz. the admonition to quit their former conversation, in words entirely different.

Ephesians 5:15, 16: “See then that ye walk circumspectly; not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time.

Colossians 4:5: “Walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time.”

This is another example of that mixture which we remarked of sameness and variety in the language of one writer. “Redeeming the time,” (εξαγοραζομενοι τον καιρον,) is a literal repetition. “Walk not as fools but as wise,” (περιπατειτε μη ασοφοι, αλλ’ ως σοφοι,) answers exactly in sense, and nearly in terms, to “walk in wisdom,” (εν σοφια περιπατειτε.) περιπατειτε ακριβως is a very different phrase, but is intended to convey precisely the same idea as περιπατειτε προς τους εξω. ακριβως is not well rendered “circumspectly.” It means what in modern speech we should call “correctly;” and when we advise a person to behave “correctly,” our advice is always given with a reference “to the opinion of others,” προς τους εξω. “Walk correctly, redeeming the time,” i.e. suiting yourselves to the difficulty and ticklishness of the times in which we live, “because the days are evil.”

Ephesians 6:19, 20: “And (praying) for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery

of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds, that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

Colossians 4:3, 4: “Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds, that I may make it manifest as I ought to speak.”

In these quotations the phrase, “as I ought to speak,” (ὡς δεῖ με

eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him.”

Colossians 3:18: “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.”

The passages marked by *Italics* in the quotation from the Ephesians bear a strict resemblance, not only in signification but in terms, to the quotation from the Colossians. Both the words and the order of the words are in many clauses a duplicate of one another. In the Epistle to the Colossians these passages are laid together; in that to the Ephesians, they are divided by intermediate matter, especially by a long digressive allusion to the mysterious union between Christ and his Church; which possessing, as Mr. Locke hath well observed, the mind of the apostle, from being an incidental thought grows up into the principal subject. The affinity between, these two passages, in signification, in terms, and in the order of the words, is closer than can be pointed out between any parts of any two epistles in the volume.

If the reader, would see how the same subject is treated by a different hand, and how distinguishable it is from the production of the same pen, let him turn to the second and third chapters of the First Epistle of St. Peter. The duties of servants, of wives, and of husbands, are enlarged upon in that epistle, as they are in the Epistle to the Ephesians; but the subjects

both occur in a different order, and the train of sentiment subjoined to each is totally unlike.

3. In two letters issuing from the same person, nearly at the same time, and upon the same general occasion, we may expect to trace the influence of association in the order in which the topics follow one another. Certain ideas universally or usually suggest others. Here the order is what we call natural, and from such an order nothing can be concluded. But when the order is arbitrary, yet alike, the concurrence indicates the effect of that principle, by which ideas, which have been once joined, commonly revisit the thoughts together. The epistles under consideration furnish the two following remarkable instances of this species of agreement.

Ephesians 4:24: “And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness: wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.”

Colossians 3:9: “Lie not one to another; seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge.”

The vice of “lying,” or a correction of that vice, does not seem to bear any nearer relation to the “putting on the new man,” than a reformation in any other article of morals. Yet these two ideas we see stand in both epistles in immediate connection.

Ephesians 5:20-22: “Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.”

Colossians 3:17: “Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.”

In both these passages submission follows giving of thanks, without any similitude in the ideas which should account for the transition.

It is not necessary to pursue the comparison between the two epistles farther. The argument which results from it stands thus: No two other

epistles contain a circumstance which indicates that they were written at the same, or nearly at the same, time. No two other epistles exhibit so many marks of correspondency and resemblance. If the original which we ascribe to these two epistles be the true one, that is, if they were both really written by St. Paul, and both sent to their respective destination by the same messenger, the similitude is, in all points, what should be expected to take place. If they were forgeries, then the mention of Tychicus in both epistles, and in a manner which shows that he either carried or accompanied both epistles, was inserted for the purpose of accounting for their similitude; or else, the structure of the epistles was designedly adapted to the circumstance: or lastly, the conformity between the contents of the forgeries, and what is thus directly intimated concerning their date, was only a happy accident. Not one of these three suppositions will gain credit with a reader who peruses the epistles with attention, and who reviews the several examples we have pointed out, and the observations with which they were accompanied.

## SECTION 2.

There is such a thing as a peculiar word or phrase cleaving, as it were, to the memory of a writer or speaker, and presenting itself to his utterance at every turn. When we observe this we call it a cant word, or a cant phrase. It is a natural effect of habit, and would appear more frequently than it does, had not the rules of good writing taught the ear to be offended with the iteration of the same sound, and often-times caused us to reject, on that account, the word which offered itself first to our recollection. With a writer who, like St. Paul, either knew not these rules, or disregarded them, such words will not be avoided. The truth is, an example of this kind runs through several of his epistles, and in the epistle before us abounds; and that is in the word riches, (*πλουτος*.) used metaphorically as an augmentative of the idea to which it happens to be subjoined. Thus “the riches of his glory,” “his riches in glory,” “riches of the glory of his inheritance,” “riches of the glory of this mystery,” Romans 9:23; Ephesians 3:16; Ephesians 1:18; Colossians 1:27; “riches of his grace,” twice in the Ephesians, Ephesians 1:7; 2:7; “riches of the full assurance of understanding,” Colossians 2:2; “riches of his goodness,” Romans 2:4; “riches of the wisdom of God,” Romans 11:33; “riches of Christ,”



Ephesians 3:8. In a like sense the adjective, Romans 10:12, "Rich unto all that call upon him," Ephesians 2:4, "Rich in mercy;" 1 Timothy 6:18, "Rich in good works." Also the adverb Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." This figurative use of the word, though so familiar to St. Paul, does not occur in any part of the New Testament, except once in the Epistle of St. James, James 2:5 "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith?" where it is manifestly suggested by the antithesis. I propose the frequent, yet seemingly unaffected, use of this phrase in the epistle before us, as one internal mark of its genuineness.

### SECTION 3.

There is another singularity in St. Paul's style which, wherever it is found, may be deemed a badge of authenticity; because, if it were noticed, it would not, I think, be imitated, inasmuch as it almost always produces embarrassment and interruption in the reasoning. This singularity is a species of digression which may probably, I think, be denominated going off at a word. It is turning aside from the subject upon the occurrence of some particular word, forsaking the train of thought then in hand, and entering upon a parenthetical sentence in which that word is the prevailing term. I shall lay before the reader some examples of this, collected from the other epistles, and then propose two examples of it which are found in the Epistle to the Ephesians. 2 Corinthians 2:14, at the word savor: "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place. (For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one we are the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life; and who is sufficient for these things?) For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." Again, 2 Corinthians 3:1, at the word epistle: "Need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or of commendation from you? (Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts known and read of all men; forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.") The position of the words in the original shows, more strongly than in the translation, that it was the

occurrence of the word **επιστολη** which gave birth to the sentence as follows, 2 Corinthians 3:1: **ει μη χρηζομεν, ως τινες, συστατικων επιστολων προς υμας, η εξ υμων συστατικων; η επιστολη ημων υμεις εστε, εγγεγραμμενη εν ταις καρδιαις ημων, γινωσκομενη και αναγινωσκομενη υπο παντων ανθρωπων· φανερουμενοι οτι εστε επιστολη χριστου διακονηθεισα υφ' ημων, εγγεγραμμενη ου μελανι, αλλα πνευματι θεου ζωντος, ουκ εν πλαξι λιθιναις, αλλ' ες πλαξι καρδιας σαρκιναις.**

Again, 2 Corinthians 3:12, etc., at the word veil: “Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: and not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished. But their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which veil is done away in Christ; but even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart; nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away, (now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.) But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not.”

Who sees not that this whole allegory of the veil arises entirely out of the occurrence of the word, in telling us that “Moses put a veil over his face,” and that it drew the apostle away from the proper subject of his discourse, the dignity of the office in which he was engaged? which subject he fetches up again almost in the words with which he had left it: “Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not.” The sentence which he had before been going on with, and in which he had been interrupted by the veil, was, “Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech.”

In the Epistle to the Ephesians the reader will remark two instances in which the same habit of composition obtains; he will recognize the same pen. One he will find, Ephesians 4:8-11, at the word ascended: “Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts into men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the

same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles,” etc.

The other appears, Ephesians 5:12-15, at the word light: “For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret: but all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light; (for whatsoever doth make manifest, is light; wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light;) see then that ye walk circumspectly:”

#### SECTION 4.

As our epistle purports to have been written during St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome, which lies beyond the period to which the Acts of the Apostles brings up his history, and as we have seen and acknowledged that the epistle contains no reference to any transaction at Ephesus during the apostle's residence in that city, we cannot expect that it should supply many marks of agreement with the narrative. One coincidence, however, occurs, and a coincidence of that minute and less obvious kind, which, as hath been repeatedly observed, is of all others the most to be relied upon.

Ephesians 6:19, 20, we read, “Praying for me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds.” “In bonds,” *εν αλυσει*, in a chain. In the twenty-eighth chapter of the Acts we are informed that Paul, after his arrival at Rome, was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him. Dr. Lardner has shown that this mode of custody was in use amongst the Romans, and that whenever it was adopted, the prisoner was bound to the soldier by a single chain: in reference to which St. Paul, in the twentieth verse of this chapter, {Acts 28:20} tells the Jews, whom he had assembled, “For this cause, therefore, have I called for you, to see you and to speak with you, because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain,” *την υλυσιν ταυτην περικειμαι*. It is in exact conformity, therefore, with the truth of St. Paul's situation at the time, that he declares of himself in the epistle, *πρεσβευω εν αλυσει*. And the exactness is the more remarkable, as *αλυσις* (a chain) is no where used in the singular number to express any other kind of custody. When the prisoner's hands or feet were bound together, the word was *δεσμοι*, (bonds;) Acts 26:29.

When the prisoner was confined between two soldiers, as in the case of Peter, Acts 12:6, two chains were employed; and it is said, upon his miraculous deliverance, that the “chains (αλυσεις, in the plural) fell from his hands.”

If it can be suspected that the writer of the present epistle, who in no other particular appears to have availed himself of the information concerning St. Paul delivered in the Acts, had, in this verse, borrowed the word which he read in that book, and had adapted his expression to what he found there recorded of St. Paul’s treatment at Rome; in short, that the coincidence here noted was effected by craft and design, I think it a strong reply, to remark that in the parallel passage of the Epistle to the Colossians the same allusion is not preserved; the words there are, “praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds,” δι’ ο και δεδεμαι. After what has been shown in a preceding section, there can be little doubt that these two epistles were written by the same person.

**PREFACE**

**TO THE**

**EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE**

**TO THE**

**EPHESIANS.**

EPHESUS was a city of Ionia, in Asia Minor, and once the metropolis of that part of the world. The ancient city was situated at the mouth of the river Cayster, on the shore of the AEgean Sea, about 50 miles south of Smyrna. The Ephesus in which St. Paul founded a Church, and which for a time flourished gloriously, was not the ancient Ephesus; for that was destroyed, and a new city of the same name was built by Lysimachus.

This most famous of all the Asiatic cities is now a miserable village, composed of mean huts formed out of the ruins of its once magnificent structures; and these huts are now the residence of about forty or fifty Turkish families, without a single Christian among them! For other particulars see the note on Acts 18:19.

It is, however, a doubt with many learned men, whether this epistle was sent to the Church at Ephesus. They think that the proper direction is, The Epistle of St. Paul to the Laodiceans; and suppose it to be the same which the apostle mentions, Colossians 4:16: "When this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea." Dr. Paley's arguments in the affirmative are entitled to much regard.

"Although it does not appear to have ever been disputed that the epistle before us was written by St. Paul, yet it is well known that a doubt has long been entertained concerning the persons to whom it was addressed.

The question is founded partly in some ambiguity in the external evidence. Marcion, a heretic of the second century, as quoted by Tertullian, a father in the beginning of the third, calls it, The Epistle to the Laodiceans. From what we know of Marcion, his judgment is little to be relied upon; nor is it perfectly clear that Marcion was rightly understood by Tertullian. If, however, Marcion be brought to prove that some copies in his time gave **εν λαοδικεια** in the superscription, his testimony, if it be truly interpreted, is not diminished by his heresy; for, as Grotius observes, ‘*cur in ea re mentiretur nihil erat causae.*’ The name **εν εφεσω**, in Ephesus, in the first verse, upon which word singly depends the proof that the epistle was written to the Ephesians, is not read in all the manuscripts now extant. I admit, however, that the external evidence preponderates with a manifest excess on the side of the received reading. The objection therefore principally arises from the contents of the epistle itself, which, in many respects militate with the supposition that it was written to the Church of Ephesus. According to the history, St. Paul had passed two whole years at Ephesus, Acts 19:10. And in this point, viz. of St. Paul having preached for a considerable length of time at Ephesus, the history is confirmed by the two epistles to the Corinthians, and by the two epistles to Timothy: ‘I will tarry at Ephesus until pentecost;’ 1 Corinthians 16:8. ‘We would not have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia;’ 2 Corinthians 1:8. ‘As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia;’ 1 Timothy 1:3. ‘And in how many things he ministered to me at Ephesus thou knowest well;’ 2 Timothy 1:18. I adduce these testimonies because, had it been a competition of credit between the history and the epistle, I should have thought myself bound to have preferred the epistle. Now, every epistle which St. Paul wrote to Churches which he himself had founded, or which he had visited, abounds with references and appeals to what had passed during the time that he was present amongst them; whereas there is not a text in the Epistle to the Ephesians from which we can collect that he had ever been at Ephesus at all. The two epistles to the Corinthians, the Epistle to the Galatians, the Epistle to the Philippians, and the two Epistles to the Thessalonians, are of this class; and they are full of allusions to the apostle’s history, his reception, and his conduct whilst amongst them; the total want of which in the epistle before us is very difficult to account for, if it was in truth written to the Church of Ephesus, in which city he had resided for so long

a time. This is the first and strongest objection. But farther, the Epistle to the Colossians was addressed to a Church in which St. Paul had never been, This we infer from the first verse of the second chapter: 'For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh.' There could be no propriety in thus joining the Colossians and Laodiceans with those 'who had not seen his face in the flesh,' if they did not also belong to the same description. Now, his address to the Colossians, whom he had not visited, is precisely the same as his address to the Christians to whom he wrote in the epistle which we are now considering: 'We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints;' Colossians 1:3. Thus he speaks to the Christians, in the epistle before us, as follows: 'Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you in my prayers; Ephesians 1:15. The terms of this address are observable. The words, 'having heard of your faith and love,' are the very words, we see, which he uses towards strangers; and it is not probable that he should employ the same in accosting a Church in which he had long exercised his ministry, and whose 'faith and love' he must have personally known. The Epistle to the Romans was written before St. Paul had been at Rome; and his address to them runs in the same strain with that just now quoted: 'I thank my God, through Jesus Christ, for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world;' Romans 1:8. Let us now see what was the form in which our apostle was accustomed to introduce his epistles, when he wrote to those with whom he was already acquainted. To the Corinthians it was this: 'I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Christ Jesus;' 1 Corinthians 1:4. To the Philippians: 'I thank my God upon every remembrance of you;' Philippians 1:3. To the Thessalonians: 'We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love;' 1 Thessalonians 1:3. To Timothy: 'I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with a pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;' 2 Timothy 1:3. In these quotations it is usually his remembrance, and never his hearing of them, which he makes the subject of his thankfulness to God.

As great difficulties stand in the way, supposing the epistle before us to have been written to the Church of Ephesus; so I think it probable that it is actually the epistle to the Laodiceans, referred to in the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians. The text which contains that reference is this: ‘When this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea;’ Colossians 4:16. The epistle from Laodicea was an epistle sent by St. Paul to that Church, and by them transmitted to Colosse. The two Churches were mutually to communicate the epistles they had received. This is the way in which the direction is explained by the greater part of commentators, and is the most probable sense that can be given to it. It is also probable that the epistle alluded to was an epistle which had been received by the Church of Laodicea lately. It appears, then, with a considerable degree of evidence, that there existed an epistle of St. Paul nearly of the same date with the Epistle to the Colossians, and an epistle directed to a Church (for such the Church of Laodicea was) in which St. Paul had never been. What has been observed concerning the epistle before us, shows that it answers perfectly to that character.

“Nor does the mistake seem very difficult to account for. Whoever inspects the map of Asia Minor will see, that a person proceeding from Rome to Laodicea would probably land at Ephesus, as the nearest frequented seaport in that direction. Might not Tychicus, then, in passing through Ephesus, communicate to the Christians of that place the letter with which he was charged? And might not copies of that letter be multiplied and preserved at Ephesus? Might not some of the copies drop the words of designation *εν τη λαοδικεια*, which it was of no consequence to an Ephesian to retain? Might not copies of the letter come out into the Christian Church at large from Ephesus; and might not this give occasion to a belief that the letter was written to that Church? And, lastly, might not this belief produce the error which we suppose to have crept into the inscription?

“And it is remarkable that there seem to have been some ancient copies without the words of designation, either the words in Ephesus, or the words in Laodicea. St. Basil, a writer of the fourth century, speaking of the present epistle, has this very singular passage: ‘And writing to the Ephesians, as truly united to him who is through knowledge, he (Paul)



calleth them in a peculiar sense such who are; saying, to the saints who are and (or even) the faithful in Christ Jesus; for so those before us have transmitted it, and we have found it in ancient copies.’ Dr. Mill interprets (and, notwithstanding some objections that have been made to him, in my opinion, rightly interprets) these words of Basil, as declaring that this father had seen certain copies of the epistle in which the words ‘in Ephesus’ were wanting. And the passage, I think, must be considered as Basil’s fanciful way of explaining what was really a corrupt and defective reading; for I do not believe it possible that the author of the epistle could have originally written **αγιοις τοις ουσιν**, without any name of place to follow it.”

It must be allowed that the arguments of Dr. Paley, the sum of which may be found in Wetstein, that this is the epistle to the Laodiceans, are both plausible and strong; and yet almost the whole of antiquity, with the exceptions which those learned men mention, is in favor of the epistle being sent originally to the Church at Ephesus. Puzzled with these two considerations, some critics have pointed out a middle way. They suppose that several copies of this epistle were directed to no particular Church, but were intended for all the Churches in Asia Minor; and that different copies might have different directions, from this circumstance, that St. Paul, in writing the first verse **παυλος αποστολος ιησου χριστου-τοις αγιοις τοις ουσιν**, Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the saints which are, left a blank after **ουσιν**, are, which was in some cases filled up with **εν εφεσω**, in Ephesus; in others, with **εν λαοδικεια**, in Laodicea; though there might be one copy expressly sent by him to the Church of the Laodiceans, while he wished that others should be directed to the different Churches through Asia Minor. That there were copies which had no place specified, we learn from St. Basil; and the arguments in favor of Laodicea are certainly the strongest; the circumstance, that the apostle salutes no person, agrees well with Laodicea, where he had never been, Colossians 2:1; but cannot agree with Ephesus, where he was well known, and where, in preaching the Gospel, he had spent three years. See Acts 20:31.

As this point is very dubious, and men of great abilities and learning have espoused different sides of the question, I judge myself incompetent to determine any thing; but I felt it my duty to bring the arguments for

Laodicea fairly before the reader; those in favor of Ephesus may be met with every where. The passages in the body of the epistle, alleged by critics who espouse opposite sides of this subject, I have seldom noticed in a controversial way; and the notes on those passages are constructed as though no controversy existed.

Many expositors, and particularly Drs. Chandler and Macknight, have thought that they have perceived a great number of references to the temple of Diana at Ephesus; to the sacred mysteries among the Greeks; to the Hierophants, Mystagogues, Neocoroi, etc., in the temple of the celebrated goddess. It may appear strange that, with these opinions before me, I have not referred to the same things; nor adduced them by way of illustration; the truth is, I have not been able to discover them, nor do I believe that any such allusions exist. I see many allusions to the temple of God at Jerusalem, but none to the temple of Diana at Ephesus. I find also many references to the sacred service and sacerdotal officers in the Jewish temple; but none to Mystagogues, etc., among the heathens. I find much said about, what is to be understood most literally, the mystery which had been hidden from all ages, viz. of uniting Jews and Gentiles in one Church, but no reference to the Eleusinian, Bacchic, or other mysteries in the abominable worship of the Greeks, was suggesting to the mind of the apostle any parallel between their mysteries and those of the Almighty. My reasons for my dissent from these respectable authorities I have given in the notes.

JUNE 20TH, 1815.

# EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

## TO THE

## EPHESIANS.

Chronological Notes relative to this Epistle.

Usherian year of the world, 4065. — Alexandrian era of the world, 5563. — Antiochian era of the world, 5553. — Constantinopolitan era of the world, 5569. — Year of the Eusebian epocha of the Creation, 4289. — Year of the Julian period, 4771. — Year of the minor Jewish era of the world, 3821. — Year of the Greater Rabbinical era of the world, 4420. — Year from the Flood, according to Archbishop Usher, and the English Bible, 2409. — Year of the Cali yuga, or Indian era of the Deluge, 3163. — Year of the era of Iphitus, or since the first commencement of the Olympic games, 1001. — Year of the Nabonassarean era, 808. Year of the era of the Seleucidae, 373. — Year of the Spanish era, 99. — Year of the Actiac or Actian era, 92. — Year from the birth of Christ, 65. — Year of the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 61. — Year from the building of Rome, according to Varro, 813. — Year of the CCXth Olympiad, 1. — Jesus, high priest of the Jews. — Common Golden Number, 5. — Jewish Golden Number, 2. — Year of the Solar Cycle, 14. — Dominical Letter, D. — Jewish Passover, March 22nd. — Easter Sunday, March 29th. — Epact, or the moons age on the 22nd of March, or the Xth of the Calends of April, 14. — Year of the reign of Nero Caesar, the sixth emperor of the Romans, 8. — In the first year of Porcius Festus, governor of the Jews. — Year of Vologesus, king of the Parthians, 11. — Year of Domitius Corbulo, governor of Syria, 2. — Roman Consuls; C. Caesonius Paetus, and C. Petronius Turpilianus.

## CHAPTER 1.

*The apostle's salutation to the Church, 1, 2. He blesses God for calling the Gentiles to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, by whose sacrificial death both they and the Jews find redemption, 3-7. He shows that it was through the great abundance of God's wisdom and goodness that the Gentiles were called into a state of salvation, and that they should receive the Holy Spirit as the earnest of their inheritance, 8-15. He praises God for their conversion, and prays that they may be farther enlightened, that they may see the glory of Christ, and partake of the blessings procured by his passion and exaltation, 16-23.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 1.

**Verse 1. *To the saints which are at Ephesus***— As some learned men think that this epistle was written to the Church of the Laodiceans, and that the words **εν εφεσω**, in Ephesus, were not originally in this epistle, the consideration of the subject has appeared to be more proper for the preface; and to that the reader is referred for a particular discussion of this opinion. By the term saints we are to understand those who in that place professed Christianity, and were members of the Christian Church. Saint properly signifies a holy person, and such the Gospel of Christ requires every man to be, and such every true believer is, both in heart and life; but saint appears to have been as ordinary a denomination of a believer in Christ in those primitive times, as the term Christian is now. Yet many had the name who had not the thing.

***The faithful in Christ Jesus***— **πιστοις**· the believers — the persons who received Christ as the promised Messiah, and the Savior of the world, and continued in the grace which they had received.

**Verse 2. *Grace be to you***— See the note on Romans 1:7.

**Verse 3. *Blessed be the God***— See the note on 2 Corinthians 1:3, where the same form is used.

***With all spiritual blessings***— With the pure doctrines of the Gospel, and the abundant gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, justifying, sanctifying, and building us up on our most holy faith.

***In heavenly places***— *εν τοις ουρανοις*. In heavenly things, such as those mentioned above; they were not yet in heavenly places, but they had abundance of heavenly things to prepare them for heavenly places. Some think the word should be understood as signifying blessings of the most exalted or excellent kind, such as are spiritual in opposition to those that are earthly, such as are eternal in opposition to those that are temporal; and all these in, through and by CHRIST. We have already seen, on Galatians 4:26, that the heavenly Jerusalem, or Jerusalem which is from above, is used by the Jews to signify the days of the Messiah, and that state of grace and glory which should follow the Levitical worship and ceremonies; and it is possible that St. Paul may use the word *ουρανια*, heavenly things, in this sense: God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things, or in this heavenly state, in which life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel. This is apparently the preferable sense.

**Verse 4. *According as he hath chosen us in him***— As he has decreed from the beginning of the world, and has kept in view from the commencement of the religious system of the Jews, (which the phrase sometimes means,) to bring us Gentiles to the knowledge of this glorious state of salvation by Christ Jesus. The Jews considered themselves an elect or chosen people, and wished to monopolize the whole of the Divine love and beneficence. The apostle here shows that God had the Gentiles as much in the contemplation of his mercy and goodness as he had the Jews; and the blessings of the Gospel, now so freely dispensed to them, were the proof that God had thus chosen them, and that his end in giving them the Gospel was the same which he had in view by giving the law to the Jews, viz. that they might be holy and without blame before him. And as his object was the same in respect to them both, they should consider that, as he loved them, so they should love one another: God having provided for each the same blessings, they should therefore be *αγιους*, holy — fully separated from earth and sin, and consecrated to God and *αμωμους*, without blame — having no spot nor imperfection, their inward holiness agreeing with their outward consecration. The words are a metaphor taken

from the perfect and immaculate sacrifices which the law required the people to bring to the altar of God. But as love is the fulfilling of the law, and love the fountain whence their salvation flowed, therefore love must fill their hearts towards God and each other, and love must be the motive and end of all their words and works.

**Verse 5. *Having predestinated us*—** **προορισας.** As the doctrine of eternal predestination has produced much controversy in the Christian world, it may be necessary to examine the meaning of the term, that those who do use it may employ it according to the sense it has in the oracles of God. The verb **προοπιζω**, from **προ**, before, and **οπιζω**, I define, finish, bound, or terminate, whence **οπος**, a boundary or limit, signifies to define beforehand, and circumscribe by certain bounds or limits; and is originally a geographical term, but applied also to any thing concluded, or determined, or demonstrated. Here the word is used to point out God's fixed purpose or predetermination to bestow on the Gentiles the blessing of the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ, which adoption had been before granted to the Jewish people; and without circumcision, or any other Mosaic rite, to admit the Gentiles to all the privileges of his Church and people. And the apostle marks that all this was fore-determined by God, as he had fore-determined the bounds and precincts of the land which he gave them according to the promise made to their fathers; that the Jews had no reason to complain, for God had formed this purpose before he had given the law, or called them out of Egypt; (for it was before the foundation of the world, Ephesians 1:4;) and that, therefore, the conduct of God in calling the Gentiles now — bringing them into his Church, and conferring on them the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, was in pursuance of his original design; and, if he did not do so, his eternal purposes could not be fulfilled; and that, as the Jews were taken to be his peculiar people, not because they had any goodness or merit in themselves; so the Gentiles were called, not for any merit they had, but according to the good pleasure of his will; that is, according to his eternal benevolence, showing mercy and conferring privileges in this new creation, as he had done in the original creation; for as, in creating man, he drew every consideration from his own innate eternal benevolence, so now, in redeeming man, and sending the glad tidings of salvation both to the Jews

and the Gentiles, be acted on the same principles, deriving all the reasons of his conduct from his own infinite goodness.

This argument was exceedingly conclusive, and must silence the Jews on the ground of their original, primitive, and exclusive rights, which they were ever ready to plead against all pretensions of the Gentiles. If therefore God, before the foundation of the Jewish economy, had determined that the Gentiles, in the fullness of time, should be called to and admitted into all the privileges of the Messiah's kingdom, then the exclusive salvation of the Jews was chimerical; and what God was doing now, by the preaching of the apostles in the Gentile world, was in pursuance of his original design. This same argument St. Paul repeatedly produces in his Epistle to the Romans; and a proper consideration of it unlocks many difficulties in that epistle. See the notes on Romans 8:29, 30; and elsewhere, in the course of that epistle, where this subject is handled. But why is the word **προορισας**, fore-determined, limited, or circumscribed, used here? Merely in reference to the settlement of the Israelites in the promised land. God assigned to them the portions which they were to inherit; and these portions were described, and their bearings, boundaries, vicinities to other portions, extent and length, as exactly ascertained as they could be by the most correct geographical map. As God, therefore, had dealt with the Jews in making them his peculiar people, and when he divided the earth among the sons of Noah reserved to himself the twelve portions which he afterwards gave to the twelve tribes; (see on Deuteronomy 32:8;) and as his dealings with them were typical of what he intended to do in the calling and salvation of the Gentiles; so he uses the terms by which their allotment and settlement were pointed out to show that, what he had thus designed and typified, he had now fulfilled according to the original predetermination; the Gentiles having now the spiritual inheritance which God had pointed out by the grant made of the promised land to the children of Israel. This is the grand key by which this predestination business is unlocked. See on Ephesians 1:11.

**Verse 6. *To the praise of the glory of his grace***— **δοξης της χαριτος αυτου**. The glory of his grace, for **χαρις ενδοξος**, his glorious or illustrious grace, according to the Hebrew idiom. But the grace or mercy of God is peculiarly illustrated and glorified in the plan of redemption by Christ Jesus. By the giving of the LAW, God's justice and holiness were

rendered most glorious; by the giving of the GOSPEL, his grace and mercy are made equally conspicuous.

**Wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved**— This translation of *εν η εχαριτωσεν ημας εν τω ηγαπημενω*) is not clear; with which he has graciously favored us through the Beloved, is at once more literal and more intelligible. Whitby, Macknight, and Wakefield translate the passage in nearly the same way.

In the Beloved must certainly mean in Christ, who is termed God's beloved Son, Matthew 3:17; but several excellent MSS., such as D\*EFG, the later Syriac, the Aethiopic, Vulgate, Itala, with several of the fathers, add, *υιω αυτου*, his beloved Son. This is the meaning, whether the reading be received or rejected.

**Verse 7. In whom we have redemption**— God has glorified his grace by giving us redemption by the blood of his Son, and this redemption consists in forgiving and delivering us from our sins; so then Christ's blood was the redemption price paid down for our salvation: and this was according to the riches of his grace; as his grace is rich or abundant in benevolence, so it was manifested in beneficence to mankind, in their redemption by the sacrifice of Christ, the measure of redeeming grace being the measure of God's own eternal goodness.

It may not be useless to remark that, instead of *της χαριτος αυτου*, his grace, the Codex Alexandrinus and the Coptic version have *της χρηστοτητος*, his goodness.

**Verse 8. Wherein he hath abounded**— That is, in the dispensation of mercy and goodness by Christ Jesus.

**In all wisdom and prudence**— Giving us apostles the most complete instructions in heavenly things by the inspiration of his Spirit; and at the same time prudence, that we might know when and where to preach the Gospel so that it might be effectual to the salvation of those who heard it. Nothing less than the Spirit of God could teach the apostles that wisdom by which they were to instruct a dark and sinful world; and nothing less than the same Spirit could inspire them with that prudence which was necessary to be exercised in every step of their life and ministry. Every wise man is not a prudent man, and every prudent man is not a wise man.



Wisdom and prudence may be expected in an apostle who is constantly living under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. “Wisdom,” according to Sir William Temple, “is that which makes men judge what are the best ends, and what the best means to attain them; and gives a man advantage of counsel and direction.” “Prudence is wisdom applied to practice; or that discreet, apt suiting as well of actions as words, in their due place, time, and manner. Every minister of Christ needs these still; and if he abide not under the influence of both, not only his prayers but his ministerial labors will be all hindered,

**Verse 9. *Having made known unto us the mystery***— That the Gentiles should ever be received into the Church of God, and have all the privileges of the Jews, without being obliged to submit to circumcision, and perform the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law was a mystery — a hidden thing which had never been published before; and now revealed only to the apostles. It was God’s will that it should be so, but that will he kept hidden to the present time. A mystery signifies something hidden, but it ceases to be a mystery as soon as it is revealed. See the note on Matthew 13:11; and particularly that on Romans 11:25.

***Good pleasure***— *την ευδοκιαν*. That benevolent design which he had purposed in himself, not being induced by any consideration from without.

**Verse 10. *In the dispensation of the fullness of times***— *εις οικονομιαν του πληρωματος των καιρων*. The word *οικονομια*, which is the same as our word economy, signifies, as Dr. Macknight has well observed, “the plan which the master of a family, or his steward, has established for the management of the family;” it signifies, also, a plan for the management of any sort of business: and here it means the dispensation of the Gospel, that plan by which God has provided salvation for a lost world; and according to which he intends to gather all believers, both Jews and Gentiles, into one Church under Jesus Christ, their head and governor. See the note on Matthew 24:45, where the word and the office are particularly explained.

The fullness of times — By this phrase we are to understand either the Gospel dispensation, which is the consummation of all preceding dispensations, and the last that shall be afforded to man; or that advanced

state of the world which God saw to be the most proper for the full manifestation of those benevolent purposes which he had formed in himself relative to the salvation of the world by Jesus Christ.

*That he might gather together in one*— *ανακεφαλαιωσασθαι*, from *ανα*, again, and *κεφαλαιω*, to reduce to one sum; to add up; to bring different sums together, and fractions of sums, so as to reduce them under one denomination; to recapitulate the principal matters contained in a discourse. Here it means the gathering together both Jews and Gentiles, who have believed in Christ, into one Church and flock. See the preceding note.

*All things-which are in heaven, and which are on earth*— This clause is variously understood: some think, by things in heaven the Jewish state is meant and by things on earth the Christian. The Jews had been long considered a Divine or heavenly people; their doctrine, their government, their constitution, both civil and ecclesiastical, were all Divine or heavenly: as the powers of the heavens, Matthew 24:29, Luke 21:26, mean the Jewish rulers in Church and state, it is very possible that the things which are in heaven mean this same state; and as the Gentiles were considered to have nothing Divine or heavenly among them, they may be here intended by the earth, out of the corruption of which they are to be gathered by the preaching of the Gospel. But there are others who imagine that the things in heaven mean the angelical hosts; and the things on earth believers of all nations, who shall all be joined together at last in one assembly to worship God throughout eternity. And some think that the things in heaven mean the saints who died before Christ's advent, and who are not to be made perfect till the resurrection, when the full power and efficacy of Christ shall be seen in raising the bodies of believers and uniting them with their holy souls, to reign in his presence for ever. And some think that, as the Hebrew phrase *שמים והארץ* *shamayim vahaarets*, the heavens and the earth, signifies all creatures, the words in the text are to be understood as signifying all mankind, without discrimination of peoples, kindreds, or tongues; Jews, Greeks, or barbarians. All that are saved of all nations, (being saved in the same way, viz. by faith in Christ Jesus, without any distinction of nation or previous condition,) and all gathered into one Church or assembly.

I believe that the forming one Church out of both Jews and Gentiles is that to which the apostle refers. This agrees with what is said, Ephesians 2:14-17.

**Verse 11. *In whom***— Christ Jesus; also we — believing Jews have obtained an inheritance — what was promised to Abraham and his spiritual seed, viz. the adoption of sons, and the kingdom of heaven, signified by the privileges under the Mosaic dispensation, and the possession of the promised land, but all these privileges being forfeited by the rebellion and unbelief of the Jews, they are now about to be finally cut off, and the believing part to be re-elected, and put in possession of the blessings promised to Abraham and his spiritual seed, by faith; for without a re-election, they cannot get possession of these spiritual privileges.

***Being predestinated***— God having determined to bring both Jews and Gentiles to salvation, not by works, nor by any human means or schemes, but by Jesus Christ; that salvation being defined and determined before in the Divine mind, and the means by which it should be brought about all being according to his purpose, who consults not his creatures, but operates according to the counsel of his own will, that being ever wise, gracious, and good.

The original reference is still kept up here in the word **προορισθεντες**, being predestinated, as in the word **προορισας** Ephesians 1:5. And as the apostle speaks of obtaining the inheritance, he most evidently refers to that of which the promised land was the type and pledge. And as that land was assigned to the Israelites by limit and lot, both of which were appointed by God so the salvation now sent to the Gentiles was as expressly their lot or portion, as the promised land was that of the people of Israel. All this shows that the Israelites were a typical people; their land, the manner of possessing it, their civil and religious code, etc., etc., all typical; and that in, by, and through them, God had fore-determined, fore-described, and fore-ascertained a greater and more glorious people, among whom the deepest counsels of his wisdom should be manifested, and the most powerful works of his eternal mercy, grace, holiness, goodness, and truth, be fully exhibited. Thus there was nothing fortuitous

in the Christian scheme; all was the result of infinite counsel and design. See on Ephesians 1:5.

**Verse 12. *That we***— Jews, now apostles and messengers of God, to whom the first offers of salvation were made, and who were the first that believed in Christ.

***Should be to the praise of his glory***— By being the means of preaching Christ crucified to the Gentiles, and spreading the Gospel throughout the world.

**Verse 13. *In whom ye also trusted***— Ye Gentiles, having heard from us the word, **τον λογον**, the doctrine, of the truth, which is the Gospel, or glad tidings, of your salvation, have believed, as we Jews have done, and received similar blessings to those with which God has favored us.

In whom also, **εν ω**, through whom, Christ Jesus, after that ye had believed, viz. that he was the only Savior, and that through his blood redemption might be obtained, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise; that is, The Holy Spirit, which is promised to them who believe on Christ Jesus, was given to you, and thus you were ascertained to be the children of God, for God has no child who is not a partaker of the Holy Ghost, and he who has this Spirit has God's seal that he belongs to the heavenly family. It was customary among all nations, when a person purchased goods of any kind, to mark with his seal that which he had bought, in order that he might know it, and be able to claim it if mixed with the goods of others; to this custom the apostle may here allude but it was also customary to set a seal upon what was dedicated to God, or what was to be offered to him in sacrifice. See this proved in the note on John 6:27. The Jews themselves speak of the seal of God, which they term **אמת** emeth, truth, and which they consider as a representation of the unoriginated and endless perfections of God. As the apostle is here speaking of the doctrine of truth, which came by the Holy Spirit, and is sealed on the souls of believers by this Spirit, he may have in view the Jewish notion, which is at once both correct and elevated. This Spirit of truth, John 14:17, who leads into all truth, John 16:13, and teaches all things, John 14:26, makes the impression of his own eternal purity and truth in the souls of them who believe, and thus they bear the seal of God Almighty. And they who in the day of judgment are found to bear this seal

— TRUTH; truth in the inward parts, having truly repented, truly believed, and having been in consequence truly justified, and truly sanctified; and having walked in truth and sincerity towards God and man; these are sealed to the day of redemption; for, having this seal, they are seen to have a right to eternal life.

**Verse 14. *Which is the earnest of our inheritance***— This Holy Spirit, sealing the soul with truth and righteousness, is the earnest, foretaste, and pledge of the heavenly inheritance. And he who can produce this earnest — this witness of the Spirit, in the day of judgment, shall have an abundant entrance into the holiest. On the *αρραβων*, or earnest, see the notes on Genesis 38:13, etc., and on 2 Corinthians 1:22.

***The redemption of the purchased possession***— That is, till the time when body and soul are redeemed from all their miseries, and glorified in the kingdom on heaven.

The redemption of the purchased possession — *απολυτρωσις της περιποιησεως* is variously understood; and indeed the original is variously translated. Dr. Whitby has observed that the verb *πειποιεις* signifies to save alive; and he refers the *περιποιησις*, here, to the redemption of the body from corruption, and to its final glorification with the soul.

All those who believe in Christ Jesus are considered as his peculiar people and property, and to them eternal glory is promised. The Spirit of promise, which is given them, is a pledge that they shall have a resurrection from the dead, and eternal blessedness; the redemption, or bringing to life of the body, cannot take place till the day of judgment, but the Holy Spirit promises this redemption, and is now in their hearts an earnest or pledge of this complete restoration at the great day, which will then be, in an especial manner, to the praise of his glory, viz. of Christ, who has bought them by his blood.

**Verse 15. *Faith in the Lord Jesus***— Cordial reception of the Christian religion, amply proved by their love to all the saints — to all the Christians. Perhaps love here implies, not only the kind affection so called, but also all the fruits of love-benevolence, and kind offices of every description.

**Verse 16. *Cease not to give thanks***— The apostle intimates, so fully satisfied was he of the genuineness of their conversion, and of their steadiness since their conversion, that it was to him a continual cause of thanksgiving to God, who had brought them into that state of salvation; and of prayer, that they might be preserved blameless to the end.

***Making mention of you***— While praying for the prosperity of the Christian cause generally, he was led, from his particular affection for them, to mention them by name before God.

**Verse 17. *That the God of our Lord Jesus***— Jesus Christ, as man and mediator, has the Father for his God and Father: and it is in reference to this that he himself says: I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God; John 20:17.

***The Father of glory***— The author and giver of that glory which you expect at the end of your Christian race. This may be a Hebraism for glorious Father, but the former appears to be the best sense.

***The Spirit of wisdom and revelation***— I pray that God may give you his Holy Spirit, by whom his will is revealed to men, that he may teach and make you wise unto salvation, that you may continue to acknowledge him, Christ Jesus, as your only Lord and Savior.

**Verse 18. *The eyes of your understanding being enlightened***— The understanding is that power or faculty in the soul by which knowledge or information is received, and the recipient power is here termed the EYES of the understanding; and we learn from this that **οπερ ο οφθαλμος εν τω σωματι, τουτο ο νους εν τη ψυχη**, as Philo expresses it: What the eye is to the body, the understanding is to the soul; and that as the eye is not light in itself, and can discern nothing but by the means of light shining, not only on the objects to be viewed, but into the eye itself; so the understanding of man can discern no sacred thing of or by itself, but sees by the influence of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation; for without the influence of God's Holy Spirit no man ever became wise unto salvation, no more than a man ever discerned an object, (no matter how perfect soever his eye might have been,) without the instrumentality of light.

Instead of **της διανοιας**, of your understanding, **της καρδιας**, of your heart, is the reading of ABDEFG, and several others; also both the Syriac,

all the Arabic, the Coptic, the Aethiopic, Armenian, Sahidic, Slavonian, Vulgate, and Itala, besides several of the fathers. The eyes of your HEART is undoubtedly the true reading.

*The hope of his calling*— That you may clearly discern the glorious and important objects of your hope, to the enjoyment of which God has called or invited you.

*The riches of the glory of his inheritance*— That you may understand what is the glorious abundance of the spiritual things to which you are entitled, in consequence of being made children of God; for if children, then heirs, heirs of that glorious inheritance which God has provided for the saints — for all genuine Christians, whether formerly Jews or Gentiles. On the chief subject of this verse, see the notes on Galatians 4:6, 7.

**Verse 19.** *The exceeding greatness of his power*— As the apostle is here speaking of the glorious state of believers after death, the exceeding greatness of his power, or that power which surpasses all difficulties, being itself omnipotent, is to be understood of that might which is to be exerted in raising the body at the last day; as it will require the same power or energy which he wrought in Christ, when he raised his body from the grave, to raise up the bodies of all mankind; the resurrection of the human nature of Christ being a proof of the resurrection of mankind in general.

*According to the working of his mighty power*— **κατα την ενεργειαν του κρατους της ισχυος αυτου**. According to the energy of the power of his might. We may understand these words thus: MIGHT, **ισχυς**, is the state or simple efficiency of this attribute in God; POWER, **κρατος**, is this might or efficiency in action; ENERGY, **ενεργεια**, is the quantum of force, momentum, or velocity, with which the power is applied. Though they appear to be synonymous terms they may be thus understood: passive power is widely different from power in action; and power in action will be in its results according to the energy or momentum with which it is applied. The resurrection of the dead is a stupendous work of God; it requires his might in sovereign action; and when we consider that all mankind are to be raised and changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, then the momentum, or velocity, with which the power is to be applied must be inconceivably great. All motion is in proportion to the quantity of matter in the mover, and the velocity with which it is applied.

The effect here is in proportion to the cause and the energy he puts forth in order to produce it. But such is the nature of God's power in action, that it is perfectly inconceivable to us; and even these astonishingly strong words of the apostle are to be understood as used in condescension to human weakness.

**Verse 20.** *Set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places*— Gave him, as mediator between God and man, the highest honors and dignities, Philippians 2:9; in which state of exaltation he transacts all the affairs of his Church, and rules the universe. The right hand is the place of friendship, honor, confidence, and authority.

**Verse 21.** *Far above all principality*— The difficulty in this verse does not arise from the words themselves, the meaning of each being easily understood, but from the sense in which the apostle uses them. Some think he has reference here to the different orders among good and evil angels; he is superior to all the former, and rules all the latter. Others think he refers to earthly governments; and as **αρχη**, principality, the first word, signifies the most sovereign and extensive kind of dominion; and **κυριότης**, lordship, the last word, signifies the lowest degree of authority; hence we are to understand that to our Lord, in his human nature, are subjected the highest, the intermediate, and the lowest orders of beings in the universe. — Chandler. Others imagine that the apostle has in view, by whatsoever is named in this world, all the dignitaries of the Jewish Church; and by what is named in the world to come, all the dignities that should be found in the Christian Church.

Schoettgen supposes that the “apostle’s **αρχη** (for **αρχοντες**, the abstract for the concrete) means the same as the **נְשִׂיִם** Nesiim among the Jews, whose chief business it was to clear and decide all contentions which arose concerning traditions and legal controversies.

“That **εξουσια**, power, is the same as **צורבא** tsorba, he who possesses authority to propound, expound, persuade, convince, and refute.

“That **δυναμις**, might, answers to **רבנות** rabbanoth, signifying all the class of rabbins, whose office it was to expound the law, and teach the people generally.



“And that **κυριοτης**, dominion, answers to **מר** mar, which signifies a person above the lower orders of men. And he observes that Jesus Christ, after his resurrection, called fishermen, publicans, and men from the lowest orders of the people, to the work of the ministry; and made them instruments of confounding and overturning all the Jewish rulers, rabbins, and doctors. And that in the world which is to come — the successive ages of Christianity, he should ever be exalted above all those powers and authorities which Antichrist might bring into the Christian Church; such as popes, cardinals, wicked archbishops, bishops, deans, and canons; and all those who among the schoolmen were termed seraphic doctors, angelic doctors, most illuminated, most perfect, and irrefragable doctors. And although Wiclif, Huss, Luther, Melancthon, and the rest of the reformers, were men of little or no note when compared with the rulers of the popish Church, so eminently did the power of Christ work in and by them, that the pope and all his adjutants were every where confounded, and their power and authority annihilated in several entire regions.”

It is certain that the apostle means that all created power, glory, and influence, are under Christ; and hence it is added:

**Verse 22. *And hath put all things under his feet***— All beings and things are subject to him, whether they be thrones, dominions, principalities, or powers, Colossians 1:16-18; 2:10; for he, God the Father, has given him to be head — chief, and supreme, over all, to the Church, the Church having no ruler but Jesus Christ; others may be officers in his Church, but he alone is head and supreme.

**Verse 23. *Which is his body***— As he is head over all things, he is head to the Church; and this Church is considered as the body of which he is especially the head; and from him, as the head, the Church receives light, life, and intelligence.

***And is the fullness of him***— That in which he especially manifests his power, goodness, and truth; for though he fills all the world with his presence, yet he fills all the members of his mystical body with wisdom, goodness, truth, and holiness, in an especial manner. Some understand the fullness or **πληρωμα**, here, as signifying the thing to be filled; so the Christian Church is to be filled by him, whose fullness fills all his members, with all spiritual gifts and graces. And this corresponds with

what St. John says, John 1:16: And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. And with what is said, Colossians 2:9, 10: Ye are complete in him; **και εστε εν αυτω πεπληρωμενοι**. And ye are in him filled full; i.e. with gifts and grace.

How, in any other sense, the Church can be said to be the fullness of him who fills all in all, is difficult to say. However, as Jesus Christ is represented to be the head, and the Church, the body under that head, the individuals being so many members in that body; and as it requires a body and members to make a head complete; so it requires a Church, or general assembly of believers, to make up the body of Christ. When, therefore, the Jews and Gentiles are brought into this Church, the body may be said to be complete; and thus Christ has his visible fullness upon earth, and the Church may be said to be the fullness of him, etc. See Ephesians 1:10.

## CHAPTER 2.

*The character of the Ephesians previously to their conversion to Christianity, 1-3. By what virtue they were changed, and for what purpose, 4-7. They were saved by faith, 8, 9. And created unto good works, 10. The apostle enters into the particulars of their former miserable state, 11, 12. And those of their present happy state, 13. Christ has broken down the middle wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles, and proclaims reconciliation to both, 14-17. The glorious privileges of genuine believers, 18-22.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 2.

**Verse 1. *And you hath he quickened***— This chapter should not have been separated from the preceding, with which it is most intimately connected. As Christ fills the whole body of Christian believers with his fullness, (Ephesians 1:23,) so had he dealt with the converted Ephesians, who before were dead in trespasses, and dead in sins. DEATH is often used by all writers, and in all nations, to express a state of extreme misery. The Ephesians, by trespassing and sinning, had brought themselves into a state of deplorable wretchedness, as had all the heathen nations; and having thus sinned against God, they were condemned by him, and might be considered as dead in law — incapable of performing any legal act, and always liable to the punishment of death, which they had deserved, and which was ready to be inflicted upon them.

Trespasses, *παραπτώμασι*, may signify the slightest deviation from the line and rule of moral equity, as well as any flagrant offense; for these are equally transgressions, as long as the sacred line that separates between vice and virtue is passed over.

Sins, *αμαρτιας*, may probably mean here habitual transgression; sinning knowingly and daringly.

**Verse 2. *Wherein in time past ye walked***— There is much force in these expressions; the Ephesians had not sinned casually, or now and then, but

continually; it was their continual employment; they walked in trespasses and sins: and this was not a solitary case, all the nations of the earth acted in the same way; it was the course of this world, **κατα τον αιωνα του κοσμου τουτου**, according to the life, mode of living, or successive ages of this world. The word **αιων**, the literal meaning of which is constant duration, is often applied to things which have a complete course, as the Jewish dispensation, a particular government, and the term of human life; so, here, the whole of life is a tissue of sin, from the cradle to the grave; every human soul, unsaved by Jesus Christ, continues to transgress. And the nominally Christian world is in the same state to the present day. Age after age passes on in this way and the living lay it not to heart!

***The prince of the power of the air***— As the former clause may have particular respect to the Jewish people, who are frequently denominated **עולם הזה** *olam hazzeh*, this world, this latter clause may especially refer to the Gentiles, who were most manifestly under the power of the devil, as almost every object of their worship was a demon, to whom the worst of passions and practices were attributed, and whose conduct his votaries took care to copy.

Satan is termed prince of the power of the air, because the air is supposed to be a region in which malicious spirits dwell, all of whom are under the direction and influence of Satan, their chief.

***The spirit that now worketh***— **του νυν ενεργουντος** The operations of the prince of the aerial powers are not confined to that region; he has another sphere of action, viz. the wicked heart of man, and in this he works with energy. He seldom inspires indifference to religion; the subjects in whom he works are either determinate opposers of true religion, or they are systematic and energetic transgressors of God's laws.

***Children of disobedience***— Perhaps a Hebraism for disobedient children; but, taken as it stands here, it is a strong expression, in which disobedience, **η απειθεια**, appears to be personified, and wicked men exhibited as her children; the prince of the power of the air being their father, while disobedience is their mother. Thus they are emphatically, what our Lord calls them, Matthew 13:38, children of the wicked one; for they show themselves to be of their father the devil, because they will do his works, John 8:44. Some think that by children of disobedience the

apostle means particularly the disobedient, unbelieving, refractory, and persecuting Jews; but I rather think he speaks this generally, and refers to the Jews in the following verse.

**Verse 3.** *Among whom also we all had our conversation*— We JEWS, as well as you Gentiles, have lived in transgressions and sins;  
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the wickedness of their lives. Here we see that the fallen, apostate nature produces the fruits of unrighteousness. The bad tree produces bad fruit.

Children of wrath is the same as son of perdition, son of death, etc.; i.e. persons exposed to God's displeasure, because of their sins.

**Verse 4. *But God, who is rich in mercy***— As they were corrupt in their nature, and sinful in their practice, they could possess no merit, nor have any claim upon God; and it required much mercy to remove so much misery, and to pardon such transgressions.

***His great love***— God's infinite love is the groundwork of our salvation; in reference to us that love assumes the form of mercy, and that mercy provides the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore the apostle adds, Ephesians 2:5: By grace ye are saved — it is by God's free mercy in Christ that ye are brought into this state of salvation. See on Ephesians 2:8.

**Verse 5. *Even when we were dead in sins***— Dead in our souls; dead towards God; dead in law; and exposed to death eternal,

***Hath quickened us together with Christ***— God has given us as complete a resurrection from the death of sin to a life of righteousness, as the body of Christ has had from the grave. And as this quickening, or making alive, was most gratuitous on God's part, the apostle, with great propriety, says; By grace ye are saved.

**Verse 6. *And hath raised us up together in Christ***— Or rather, by Christ; his resurrection being the proof that he had made the full atonement, and that we might be justified by his blood. Believing, therefore, the record which God gave of his Son, we received this atonement, and were raised from a death of sin to a life of righteousness; and now we sit in heavenly places—we have a right to the kingdom of God, anticipate this glory, and are indescribably happy in the possession of this salvation, and in our fellowship with Christ Jesus.

**Verse 7. *That in the ages to come***— God has produced us an example, and one which shall be on record through all generations, that he quickens dead souls; that he forgives the sins of the most sinful, when they repent and believe in Christ Jesus. So that what God has done for the sinners at

Ephesus will serve as an encouragement to all ages of the world; and on this evidence every preacher of the Gospel may boldly proclaim that Christ saves unto the uttermost all that come unto God through him. And thus the exceeding riches of his grace will appear in the provision he has made for the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles.

This observation of the apostle is of great use and importance; because we are authorized to state, in all the successive ages of the world, that he who saved the sinners at Ephesus is ever ready to save all who, like them, repent of their sins, and believe in Christ Jesus.

**Verse 8. *For by grace are ye saved, through faith***— As ye are now brought into a state of salvation, your sins being all blotted out, and you made partakers of the Holy Spirit; and, having a hope full of immortality, you must not attribute this to any works or merit of yours; for when this Gospel reached you, you were all found dead in trespasses and dead in sins; therefore it was God’s free mercy to you, manifested through Christ, in whom ye were commanded to believe; and, having believed by the power of the Holy Spirit, ye received, and were sealed by, the Holy Spirit of promise; so that this salvation is in no sense of yourselves, but is the free gift of God; and not of any kind of works; so that no man can boast as having wrought out his own salvation, or even contributed any thing towards it. By grace are ye saved, through faith in Christ. This is a true doctrine, and continues to be essential to the salvation of man to the end of the world.

But whether are we to understand, faith or salvation as being the gift of God? This question is answered by the Greek text: **τη γαρ χαριτι εστε σεσωσμενοι δια της πιστεως· και τουτο ουκ εξ υμων· θεου το δωρον, ουκ εξ εργαων· ινα μη τις καυχησηται·** “By this grace ye are saved through faith; and THIS (τουτο, this salvation) not of you; it is the gift of God, not of works: so that no one can boast.” “The relative **τουτο**, this, which is in the neuter gender, cannot stand for **πιστις**, faith, which is the feminine; but it has the whole sentence that goes before for its antecedent.” But it may be asked: Is not faith the gift of God? Yes, as to the grace by which it is produced; but the grace or power to believe, and the act of believing, are two different things. Without the grace or power to believe no man ever did or can believe; but with that power the act of faith

is a man's own. God never believes for any man, no more than he repents for him: the penitent, through this grace enabling him, believes for himself: nor does he believe necessarily, or impulsively when he has that power; the power to believe may be present long before it is exercised, else, why the solemn warnings with which we meet every where in the word of God, and threatenings against those who do not believe? Is not this a proof that such persons have the power but do not use it? They believe not, and therefore are not established. This, therefore, is the true state of the case: God gives the power, man uses the power thus given, and brings glory to God: without the power no man can believe; with it, any man may.

**Verse 10. *For we are his workmanship***— So far is this salvation from being our own work, or granted for our own works' sake, that we are ourselves not only the creatures of God, but our new creation was produced by his power; for we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works. He has saved us that we may show forth the virtues of Him who called us from darkness into his marvellous light. For though we are not saved for our good works, yet we are saved that we may perform good works, to the glory of God and the benefit of man.

***Which God hath before ordained***— οἷς προητοιμασες; For which God before prepared us, that we might walk in them. For being saved from sin we are made partakers of the Spirit of holiness; and it is natural to that Spirit to lead to the practice of holiness; and he who is not holy in his life is not saved by the grace of Christ. The before ordaining, or rather preparing, must refer to the time when God began the new creation in their hearts; for from the first inspiration of God upon the soul it begins to love holiness; and obedience to the will of God is the very element in which a holy or regenerated soul lives.

**Verse 11. *Wherefore remember***— That ye may ever see and feel your obligations to live a pure and holy life, and be unfeignedly thankful to God for your salvation, remember that ye were once heathens in the flesh — without the pure doctrine, and under the influence of your corrupt nature; such as by the Jew's (who gloried, in consequence of their circumcision, to be in covenant with God) were called uncircumcision; i.e. persons out of the Divine covenant, and having no right or title to any blessing of God.



**Verse 12. *That at that time ye were without Christ***— Not only were not Christians, but had no knowledge of the Christ or Messiah, and no title to the blessings which were to proceed from him.

***Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel***— Ye were by your birth, idolatry, etc., alienated from the commonwealth of Israel—from the civil and religious privileges of the Jewish people.

***Strangers from the covenants of promise***— Having no part in the promise of the covenant made with Abraham, whether considered as relating to his natural or spiritual seed; and no part in that of the covenant made at Horeb with the Israelites, when a holy law was given them, and God condescended to dwell among them, and to lead them to the promised land.

***Having no hope***— Either of the pardon of sin or of the resurrection of the body, nor indeed of the immortality of the soul. Of all these things the Gentiles had no rational or well-grounded hope.

***Without God in the world***— They had gods many, and lords many; but in no Gentile nation was the true God known: nor indeed had they any correct notion of the Divine nature. Their idols were by nature no gods — they could neither do evil nor good, and therefore they were properly without God, having no true object of worship, and no source of comfort. He who has neither God nor Christ is in a most deplorable state; he has neither a God to worship, nor a Christ to justify him. And this is the state of every man who is living without the grace and Spirit of Christ. All such, whatever they may profess, are no better than practical atheists.

**Verse 13. *Ye who sometimes were far off***— To be far off, and to be near, are sayings much in use among the Jews; and among them, to be near signifies, 1. To be in the approbation or favor of God; and to be far off signifies to be under his displeasure. So a wicked Jew might be said to be far off from God when he was exposed to his displeasure; and a holy man, or a genuine penitent, might be said to be nigh to God, because such persons are in his favor. 2. Every person who offered a sacrifice to God was considered as having access to him by the blood of that sacrifice: hence the priests, whose office it was to offer sacrifices, were considered as being nigh to God; and all who brought gifts to the altar were considered as approaching the Almighty. 3. Being far off, signified the state of the

Gentiles as contradistinguished from the Jews, who were nigh. And these expressions were used in reference to the tabernacle, God's dwelling-place among the Israelites, and the sacrifices there offered. All those who had access to this tabernacle, or were nigh to it or encamped about it, were said to be nigh to God; those who had no access to it were said to be far off. Hence the latter phrase is used to distinguish the Gentiles from the Jewish people; and this appears to be the meaning of the prophet, Isaiah 57:19: I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; i.e. I give cause of praise and rejoicing to the Gentile as well as to the Jew. And to this scripture, and to this thing, the apostle seems here to allude. You Gentiles, who were unacquainted with God, and were even without God in the world, are brought to an acquaintance with him; and are now, through Christ Jesus, brought into the favor and fellowship of God. And as the Jews of old approached God by the blood of their sacrifices, so you approach him by the blood of Christ.

**Verse 14. *For he is our peace***— Jesus Christ has died for both Jews and Gentiles, and has become a peace-offering, שלום shalom, to reconcile both to God and to each other.

***Who hath made both one***— Formed one Church out of the believers of both people.

***The middle wall of partition***— By abolishing the law of Jewish ordinances, he has removed that which kept the two parties, not only in a state of separation, but also at variance.

This expression, the middle wall, can refer only to that most marked distinction which the Jewish laws and customs made between them and all other nations whatsoever.

Some think it refers to their ancient manner of living among the Gentiles, as they always endeavored to live in some place by themselves, and to have a river or a wall between them and their heathen neighbors. Indeed, wherever they went, their own rites, ordinances, and customs were a sufficient separation between them and others; and as Jesus Christ abolished those customs, admitting all into his Church, both Jews and Gentiles, by repentance and faith, he may be said to have broken down the middle wall of partition. When, at the death of Christ, the veil of the

temple was rent from the top to the bottom, it was an emblem that the way to the holiest was laid open, and that the people at large, both Jews and Gentiles, were to have access to the holiest by the blood of Jesus.

Some think there is an allusion here to the wall called chel, which separated the court of Israel from the court of the Gentiles; but this was not broken down till the temple itself was destroyed: and to this transaction the apostle cannot be supposed to allude, as it did not take place till long after the writing of this epistle.

**Verse 15. *Having abolished in his flesh***— By his incarnation and death he not only made an atonement for sin, but he appointed the doctrine of reconciliation to God, and of love to each other, to be preached in all nations; and thus glory was brought to God in the highest, and on earth, peace and good will were diffused among men.

The enmity of which the apostle speaks was reciprocal among the Jews and Gentiles. The former detested the Gentiles, and could hardly allow them the denomination of men; the latter had the Jews in the most sovereign contempt, because of the peculiarity of their religious rites and ceremonies, which were different from those of all the other nations of the earth.

***The law of commandments***— Contained in, or rather concerning, ordinances; which law was made merely for the purpose of keeping the Jews a distinct people, and pointing out the Son of God till he should come. When, therefore, the end of its institution was answered, it was no

contention, and become one spiritual body, or society of men, influenced by the Spirit, and acting according to the precepts of the Gospel.

***Having slain the enmity thereby***— Having, by his death upon the cross, made reconciliation between God and man, and by his Spirit in their hearts removed the enmity of their fallen, sinful nature. Dr. Macknight thinks that abolishing the enmity is spoken of the removal of the hatred which the Jews and Gentiles mutually bore to each other, because of the difference of their respective religious worship; and that slaying the enmity refers to the removal of evil lusts and affections from the heart of man, by the power of Divine grace. This is nearly the sense given above.

**Verse 17. *And came and preached peace***— Proclaimed the readiness of God to forgive and save both Jews and Gentiles. See the note on Ephesians 2:13.

**Verse 18. *For through him***— Christ Jesus, we both — Jews and Gentiles, have access by one Spirit — through the influence of the Holy Ghost, unto the Father — God Almighty. This text is a plain proof of the holy Trinity. Jews and Gentiles are to be presented unto God the FATHER; the SPIRIT of God works in their hearts, and prepares them for this presentation; and JESUS CHRIST himself introduces them. No soul can have access to God but by Jesus Christ, and he introduces none but such as receive his Holy Spirit. All who receive that Spirit are equally dear to him; and, whatever their names be among men, they are known in heaven as children of God, and heirs of eternal glory.

**Verse 19. *Ye are no more strangers***— In this chapter the Church of God is compared to a city, which, has a variety of privileges, rights, etc., founded on regular charters and grants. The Gentiles, having believed in Christ, are all incorporated with the believing Jews in this holy city. Formerly, when any of them came to Jerusalem, being ξενοι, strangers, they had no kind of rights whatever; nor could they, as mere heathens, settle among them. Again, if any of them, convinced of the errors of the Gentiles, acknowledged the God of Israel, but did not receive circumcision, he might dwell in the land, but he had no right to the blessings of the covenant; such might be called παροικοι, sojourners — persons who have no property in the land, and may only rent a house for the time being.

***Fellow citizens with the saints***— Called to the enjoyment of equal privileges with the Jews themselves, who, by profession, were a holy people; who were bound to be holy, and therefore are often called saints, or holy persons, when both their hearts and conduct were far from being right in the sight of God. But the saints spoken of here are the converted or Christianized Jews.

***Of the household of God***— The house of God is the temple; the temple was a type of the Christian Church; this is now become God's house; all genuine believers are considered as being οἰκεῖοι, domestics, of this house, the children and servants of God Almighty, having all equal rights, privileges, and advantages; as all, through one Spirit, by the sacred head of the family, had equal access to God, and each might receive as much grace and as much glory as his soul could possibly contain.

**Verse 20. *And are built upon the foundation***— Following the same metaphor, comparing the Church of Christ to a city, and to the temple, the believing Ephesians are represented as parts of that building; the living stones out of which it is principally formed, 1 Peter 2:4, 5, having for foundation — the ground plan, specification, and principle on which it was builded, the doctrine taught by the prophets in the Old Testament, and the apostles in the New. Jesus Christ being that corner stone, or ἀκρογωνία, the chief angle or foundation corner stone, the connecting medium by which both Jews and Gentiles were united in the same building. Elsewhere Jesus Christ is termed the foundation stone. Behold I lay in Zion a foundation stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, Isaiah 28:16; but the meaning is the same in all the places where these terms, foundation and corner stone, occur; for in laying the foundation of a building, a large stone is generally placed at one of the angles or corners, which serves to form a part of the two walls which meet in that angle. When, therefore, the apostle says that Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone, it means such a foundation stone as that above mentioned.

**Verse 21. *In whom***— By which foundation corner stone, Christ Jesus, all the building, composed of converted Jews and Gentiles, fitly framed together, συναρμολογουμένη, properly jointed and connected together, groweth unto a holy temple — is continually increasing, as new converts from Judaism or heathenism flock into it. It is not a finished building, but

will continue to increase, and be more and more perfect, till the day of judgment.

**Verse 22. *In whom ye also are builded***— The apostle now applies the metaphor to the purpose for which he produced it, retaining however some of the figurative expressions. As the stones in a temple are all properly placed so as to form a complete house, and be a habitation for the Deity that is worshipped there, so ye are all, both believing Jews and Gentiles, prepared by the doctrine of the prophets and apostles, under the influence of the Spirit of Christ, to become a habitation of God, a Church in which God shall be worthily worshipped, and in which he can continually dwell.

1. MANY suppose that the apostle in the preceding chapter alludes to the splendor of the temple of Diana at Ephesus, which was reputed one of the wonders of the world. But to me this opinion does not seem sufficiently founded. I believe he has the Jewish temple continually in view; for that temple, above all in the universe, could alone be said to be a habitation of God. Both in the tabernacle and temple God dwelt between the cherubim; there was the symbol of his presence, and there was the worship performed which himself had prescribed. After the model of this was the spiritual temple, the Christian Church, constructed; and God was to dwell in the one, as he had dwelt in the other. This simile, drawn from the temple at Jerusalem, was alone worthy of the apostle's design; to have alluded to the temple of Diana would have disgraced his subject. And as many at Ephesus were Jews, and well acquainted with the temple at Jerusalem, they would both feel and venerate the apostle's simile, and be led to look for the indwelling of God; that which distinguished the Jewish temple from all others on the face of the earth.

2. The Church of God is very properly said to be a most noble and wonderful work, and truly worthy of GOD himself. There is nothing, says one, so august as this Church, seeing it is the temple of GOD. Nothing so worthy of reverence, seeing God dwells in it. Nothing so ancient, since the patriarchs and prophets labored in building it. Nothing so solid, since Jesus Christ is the foundation of it. Nothing more closely united and indivisible, since he is the corner stone. Nothing so lofty, since it reaches as high as heaven, and to the bosom of God himself. Nothing so regular

and well proportioned, since the Holy Spirit is the architect. Nothing more beautiful, or adorned with greater variety, since it consists of Jews and Gentiles, of every age, country, sex, and condition: the mightiest potentates, the most renowned lawgivers, the most profound philosophers, the most eminent scholars, besides all those of whom the world was not worthy, have formed a part of this building. Nothing more spacious, since it is spread over the whole earth, and takes in all who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Nothing so inviolable, since it is consecrated to Jehovah. Nothing so Divine, since it is a living building, animated and inhabited by the Holy Ghost. Nothing so beneficent, seeing it gives shelter to the poor, the wretched, and distressed, of every nation, and kindred, and tongue. It is the place in which God does his marvelous works; the theater of his justice, mercy, goodness, and truth; where he is to be sought, where he is to be found, and in which alone he is to be retained.

As we have one only GOD, and one only Savior and Mediator between God and man, and one only inspiring Spirit; so there is but one Church, in which this ineffable Jehovah performs his work of salvation. That Church, however scattered and divided throughout the world, is but one building, founded on the Old and New Testaments; having but one sacrifice, the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

3. Of this glorious Church every Christian soul is an epitome; for as God dwells in the Church at large, so he dwells in every believer in particular: each is a habitation of God through the Spirit. In vain are all pretensions among sects and parties to the privileges of the Church of Christ, if they have not the doctrine and life of Christ. Traditions and legends are not apostolic doctrines, and showy ceremonies are not the life of God in the soul of man.

4. Religion has no need of human ornaments or trappings; it shines by its own light, and is refulgent with its own glory. Where it is not in life and power, men have endeavored to produce a specious image, dressed and ornamented with their own hands. Into this God never breathed, therefore it can do no good to man, and only imposes on the ignorant and credulous by a vain show of lifeless pomp and splendor. This phantom, called true

religion and the Church by its votaries, is in heaven denominated vain superstition; the speechless symbol of departed piety.



## CHAPTER 3.

*Paul, a prisoner for the testimony of Jesus, declares his knowledge of what had been a mystery from all ages, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body with the Jews, 1-6. Which doctrine he was made a minister, that he might declare the unsearchable riches of Christ, and make known to principalities and powers this eternal purpose of God, 7-12. He desires them not to be discouraged on account of his tribulations, 13. His prayer that they might be filled with all the fullness of God, 14-19. His doxology, 20, 21.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 3.

**Verse 1. *For this cause***— Because he maintained that the Gentiles were admitted to all the privileges of the Jews, and all the blessings of the new covenant, without being obliged to submit to circumcision, the Jews persecuted him, and caused him to be imprisoned, first at Caesarea, where he was obliged to appeal to the Roman emperor, in consequence of which he was sent prisoner to Rome. See Acts 21:21-28, etc.

***The prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles***— For preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, and showing that they were not bound by the law of Moses, and yet were called to be fellow citizens with the saints; for this very cause the Jews persecuted him unto bonds, and conspired his death.

**Verse 2. *If ye have heard of the dispensation***— The compound particle *εἴτε*, which is commonly translated if indeed, in several places means since indeed, seeing that, and should be translated so in this verse, and in several other places of the New Testament. Seeing ye have heard of the dispensation of God, which is given me to you-ward: this they had amply learned from the apostle during his stay at Ephesus, for he had not shunned to declare unto them the whole counsel of God, Acts 20:27, and kept nothing back that was profitable to them, Acts 20:20. And this was certainly among those things that were most profitable, and most necessary to be known.

By the dispensation of the grace of God we may understand, either the apostolic office and gifts granted to St. Paul, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel among the Gentiles, see Romans 1:5; or the knowledge which God gave him of that gracious and Divine plan which he had formed for the conversion of the Gentiles. For the meaning of the word economy see the note on Ephesians 1:10.

**Verse 3. *By revelation he made known unto me***— Instead of *εγνωρισε*, he made known, *εγνωρισθη*, was made known, is the reading of ABCD\*FG, several others, both the Syriac, Coptic, Slavonic, Vulgate, and Itala, with Clemens, Cyril, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Damascenus, and others: it is doubtless the true reading.

The apostle wishes the Ephesians to understand that it was not an opinion of his own, or a doctrine which he was taught by others, or which he had gathered from the ancient prophets; but one that came to him by immediate revelation from God, as he had informed them before in a few words, referring to what he had said Ephesians 1:9-12.

**Verse 4. *Whereby, when ye read***— When ye refer back to them.

***Ye may understand my knowledge***— Ye may see what God has given me to know concerning what has been hitherto a mystery — the calling of the Gentiles, and the breaking down the middle wall between them and the Jews, so as to make both one spiritual body, and on the same conditions.

**Verse 5. *Which in other ages was not made known***— That the calling of the Gentiles was made known by the prophets in different ages of the Jewish Church is exceedingly clear; but it certainly was not made known in that clear and precise manner in which it was now revealed by the Spirit unto the ministers of the New Testament: nor was it made known unto them at all, that the Gentiles should find salvation without coming under the yoke of the Mosaic law, and that the Jews themselves should be freed from that yoke of bondage; these were discoveries totally new, and now revealed for the first time by the Spirit of God.

**Verse 6. *That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs***— This is the substance of that mystery which had been hidden from all ages, and which was now made known to the New Testament apostles and prophets, and more particularly to St. Paul.

***His promise in Christ***— That the promise made to Abraham extended to the Gentiles, the apostle has largely proved in his Epistle to the Romans; and that it was to be fulfilled to them by and through Christ, he proves there also; and particularly in his Epistle to the Galatians, see Galatians 3:14. And that these blessings were to be announced in the preaching of the Gospel, and received on believing it, he every where declares, but more especially in this epistle.

**Verse 7. *Whereof I was made a minister***— **διακονος**: A deacon, a servant acting under and by the direction of the great Master, Jesus Christ; from whom, by an especial call and revelation, I received the apostolic gifts and office, and by **την ενεργειαν της δυναμεως αυτου**, the energy, the in-working of his power, this Gospel which I preached was made effectual to the salvation of vast multitudes of Jews and Gentiles.

**Verse 8. *Less than the least of all saints***— **ελαχιστοτερω παντων αγιων**. As the design of the apostle was to magnify the grace of Christ in the salvation of the world, he uses every precaution to prevent the eyes of the people from being turned to any thing but Christ crucified; and although he was obliged to speak of himself as the particular instrument which God had chosen to bring the Gentile world to the knowledge of the truth, yet he does it in such a manner as to show that the excellency of the power was of God, and not of him; and that, highly as he and his fellow apostles were honored; they had the heavenly treasure in earthen vessels. To lay himself as low as possible, consistently with his being in the number of Divinely commissioned men, he calls himself less than the least; and is obliged to make a new word, by strangely forming a comparative degree, not from the positive, which would have been a regular grammatical procedure, but from the superlative. The adjective **ελαχυσ** signifies little, **ελασσων** or **ελαττων**, less, and **ελαχιστος**, least. On this latter, which is the superlative of **ελαχυσ**, little, St. Paul forms his comparative, **ελαχιστοτερος**, less than the least, a word of which it would be vain to attempt a better translation than that given in our own version. It most strongly marks the unparalleled humility of the apostle; and the amazing condescension of God, in favoring him, who had been before a persecutor and blasphemer, with the knowledge of this glorious scheme of human redemption, and the power to preach it so successfully among the Gentiles.

***The unsearchable riches of Christ***— The word **ανεξιχνιαστος**, from **α**, privative, and **εξιχνιαζω**, to trace out, from **ιχνος**, a step, is exceedingly well chosen here: it refers to the footsteps of God, the plans he had formed, the dispensations which he had published, and the innumerable providences which he had combined, to prepare, mature, and bring to full effect and view his gracious designs in the salvation of a ruined world, by the incarnation, passion, death, and resurrection of his Son. There were in these schemes and providences such riches — such an abundance, such a variety, as could not be comprehended even by the naturally vast, and, through the Divine inspiration, unparalleledly capacious mind of the apostle.

Yet he was to proclaim among the Gentiles these astonishing wonders and mysteries of grace; and as he proceeds in this great and glorious work, the Holy Spirit that dwelt in him opens to his mind more and more of those riches — leads him into those footsteps of the Almighty which could not be investigated by man nor angel, so that his preaching and epistles, taken all in their chronological order, will prove that his views brighten, and his discoveries become more numerous and more distinct in proportion as he advances. And had he lived, preached, and written to the present day, he had not exhausted the subject, nor fully declared to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ — the endless depths of wisdom and knowledge treasured up in him, and the infinity of saving acts and saving power displayed by him.

**Verse 9. *And to make all men see***— **και φωτισαι παντας**. And to illuminate all; to give information both to Jews and Gentiles; to afford them a sufficiency of light, so that they might be able distinctly to discern the great objects exhibited in this Gospel.

***What is the fellowship of the mystery***— The word **κοινωνια**, which we properly translate fellowship, was used among the Greeks to signify their religious communities; here it may intimate the association of Jews and Gentiles in one Church or body, and their agreement in that glorious mystery which was now so fully opened relative to the salvation of both. But instead of **κοινωνια**, fellowship, **οικονομια**, dispensation or economy, is the reading of ABCDEFG, and more than fifty others; both the Syriac, Coptic, Aethiopic, Armenian, Slavonian, Vulgate and Itala,

with the chief of the Greek fathers. Some of the best printed editions of the Greek text have the same reading, and that in our common text has very little authority to support it. Dispensation or economy is far more congenial to the scope of the apostle's declaration in this place; he wished to show them the economy of that mystery of bringing Jews and Gentiles to salvation by faith in Christ Jesus, which God from the beginning of the world had kept hidden in his own infinite mind, and did not think proper to reveal even when he projected the creation of the world, which had respect to the economy of human redemption. And although the world was made by Jesus Christ, the great Redeemer, yet at that period this revelation of the power of God, the design of saving men, whose fall infinite wisdom had foreseen, was not then revealed. This reading Griesbach has received into the text.

***Who created all things by Jesus Christ***— Some very judicious critics are of opinion that this does not refer to the material creation; and that we should understand the whole as referring to the formation of all God's dispensations of grace, mercy, and truth, which have been planned, managed, and executed by Christ, from the foundation of the world to the present time. But the words *δία ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ*, by Jesus Christ, are wanting in ABCD\*FG, and several others; also in the Syriac, Arabic of Erpen, Coptic, Aethiopic, Vulgate, and Itala; as also in several of the fathers. Griesbach has thrown the words out of the text; and Professor White says, "certissime delenda," they are indisputably spurious. The text, therefore, should be read: which from the beginning of the world had been hidden in God who created all things. No inferiority of Christ can be argued from a clause of whose spuriousness there is the strongest evidence.

**Verse 10. *That now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places***— Who are these principalities and powers? Some think evil angels are intended, because they are thus denominated, Ephesians 6:12. Others think good angels are meant; for as these heavenly beings are curious to investigate the wondrous economy of the Gospel, though they are not its immediate objects, see 1 Peter 1:12, it is quite consistent with the goodness of God to give them that satisfaction which they require. And in this discovery of the Gospel plan of salvation, which reconciles things in heaven and things on earth — both men and angels, these pure spirits are

greatly interested, and their praises to the Divine Being rendered much more abundant. Others imagine the Jewish rulers and rabbins are intended, particularly those of them who were converted to Christianity, and who had now learned from the preaching of the Gospel what, as Jews, they could never have known. I have had several opportunities of showing that this sort of phraseology is frequent among the Jews, and indeed not seldom used in the New Testament. Dr. Macknight, whose mode of arguing against this opinion is not well chosen, supposes that “the different orders of angels in heaven are intended, whose knowledge of God’s dispensations must be as gradual as the dispensations themselves; consequently their knowledge of the manifold wisdom of God must have been greatly increased by the constitution of the Christian Church.” Of this there can be no doubt, whether the terms in the text refer to them or not.

***By the Church***— That is, by the Christians and by the wonderful things done in the Church; and by the apostles, who were its pastors.

***The manifold wisdom of God***— *η πολυποικιλος σοφια*. That multifarious and greatly diversified wisdom of God; laying great and infinite plans, and accomplishing them by endless means, through the whole lapse of ages; making every occurrence subservient to the purposes of his infinite mercy and goodness. God’s gracious design to save a lost world by Jesus Christ, could not be defeated by any cunning skill or malice of man or devils: whatever hinderances are thrown in the way, his wisdom and power can remove; and his infinite wisdom can never want ways or means to effect its gracious designs.

**Verse 11. *According to the eternal purpose***— *κατα προθεσιν των αιωνων*. According to the purpose concerning the periods. This seems to refer to the complete round of the Jewish system, and to that of the Gospel. I have often observed, that though the proper grammatical meaning of the word is ever-during or endless duration, yet it is often applied to those systems, periods, governments, etc., which have a complete duration, taking in the whole of them, from their commencement to their termination, leaving nothing of their duration unembraced. So, here, God purposed that the Jewish dispensation should commence at such a time, and terminate at such a time; that the Gospel dispensation should

commence when the Jewish ended, and terminate only with life itself; and that the results of both should be endless. This is probably what is meant by the above phrase.

**Which he purposed in Christ Jesus**— *ην εποιησεν*. Which he made or constituted in or for Christ Jesus. The manifestation of Christ, and the glory which should follow, were the grand objects which God kept in view in all his dispensations.

**Verse 12. In whom we have boldness**— By whom we, Gentiles, have *την παρρησιαν*, this liberty of speech; so that we may say any thing by prayer and supplication, and *την προσαγωγην*, this introduction, into the Divine presence by faith in Christ. It is only in his name we can pray to God, and it is only by him that we can come to God; none can give us an introduction but Christ Jesus, and it is only for his sake that God will either hear or save us. It is on the ground of such scriptures as these that we conclude all our prayers in the name, and for the sake, of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Verse 13. I desire that ye faint not**— In those primitive times, when there was much persecution, people were in continual danger of falling away from the faith who were not well grounded in it. This the apostle deprecates, and advances a strong reason why they should be firm: “I suffer my present imprisonment on account of demonstrating your privileges, of which the Jews are envious: I bear my afflictions patiently, knowing that what I have advanced is of God, and thus I give ample proof of the sincerity of my own conviction. The sufferings, therefore, of your apostles are honorable to you and to your cause; and far from being any cause why you should faint, or draw back like cowards, in the day of distress, they should be an additional argument to induce you to persevere.”

**Verse 14. For this cause I bow my knees**— That you may not faint, but persevere, I frequently pray to God, who is our God and the Father of our Lord Jesus. Some very ancient and excellent MSS. and versions omit the words *του κυριου ημων ιησου χριστου*, of our Lord Jesus Christ. And in them the passage reads: I bow my knees unto the Father. The apostle prays to God the Father, that they may not faint; and he bows his knees in this praying. What can any man think of himself, who, in his addresses

to God, can either sit on his seat or stand in the presence of the Maker and Judge of all men? Would they sit while addressing any person of ordinary respectability? If they did so they would be reckoned very rude indeed. Would they sit in the presence of the king of their own land? They would not be permitted so to do. Is God then to be treated with less respect than a fellow mortal? Paul kneeled in praying, Acts 20:36; 21:5. Stephen kneeled when he was stoned, Acts 7:60. And Peter kneeled when he raised Tabitha, Acts 9:40.

Many parts of this prayer bear a strict resemblance to that offered up by Solomon, 2 Chronicles 6:1, etc., when dedicating the temple: He kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands towards heaven; 2 Chronicles 6:13. The apostle was now dedicating the Christian Church, that then was and that ever should be, to God; and praying for those blessings which should ever rest on and distinguish it; and he kneels down after the example of Solomon, and invokes him to whom the first temple was dedicated, and who had made it a type of the Gospel Church.

**Verse 15. *Of whom the whole family***— Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ on earth, the spirits of just men made perfect in a separate state, and all the holy angels in heaven, make but one family, of which God is the Father and Head. St. Paul does not say, of whom the families, as if each order formed a distinct household; but he says family, because they are all one, and of one. And all this family is named — derives its origin and being, from God, as children derive their name from him who is the father of the family: holy persons in heaven and earth derive their being and their holiness from God, and therefore his name is called upon them. Christ gives the name of Christians to all the real members of his Church upon earth; and to all the spirits of just men (saved since his advent, and through his blood) in heaven. They are all the sons and daughters of God Almighty.

**Verse 16. *That he would grant you***— This prayer of the apostle is one of the most grand and sublime in the whole oracles of God. The riches of the grace of the Gospel, and the extent to which the soul of man may be saved here below, are most emphatically pointed out here. Every word seems to have come immediately from heaven; laboring to convey ideas of infinite



importance to mankind. No paraphrase can do it justice, and few commentators seem to have entered into its spirit; perhaps deterred by its unparalleled sublimity. I shall only attempt a few observations upon the terms, to show their force and meaning; and leave all the rest to that Spirit by which these most important words were dictated. In the mean time referring the reader to the discourse lately published on this prayer of the apostle, entitled, The Family of God and its Privileges.

That he would grant you — You can expect nothing from him but as a free gift through Christ Jesus; let this be a ruling sentiment of your hearts when you pray to God.

***According to the riches of his glory***— According to the measure of his own eternal fullness; God's infinite mercy and goodness being the measure according to which we are to be saved. In giving alms it is a maxim that every one should act according to his ability. It would be a disgrace to a king or a noble-man to give no more than a tradesman or a peasant. God acts up to the dignity of his infinite perfections; he gives according to the riches of his glory.

***To be strengthened with might***— Ye have many enemies, cunning and strong; many trials, too great for your natural strength; many temptations, which no human power is able successfully to resist; many duties to perform, which cannot be accomplished by the strength of man; therefore you need Divine strength; ye must have might; and ye must be strengthened every where, and every way fortified by that might; mightily and most effectually strengthened.

***By his Spirit***— By the sovereign energy of the Holy Ghost. This fountain of spiritual energy can alone supply the spiritual strength which is necessary for this spiritual work and conflict.

***In the inner man***— In the soul. Every man is a compound being; he has a body and a soul. The outward man is that alone which is seen and considered by men; the inward man is that which stands particularly in reference to God and eternity. The outward man is strengthened by earthly food, etc.; the inward man, by spiritual and heavenly influences. Knowledge, love, peace, and holiness, are the food of the inward man; or rather Jesus Christ, that bread of life which came down from heaven: he

that eateth this bread shall live and be strengthened by it. The soul must be as truly fed and nourished by Divine food as the body by natural food.

**Verse 17. *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith***— In this as well as in many other passages, and particularly that in Ephesians 2:21, (where see the note,) the apostle compares the body or Church of true believers to a temple, which, like that of Solomon, is built up to be a habitation of God through the Spirit. Here, as Solomon did at the dedication of the temple at Jerusalem, 2 Chronicles 6:1, etc., Paul, having considered the Church at Ephesus completely formed, as to every external thing, prays that God may come down and dwell in it. And as there could be no indwelling of God but by Christ, and no indwelling of Christ but by faith, he prays that they may have such faith in Christ, as shall keep them in constant possession of his love and presence. God, at the beginning, formed man to be his temple, and while in a state of purity he inhabited this temple; when the temple became defiled, God left it. In the order of his eternal mercy, Christ, the repairer of the breach, comes to purify the temple, that it may again become a fit habitation for the blessed God. This is what the apostle points out to the believing Ephesians, in praying that Christ κατοικησαι, might intensely and constantly dwell in their hearts by faith: for the man's heart, which is not God's house, must be a hold of every foul and unclean spirit; as Satan and his angels will endeavor to fill what God does not.

***That ye, being rooted and grounded in love***— Here is a double metaphor; one taken from agriculture, the other, from architecture. As trees, they are to be rooted in love — this is the soil in which their souls are to grow; into the infinite love of God their souls by faith are to strike their roots, and from this love derive all that nourishment which is essential for their full growth, till they have the mind in them that was in Jesus, or, as it is afterwards said, till they are filled with all the fullness of God. As a building, their foundation is to be laid in this love. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, etc. Here is the ground on which alone the soul, and all its hopes and expectations, can be safely founded. This is a foundation that cannot be shaken; and it is from this alone that the doctrine of redemption flows to man, and from this alone has the soul its form and comeliness. IN this, as its proper soil, it grows. ON this, as its only foundation, it rests.

**Verse 18.** *May be able to comprehend with all saints*— ἵνα ἐξισχυσητε καταλαβεσθαι. These words are so exceedingly nervous and full of meaning, that it is almost impossible to translate them. The first word, ἐξισχυσητε, from ἐξ, intensive, and ἰσχυω, to be strong, signifies that they might be thoroughly able, by having been strengthened with might, by God's power. The second word καταλαβεσθαι, from κατα, intensive, and λαμβανω, to take, catch, or seize on, may be translated, that ye may fully catch, take in, and comprehend this wonderful mystery of God. The mind must be rendered apt, and the soul invigorated, to take in and comprehend these mysteries.

*What is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height*— Here the apostle still keeps up the metaphor, comparing the Church of God to a building; and as, in order to rear a proper building, formed on scientific principles, a ground plan and specification must be previously made, according to which the building is to be constructed, the apostle refers to this; for this must be thoroughly understood, without which the building could not be formed. They were to be builded up a heavenly house, a habitation of God through the Spirit; and this must have its latitude or breadth, its longitude or length, its altitude or height, and its profundity or depth.

It is supposed by some that the apostle is here alluding to the famous temple of Diana at Ephesus, which, as I have already had occasion to remark, was reputed one of the wonders of the world, being in length 425 feet, in breadth 220; it was supported by 127 pillars, each 60 feet high; was builded at the expense of all Asia; and was 220 years in being completed. I cannot, however, allow of this allusion while the apostle had a nobler model at hand, and one every way more worthy of being brought into the comparison. The temple at Jerusalem was that alone which he had in view; that alone could be fitly compared here; for that was built to be a habitation of God; that was his house, and that the place of his rest: so the Christian temple, and the believing heart, are to be the constant, the endless residence of God; and how august must that edifice be in which the eternal Trinity dwells!

But what can the apostle mean by the breadth, length, depth, and height, of the love of God? Imagination can scarcely frame any satisfactory

answer to this question. It takes in the eternity of God. GOD is LOVE; and in that, an infinity of breadth, length, depth, and height, is included; or rather all breadth, length, depth, and height, are lost in this immensity. It comprehends all that is above, all that is below, all that is past, and all that is to come. In reference to human beings, the love of God, in its BREADTH, is a girdle that encompasses the globe; its LENGTH reaches from the eternal purpose of the mission of Christ, to the eternity of blessedness which is to be spent in his ineffable glories; its DEPTH reaches to the lowest fallen of the sons of Adam, and to the deepest depravity of the human heart; and its HEIGHT to the infinite dignities of the throne of Christ. He that overcometh will I give to sit down with me upon my throne, as I have overcome and sat down with the Father upon his throne. Thus we see that the Father, the Son, and all true believers in him, are to be seated on the same throne! This is the height of the love of God, and the height to which that love raises the souls that believe in Christ Jesus!

**Verse 19. *To know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge***— It is only by the love of Christ that we can know the love of God: the love of God to man induced him to give Christ for his redemption; Christ's love to man induced him to give his life's blood for his salvation. The gift of Christ to man is the measure of God's love; the death of Christ for man is the measure of Christ's love. God so loved the world, etc. Christ loved us, and gave himself for us.

But how can the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, be known? Many have labored to reconcile this seeming contradiction. If we take the verb **γῶναι** in a sense in which it is frequently used in the New Testament, to approve, acknowledge, or acknowledge with approbation, and **γῶσις** to signify comprehension, then the difficulty will be partly removed: "That ye may acknowledge, approve, and publicly acknowledge, that love of God which surpasseth knowledge." We can acknowledge and approve of that which surpasses our comprehension. We cannot comprehend GOD; yet we can know that he is; approve of, love, adore, and serve him. In like manner, though we cannot comprehend, the immensity of the love of Christ, yet we know that he has loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; and we approve of, and acknowledge, him as our only Lord and Savior. In this sense we may be said to know the love of Christ that passeth knowledge.

But it is more likely that the word **γνωσις**, which we translate knowledge, signifies here science in general, and particularly that science of which the rabbins boasted, and that in which the Greeks greatly exulted. The former professed to have the key of knowledge; the secret of all Divine mysteries; the latter considered their philosophers, and their systems of philosophy, superior to every thing that had ever been known among men, and reputed on this account all other nations as barbarians. When the apostle prays that they may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, he may refer to all the boasted knowledge of the Jewish doctors, and to all the greatly extolled science of the Greek philosophers. To know the love of Christ, infinitely surpasseth all other science. This gives a clear and satisfactory sense.

*That ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.*— Among all the great sayings in this prayer, this is the greatest. To be FILLED with God is a great thing; to be filled with the FULNESS of God is still greater; but to be filled with ALL the fullness of God, **παν το πληρωμα του θεου**, utterly bewilders the sense and confounds the understanding.

Most people, in quoting these words, endeavor to correct or explain the apostle, by adding the word communicable; but this is as idle as it is useless and impertinent. The apostle means what he says, and would be understood in his own meaning. By the fullness of God, we are to understand all those gifts and graces which he has promised to bestow on man, and which he dispenses to the Church. To be filled with all the fullness of God, is to have the whole soul filled with meekness, gentleness, goodness, love, justice, holiness, mercy, and truth. And as what God fills, neither sin nor Satan can fill; consequently, it implies that the soul shall be emptied of sin, that sin shall neither have dominion over it, nor a being in it. It is impossible for us to understand these words in a lower sense than this. But how much more they imply, (for more they do imply,) I cannot tell. As there is no end to the merits of Christ, no bounds to the mercy and love of God, no limits to the improbability of the human soul, so there can be no bounds set to the saving influence which God will dispense to the heart of every believer. We may ask, and we shall receive, and our joy shall be full.

**Verse 20. *Now unto him***— Having finished his short, but most wonderfully comprehensive and energetic prayer, the apostle brings in his doxology, giving praise to Him from whom all blessings come, and to whom all thanks are due.

***That is able to do exceeding abundantly***— It is impossible to express the full meaning of these words, God is omnipotent, therefore he is able to do all things, and able to do **υπερ εκ περισσου**, superabundantly above the greatest abundance. And who can doubt this, who has any rational or Scriptural views of his power or his love?

***All that we ask or think***— We can ask every good of which we have heard, every good which God has promised in his word; and we can think of, or imagine, goods and blessings beyond all that we have either read of or seen: yea, we can imagine good things to which it is impossible for us to give a name; we can go beyond the limits of all human descriptions; we can imagine more than even God has specified in his word; and can feel no bounds to our imagination of good, but impossibility and eternity: and after all, God is able to do more for us than we can ask or think; and his ability here is so necessarily connected with his willingness, that the one indisputably implies the other; for, of what consequence would it be to tell the Church of God that he had power to do so and so, if there were not implied an assurance that he will do what his power can, and what the soul of man needs to have done?

***According to the power that worketh in us***— All that he can do, and all that he has promised to do, will be done according to what he has done, by that power of the holy Ghost **την ενεργουμενην**, which worketh strongly in us — acts with energy in our hearts, expelling evil, purifying and refining the affections and desires, and implanting good.

**Verse 21. *Unto him***— Thus possessed of power and goodness, be glory in the Church — be unceasing praises ascribed in all the assemblies of the people of God, wherever these glad tidings are preached, and wherever this glorious doctrine shall be credited.

***By Christ Jesus***— Through whom, and for whom, all these miracles of mercy and power are wrought.

**Throughout all ages**— εἰς πάσας τὰς γενεάς· Through all succeeding generations — while the race of human beings continues to exist on the face of the earth.

**World without end.**— τοῦ αἰῶνος τῶν αἰῶνων· Throughout eternity — in the coming world as well as in this. The song of praise, begun upon earth, and protracted through all the generations of men, shall be continued in heaven, by all that are redeemed from the earth, where eras, limits, and periods are no more for ever.

**Amen.**— So be it. So let it be! and so it will be; for all the counsels of God are faithfulness and truth; and not one jot or tittle of his promise has failed, from the foundation of the world to the present day; nor can fail, till mortality is swallowed up of life.

Therefore, to the Father, Son, and holy Ghost, be glory, dominion, power, and thanksgiving, now, henceforth, and for ever. — Amen and Amen.

1. FOR the great importance of the matter contained in this chapter, and the sublimity of the language and conceptions, there is no portion of the New Testament equal to this. The apostle was now shut up in prison, but the word of the Lord was not bound; and the kingdom of God seems to have been opened to him in a most astonishing manner. There seems to have been exhibited to him a plan of the Divine counsels and conduct relative to the salvation of man, before and from the foundation of the world to the end of time; and while, with the eye of his mind, he contemplates this plan, he describes it in language at once the most elevated that can be conceived, and every where dignified and appropriate to the subject; so that he may with safety be compared with the finest of the Grecian writers. In the notes I have already observed how hard it is to give any literal translation of the many compound epithets which the apostle uses. Indeed his own nervous language seems to bend and tremble under the weight of the Divine ideas which it endeavors to express. This is most observable in the prayer and doxology which are contained in Ephesians 3:14-21. A passage in Thucydides, lib. vii. cap. lxxxvii, in fine, where he gives an account of the total overthrow of the Athenian general, Nicias, and his whole army, by the Sicilians, has been compared with this of the apostle; it is truly a grand piece, and no reader can be displeased with its introduction here: **ξυνεβη τε εργον τουτο ἑλληρικων των**

καθα τον πολεμον τονδε μεγιστον γενεσθαι-και τοις τε κρατησασι λαμπροτατον, και τοις διαφθαρεισι δυστυχεστατον· κατα παντα γαρ παντως νικηθεντες, και ουδεν ολιγον ες ουδεν κακοπαθησαντες, πανωλεθρια δη, το λεγομενον, και πεζος και νηες, και ουδεν ο, τι ουκ απωλετο· και ολιγοι απο πολλων επ' οικου απενοστησαν· “This was the greatest discomfiture which the Greeks sustained during the whole war, and was as brilliant to the conquerors as it was calamitous to the vanquished. In every respect they were totally defeated; and they suffered no small evil in every particular: the destruction was universal, both of army and navy; there was nothing that did not perish; and scarcely any, out of vast multitudes, returned to their own homes.

The learned may compare the two passages; and while due credit is given to the splendid Greek historian, no critic will deny the palm to the inspired writer.

2. With such portions of the word of God before us, how is it that we can he said conscientiously to credit the doctrines of Christianity, and live satisfied with such slender attainments in the divine life? Can any man that pleads for the necessary and degrading continuance of indwelling sin, believe what the apostle has written? Can we, who profess to believe it, be excusable, and live under the influence of any temper or passion that does not belong to the mind of Christ? Will it be said in answer, that “this is only a prayer of the apostle, and contains his wish from the overflowings of his heart for the spiritual prosperity of the Ephesians?” Was the apostle inspired or not when he penned this prayer? If he were not inspired, the prayer makes no part of Divine revelation; if he were inspired, every petition is tantamount to a positive promise; for what God inspires the heart to pray for, that God purposes to bestow. Then it is his will that all these blessings should be enjoyed by his true followers, that Christ should inhabit their hearts, and that they should be filled with all the fullness of God; yea, and that God should do for them more abundantly than they can ask or think. This necessarily implies that they should be saved from all sin, inward and outward, in this life; that the thoughts of their hearts should be cleansed by the inspiration of God’s Holy Spirit, that they might perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name.



As sin is the cause of the ruin of mankind, the Gospel system, which is its cure, is called good news, or glad tidings; and it is good news because it proclaims him who saves his people from their sins. It would be dishonorable to the grace of Christ to suppose that sin had made wounds which that could not heal.

## CHAPTER 4.

*The apostle exhorts them to walk worthy of their vocation, and to live in peace and unity, 1-6. Shows that God has distributed a variety of gifts, and instituted a variety of offices in his Church, for the building up and perfecting of the body of Christ, 7-13. Teaches them the necessity of being well instructed and steady in Divine things, 14. Teaches how the body or Church of Christ is constituted, 15, 16. Warns them against acting like the Gentiles, of whose conduct he gives a lamentable description, 17-19. Points out how they had been changed, in consequence of their conversion to Christianity, 20, 21. Gives various exhortations relative to the purification of their minds, their conduct to each other, and to the poor, 22-28. Shows them that their conversation should be chaste and holy, that they might not grieve the Spirit of God; that they should avoid all bad tempers, be kindly affectioned one to another, and be of a forgiving spirit, 29-32.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 4.

**Verse 1.** *I therefore*— Therefore, because God has provided for you such an abundant salvation, and ye have his testimonies among you, and have full liberty to use all the means of grace;

*The prisoner of the Lord*— Who am deprived of my liberty for the Lord's sake.

*Beseech you that ye walk*— Ye have your liberty, and may walk; I am deprived of mine, and cannot. This is a fine stroke, and wrought up into a strong argument. You who are at large can show forth the virtues of him who called you into his marvellous light; I am in bondage, and can only exhort others by my writing, and show my submission to God by my patient suffering.

*The vocation wherewith ye are called*— The calling, κλησις, is the free invitation they have had from God to receive the privileges of the Gospel, and become his sons and daughters, without being obliged to observe

Jewish rites and ceremonies. Their vocation, or calling, took in their Christian profession, with all the doctrines, precepts, privileges, duties, etc., of the Christian religion.

Among us, a man's calling signifies his trade, or occupation in life; that at which he works, and by which he gets his bread; and it is termed his calling, because it is supposed that God, in the course of his providence, calls the person to be thus employed, and thus to acquire his livelihood. Now, as it is a very poor calling by which a man cannot live, so it is a poor religion by which a man cannot get his soul saved. If, however, a man have an honest and useful trade, and employ himself diligently in labouring at it, he will surely be able to maintain himself by it; but without care, attention, and industry, he is not likely to get, even by this providential calling, the necessaries of life. In like manner, if a man do not walk worthy of his heavenly calling, i.e. suitable to its prescriptions, spirit, and design, he is not likely to get his soul saved unto eternal life. The best trade, unpractised, will not support any man; the most pure and holy religion of the Lord Jesus, unapplied, will save no soul. Many suppose, because they have a sound faith, that all is safe and well: as well might the mechanic, who knows he has a good trade, and that he understands the principles of it well, suppose it will maintain him, though he brings none of its principles into action by honest, assiduous, and well-directed labor.

Some suppose that the calling refers to the epithets usually given to the Christians; such as children of Abraham, children of God, true Israel of God, heirs of God, saints, fellow citizens with the saints, etc., etc.; and that these honorable appellations must be a strong excitement to the Ephesians to walk worthy of these exalted characters. But I do not find that the word *κλήσις*, calling, is taken in this sense any where in the New Testament; but that it has the meaning which I have given it above is evident from 1 Corinthians 7:20: *εκάστος εν τη κλήσει η εκληθη, εν ταυτη μενετω*. Let every man abide in the calling to which he hath been called. The context shows that condition, employment, or business of life, is that to which the apostle refers.

**Verse 2. *With all lowliness***— It is by acting as the apostle here directs that a man walks worthy of this high vocation; *ταπεινοφροσυνη* signifies subjection or humility of mind.

**Meekness**— The opposite to anger and irritability of disposition.

**Long-suffering**— μακροθυμια· Long-mindedness — never permitting a trial or provocation to get to the end of your patience.

**Forbearing one another**— ανεχομενοι αλληλων· Sustaining one another — helping to support each other in all the miseries and trials of life: or, if the word be taken in the sense of bearing with each other, it may mean that, through the love of God working in our hearts, we should bear with each other's infirmities, ignorance, etc., knowing how much others have been or are still obliged to bear with us.

**Verse 3. Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**— There can be no doubt that the Church at Ephesus was composed partly of converted Jews, as well as Gentiles. Now, from the different manner in which they had been brought up, there might be frequent causes of altercation. Indeed, the Jews, though converted, might be envious that the Gentiles were admitted to the same glorious privileges with themselves, without being initiated into them by bearing the yoke and burden of the Mosaic law. The apostle guards them against this, and shows them that they should intensely labor (for so the word **σπουδαζειν** implies) to promote and preserve peace and unity. By the unity of the Spirit we are to understand, not only a spiritual unity, but also a unity of sentiments, desires, and affections, such as is worthy of and springs from the Spirit of God. By the bond of peace we are to understand a peace or union, where the interests of all parties are concentrated, cemented, and sealed; the Spirit of God being the seal upon this knot.

**Verse 4. There is one body**— Viz. of Christ, which is his Church.

**One Spirit**— The Holy Ghost, who animates this body.

**One hope**— Of everlasting glory, to which glory ye have been called by the preaching of the Gospel; through which ye have become the body of Christ, instinct with the energy of the Holy Ghost.

**Verse 5. One Lord**— Jesus Christ, who is the governor of this Church.

**One faith**— One system of religion, proposing the same objects to the faith of all.

**One baptism**— Administered in the name of the holy Trinity; indicative of the influences, privileges, and effects of the Christian religion.

**Verse 6. One God**— The fountain of all being, self-existent and eternal; and Father of all, both Jews and Gentiles, because he is the Father of the spirits of all flesh.

**Who is above all**— ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων· Who is over all; as the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

**And through all**— Pervading every thing; being present with every thing; providing for all creatures; and by his energy supporting all things.

**And in you all**.— By the energy of his Spirit, enlightening, quickening, purifying, and comforting; in a word, making your hearts the temples of the Holy Ghost. Some think the mystery of the blessed Trinity is contained in this verse: God is over all, as Father; through all, by the Logos or Word; and in all, by the Holy Spirit.

**Verse 7. Unto every one of us is given grace**— Grace may here signify a particular office; as if the apostle had said: Though we are all equal in the respects already mentioned, yet we have all different offices and situations to fill up in the Church and in the world; and we receive a free gift from Christ, according to the nature of the office, that we may be able to discharge it according to his own mind. So the free gift, which we receive from Christ, is according to the office or function which he has given us to fulfill; and the office is according to that free gift, each suited to the other.

**Verse 8. Wherefore he saith**— The reference seems to be to Psalm 68:18, which, however it may speak of the removal of the tabernacle, appears to have been intended to point out the glorious ascension of Christ after his resurrection from the dead. The expositions of various commentators have made the place extremely difficult. I shall not trouble my reader with them; they may be seen in Rosenmuller.

**When he ascended up on high**— The whole of this verse, as it stands in the psalm, seems to refer to a military triumph. Take the following paraphrase: Thou hast ascended on high: the conqueror was placed in a very elevated chariot. Thou hast led captivity captive: the conquered kings and generals were usually bound behind the chariot of the conqueror, to

grace the triumph. Thou hast received gifts for (Paul, given gifts unto) men: at such times the conqueror was wont to throw money among the crowd. Even to the rebellious: those who had fought against him now submit unto him, and share his munificence; for it is the property of a hero to be generous. That the Lord God might dwell among them: the conqueror being now come to fix his abode in the conquered provinces, and subdue the people to his laws.

All this the apostle applies to the resurrection, ascension, and glory of Christ; though it has been doubted by some learned men whether the psalmist had this in view. I shall not dispute about this; it is enough for me that the apostle, under the inspiration of God, applied the verse in this way; and whatever David might intend, and of whatever event he might have written, we see plainly that the sense in which the apostle uses it was the sense of the Spirit of God; for the Spirit in the Old and New Testaments is the same. I may venture a short criticism on a few words in the original: Thou hast received gifts for men, לקחת מתנות באדם lakachta mattanoth baadam, thou hast taken gifts in man, in Adam. The gifts which Jesus Christ distributes to man he has received in man, in and by virtue of his incarnation; and it is in consequence of his being made man that it may be said, The Lord God dwells among them; for Jesus was called Immanuel, God with us, in consequence of his incarnation. This view of the subject is consistent with the whole economy of grace, and suits well with the apostle's application of the words of the psalmist in this place.

**Verse 9. *But that he also descended***— The meaning of the apostle appears to be this: The person who ascended is the Messiah, and his ascension plainly intimates his descension; that is, his incarnation, humiliation, death, and resurrection.

**Verse 10. *He that descended***— And he who descended so low is the same who has ascended so high. He came to the lower parts of the earth — the very deepest abasement; having emptied himself; taken upon him; the form of a servant, and humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross; now he is ascended far above all heavens — higher than all height; he has a name above every name. Here his descending into the lower parts of

the earth is put in opposition to his ascending far above all heavens. His abasement was unparalleled; so also is his exaltation.

***That he might fill all things.***— That he might be the fountain whence all blessings might flow; dispensing all good things to all his creatures, according to their several capacities and necessities; and, particularly, fill both converted Jews and Gentiles with all the gifts and graces of his Holy Spirit. Hence it follows: {Ephesians 4:11}

**Verse 11. *He gave some, apostles***— He established several offices in his Church; furnished these with the proper officers; and, to qualify them for their work, gave them the proper gifts. For a full illustration of this verse, the reader is requested to refer to the notes on 1 Corinthians 12:6-10; 28-30; and to the concluding observations at the end of that chapter.

**Verse 12. *For the perfecting of the saints***— For the complete instruction, purification, and union of all who have believed in Christ Jesus, both Jews and Gentiles. For the meaning of *καταρτισμος*, perfecting, see the note on 2 Corinthians 13:9.

***For the work of the ministry***— All these various officers, and the gifts and graces conferred upon them, were judged necessary, by the great Head of the Church, for its full instruction in the important doctrines of Christianity. The same officers and gifts are still necessary, and God gives them; but they do not know their places. In most Christian Churches there appears to be but one office, that of preacher; and one gift, that by which he professes to preach. The apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, are all compounded in the class preachers; and many, to whom God has given nothing but the gift of exhortation, take texts to explain them; and thus lose their time, and mar their ministry.

***Edifying of the body***— The body of Christ is his Church, see Ephesians 2:20, etc.; and its edification consists in its thorough instruction in Divine things, and its being filled with faith and holiness.

**Verse 13. *In the unity of the faith***— Jews and Gentiles being all converted according to the doctrines laid down in the faith — the Christian system.

***The knowledge of the Son of God***— A trite understanding of the mystery of the incarnation; why God was manifest in the flesh, and why this was necessary in order to human salvation.

***Unto a perfect man***— *εις ανδρα τελειον*. One thoroughly instructed; the whole body of the Church being fully taught, justified, sanctified, and sealed.

***Measure of the stature***— The full measure of knowledge, love, and holiness, which the Gospel of Christ requires. Many preachers, and multitudes of professing people, are studious to find out how many imperfections and infidelities, and how much inward sinfulness, is consistent with a safe state in religion but how few, very few, are bringing out the fair Gospel standard to try the height of the members of the Church; whether they be fit for the heavenly army; whether their stature be such as qualifies them for the ranks of the Church militant! The measure of the stature of the fullness is seldom seen; the measure of the stature of littleness, dwarfishness, and emptiness, is often exhibited.

**Verse 14. *Be no more children***— Children, here, are opposed to the perfect man in the preceding verse; and the state of both is well explained by the apostle's allusions. The man is grown up strong and healthy, and has attained such a measure or height as qualifies him for the most respectable place in the ranks of his country.

The child is ignorant, weak, and unsteady, tossed about in the nurse's arms, or whirled round in the giddy sports or mazes of youth; this seems to be the apostle's allusion. Being tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, refers to some kind of ancient play, but what I cannot absolutely determine; probably to something similar to a top, or to our paper kite.

***By the sleight of men***— The words *εν τη κυβεια* refer to the arts used by gamesters, who employ false dice that will always throw up one kind of number, which is that by which those who play with them cannot win.

***Cunning craftiness***— It is difficult to give a literal translation of the original words: *εν πανουργια προς την μεθοδειαν της πλανης*. “By cunning, for the purpose of using the various means of deception.” *πανουργια* signifies craft and subtlety in general, cheating and imposition:



**μεθοδεια**, from which we have our term method, signifies a wile, a particular sleight, mode of tricking and deceiving; it is applied to the arts which the devil uses to deceive and destroy souls; see Ephesians 6:11, called there the WILES of the devil. From this it seems that various arts were used, both by the Greek sophists and the Judaizing teachers, to render the Gospel of none effect, or to adulterate and corrupt it.

**Verse 15. *But, speaking the truth in love***— The truth recommended by the apostle is the whole system of Gospel doctrine; this they are to teach and preach, and this is opposed to the deceit mentioned above. This truth, as it is the doctrine of God's eternal love to mankind, must be preached in love. Scolding and abuse from the pulpit or press, in matters of religion, are truly monstrous. He who has the truth of God has no need of any means to defend or propagate it, but those which love to God and man provides.

***Grow up into him***— This is a continuance of the metaphor taken from the members of a human body receiving nourishment equally and growing up, each in its due proportion to other parts, and to the body in general. The truth of God should be so preached to all the members of the Church of God, that they may all receive an increase of grace and life; so that each, in whatever state he may be, may get forward in the way of truth and holiness. In the Church of Christ there are persons in various states: the careless, the penitent, the lukewarm, the tempted, the diffident, the little child, the young man, and the father. He who has got a talent for the edification of only one of those classes should not stay long in a place, else the whole body cannot grow up in all things under his ministry.

**Verse 16. *From whom the whole body***— Dr. Macknight has a just view of this passage, and I cannot express my own in more suitable terms: “The apostle's meaning is, that, as the human body is formed by the union of all the members to each other, under the head, and by the fitness of each member for its own office and place in the body, so the Church is formed by the union of its members under Christ, the head. Farther, as the human body increases till it arrives at maturity by the energy of every part in performing its proper function, and by the sympathy of every part with the whole, so the body or Church of Christ grows to maturity by the

proper exercise of the gifts and graces of individuals for the benefit of the whole.”

This verse is another proof of the wisdom and learning of the apostle. Not only the general ideas here are anatomical, but the whole phraseology is the same. The articulation of the bones, the composition and action of the muscles, the circulation of the fluids, carrying nourishment to every part, and depositing some in every place, the energy of the system in keeping up all the functions, being particularly introduced, and the whole terminating in the general process of nutrition, increasing the body, and supplying all the waste that had taken place in consequence of labor, etc. Let any medical man, who understands the apostle’s language, take up this verse, and he will be convinced that the apostle had all these things in view. I am surprised that some of those who have looked for the discoveries of the moderns among the ancients, have not brought in the apostle’s word

3. *Being alienated from the life of God*— The original design of God was to live in man; and the life of God in the soul of man was that by which God intended to make man happy, and without which true happiness was never found by any human spirit: from this through the ignorance that was in them, **δια την αγνοιαν την ουσαν**, through the substantial or continually existing ignorance, which there was nothing to instruct, nothing to enlighten; for the most accurate writings of their best philosophers left them entirely ignorant of the real nature of God. And if they had no correct knowledge of the true God they could have no religion; and if no religion, no morality. Their moral state became so wretched that they are represented as abhorring every thing spiritual and pure, for this is the import of the word **απηλλοτριωμενοι** (which we translate alienated) in some of the best Greek writers. They abhorred every thing that had a tendency to lay any restraint on their vicious passions and inclinations.

4. *Blindness of their heart*— **δια την πωρωσιν**. Because of the callousness of their hearts. Callous signifies a thickening of the outward skin of any particular part, especially on the hands and feet, by repeated exercise or use, through which such parts are rendered insensible. This may be metaphorically applied to the conscience of a sinner, which is rendered stupid and insensible by repeated acts of iniquity.

**Verse 19. 5. Who being past feeling**— **ουτινες απηληγηκοτες**. The verb **απαλγειν** signifies, 1. To throw off all sense of shame, and to be utterly devoid of pain, for committing unrighteous acts. 2. To be desperate, having neither hope nor desire of reformation; in a word, to be without remorse, and to be utterly regardless of conduct, character, or final blessedness. Instead of **απηληγηκοτες**, several excellent MSS. and versions have **απηλπικοτες**, being without hope; that is, persons who, from their manner of life in this world, could not possibly hope for blessedness in the world to come, and who might feel it their interest to deny the resurrection of the body, and even the immortality of the soul.

6. *Have given themselves over unto lasciviousness*— Lasciviousness, **ασελγεια**, is here personified; and the Gentiles in question are represented as having delivered themselves over to her jurisdiction. This is a trite picture of the Gentile world: uncleanness, lechery, and debauchery

of every kind, flourished among them without limit or restraint. Almost all their gods and goddesses were of this character.

7. **To work all uncleanness with greediness.**— This is a complete finish of the most abandoned character; to do an unclean act is bad, to labor in it is worse, to labor in all uncleanness is worse still; but to do all this in every case to the utmost extent, *εν πλεονεξια*, with a desire exceeding time, place, opportunity, and strength, is worst of all, and leaves nothing more profligate or more abandoned to be described or imagined; just as Ovid paints the drunken Silenus, whose wantonness survives his strength and keeps alive his desires, though old age has destroyed the power of gratification:-

*Te quoque, inextinctae Silene libidinis, urunt:  
Nequitia est, quae te non sinit esse senem.*

*Fast., lib. i. v. 413.*

*Thee also, O Silenus, of inextinguishable lust,  
they inflame; Thou art old in every thing except in lust.*

Such was the state of the Gentiles before they were blessed with the light of the Gospel; and such is the state of those nations who have not yet received the Gospel; and such is the state of multitudes of those in Christian countries who refuse to receive the Gospel, endeavor to decry it, and to take refuge in the falsities of infidelity against the testimony of eternal truth.

**Verse 20. *But ye have not so learned Christ***— Ye have received the doctrines of Christianity, and therefore are taught differently; ye have received the Spirit of Christ, and therefore are saved from such dispositions. Some would point and translate the original thus: *ὑμεῖς δε ουχ ουτως· εμαθετε τον χριστον*. But ye are not thus; ye have learned Christ.

**Verse 21. *If so be that ye have heard him***— *ειγε*, Seeing that, since indeed, ye have heard us proclaim his eternal truth; we have delivered it to you as we received it from Jesus.

**Verse 22. *That ye put off***— And this has been one especial part of our teaching, that ye should abandon all these, and live a life totally opposite to what it was before.

***The old man***— See the note on Romans 6:6, and especially the notes on Romans 13:13, 14.

***Which is corrupt***— The whole of your former life was corrupt and abominable; ye lived in the pursuit of pleasure and happiness; ye sought this in the gratification of the lusts of the flesh; and were ever deceived by these lusts, and disappointed in your expectations.

**Verse 23. *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind***— Their old mode of living was to be abandoned; a new one to be assumed. The mind is to be renovated; and not only its general complexion, but the very spirit of it; all its faculties and powers must be thoroughly, completely, and universally renewed. Plautus uses a similar expression describing deep distress, and answerable to our phrase innermost soul:-

*Paupertas, pavor territat mentem animi.*

*Poverty and dread alarm my innermost soul.*

*Epid., l. 519.*

**Verse 24. *Put on the new man***— Get a new nature; for in Christ Jesus—under the Christian dispensation, neither circumcision avails any thing, nor uncircumcision, hut a new creation. Therefore ye must be renewed in the spirit of your mind.

***Which after God is created in righteousness***— Here is certainly an allusion to the creation of man. Moses tells us, Genesis 1:27, that God created man in his own image; that is, God was the model according to which he was formed in the spirit of his mind. St. Paul says here that they should put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, or, *οσιοτητι της αληθειας*, in the holiness of truth. Both certainly refer to the same thing, and the one illustrates the other. From the apostle we learn what Moses meant by the image of God; it was righteousness and the truth of holiness. See the note on Genesis 1:26. It is not this or the other degree of moral good which the soul is to receive by Jesus Christ, it is the whole image of God; it is to be formed *κατα θεου*,

according to God; the likeness of the Divine Being is to be traced upon his soul, and he is to bear that as fully as his first father Adam bore it in the beginning.

**Verse 25. *Wherefore putting away lying***— All falsity, all prevarication, because this is opposite to the truth as it is in Jesus, Ephesians 4:21, and to the holiness of truth, Ephesians 4:24.

***Speak every man truth with his neighbor***— Truth was but of small account among many of even the best heathens, for they taught that on many occasions a lie was to be preferred to the truth itself. Dr. Whitby collects some of their maxims on this head.

κρειττον δε ελεσθαι ψευδος, η αληθες κακον· “A lie is better than a hurtful truth.”-Menander.

το γαρ αγαθον κρειττον εστι της αληθειας; “Good is better than truth.”-Proclus.

ενθα γαρ τι δει και ψευγδος λεγεσθαι, λεγεσθω. “When telling a lie will be profitable, let it be told.”-Darius in Herodotus, lib. iii. p. 101.

“He may lie who knows how to do it *εξ δεοντι καιρω*, in a suitable time.”-Plato apud Stob., ser. 12.

“There is nothing decorous in truth but when it is profitable; yea, sometimes *και ψευδος ωνησεν ανθρωπους, και τ' αληθες εβλαψεν*, truth is hurtful, and lying is profitable to men.”-Maximus Tyrius, Diss. 3, p. 29.

Having been brought up in such a loose system of morality, these converted Gentiles had need of these apostolic directions; Put away lying; speak the truth: Let lying never come near you; let truth be ever present with you.

***We are members one of another.***— Consider yourselves as one body, of which Jesus Christ is the head; and as a man’s right hand would not deceive or wrong his left hand, so deal honestly with each other; for ye are members one of another.

**Verse 26. *Be ye angry, and sin not***— *οργιζεσθε*, here, is the same as *ει μεν οργιζεσθε*, IF YE be angry, do not sin. We can never suppose that

the apostle delivers this as a precept, if we take the words as they stand in our version. Perhaps the sense is, Take heed that ye be not angry, lest ye sin; for it would be very difficult, even for an apostle himself, to be angry and not sin. If we consider anger as implying displeasure simply, then there are a multitude of cases in which a man may be innocently, yea, laudably angry; for he should be displeased with every thing which is not for the glory of God, and the good of mankind. But, in any other sense, I do not see how the words can be safely taken.

***Let not the sun go down upon your wrath***— That is: If you do get angry with any one, see that the fire be cast with the utmost speed out of your bosom. Do not go to sleep with any unkind or unbrotherly feeling; anger, continued in, may produce malice and revenge. No temper of this kind can consist with peace of conscience, and the approbation of God's Spirit in the soul.

**Verse 27. *Neither give place to the devil***.— Your adversary will strive to influence your mind, and irritate your spirit; watch and pray that he may not get any place in you, or ascendancy over you.

As the word **διαβολος** is sometimes used to signify a calumniator, tale-bearer, whisperer, or backbiter; (see in the original, 1 Timothy 3:11; 2 Timothy 3:3, and Titus 2:3;) here it may have the same signification. Do not open your ear to the tale-bearer, to the slanderer, who comes to you with accusations against your brethren, or with surmisings and evil speakings. These are human devils; they may be the means of making you angry, even without any solid pretense; therefore give them no place, that you may not be angry at any time; but if, unhappily, you should be overtaken in this fault, let not the sun go down upon your wrath; go to your brother, against whom you have found your spirit irritated; tell him what you have heard, and what you fear; let your ears be open to receive his own account; carefully listen to his own explanation; and, if possible, let the matter be finally settled, that Satan may not gain advantage over either.

**Verse 28. *Let him that stole steal no more***— It is supposed that, among the rabbins, stealing was not entirely discountenanced, provided a portion was given to the poor. The apostle here teaches them a different doctrine: as they should speak truth every man with his neighbor, so they should in

every respect act honestly, for nothing contrary to truth and righteousness could be tolerated under the Christian system. Let no man, under pretense of helping the poor, defraud another; but let him labor, working with his hands to provide that which is good, that he may have to give to him who is in necessity. Stealing, overreaching, defrauding, purloining, etc., are consistent with no kind of religion that acknowledges the true God. If Christianity does not make men honest, it does nothing for them. Those who are not saved from dishonesty fear not God, though they may dread man.

**Verse 29. *Let no corrupt communication***— *πας λογος σαπρος*. Kypke observes that *λογος σαπρος* signifies a useless, putrid, unsavory, and obscene word or conversation. 1. Useless, particularly that which has been rendered so by old age and corruption. 2. Putrid, impure; so Aristophanes in *Lysistrat.*, p. 859, calls a bad woman *σαπρα: εμοι συ λουτρον, ω σαπρα*. Tune, Spurca! balneum mihi parabis? 3. Calumnious, or reproachful; whatever has a tendency to injure the name, fame, or interest of another. In short, it appears to mean any word or thing obscene, any thing that injures virtue, countenances vice, or scoffs at religion. In the parallel place, Colossians 4:6, the apostle exhorts that our speech may be seasoned with salt, to preserve it from putrefaction. See Kypke and Macknight.

***But that which is good to the use of edifying***— To be good for a thing is a Graecism, as well as an Anglicism, for, to be fit, proper, suitable, etc.; so Achilles Tatius, lib. iv. p. 231: *α γαθον εις φιλιαν οιδα σε*. I know thee to be good (formed) for friendship. And Appian, de Bell. Hisp., p. 439, terms both the Scipios, *ανδρας ες παντα αγαθους γενομενουχ*, men who were good (suitable) for all things. And also Lucian, in *Toxari*, p. 53: *ου μονον αρα τοξευειν αγαθοι ησαν σκυθαι*. The Scythians were not good (expert) in archery only. See Kypke, from whom I quote.

***That it may minister grace***— *ἵνα δω χαριν*. This may be understood thus: 1. Let your conversation be pure, wise, and holy, that it may be the means of conveying grace, or Divine influences, to them that hear. 2. Let it be such as to be grateful or acceptable to the hearers. This is the meaning of *ἵνα δω χαριν* in some of the most correct Greek writers. Never wound modesty, truth, or religion with your discourse; endeavor to edify



those with whom you converse; and if possible, speak so as to please them.

**Verse 30. *Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God***— By giving way to any wrong temper, unholy word, or unrighteous action. Even those who have already a measure of the light and life of God, both of which are not only brought in by the Holy Spirit, but maintained by his constant indwelling, may give way to sin, and so grieve this Holy Spirit that it shall withdraw both its light and presence; and, in proportion as it withdraws, then hardness and darkness take place; and, what is still worse, a state of insensibility is the consequence; for the darkness prevents the fallen state from being seen, and the hardness prevents it from being felt.

***Whereby ye are sealed***— The Holy Spirit in the soul of a believer is God's seal, set on his heart to testify that he is God's property, and that he should be wholly employed in God's service. It is very likely that the apostle had in view the words of the prophet, Isaiah 63:10: But they rebelled, and VEXED his HOLY SPIRIT; therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and fought against them. The psalmist refers to the same fact in nearly the same words, Psalm 78:40: How oft did they PROVOKE him in the wilderness, and GRIEVE him in the desert! Let every man, therefore, take heed that he grieve not the Spirit of God, lest God turn to be his enemy, and fight against him.

**Verse 31. *Let all bitterness***— *πασα πικρια*. It is astonishing that any who profess the Christian name should indulge bitterness of spirit. Those who are censorious, who are unmerciful to the failings of others, who have fixed a certain standard by which they measure all persons in all circumstances, and unchristian every one that does not come up to this standard, these have the bitterness against which the apostle speaks. In the last century there was a compound medicine, made up from a variety of drastic acrid drugs and ardent spirits, which was called Hiera Picra, *ιερα πικρα*, the holy bitter; this medicine was administered in a multitude of cases, where it did immense evil, and perhaps in scarcely any case did it do good. It has ever appeared to me to furnish a proper epithet for the disposition mentioned above, the holy bitter; for the religiously censorious act under the pretense of superior sanctity. I have known such persons do

much evil in a Christian society, but never knew an instance of their doing any good.

**And wrath**— **θυμος** is more properly anger, which may be considered the commencement of the passion.

**Anger**— **οργη** is more properly wrath — the passion carried to its highest pitch, accompanied with injurious words and outrageous acts, some of which are immediately specified.

**And clamor**— **κραυγη** Loud and obstreperous speaking, brawling, railing, boisterous talk, often the offspring of wrath; all of which are highly unbecoming the meek, loving, quiet, sedate mind of Christ and his followers.

**And evil speaking**— **βλασφημια**· Blasphemy; that is, injurious speaking — words which tend to hurt those of whom or against whom they are spoken.

**With all malice**— **κακια**· All malignity; as anger produces wrath, and wrath clamor, so all together produce malice; that is, settled, sullen, fell wrath, which is always looking out for opportunities to revenge itself by the destruction of the object of its indignation. No state of society can be even tolerable where these prevail; and, if eternity were out of the question, it is of the utmost consequence to have these banished from time.

**Verse 32. Be ye kind one to another**— **γινεσθε-χρηστοι**· Be kind and obliging to each other; study good breeding and gentleness of manners. A Christian cannot be a savage, and he need not be a boor. Never put any person to needless pain.

**Tender-hearted**— **ευσπλαγχοι**· Compassionate; having the bowels easily moved (as the word implies) to commiserate the state of the wretched and distressed.

**Forgiving one another**— Should you receive any injury from a brother, or from any man, be as ready to forgive him, on his repentance and acknowledgment, as God was, for Christ's sake, to forgive you when you repented of your sins, and took refuge in his mercy.

1. THE exhortations given in this chapter, if properly attended to, have the most direct tendency to secure the peace of the individual, the comfort of every family, and the welfare and unity of every Christian society. That God never prohibits any thing that is useful to us, is an unshaken truth. And that he never commands what has not the most pointed relation to our present and eternal welfare, is not less so. How is it, then, that we do not glory in his commandments and rejoice in his prohibitions? If the gratification of our fleshly propensities could do us good, that gratification had never been forbidden. God plants thorns in the way that would lead us to death and perdition.

2. From the provision which God has made for the soul's salvation, we may see the nature, and in some sense the extent, of the salvation provided. Much on this subject has been said in the preceding chapter, and the same subject is continued here. God requires that the Church shall be holy, so that it may be a proper habitation for himself; and he requires that each believer should be holy, and that he should, under the influences of his grace, arrive at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ! Ephesians 4:13. This is astonishing; but God is able to make all grace abound towards us.

3. It is the will of God that Christians should be well instructed; that they should become wise and intelligent; and have their understandings well cultivated and improved. Sound learning is of great worth, even in religion; the wisest and best instructed Christians are the most steady, and may be the most useful. If a man be a child in knowledge, he is likely to be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine; and often lies at the mercy of interested, designing men: the more knowledge he has, the more safe is his state. If our circumstances be such that we have few means of improvement, we should turn them to the best account. "Partial knowledge is better than total ignorance; he who cannot get all he may wish, must take heed to acquire all that he can." If total ignorance be a bad and dangerous thing, every degree of knowledge lessens both the evil and the danger. It must never be forgotten that the Holy Scriptures themselves are capable of making men wise unto salvation, if read and studied with faith in Christ.

4. Union among the followers of Christ is strongly recommended. How can spiritual brethren fall out by the way? Have they not all one Father, all one Head? Do they not form one body, and are they not all members of each other? Would it not be monstrous to see the nails pulling out the eyes, the hands tearing off the flesh from the body, the teeth biting out the tongue, etc., etc.? And is it less so to see the members of a Christian society bite and devour each other, till they are consumed one of another? Every member of the mystical body of Christ should labor for the comfort and edification of the whole, and the honor of the Head. He that would live a quiet life, and keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, must be as backward to take offense as to give it. Would all act on this plan (and surely it is as rational as it is Christian) we should soon have glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will among men.

5. A roughness of manners is to some unavoidable; it is partly owing to the peculiar texture of their mind, and partly to their education. But there are others who glory in, and endeavor to cultivate, this ungentle disposition; under this is often concealed a great degree of spiritual pride, and perhaps some malignity; for they think that this roughness gives them a right to say grating, harsh, and severe things. They should be taught another lesson; and if they will not demean themselves as they ought, they should be left to themselves, and no man should associate with them. They are not Christians, and they act beneath the character of men.

## CHAPTER 5.

*Christians should imitate their heavenly Father, and walk in love, after the example of Christ, 1, 2. They should avoid all uncleanness, impurity, covetousness, and foolish jesting, and idolatry, because these things exclude from the kingdom of God, 3-7. The Ephesians were once in darkness, but being now light in the Lord, they are exhorted to walk in that light, and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit; and to have no fellowship with the workers of iniquity, whose evil deeds are manifested by the light, 8-13. All are exhorted to awake; to walk circumspectly; to redeem the time; and to learn what the will of the Lord is, 14-17. The apostle gives particular directions relative to avoiding excess of wine, 18. To singing and giving thanks, 19, 20. Submission to each other, 21. To husbands that they should love their wives, as Christ loved the Church; for by the marriage union, the union between Christ and the Church is pointed out; and wives are exhorted to reverence their husbands, 22-33.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 5.

**Verse 1.** *Be ye therefore followers of God*— The beginning of this chapter is properly a continuation of the preceding, which should have ended with the second verse of this. The word μιμηται, which we translate followers, signifies such as personate others, assuming their gait, mode of speech, accent, carriage, etc.; and it is from this Greek word that we have the word mimic. Though this term is often used in a ludicrous sense, yet here it is to be understood in a very solemn and proper sense. Let your whole conduct be like that of your Lord; imitate him in all your actions, words, spirit, and inclinations; imitate him as children do their beloved parents, and remember that you stand in the relation of beloved children to him. It is natural for children to imitate their parents; it is their constant aim to learn of them, and to copy them in all things; whatever they see the parent do, whatever they hear him speak, that they endeavor to copy and imitate; yea, they go farther, they insensibly copy the very tempers of their parents. If ye therefore be children of God, show this love to your

heavenly Father, and imitate all his moral perfections, and acquire the mind that was in Jesus.

**Verse 2. *And walk in love***— Let every act of life be dictated by love to God and man.

***As Christ hath loved us***— Laying down your lives for your brethren if necessary; counting nothing too difficult to be done in order to promote their eternal salvation.

***Hath given himself for us***— Christ hath died in our stead, and become thereby a sacrifice for our sins.

***An offering***— **προσφορα**. An oblation, an eucharistic offering; the same as **מִנְחָה** minchah, Leviticus 2:1, etc., which is explained to be an offering made unto the Lord, of fine flour, with oil and frankincense. It means, any offering by which gratitude was expressed for temporal blessings received from the bounty of God.

***A sacrifice***— **θυσια**. A sin-offering, a victim for sin; the same as **זֶבַח** zebach, which almost universally means that sacrificial act in which the blood of an animal was poured out as an atonement for sin. These terms may be justly considered as including every kind of sacrifice, offering, and oblation made to God on any account; and both these terms are with propriety used here, because the apostle's design was to represent the sufficiency of the offering made by Christ for the sin of the world. And the passage strongly intimates, that as man is bound to be grateful to God for the good things of this life, so he should testify that gratitude by suitable offerings; but having sinned against God, he has forfeited all earthly blessings as well as those that come from heaven; and that Jesus Christ gave himself **υπερ ημων**, in our stead and on our account, as the gratitude-offering, **προσφορα**, which we owed to our MAKER, and, without which a continuance of temporal blessings could not be expected; and also as a sacrifice for sin, **θυσια**, without which we could never approach God, and without which we must be punished with an everlasting destruction from the presence of God and the glory of his power. Thus we find that even our temporal blessings come from and by Jesus Christ, as well as all our spiritual and eternal mercies.

**For a sweet-smelling savor.**— εἰς ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας· The same as is expressed in Genesis 8:21; Leviticus 1:9; 3:16: רִיחַ נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה reiach nichoach laihovah, “a sweet savor unto the Lord;” i.e. an offering of his own prescription, and one with which he was well pleased; and by accepting of which he showed that he accepted the person who offered it. The sweet-smelling savor refers to the burnt-offerings, the fumes of which ascended from the fire in the act of burning; and as such odors are grateful to man, God represents himself as pleased with them, when offered by an upright worshipper according to his own appointment.

**Verse 3. But fornication**— It is probable that the three terms used here by the apostle refer to different species of the same thing. The word fornication, πορνεία, may imply not only fornication but adultery also, as it frequently does; uncleanness, ἀκαθαρσία may refer to all abominable and unnatural lusts-sodomy, bestiality, etc., and covetousness, πλεονεξία, to excessive indulgence in that which, moderately used, is lawful. As the covetous man never has enough of wealth, so the pleasure-taker and the libertine never have enough of the gratifications of sense, the appetite increasing in proportion to its indulgence. If, however, simple covetousness, i.e. the love of gain, be here intended, it shows from the connection in which it stands, (for it is linked with fornication, adultery, and all uncleanness,) how degrading it is to the soul of man, and how abominable it is in the eye of God. In other places it is ranked with idolatry, for the man who has an inordinate love of gain makes money his god.

**Let it not be once named**— Let no such things ever exist among you, for ye are called to be saints.

**Verse 4. Neither filthiness**— ἀισχροτης· Any thing base or vile in words or acts.

**Foolish talking**— μωρολογία· Scurrility, buffoonery, ridicule, or what tends to expose another to contempt.

**Nor jesting**— εὐτραπέλεια· Artfully turned discourses or words, from εὖ, well or easily, and τρέπω, I turn; words that can be easily turned to other meanings; double entendres; chaste words which, from their connection, and the manner in which they are used, convey an obscene or

offensive meaning. It also means jests, puns, witty sayings, and mountebank repartees of all kinds.

***Which are not convenient***— *ουκ ανηκοντα*. They do not come up to the proper standard; they are utterly improper in themselves, and highly unbecoming in those who profess Christianity.

***But rather giving of thanks.***— *ευχαριστια*. Decent and edifying discourse or thanksgiving to God. Prayer or praise is the most suitable language for man; and he who is of a trifling, light disposition, is ill fitted for either. How can a man, who has been talking foolishly or jestingly in company, go in private to magnify God for the use of his tongue which he has abused, or his rational faculties which he has degraded?

**Verse 5. *For this ye know***— Ye must be convinced of the dangerous and ruinous tendency of such a spirit and conduct, when ye know that persons of this character can never inherit the kingdom of God. See on Ephesians 5:3; and see the observations on the Greek article at the end of this epistle. {Ephesians 6:24} {The observations on the Greek article will be inserted later.}

**Verse 6. *Let no man deceive you***— Suffer no man to persuade you that any of these things are innocent, or that they are unavoidable frailties of human nature; they are all sins and abominations in the sight of God; those who practice them are children of disobedience; and on account of such practices the wrath of God — Divine punishment, must come upon them.

**Verse 7. *Be not ye therefore partakers with them***— Do not act as your fellow citizens do; nor suffer their philosophy, to it in vain words, *κενοις λογοις*, with empty and illusive doctrines, to lead you astray from the path of truth.

That there was much need for such directions and cautions to the people of Ephesus has been often remarked. It appears, from Athenaeus, that these people were addicted to luxury, effeminacy etc. He tells us that the famous Aspasia, who was herself of the Socratic sect, brought a vast number of beautiful women into Greece, and by their means filled the country with prostitutes, *και επληθυνεν απο των ταυτης εταιριδων η ελλας*, lib. xiii. cap. 25. Ibid. cap. 31, he observes that the Ephesians had dedicated temples *εταιρα αφροδιτη*, to the prostitute Venus; and



again, cap. 32, he quotes from Demosthenes, in Orat. contra Neeram: **τασ μεν εταιρας ηδονης ενεκα εχομεν, τας δε παλλακας της καθ' ημεραν παλλακειας, τας δε γυναικας του παιδοποιεισθαι γνησιες, και των ενδον φυλακα φιστην εχειν**. “We have whores for our pleasure, harlots for daily use, and wives for the procreation of legitimate children, and for the faithful preservation of our property.” Through the whole of this 13th book of Athenaeus the reader will see the most melancholy proofs of the most abominable practices among the Greeks, and the high estimation in which public prostitutes were held; the greatest lawgivers and the wisest philosophers among the Greeks supported this system both by their authority and example. Is it not in reference to their teaching and laws that the apostle says: Let no man deceive you with vain words?

**Verse 8. *For ye were sometimes (ποτε, formerly) darkness***— While ye lived in darkness, ye lived in these crimes.

***But now are ye light in the Lord***— When ye were in heathenish darkness ye served divers lusts and pleasures, but now ye have the light — the wisdom and teaching which come from God; therefore walk as children of the light — let the world see that ye are not slaves to the flesh, but free, willing, rational servants of the Most High; not brutish followers of devil gods.

**Verse 9. *For the fruit of the Spirit***— Instead of Spirit, **πνευματος**, ABD\*EFG, the Syriac, Coptic, Sahidic, AEthiopic, Armenian, Vulgate, and Itala, together with several of the fathers, read **φωτος**, light, which is supposed by most critics to be the true reading, because there is no mention made of the Spirit in any part of the context. As light, Ephesians 5:8, not only means the Divine influence upon the soul, but also the Gospel, with great propriety it may be said: The fruit of the light, i.e. of the Gospel, is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth. Goodness, **αγαθωσυνη**, in the principle and disposition; righteousness, **δικαιοσυνη**, the exercise of that goodness in the whole conduct of life; truth, **αληθεια**, the director of that principle, and its exercise, to the glorification of God and the good of mankind.

**Verse 10. *Proving what is acceptable***— By walking in the light-under the influence of the Divine Spirit, according to the dictates of the Gospel, ye

shall be able to try, and bring to full proof, that by which God is best pleased. Ye shall be able to please him well in all things.

**Verse 11. *Have no fellowship***— Have no religious connection whatever with heathens or their worship.

***Unfruitful works of darkness***— Probably alluding to the mysteries among the heathens, and the different lustrations and rites through which the initiated went in the caves and dark recesses where these mysteries were celebrated; all which he denominates works of darkness, because they were destitute of true wisdom; and unfruitful works, because they were of no use to mankind; the initiated being obliged, on pain of death, to keep secret what they had seen, heard, and done: hence they were called **απορρητα μυστηρια**, unspeakable mysteries — things that were not to be divulged. That the apostle may refer to magic and incantations is also probable, for to these the Ephesians were greatly addicted. See the proofs in the notes on Acts 19:19.

***Rather reprove them.***— Bear a testimony against them; convince them that they are wrong; confute them in their vain reasons; reprove them for their vices, which are flagrant, while pretending to superior illumination. All these meanings has the Greek word **ελεγχω**, which we generally render to convince or reprove.

**Verse 12. *For it is a shame even to speak***— This no doubt refers to the Eleusinian and Bacchanalian mysteries, which were performed in the night and darkness, and were known to be so impure and abominable, especially the latter, that the Roman senate banished them both from Rome and Italy. How the discovery of these depths of Satan was made, and the whole proceedings in that case, may be seen in Livy, Hist. lib. xxxix. cap. 8-19, where the reader will see the force of what the apostle says here: It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret; the abominations being of the most stupendous kind, and of the deepest dye.

**Verse 13. *But all things that are reprovèd***— Dr. Macknight paraphrases this verse as follows: “Now all these reprovèd actions, **ελεγχομενα**, which are practised in celebrating these mysteries, are made manifest as sinful by the Gospel; and, seeing every thing which discovers the true

nature of actions is light, the Gospel, which discovers the evil nature of the actions performed in these mysteries, is light.”

The apostle speaks against these mysteries as he speaks against fornication, uncleanness, and covetousness; but by no means either borrows expression or similitude from them to illustrate Divine truths; for, as it would be a shame even to speak of those things, surely it would be an abomination to allude to them in the illustration of the doctrines of the Gospel.

**Verse 14. *Wherefore he saith***— It is a matter of doubt and controversy whence this saying is derived. Some think it taken from Isaiah 26:19: Thy dead men shall live; with my dead body shall they arise; Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, etc. Others think that it is taken from Isaiah 60:1-3: Arise, shine; for thy light is come, etc. But these passages neither give the words nor the meaning of the apostle. Epiphanius supposed them to be taken from an ancient prophecy of Elijah, long since lost: Syncellus and Euthalius think they were taken from an apocryphal work attributed to Jeremiah the prophet: others, that they made part of a hymn then used in the Christian Church; for that there were, in the apostle’s time, hymns and spiritual songs, as well as psalms, we learn from himself, in Ephesians 5:19, and from Colossians 3:16. The hymn is supposed to have begun thus:-

εγειραι ο καθευδων,  
και αναστα εκ των νεκρων,  
επιφανυσει σοι ο χριστος.

*Awake, O thou who sleepest,  
And from the dead arise thou,  
And Christ shall shine upon thee.*

See Rosenmuller, Wolf, and others. But it seems more natural to understand the words he saith as referring to the light, i.e. the Gospel, mentioned Ephesians 5:13. And the **διο λεγει** should be translated, Wherefore It saith, Awake thou, etc. that is: This is the general, the strong, commanding voice of the Gospel in every part—Receive instruction; leave thy sins, which are leading thee to perdition; believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will enlighten and save thee.

As a man asleep neither knows nor does any thing that can be called good or useful, so the Gentiles and all others, while without the knowledge of Christianity, had not only no proper knowledge of vice and virtue, but they had no correct notion of the true God.

As the dead can perform no function of life, so the Gentiles and the unconverted were incapable of performing any thing worthy either of life or being. But though they were asleep—in a state of complete spiritual torpor, yet they might be awoken by the voice of the Gospel; and though dead to all goodness, and to every function of the spiritual life, yet, as their animal life was whole in them, and perception and reason were still left, they were capable of hearing the Gospel, and under that influence which always accompanies it when faithfully preached, they could discern its excellency, and find it to be the power of God to their salvation. And they are addressed by the apostle as possessing this capacity; and, on their using it properly, have the promise that Christ shall enlighten them.

**Verse 15. *Walk circumspectly***— Our word circumspect, from the Latin *circumspicio*, signifies to look round about on all hands; to be every way watchful, wary, and cautious, in order to avoid danger, discern enemies before they come too nigh, and secure a man's interest by every possible and lawful means. But the original word **ακριβως** signifies correctly, accurately, consistently, or perfectly. Be ye, who have received the truth, careful of your conduct; walk by the rule which God has given you; do this as well in little as in great matters; exemplify your principles, which are holy and good, by a corresponding conduct; do not only profess, but live the Gospel. As you embrace all its promises, be careful also to embrace all its precepts; and behave yourselves so, that your enemies may never be able to say that ye are holy in your doctrines and profession, but irregular in your lives.

***Not as fools, but as wise***— **μη ως ασοφοι, αλλ' ως σοφοι**. The heathens affected to be called **σοφοι**, or wise men. Pythagoras was perhaps the first who corrected this vanity, by assuming the title of **φιλοσοφος**, a lover of wisdom; hence our term philosopher, used now in a much prouder sense than that in which the great Pythagoras wished it to be applied. The apostle here takes the term **σοφος**, and applies it to the Christian; and,

instead of it, gives the empty Gentile philosopher the title of **ασοφος**, without wisdom, fool.

**Verse 16. *Redeeming the time***— **εξαγοραζομενοι τον καιρον**· Buying up those moments which others seem to throw away; steadily improving every present moment, that ye may, in some measure, regain the time ye have lost. Let time be your chief commodity; deal in that alone; buy it all up, and use every portion of it yourselves. Time is that on which eternity depends; in time ye are to get a preparation for the kingdom of God; if you get not this in time, your ruin is inevitable; therefore, buy up the time.

Some think there is an allusion here to the case of debtors, who, by giving some valuable consideration to their creditors, obtain farther time for paying their debts. And this appears to be the sense in which it is used by the Septuagint, Daniel 2:8: **επ' αληθειας οίδα εγω, οτι καιρον υμεις εξαγοραζετε**· I know certainly that ye would gain or buy time — ye wish to have the time prolonged, that ye may seek out for some plausible explanation of the dream. Perhaps the apostle means in general, embrace every opportunity to glorify God, save your own souls, and do good to men.

***Because the days are evil***.— The present times are dangerous, they are full of trouble and temptations, and only the watchful and diligent have any reason to expect that they shall keep their garments unspotted.

**Verse 17. *Wherefore be ye not unwise***— **μη γινεσθε αφρονες**· Do not become madmen. Here is a most evident allusion to the orgies of Bacchus, in which his votaries acted like madmen; running about, tossing their heads from shoulder to shoulder, appearing to be in every sense completely frantic. See the whole of the passage in Livy, to which I have referred on Ephesians 5:12.

***But understanding what the will of the Lord is***.— It is the will of God that ye should be sober, chaste, holy, and pure. Get a thorough understanding of this; acquaint yourselves with God's will, that ye may know how to glorify him.

**Verse 18. *Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess***— This is a farther allusion to the Bacchanalian mysteries; in them his votaries got drunk, and ran into all manner of excesses. Plato, though he forbade drunkenness in



are there in the universe whose hearts ever accompany them in what they call singing the praises of God!

**Verse 20. *Giving thanks always***— God is continually loading you with his benefits; you deserve nothing of his kindness; therefore give him thanks for his unmerited bounties.

***God and the Father***— That is: God, who is your Father, and the Father of mercies. See the observations on the Greek article at the end of this epistle. {Ephesians 6:24}

***In the name of our Lord Jesus***— He is the only mediator; and through him alone can ye approach to God; and it is for his sake only that God will hear your prayers or receive your praises.

**Verse 21. *Submitting-one to another***— Let no man be so tenacious of his own will or his opinion in matters indifferent, as to disturb the peace of the Church; in all such matters give way to each other, and let love rule.

***In the fear of God***.— Setting him always before your eyes, and considering that he has commanded you to love one another, and to bear each other's burdens; and that what you do in this or any other commanded case, you do as unto the Lord. Instead of *εν φοβω θεου*, in the fear of GOD, *εν φοβω χριστου*, in the fear of CHRIST, is the reading of ABDEFG, with all others of most value; besides the Syriac, Coptic, Sahidic, Aethiopic, Armenian, Vulgate, and Itala; Basil the Great, and Chrysostom. Neither reading makes any difference in the sense.

**Verse 22. *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands***— As the Lord, viz. Christ, is the head or governor of the Church, and the head of the man, so is the man the head or governor of the woman. This is God's ordinance, and should not be transgressed. The husband should not be a tyrant, and the wife should not be the governor. Old Francis Quarles, in his homely rhymes, alluding to the superstitious notion, that the crowing of a hen bodes ill luck to the family, has said:-

*“Ill thrives the hapless family that shows  
A cock that's silent, and a hen that crows:  
I know not which live most unnatural lives,  
Obeying husbands or commanding wives.”*

***As unto the Lord.***— The word Church seems to be necessarily understood here; that is: Act under the authority of your husbands, as the Church acts under the authority of Christ. As the Church submits to the Lord, so let wives submit to their husbands.

**Verse 23. *For the husband is the head of the wife***— This is the reason which the apostle gives for his injunctions. See above.

***He is the Savior of the body.***— As Christ exercises authority over the Church so as to save and protect it, so let the husband exercise authority over his wife by protecting, comforting, and providing her with every necessary and comfort of life, according to his power.

**Verse 24. *In every thing***.— That is, every lawful thing; for it is not intimated that they should obey their husbands in any thing criminal, or in any thing detrimental to the interests of their souls. The husband may be profligate, and may wish his wife to become such also; he may be an enemy to true religion, and use his authority to prevent his wife from those means of grace which she finds salutary to her soul; in none of these things should she obey him.

**Verse 25. *Husbands, love your wives***— Here is a grand rule, according to which every husband is called to act: Love your wife as Christ loved the Church. But how did Christ love the Church? He gave himself for it — he laid down his life for it. So then husbands should, if necessary, lay down their lives for their wives: and there is more implied in the words than mere protection and support; for, as Christ gave himself for the Church to save it, so husbands should, by all means in their power, labor to promote the salvation of their wives, and their constant edification in righteousness. Thus we find that the authority of the man over the woman is founded on his love to her, and this love must be such as to lead him to risk his life for her. As the care of the family devolves on the wife, and the children must owe the chief direction of their minds and formation of their manners to the mother, she has need of all the assistance and support which her husband can give her; and, if she performs her duty well, she deserves the utmost of his love and affection.

**Verse 26. *That he might sanctify and cleanse it***— The Church is represented as the spouse of Christ, as the woman is the spouse of the



man; and, to prepare this Church for himself, he washes, cleanses, and sanctifies it. There is certainly an allusion here to the ancient method of purifying women, who were appointed to be consorts to kings; twelve months, it appears, were in some instances spent in this purification: Six

glorious, having neither spot, wrinkle, blemish, nor any such thing. How vain is the pretension of multitudes to be members of the true Church while full of spots, wrinkles, blemishes, and MANY such things; fondly supposing that their holiness is in their surety, because not in themselves! Reader, lay thy hand on thy conscience and say, Dost thou believe that this is St. Paul's meaning? See the notes on Ephesians 3:14, etc.

**Verse 28. *As their own bodies***— For the woman is, properly speaking, a part of the man; for God made man male and female, and the woman was taken out of his side; therefore is she flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone; and therefore, he that loveth his wife loveth himself, for they two are one flesh. The apostle, in all these verses, refers to the creation and original state of the first human pair.

**Verse 29. *No man ever yet hated his own flesh***— And this is a natural reason why he should love his wife, and nourish and cherish her.

**Verse 30. *We are members of his body***— He has partaken of our nature, as we have partaken of the nature of Adam. And as he is the head of the Church and the Savior of this body; so we, being members of the Church, are members of his mystical body. That is, we are united to him by one Spirit in the closest intimacy, even similar to that which the members have with the body.

**Verse 31. *Shall be joined unto his wife***— *προσκολληθησεται*. He shall be glued or cemented to her; and, as a well-glued board will sooner break in the whole wood than in the glued joint, so death alone can part the husband and wife; and nothing but death should dissolve their affection. See the notes on Genesis 2:21-24.

**Verse 32. *This is a great mystery***— *το μυστηριον τουτο μεγα εστιν*. This mystery is great. *Sacramentum hoc magnum est*; this sacrament is great. — VULGATE. And on the evidence of this version the Church of Rome has made matrimony a sacrament, which, as they use it, is no meaning of the original. By mystery, here, we may understand a natural thing by which some spiritual matter is signified, which signification the Spirit of God alone can give. So, here, the creation and union of Adam and Eve, were intended, in the design of God, to point out the union of Christ and the Church: a union the most important that can be conceived; and

therefore the apostle calls it a great mystery. See the observations at the end of this chapter.

**Verse 33. *Nevertheless***— *πλην*. Moreover, or therefore, on the consideration of God's design in the institution of marriage, let every one of you love his wife as himself, because she is both naturally and by a Divine ordinance a part of himself.

***That she reverence her husband.***— Let the wife ever consider the husband as her head, and this he is, not only by nature, but also by the ordinance of God. These are very important matters, and on them the apostle lays great stress. See the following observations.

THERE is one subject in the preceding verse on which I could not enlarge sufficiently in the notes, and which I have reserved for this place; viz. what the apostle says concerning the mystery of marriage, which certainly has a deeper meaning than what is generally apprehended. Dr. Macknight has some good observations on this part of the subject, which I shall beg leave to lay before my readers.

1. "The apostle calls the formation of Eve from Adam's body, his marriage with her; and the intimate union established between them by that marriage, a great mystery, because it contained an important emblematical meaning concerning the regeneration of believers, and their union with Christ, which hitherto had been kept secret, but which he had discovered in the 30th verse. {Ephesians 5:30} For there, in allusion to what Adam said concerning Eve, 'This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh,' the apostle says, concerning Christ and believers: We are bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh: that is, we are parts of his body, the Church. And by this application of Adam's words concerning Eve to Christ and to his Church, he intimates, First, That the formation of Eve of a rib taken out of Adam's body was a figure of the regeneration of believers by the breaking of Christ's body, mentioned Ephesians 5:25. Secondly, That Adam's love to Eve, on account of her being formed of his body, was a figure of Christ's love to believers because they are become his body, Ephesians 5:30. Thirdly, That Adam's marriage with Eve was a figure of the eternal union of Christ with believers in heaven, mentioned Ephesians 5:27. For he left his Father to be united to his Church.

2. “In giving this emblematical representation of these ancient facts, the apostle has not exceeded the bounds of probability. In the first age, neither the art of writing, nor any permanent method of conveying instruction, being invented, it was necessary to make such striking actions and events as could not easily be forgotten emblems of the instruction meant to be perpetuated. On this supposition, Adam, in whom the human race began, was a natural image of Christ, in whom the human race was to be restored; and his deep sleep, the opening of his side, and the formation of Eve of a rib taken out of his side, were fit emblems of Christ’s death, of the opening of his side on the cross, and of the regeneration of believers by his death. The love which Adam expressed towards Eve, and his union with her by marriage, were lively images of Christ’s love to believers, and of his eternal union with them in one society after their resurrection; and Eve herself, who was formed of a rib taken from Adam’s side, was a natural image of believers, who are regenerated, both in their body and in their mind, by the breaking of Christ’s side on the cross. Thus, the circumstances which accompanied the formation of Eve being fit emblems of the formation of the Church, we may suppose they were brought to pass to prefigure that great event; and, by prefiguring it, to show that it was decreed of God from the very beginning.

3. “The aptness, however, of these images is not the only reason for supposing that the formation of Eve, and her marriage with Adam in paradise, were emblems of the regeneration of believers by the death of Christ, and of their eternal union with him in heaven. The singular manner in which Eve was formed, and the declaration at her marriage with Adam, ‘Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh,’ strongly lead to that conclusion. Eve was not formed of the dust of the earth, as all other living things were made, (not excepting Adam himself,) but of a rib taken from Adam’s side while he was in a deep sleep. Now, for this diversity, what reason can be assigned, if that which the apostle hath suggested is not admitted? Farther: unless some deep instruction were couched under the formation of Eve, what occasion was there for Adam, at his marriage with her, to declare, ‘This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man: therefore shall a man leave,’ etc.? For although the taking of Eve out of Adam might be a reason for

Adam's affection towards her, it was no reason for the affection of his posterity towards their wives, who were not so formed. The reason of their love to their wives is their being creatures of the same species with themselves. This Eve might have been, though, like Adam, she had been formed of the dust of the earth. Wherefore Adam's declaration concerning Eve being taken out of his body, and concerning his love to her on that account, was intended for some purpose peculiar to himself; namely, as he was a type of Him who was to restore the human race by the breaking of his body on the cross, and who on that account loves them, and will unite them to himself for ever. Upon the whole, the formation of Eve and her marriage with Adam, and his love to and union with her because she was taken out of his side, and the declaration that, on that account, all his posterity should love their wives, and continue united to them through life, (a union which does not subsist among other animals,) are events so singular, that I do not see what account can be given of them, unless, with the Apostle Paul, we suppose that, agreeably to the most ancient method of instruction, God intended these things as figurative representations of the regeneration of believers by the death of Christ, and of his eternal union with them in heaven; and that Adam and Eve were taught by God himself to consider them as such.

4. "It is no small confirmation of the apostle's emblematical interpretation of the formation and marriage of Eve, that in Scripture we find a variety of images and expressions founded on that interpretation. For example, Romans 5:14, Adam is expressly called a type of him who was to come, on which account, 1 Corinthians 15:45, Christ is called the last Adam. Next, the catholic Church, consisting of believers of all nations, is called the body of Christ, and the members thereof are said to be members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones; in allusion to the formation of Eve, the emblem of the Church. For, as Eve was formed of a rib taken out of Adam's body during his deep sleep, so believers are regenerated both in mind and body, and formed into one great society, and united to Christ as their head and governor, by the breaking of his body on the cross. Thirdly, to this emblematical meaning of the formation of Eve, our Lord, I think, alluded when he instituted his supper. For instead of appointing one symbol only of his death, he appointed two; and, in explaining the first of them, he expressed himself in such a manner as to show that he had his

eye on what happened to Adam when Eve was formed: This is my body which is broken for you — for your regeneration. Fourthly, the eternal union of the regenerated with Christ after the resurrection is called a marriage, Revelation 19:7; and the new Jerusalem, that is, the inhabitants of the new Jerusalem, the society of the redeemed, is termed the bride, the Lamb's wife; and the preparing of men for that happy union, by introducing them into the Church upon earth through faith, and by sanctifying them through the word, is called, 2 Corinthians 11:2, A fitting them for one husband, that at the resurrection they may be presented a chaste virgin to Christ; in allusion, I suppose, to the presenting of Eve to Adam, in order to her marriage with him; and to show that, in this expression, the apostle had the figurative meaning of Eve's marriage in his mind, he mentions, 2 Corinthians 11:3, the subtlety of the devil in deceiving Eve. Finally, the union of the Jewish Church with God, as the figure of the catholic Church, consisting of the regenerated of all nations, is by God himself termed a marriage, Jeremiah 3:14; Ezekiel 16:8-32; and God is called the husband of that people, Isaiah 54:5; and their union to him by the law of Moses is termed, The day of their espousals, Jeremiah 2:2."

1. A truly Christian marriage has an excellence, holiness, and unity in it, that cannot be easily described; and let it be observed that, while it prefigures the union of Christ with his Church, it is one means of giving children to the Church, and members to the mystical body of Christ. It is an ordinance of God, and, cannot be too highly honored; endless volumes might be written on its utility to man: without marriage, by which every man is assigned his own wife, and every woman her own husband, even the multitude of spurious births which would take place would fail to keep up the population of the earth; and natural, moral, and political wretchedness would be the consequence of promiscuous, fortuitous, and transitory connections. For without that ascertainment of peculiar property which marriage gives to every man in his wife, and to every woman in her husband, the human progeny would be unnoticed, unclaimed, uneducated, and totally neglected. This would continually increase the wretchedness, and in process of time bring about the total depopulation of the world.

2. The husband is to love his wife, the wife to obey and venerate her husband; love and protection on the one hand, affectionate subjection and fidelity on the other. The husband should provide for his wife without encouraging profuseness; watch over her conduct without giving her vexation; keep her in subjection without making her a slave; love her without jealousy; oblige her without flattery; honor her without making her proud; and be hers entirely, without becoming either her footman or her slave. In short, they have equal rights and equal claims; but superior strength gives the man dominion, affection and subjection entitle the woman to love and protection. Without the woman, man is but half a human being; in union with the man, the woman finds her safety and perfection.

In the above remarks there are many things solid and useful; there are others which rest more on fancy than judgment.

3. Of marriage the Church of Rome has made a sacrament, and it is one of the seven which that Church acknowledges. That it is an ordinance of God is sufficiently evident; that he has not made it a sacrament is not less so. Though the minister of religion celebrates it, yet the regulation of it, in reference to inheritance, etc., is assumed by the state. This is of great moment, as by it many evils are prevented, and many political and domestic advantages secured. If a man enter hastily into this state it is at his own risk; after he has once entered it, the seal of the legislature is imposed upon it, and with his engagements, he cannot trifle. A consideration of this has prevented many hasty and disproportionate alliances. Though they might hope to trifle with the Church, they dare not do it with the state.

## CHAPTER 6.

*Children should obey their parents, that they may live long and be happy, 1-3. Parents should be tender towards their children, 4. Servants should show all obedience and fidelity to their masters, 5-8. And masters should treat their servants with humanity, 9. All should be strong in the Lord, and be armed with his armor, because of their wily, powerful, and numerous foes, 10-13. The different parts of the Christian armor enumerated, 14-17. The necessity of all kinds of prayer and watchfulness, 18-20. Tychicus is commissioned to inform the Ephesians of the apostle's affairs, 21, 22. The apostolic benediction and farewell, 23, 24.*

### NOTES ON CHAP 6.

**Verse 1. *Children, obey your parents***— This is a duty with which God will never dispense; he commands it, and one might think that gratitude, from a sense of the highest obligations, would most strongly enforce the command.

***In the Lord***— This clause is wanting in several reputable MSS., and in some versions. In the Lord may mean, on account of the commandment of the Lord; or, as far as the parents commands are according to the will and word of God. For surely no child is called to obey any parent if he give unreasonable or unscriptural commands.

**Verse 2. *Honor thy father***— See the notes on Exodus 20:12, etc., where this subject, together with the promises and threatenings connected with it, is particularly considered, and the reasons of the duty laid down at large.

**Verse 4. *Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath***— Avoid all severity; this will hurt your own souls, and do them no good; on the contrary, if punished with severity or cruelty, they will be only hardened and made desperate in their sins. Cruel parents generally have bad children. He who corrects his children according to God and reason will feel every blow on his own heart more sensibly than his child feels it on his body.



Parents are called to correct; not to punish, their children. Those who punish them do it from a principle of revenge; those who correct them do it from a principle of affectionate concern.

***Bring them up, etc.***— **εκτρεφετε αυτα εν παιδεια και νουθεσια κυριου**· literally, Nourish them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. The mind is to be nourished with wholesome discipline and instruction, as the body is with proper food. **παιδεια**, discipline, may refer to all that knowledge which is proper for children, including elementary principles and rules for behavior, etc. **νουθεσια**, instruction, may imply whatever is necessary to form the mind; to touch, regulate, and purify the passions; and necessarily includes the whole of religion. Both these should be administered in the Lord — according to his will and word, and in reference to his eternal glory. All the important lessons and doctrines being derived from his revelation, therefore they are called the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

**Verse 5. *Servants, be obedient***— Though **δουλος** frequently signifies a slave or bondman, yet it often implies a servant in general, or any one bound to another, either for a limited time, or for life. Even a slave, if a Christian, was bound to serve him faithfully by whose money he was bought, howsoever illegal that traffic may be considered. In heathen countries slavery was in some sort excusable; among Christians it is an enormity and a crime for which perdition has scarcely an adequate state of punishment.

***According to the flesh***— Your masters in secular things; for they have no authority over your religion, nor over your souls.

***With fear and trembling***— Because the law gives them a power to punish you for every act of disobedience.

***In singleness of your heart***— Not merely through fear of punishment, but from a principle of uprightness, serving them as you would serve Christ.

**Verse 6. *Not with eye-service***— Not merely in their presence, when their eye is upon you, as unfaithful and hypocritical servants do, without consulting conscience in any part of their work.

***Doing the will of God***— Seeing that you are in the state of servitude, it is the will of God that you should act conscientiously in it.

**Verse 7. *With good will***— μετ' εὐνοίας; With cheerfulness; do not take up your service as a cross, or bear it as a burden; but take it as coming in the order of God's providence, and a thing that is pleasing to him.

**Verse 8. *Whatever good thing any man doeth***— Though your masters should fail to give you the due reward of your fidelity and labor, yet, as ye have done your work as unto the Lord, he will take care to give you the proper recompense.

***Whether he be bond***— A slave, bought with money;

***Or free.***— A person who has hired himself of his own free accord.

**Verse 9. *Ye masters, do the same things unto them***— Act in the same affectionate, conscientious manner towards your slaves and servants, as they do towards you.

***Forbearing threatening***— If they should transgress at any time, lean more to the side of mercy than justice; and when ye are obliged to punish, let it be as light and as moderate as possible; and let revenge have no part in the chastisement, for that is of the devil, and not of God.

The words, forbearing threatening; ανιεντες την απειλην, signify to mitigate, relax, or not exact threatening; that is, the threatened punishment. The sense is given above.

In Shemoth Rabba, sect. 21, fol. 120, there is a good saying concerning respect of persons: "If a poor man comes to a rich man to converse with him, he will not regard him; but if a rich man comes he will hear and rehear him. The holy and blessed God acts not thus; for all are alike before him, women, slaves, the poor, and the rich."

***Knowing that your Master also is in heaven***— You are their masters, GOD is yours. As you deal with them, so GOD will deal with you; for do not suppose, because their condition on earth is inferior to yours, that God considers them to be less worthy of his regard than you are; this is not so, for there is no respect of persons with Him.

**Verse 10. *Finally***— Having laid before you, your great and high calling, and all the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, it is necessary that I should show you the enemies that will oppose you, and the strength which is requisite to enable you to repel them.

***Be strong in the Lord***— You must have strength, and strength of a spiritual kind, and such strength too as the Lord himself can furnish; and you must have this strength through an indwelling God, the power of his might working in you.

**Verse 11. *Put on the whole armor of God***— *ενδυσασθε την πανοπλιαν του θεου*. The apostle considers every Christian as having a warfare to maintain against numerous, powerful, and subtle foes; and that therefore they would need much strength, much courage, complete armor, and skill to use it. The panoply which is mentioned here refers to the armor of the heavy troops among the Greeks; those who were to sustain the rudest attacks, who were to sap the foundations of walls, storm cities, etc. Their ordinary armor was the shield, the helmet, the sword, and the greaves or brazen boots. To all these the apostle refers below. See on Ephesians 6:13.

***The wiles of the devil***.— *τας μεθοδεις του διαβολου*. The methods of the devil; the different means, plans, schemes, and machinations which he uses to deceive, entrap, enslave, and ruin the souls of men. A man's method of sinning is Satan's method of ruining his soul. See on Ephesians 4:14.

**Verse 12. *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood***— *ουκ εστιν ημιν η παλη προς αιμα και σαρκα*. Our wrestling or contention is not with men like ourselves: flesh and blood is a Hebraism for men, or human beings. See the note on Galatians 1:16.

The word *παλη* implies the athletic exercises in the Olympic and other national games; and *παλαιστρα* was the place in which the contenders exercised. Here it signifies warfare in general.

***Against principalities***— *αρχας*. Chief rulers; beings of the first rank and order in their own kingdom.

**Powers**— **εξουσιας**, Authorities, derived from, and constituted by the above.

**The rulers of the darkness of this world**— **τους κοσμοκράτορας του σκοτους του αιωνος τουτου**. The rulers of the world; the emperors of the darkness of this state of things.

**Spiritual wickedness**— **τα πνευματικα της πονηριας**. The spiritual things of wickedness; or, the spiritualities of wickedness; highly refined and sublimed evil; disguised falsehood in the garb of truth; Antinomianism in the guise of religion.

**In high places**.— **ες τοις επουρανιοις**. In the most sublime stations. But who are these of whom the apostle speaks? Schoettgen contends that the rabbins and Jewish rulers are intended. This he thinks proved by the words **του αιωνος τουτου**, of this world, which are often used to designate the Old Testament, and the Jewish system; and the words **εν τοις επουρανιοις**, in heavenly places, which are not unfrequently used to signify the time of the NEW TESTAMENT, and the Gospel system.

By the spiritual wickedness in heavenly places, he thinks false teachers, who endeavored to corrupt Christianity, are meant; such as those mentioned by St. John, 1 John 2:19: They went out from us, but they were not of us, etc. And he thinks the meaning may be extended to all corrupters of Christianity in all succeeding ages. He shows also that the Jews called their own city **שר של עולם** sar shel olam, **κοσμοκράτωρ**, the ruler of the world; and proves that David's words, Psalm 2:2, The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, are applied by the apostles, Acts 4:26, to the Jewish rulers, **αρχοντες**, who persecuted Peter and John for preaching Christ crucified. But commentators in general are not of this mind, but think that by principalities, etc., we are to understand different orders of evil spirits, who are all employed under the devil, their great head, to prevent the spread of the Gospel in the world, and to destroy the souls of mankind.

The spiritual wickedness are supposed to be the angels which kept not their first estate; who fell from the heavenly places but are ever longing after and striving to regain them; and which have their station in the regions of the air. "Perhaps," says Mr. Wesley, "the principalities and

powers remain mostly in the citadel of their kingdom of darkness; but there are other spirits which range abroad, to whom the provinces of the world are committed; the darkness is chiefly spiritual darkness which prevails during the present state of things, and the wicked spirits are those which continually oppose faith, love, and holiness, either by force or fraud; and labor to infuse unbelief, pride, idolatry, malice, envy, anger, and hatred.” Some translate the words **εν τοις επουρανοις**, about heavenly things; that is: We contend with these fallen spirits for the heavenly things which are promised to us; and we strive against them, that we may not be deprived of those we have.

**Verse 13. *Wherefore***— Because ye have such enemies to contend with, take unto you — assume, as provided and prepared for you, the whole armor of God; which armor if you put on and use, you shall be both invulnerable and immortal. The ancient heroes are fabled to have had armor sent to them by the gods; and even the great armor-maker, Vulcan, was reputed to be a god himself. This was fable: What Paul speaks of is reality. See before on Ephesians 6:11.

***That ye may be able to withstand***— That ye may not only stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, but also discomfit all your spiritual foes; and continuing in your ranks, maintain your ground against them, never putting off your armor, but standing always ready prepared to repel any new attack.

***And having done all, to stand.***— **και απαντα κατεργασαμενοι στηναι**· rather, And having conquered all, stand: this is a military phrase, and is repeatedly used in this sense by the best Greek writers. So Dionys. Hal. Ant., lib. vi., page 400: **και παντα πολεμια εν ολιγω κατεργασαμενοι χρονω**· “Having in a short time discomfited all our enemies, we returned with numerous captives and much spoil.” See many examples in Kypke. By evil day we may understand any time of trouble, affliction, and sore temptation.

As there is here allusion to some of the most important parts of the Grecian armor, I shall give a short account of the whole. It consisted properly of two sorts: 1. Defensive armor, or that which protected themselves. 2. Offensive armor, or that by which they injured their enemies. The apostle refers to both.

**I. DEFENSIVE ARMOR:**

**περικεφαλαια**, the HELMET; this was the armor for the head, and was of various forms, and embossed with a great variety of figures. Connected with the helmet was the crest or ridge on the top of the helmet, adorned with several emblematic figures; some for ornament, some to strike terror. For crests on ancient helmets we often see the winged lion, the griffin, chimera, etc. St. Paul seems to refer to one which had an emblematical representation of hope.

**ζωμα**, the GIRDLE; this went about the loins, and served to brace the armor tight to the body, and to support daggers, short swords, and such like weapons, which were frequently stuck in it. This kind of girdle is in general use among the Asiatic nations to the present day.

**θωραξ**, the BREAST-PLATE; this consisted of two parts, called **πτερυγες** or wings: one covered the whole region of the thorax or breast, in which the principal viscera of life are contained; and the other covered the back, as far down as the front part extended.

**κνημιδες**, GREAVES or brazen boots, which covered the shin or front of the leg; a kind of solea was often used, which covered the sole, and laced about the instep, and prevented the foot from being wounded by rugged ways, thorns, stones, etc.

**χειριδες**, GAUNTLETS; a kind of gloves that served to defend the hands, and the arm up to the elbow.

**ασπις**, the clypeus or SHIELD; it was perfectly round, and sometimes made of wood, covered with bullocks' hides; but often made of metal. The aspis or shield of Achilles, made by Vulcan, was composed of five plates, two of brass, two of tin, and one of gold; so Homer, Il. U. v. 270:-

επει πεντε πτυχας ηλασε κυλλοποδιων,  
τας δυο χαλκειας, δυο δ' ενδοθι κασσιτεροιο,  
την δε μιαν ξρυσην.

Five plates of various metal, various mold, Composed the shield; of brass each outward fold, Of tin each inward, and the middle gold.

Of shields there were several sorts:

**γερρων** or **γερρα**, the gerron; a small square shield, used first by the Persians.

**λαισηιον**, LAISEION; a sort of oblong shield, covered with rough hides, or skins with the hair on.

**πελτη**, the PELTA; a small light shield, nearly in the form of a demicrescent, with a small ornament, similar to the recurved leaves of a flower de luce, on the center of a diagonal edge or straight line; this was the Amazonian shield.

**θυρεος**, the scutum or OBLONG SHIELD; this was always made of wood, and covered with hides. It was exactly in the shape of the laiseion, but differed in size, being much larger, and being covered with hides from which the hair had been taken off. It was called **θυρεος** from **θυρα**, a door, which it resembled in its oblong shape; but it was made curved, so as to embrace the whole forepart of the body. The aspis and the thureos were the shields principally in use; the former for light, the latter for heavy armed troops.

## II. OFFENSIVE ARMOR, OR WEAPONS; THE FOLLOWING WERE CHIEF:

**εγχος**, enchos, the SPEAR; which was generally a head of brass or iron, with a long shaft of ash.

**δορυ**, the LANCE; differing perhaps little from the former, but in its size and lightness; being a missile used, both by infantry and cavalry, for the purpose of annoying the enemy at a distance.

**ξιφος**, the SWORD; these were of various sizes, and in the beginning all of brass. The swords of Homer's heroes are all of this metal.

**μαχαιρα**, called also a sword, sometimes a knife; it was a short sword, used more frequently by gladiators, or in single combat. What other difference it had from the xiphos I cannot tell.

**αξινη**, from which our word AXE; the common battle-axe.

**πελεκυς**, the BIPEN; a sort of battle-axe, with double face, one opposite to the other.

**κορυνή**, an iron club or mace, much used both among the ancient Greeks and Persians.

**τοξον**, the BOW; with its pharetra or quiver, and its stock or sheaf of arrows.

**σφενδονή**, the SLING; an instrument in the use of which most ancient nations were very expert, particularly the Hebrews and ancient Greeks.

The arms and armor mentioned above were not always in use; they were found out and improved by degrees. The account given by Lucretius of the arms of the first inhabitants of the earth is doubtless as correct as it is natural.

*Arma antiqua manus, ungues, dentesque fuere,  
Et lapides, et item silvarum fragmina rami,  
Et flammæ, atque ignes postquam sunt cognita primum:  
Posterior ferri vis est, aerisque reperta:  
Sed prius aeris erat quam ferri cognitus usus:  
Quo facilis magis est natura, et copia major.  
Deuteronomy Rerum Nat., lib. v. ver. 1282.*

*Whilst cruelty was not improved by art,  
And rage not furnished yet with sword or dart;  
With fists, or boughs, or stones, the warriors fought;  
These were the only weapons Nature taught:  
But when flames burnt the trees and scorched the ground,  
Then brass appeared, and iron fit to wound.  
Brass first was used, because the softer ore,  
And earth's cold veins contained a greater store.*

CREECH.

I have only to observe farther on this head, 1. That the ancient Greeks and Romans went constantly armed; 2. That before they engaged they always ate together; and 3. That they commenced every attack with prayer to the gods for success.

**Verse 14. *Stand therefore***— Prepare yourselves for combat, having your loins girt about with truth. He had told them before to take the whole armor of God, Ephesians 6:13, and to put on this whole armor. Having got all the pieces of it together, and the defensive parts put on, they were then to gird them close to their bodies with the ζῶμα or girdle, and instead of a fine ornamented belt, such as the ancient warriors used, they were to have



truth. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the truth of God; unless this be known and conscientiously believed no man can enter the spiritual warfare with any advantage or prospect of success. By this alone we discover who our enemies are, and how they come on to attack us; and by this we know where our strength lies; and, as the truth is great, and must prevail, we are to gird ourselves with this against all false religion, and the various winds of doctrine by which cunning men and insidious devils lie in wait to deceive. Truth may be taken here for sincerity; for if a man be not conscious to himself that his heart is right before God, and that he makes no false pretences to religion, in vain does he enter the spiritual lists. This alone can give him confidence:-

— *Hic murus aheneus esto,  
Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa.*

Let this be my brazen wall; that no man can reproach me with a crime, and that I am conscious of my own integrity.

***The breast-plate of righteousness***— What the **θωραξ** or breast-plate was, see before. The word righteousness, **δικαιοσύνη**, we have often had occasion to note, is a word of very extensive import: it signifies the principle of righteousness; it signifies the practice of righteousness, or living a holy life; it signifies God's method of justifying sinners; and it signifies justification itself. Here it may imply a consciousness of justification through the blood of the cross; the principle of righteousness or true holiness implanted in the heart; and a holy life, a life regulated according to the testimonies of God. As the breast-plate defends the heart and lungs, and all those vital functionaries that are contained in what is called the region of the thorax; so this righteousness, this life of God in the soul of man, defends every thing on which the man's spiritual existence depends. While he possesses this principle, and acts from it, his spiritual and eternal life is secure.

**Verse 15. *Your feet shod***— The **κνημιδες**, or greaves, have been already described; they were deemed of essential importance in the ancient armor; if the feet or legs are materially wounded, a man can neither stand to resist his foe, pursue him if vanquished, nor flee from him should he have the worst of the fight.

That the apostle has obedience to the Gospel in general in view, there can be no doubt; but he appears to have more than this, a readiness to publish the Gospel: for, How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth PEACE; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Isaiah 52:7; Romans 10:15.

The Israelites were commanded to eat the passover with their feet shod, to show that they were ready for their journey. And our Lord commands his disciples to be shod with sandals, that they might be ready to go and publish the Gospel, as the Israelites were to go to possess the promised land. Every Christian should consider himself on his journey from a strange land to his own country, and not only stand every moment prepared to proceed, but be every moment in actual progress towards his home.

*The preparation of the Gospel*— The word **ετοιμασια** which we translate preparation, is variously understood: some think it means an habitual readiness in walking in the way prescribed by the Gospel; others that firmness and solidity which the Gospel gives to them who conscientiously believe its doctrines; others, those virtues and graces which in the first planting of Christianity were indispensably necessary to those who published it.

Should we take the word preparation in its common acceptance, it may imply that, by a conscientious belief of the Gospel, receiving the salvation provided by its author, and walking in the way of obedience which is pointed out by it, the soul is prepared for the kingdom of heaven.

The Gospel is termed the Gospel of peace, because it establishes peace between God and man, and proclaims peace and good will to the universe. Contentions, strife, quarrels, and all wars, being as alien from its nature and design, as they are opposed to the nature of Him who is love and compassion to man.

**Verse 16.** *Above all*, (**επι πασιν**, *over all the rest of the armor*.) *taking the shield of faith*— In the word **θυρεος**, thureos, the apostle alludes to the great oblong shield, or scutum, which covers the whole body. See its description before. And as faith is the grace by which all others are

preserved and rendered active, so it is properly represented here under the notion of a shield, by which the whole body is covered and protected. Faith, in this place, must mean that evidence of things unseen which every genuine believer has, that God, for Christ's sake, has blotted out his sins, and by which he is enabled to call God his Father, and feel him to be his portion. It is such an appropriating faith as this which can quench any dart of the devil.

***The fiery darts of the wicked.***— βελος, a dart, signifies any kind of missile weapon; every thing that is projected to a distance by the hand, as a javelin, or short spear; or by a bow, as an arrow; or a stone by a sling.

The fiery darts — τα βελη τα πεπυρωμενα. It is probable that the apostle alludes to the darts called falarica, which were headed with lead, in or about which some combustible stuff was placed that took fire in the passage of the arrow through the air, and often burnt up the enemy's engines, ships, etc.; they were calculated also to stick in the shields and set them on fire. Some think that poisoned arrows may be intended, which are called fiery from the burning heat produced in the bodies of those who were wounded by them. To quench or extinguish such fiery darts the shields were ordinarily covered with metal on the outside, and thus the fire was prevented from catching hold of the shield. When they stuck on a shield of another kind and set it on fire, the soldier was obliged to cast it away, and thus became defenceless.

The fiery darts of the wicked, του πονηρου, or devil, are evil thoughts, and strong injections, as they are termed, which in the unregenerate inflame the passions, and excite the soul to acts of transgression. While the faith is strong in Christ it acts as a shield to quench these. He who walks so as to feel the witness of God's Spirit that he is his child, has all evil thoughts in abhorrence; and, though they pass through his mind, they never fix in his passions. They are caught on this shield, blunted, and extinguished.

**Verse 17. *Take the helmet of salvation***— Or, as it is expressed, 1 Thessalonians 5:8, And for a helmet, the hope of salvation. It has already been observed, in the description of the Grecian armor, that on the crest and other parts of the helmet were a great variety of emblematical figures, and that it is very likely the apostle refers to helmets which had on them an emblematical representation of hope; viz. that the person should be safe

who wore it, that he should be prosperous in all his engagements, and ever escape safe from battle. So the hope of conquering every adversary and surmounting every difficulty, through the blood of the Lamb, is as a helmet that protects the head; an impenetrable one, that the blow of the battle-axe cannot cleave. The hope of continual safety and protection, built on the promises of God, to which the upright follower of Christ feels he has a Divine right, protects the understanding from being darkened, and the judgment from being confused by any temptations of Satan, or subtle arguments of the sophistical ungodly. He who carries Christ in his heart cannot be cheated out of the hope of his heaven,

*The sword of the Spirit*— See what is said before on [ξίφος](#) and [μαχαίρα](#), in the account of the Greek armor. The sword of which St. Paul speaks is, as he explains it, the word of God; that is, the revelation which God has given of himself, or what we call the Holy Scriptures. This is called the sword of the Spirit, because it comes from the Holy Spirit, and receives its fulfillment in the soul through the operation of the Holy Spirit. An ability to quote this on proper occasions, and especially in times of temptation and trial, has a wonderful tendency to cut in pieces the snares of the adversary. In God's word a genuine Christian may have unlimited confidence, and to every purpose to which it is applicable it may be brought with the greatest effect. The shield, faith, and the sword — the word of God, or faith in God's unchangeable word, are the principal armor of the soul. He in whom the word of God dwells richly, and who has that faith by which he knows that he has redemption, even the forgiveness of sins, need not fear the power of any adversary. He stands fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made him free. Some suppose that [του πνευματος](#), of the Spirit, should be understood of our own spirit or soul; the word of God being the proper sword of the soul, or that offensive weapon the only one which the soul uses. But though it is true that every Christian soul has this for its sword, yet the first meaning is the most likely.

**Verse 18.** *Praying always*— The apostle does not put praying among the armor; had he done so he would have referred it, as he has done all the rest, to some of the Grecian armor; but as he does not do this, therefore we conclude that his account of the armor is ended, and that now, having equipped his spiritual soldier, he shows him the necessity of praying, that

he may successfully resist those principalities, powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and the spiritual wickednesses in heavenly places, with whom he has to contend. The panoply, or whole armor of God, consists in, 1. the girdle; 2. the breast-plate; 3. the greaves; 4. the shield; 5. the helmet; and 6. the sword. He who had these was completely armed. And as it was the custom of the Grecian armies, before they engaged, to offer prayers to the gods for their success, the apostle shows that these spiritual warriors must depend on the Captain of their salvation, and pray with all prayer, i.e. incessantly, being always in the spirit of prayer, so that they should be ever ready for public, private, mental, or ejaculatory prayer, always depending on HIM who can alone save, and who alone can destroy.

When the apostle exhorts Christians to pray with all prayer, we may at once see that he neither means spiritual nor formal prayer, in exclusion of the other. Praying, *προσευχομενοι*, refers to the state of the spirit as well as to the act.

***With all prayer***— Refers to the different kinds of prayer that is performed in public, in the family, in the closet, in business, on the way, in the heart without a voice, and with the voice from the heart. All those are necessary to the genuine Christian; and he whose heart is right with God will be frequent in the whole. “Some there are,” says a very pious and learned writer, who use only mental prayer or ejaculations, and think they are in a state of grace, and use a way of worship far superior to any other; but such only fancy themselves to be above what is really above them; it requiring far more grace to be enabled to pour out a fervent and continued prayer, than to offer up mental aspirations.” Rev. J. Wesley.

***And supplication***— There is a difference between *προσευχη*, prayer, and *δεησις*, supplication. Some think the former means prayer for the attainment of good; the latter, prayer for averting evil. Supplication however seems to mean prayer continued in, strong and incessant pleadings, till the evil is averted, or the good communicated. There are two things that must be attended to in prayer. 1. That it be *εν παντι καιρω*, in every time, season, or opportunity; 2. That it should be *εν πνευματι*, in or through the Spirit — that the heart should be engaged in it, and that its infirmities should be helped by the Holy Ghost,

**Watching thereunto**— Being always on your guard lest your enemies should surprise you. Watch, not only against evil, but also for opportunities to do good, and for opportunities to receive good. Without watchfulness, prayer and all the spiritual armor will be ineffectual.

**With all perseverance**— Being always intent on your object, and never losing sight of your danger, or of your interest. The word implies stretching out the neck, and looking about, in order to discern an enemy at a distance.

**For all saints**— For all Christians; for this was the character by which they were generally distinguished.

**Verse 19. And for me, that utterance may be given unto me**— ἵνα μοι δοθειη λογος. Kypke has proved by many examples that λογος διδοναι signifies permission and power to defend one's self in a court of justice; and this sense of the phrase is perfectly applicable to the case of St. Paul, who was an ambassador in bonds, (Ephesians 6:20,) and expected to be called to a public hearing, in which he was not only to defend himself, but to prove the truth and excellency of the Christian religion. And we learn, from Philippians 1:12-14, that he had his desire in this respect; for the things which happened to him fell out to the furtherance of the Gospel, so that his bonds in Christ were manifest in all the palace, and in all other places. Thus God had enabled him to make a most noble defense, by which the Gospel acquired great credit.

**The mystery of the Gospel**— The whole doctrine of Christ, not fully revealed previously to that time.

**Verse 20. An ambassador in bonds**— An ambassador being the representative of his king, his person was in all civilized countries held sacred. Contrary to the rights of nations, this ambassador of the King of heaven was put in chains! He had however the opportunity of defending himself, and of vindicating the honor of his Master. See above.

**As I ought to speak.**— As becomes the dignity and the importance of the subject.

**Verse 21. That ye also**— As well as other Churches to whom I have communicated the dealings both of God and man to me.

***May know my affairs***— May be acquainted with my situation and circumstances.

***And how I do***— How I employ my time, and what fruit there is of my apostolical labors.

***Tychicus, a beloved brother***— We learn, from Acts 20:4, that Tychicus was of Asia, and that he was a useful companion of St. Paul. See the note on the above place.

This same person, and with the same character and commendation, is mentioned in the Epistle to the Colossians, Colossians 4:7. He is mentioned also in Titus 3:12, and in 2 Timothy 4:12; from all these places it is evident that he was a person in whom the apostle had the highest confidence, and that he was a very eminent minister of Christ.

**Verse 22. *Whom I have sent-for the same purpose***— Namely, that the Ephesians might know his affairs, and those of the Church at Rome: messengers of this kind frequently passed between the Churches in those ancient times.

***Comfort your hearts.***— By showing you how powerfully he was upheld in all his tribulations, and how God turned his bonds to the furtherance of the Gospel. This must have been great consolation to all the followers of God; and particularly to those in Ephesus or Laodicea, or to whomsoever the epistle was directed. The question, To whom was it sent? is divided between the Ephesians and the Laodiceans. Dr. Lardner has argued strongly in favor of the former; Dr. Paley not less so in favor of the latter.

**Verse 23. *Peace be to the brethren***— If the epistle were really sent to the Ephesians, a people with whom the apostle was so intimately acquainted, it is strange that he mentions no person by name. This objection, on which Dr. Paley lays great stress, (see the preface to this epistle,) has not been successfully answered.

***Peace***— All prosperity, and continual union with God and among yourselves; and love to God and man, the principle of all obedience and union; with faith, continually increasing, and growing stronger and stronger, from God the Father, as the fountain of all our mercies, and the Lord Jesus Christ, through whose sacrifice and mediation they all come.

**Verse 24.** *Grace be with all them*— May the Divine favor, and all the benedictions flowing from it, be with all them who love our Lord Jesus Christ, who has so loved us as to give his life to redeem ours, and to save us unto life eternal.

*In sincerity.*— εὐ ἀφθαρσία. In incorruptibility. Those who show the genuineness of their love, by walking before him in holiness of life. Many profess to love our Lord Jesus who are corrupt in all their ways; on these the grace or favor of God cannot rest; they profess to know him, but in works deny him. Such can neither expect favor here, nor hereafter.

*Amen.*— This is wanting in ABFG, and some others. It is, however, more likely to be a genuine subscription here than most others of its kind. The apostle might have sealed his most earnest wish by this word, which means not so much, so be it! or may it be so! but rather implies the faithfulness of him who had given the promises, and whose prerogative it was to give effect to the prayers which his own Spirit had inspired.

The principal subscriptions to this epistle are the following: To the Ephesians. The Epistle to the Ephesians is finished. To the Ephesians, written from Rome. To the Ephesians, written from Rome by Tychicus. (This is the subscription which we have followed; and it is that of the larger number of modern MSS. and editions.) The Epistle to the Ephesians, written from Rome, and sent by Tychicus — SYRIAC. To the Ephesians. — AETHIOPIC. VULGATE, no subscription. The end of this epistle, which was written from Rome by Tychicus. Praise be to God for ever. Amen. — ARABIC. Written at Rome, and sent by Tychicus. — COPTIC. The SAHIDIC is defective. The Epistle to the Ephesians is ended, which was written at Rome by Tychicus. — Philoxenian SYRIAC.

We have had already occasion to observe that the subscriptions to the sacred books were not written by the authors themselves, but were added in a much later age, and generally by unskilful hands. They are consequently not much to be depended on, and never should be quoted as a part of the Divine oracles.

1. IT may be supposed that on the principal subject of this concluding chapter, the armor of God, I should have been much more diffuse. I answer, my constant aim is just to say enough, and no more, on any point.



Whether I attain this, in general, or not, I can still say it is what I have desired. As to the Christian armor, it does not appear to me that the apostle has couched such a profusion of mystical meaning in it as to require a huge volume to explain. I believe the Ephesians did not understand it so; nor did the primitive Church of God. Men of rich imaginations may write large volumes on such subjects; but when they come to be fairly examined, they will be found not to be explanations of the text, on which they professedly treat, but immense bodies of divinity, in which the peculiar creed of the writer, both with respect to doctrine and discipline, is amply set forth. Mr. Gurnal's Christian Armor contains a great many excellences; but surely it does not require such a volume to explain the five verses of this chapter, in which the apostle speaks of the spiritual armor. The grand design of the apostle was to show that truth, righteousness, obedience to the Gospel, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, a well grounded hope of salvation, a thorough knowledge of the word of God, and a continual dependence on and application to him by prayer, were essentially necessary to every soul who desired to walk uprightly in this life, and finally to attain everlasting blessedness. This is the obvious meaning of the apostle; in this sense it was understood by the Ephesians, and by the primitive Church; we may amplify it as we please.

2. In two or three places, in the preceding notes, I have referred to a piece on a very remarkable rule relative to the Greek article, to be introduced at the end. From the labors of several learned men this subject has acquired considerable importance, and has excited no small interest among Biblical critics. The late benevolent, learned, and excellent Mr. Granville Sharp was, I believe, the first who brought this subject fairly before the public; he was followed by the Rev. Dr. Wordsworth, a learned and intelligent clergyman of the Established Church.

The Rev. Dr. Middleton, late bishop of Calcutta, has presented the subject in all its force and excellence, fortified by innumerable proofs, and a great variety of critical disquisition. The principal design of these writers was to exhibit a new and substantial mode of proving the Divinity of our Lord and Savior. Their works are before the public, and within the reach of all who are capable of judging of this mode of proof.

The piece which I now subjoin is the result of the researches of one of my literary friends, H. S. Boyd, Esq., author of Translations from Chrysostom, etc., who has read the Greek writers, both sacred and profane, with peculiar attention; and has collected a vast number of additional examples, both from prose and poetic writers, for the confirmation and illustration of the rule in question, and in support of the great doctrine of the Godhead of Christ.

The critical reader, who has entered into this subject, will be glad to see such a number of pointed examples brought within his reach, which at once serve the purpose both of philology and divinity. The learned author has transmitted them to me for the purpose of insertion in this place; but want of room has obliged me to omit several of his quotations. (1)

(1) Since Dr. Clarke wrote this paragraph, the Essay on the Greek Article has undergone a careful revision by the author, and several additions have been made to it, which will, it is hoped, be valuable to the critical reader. It is now introduced in a separate form from the Commentary. — THE PUBLISHERS

I would not wish the reader to suppose that these are the only proofs of the grand doctrine of the Godhead of Christ; they are not: the Holy Scripture, in its plain, obvious meaning, independently of such criticism, affords the most luminous and convincing proofs of the doctrine in question; but this is no sufficient reason that we should reject any additional light which may come to us in the way of Divine Providence.

Finished the correction for a new edition, Dec. 15th, 1831.

**PREFACE**

**TO THE**

**EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE**

**TO THE**

**PHILIPPIANS.**

WE have already seen, Acts 16:12, that Philippi was a town of Macedonia, in the territory of the Edones, on the confines of Thrace, and very near the northern extremity of the AEgean Sea. It was a little eastward of Mount Pangaeus, and about midway between Nicopolis on the east, and Thessalonica on the west. It was at first called Crenides, and afterwards Datus; but Philip, king of Macedonia and father of Alexander, having taken possession of it and fortified it, called it Philippi, after his own name. Julius Caesar planted a colony here, which was afterwards enlarged by Augustus; and hence the inhabitants were considered as freemen of Rome. Near this town, it is thought, the famous battle was fought between Brutus and Cassius on the one side, and Augustus and Mark Anthony on the other, in which the former were defeated, and the fate of the empire decided. Others think that this battle was fought at Philippi, a town of Thebes in Thessaly.

The Gospel was preached first here by St. Paul. About the year of our Lord 53, St. Paul had a vision in the night; a man of Macedonia appeared to him and said, Come over to Macedonia and help us. He was then at Troas in Mysia; from thence he immediately sailed to Samothracia, came the next day to Neapolis, and thence to Philippi. There he continued for some time, and converted Lydia, a seller of purple, from Thyatira; and afterwards cast a demon out of a Pythoness, for which he and Silas were

persecuted, cast into prison, scourged, and put into the stocks: but the magistrates afterwards finding that they were Romans, took them out of prison and treated them civilly. See the account, Acts 16:9, etc.

The Philippians were greatly attached to their apostle, and testified their affection by sending him supplies, even when he was laboring for other Churches; and they appear to have been the only Church that did so. See Philippians 4:15, 16.

There is not much controversy concerning the date of this epistle; it was probably written in the end of A. D. 62, and about a year after that to the Ephesians. Dr. Paley conjectures the date by various intimations in the epistle itself. "It purports," says he, "to have been written near the conclusion of St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome, and after a residence in that city of considerable duration. These circumstances are made out by different intimations; and the intimations upon the subject preserve among themselves a just consistency, and a consistency certainly unmeditated. First, the apostle had already been a prisoner at Rome so long, as that the reputation of his bonds, and of his constancy under them, had contributed to advance the success of the Gospel. See Philippians 1:12-14. Secondly, the account given of Epaphroditus imports that St. Paul, when he wrote the epistle, had been in Rome a considerable time. 'He longed after you all, and was full of heaviness because ye had heard that he had been sick;' Philippians 2:26. Epaphroditus had been with Paul at Rome; he had been sick; the Philippians had heard of his sickness; and he again had received an account how much they had been affected by the intelligence. The passing and repassing of these advices must necessarily have occupied a large portion of time, and must have all taken place during St. Paul's residence at Rome. Thirdly, after a residence at Rome, this proved to have been of considerable duration, he now regards the decision of his fate as nigh at hand: he contemplates either alternative; that of his deliverance, Philippians 2:23, 24: 'Him therefore, (Timothy,) I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me; but I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly;' that of his condemnation, Philippians 2:17: Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all. This consistency is material, if the consideration of it be confined to the epistle. It is farther material, as it agrees, with respect to the duration of St. Paul's first imprisonment at

Rome, with the account delivered in the Acts, which, having brought the apostle to Rome, closes the history, by telling us that he dwelt there two whole years in his own hired house." Hor. Paul., page 242.

On the agreement between the epistle and the history, as given in the Acts, Dr. Paley makes many judicious remarks, which I cannot insert here, but must refer to the work itself; and I wish all my readers to get and peruse the whole work as an inestimable treasure of sacred criticism on the authenticity of Paul's epistles.

The Epistle to the Philippians is written in a very pleasing and easy style; every where bearing evidence of that contented state of mind in which the apostle then was, and of his great affection for the people. It appears that there were false apostles, or Judaizing teachers, at Philippi, who had disturbed the peace of the Church; against these he warns them, exhorts them to concord, comforts them in their afflictions for the Gospel, returns them thanks for their kindness to him, tells them of his state, and shows a great willingness to be a sacrifice for the faith he had preached to them. There is a Divine unction in this epistle which every serious reader will perceive.

**THE**

**EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE**

**TO THE**

**PHILIPPIANS.**

Chronological Notes relative to this Epistle.

Usherian year of the world, 4066. — Alexandrian era of the world, 5564. — Antiochian era of the world, 5554. — Constantinopolitan era of the world, 5570. — Year of the Eusebian epocha of the Creation, 4290. — Year of the Julian period, 4772. — Year of the minor Jewish era of the world, 3822. — Year of the Greater Rabbinical era of the world, 4421. — Year from the Flood, according to Archbishop Usher, and the English Bible, 2410. — Year of the Cali yuga, or Indian era of the Deluge, 3164. — Year of the era of Iphitas, or since the first commencement of the Olympic games, 1002. — Year of the Nabonassarean era, 809. — Year of the era of the Seleucidae, 374. — Year of the Spanish era, 100. — Year of the Actiac or Actian era, 93. — Year from the birth of Christ, 66. — Year of the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 62. — Year from the building of Rome, according to Varro, 814. — Year of the CCXth Olympiad, 2. — Jesus, high priest of the Jews. — Common Golden Number, 6. — Jewish Golden Number, 3. — Year of the Solar Cycle, 15. — Dominical Letter C. — Jewish Passover, April 10th. — Easter Sunday, April 11th. — Epact, or the moon's age on the 22nd of March, or the Xth of the Calends of April, 25. — Year of the reign of Nero Caesar, the sixth emperor of the Romans, 9. — In the first year of Albinus, governor of the Jews. — Year of Vologesus, king of the Parthians, 12. — Year of Domitius Corbulo, governor of Syria, 3. — Roman Consuls; P. Marius Celsus, and L. Asinius

Gallus, from Jan. 1st to July 1st; and L. Annaeus Seneca the philosopher, and Trebellius Maximus, for the remainder of the year.

## CHAPTER 1.

*Paul, in conjunction with Timothy, addresses himself to the saints at Philippi, and gives them his apostolical benediction, 1, 2. Thanks God for their conversion and union, and expresses his persuasion that God will continue his work among them, 3-6. Tells them of his strong affection for them, and prays that they may be filed with the salvation of God, 7-11. Shows them how much his persecution had contributed to the success of the Gospel, 12-14. Informs that there were some at Rome who preached the Gospel from unworthy motives; yet he was convinced that this, which was designed to injure him, should turn to his advantage, 15-19. Mentions his uncertainty whether he should be liberated or martyred, and his perfect readiness to meet either; yet, on the whole, expresses a hope that he should again visit them, 20-26. Exhorts them to a holy life, and comforts them under their tribulations, 27-30.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 1.

**Verse 1. *Paul and Timotheus***— That Timothy was at this time with the apostle in Rome we learn from Philippians 2:19, and also that he was very high in the apostle's estimation. He had also accompanied the apostle on his two voyages to Philippi, see Acts 16. and 20., and was therefore deservedly dear to the Church in that city. It was on these accounts that St. Paul joined his name to his own, not because he was in any part the author of this epistle, but he might have been the apostle's amanuensis, though the subscription to the epistle gives this office to Epaphroditus. Neither in this epistle, nor in those to the Thessalonians and to Philemon does St. Paul call himself an apostle; the reason of which appears to be, that in none of these places was his apostolical authority called in question.

***Bishops and deacons***— **ἐπισκοποις**· The overseers of the Church of God, and those who ministered to the poor, and preached occasionally. There has been a great deal of paper wasted on the inquiry, "Who is meant by bishops here, as no place could have more than one bishop?" To which



it has been answered: “Philippi was a metropolitan see, and might have several bishops.” This is the extravagance of trifling. I believe no such officer is meant as we now term bishop.

**Verse 2. *Grace be unto you***— See on Romans 1:7.

**Verse 3. *Upon every remembrance***— As often as you recur to my mind, so often do I thank God for the great work wrought among you. Some think that the words should be translated, for all your kind remembrance; referring to their kind attention to the apostle, in supplying his wants, etc.

**Verse 4. *Always in every prayer***— I pray often for you, and have great pleasure in doing it, seeing what God has already wrought among you.

**Verse 5. *For your fellowship in the Gospel***— if we consider **κοινωνία** as implying spiritual fellowship or communion, then it signifies, not only their attention to the Gospel, their readiness to continue it, and perseverance in it, but also their unity and affection among themselves. Some understand the word as expressing their liberality to the apostle, and to the Gospel in general; for the term may not only be applied to communion among themselves, but to communications to others. This sense, though followed by Chrysostom and Theophylact, does not appear to be the best; though we know it to be a fact that they were liberal in supplying the apostle’s necessities, and, no doubt, in ministering to the support of others.

**Verse 6. *Being confident***— There shall be nothing lacking on God’s part to support you; and to make you wise, holy and happy; and bring you at last to his kingdom and glory.

**Verse 7. *It is meet for me to think this***— **ἔστι δίκαιον**. It is just that I should think so, because I have you in my heart—you live in my warmest love and most affectionate remembrance.

***Inasmuch as both in my bonds***— Because you have set your hearts upon me in my bonds, sending Epaphroditus to minister to me in my necessities, Philippians 2:25, and contributing of your own substance to me, Philippians 4:14, sending once and again to me while I was in bonds for the defense of the faith, Philippians 4:15, 16; those things which being a sweet savor, a sacrifice well pleasing and acceptable to God, Philippians

4:18, confirm my hope concerning you; especially when I find you yet standing firm under the like afflictions, having the same conflict which ye saw in me, when I was among you, Acts 16:12, etc., and now hear to be in me, Philippians 1:30. Whitby.

**Verse 8. *For God is my record***— I call God to witness that I have the strongest affection for you, and that I love you with that same kind of tender concern with which Christ loved the world when he gave himself for it; for I am even ready to be offered on the sacrifice and service of your faith, Philippians 2:17.

**Verse 9. *This I pray***— This is the substance of all my prayers for you, that your love to God, to one another, and to all mankind, may abound yet more and more, *ετι μαλλον και μαλλον περισσευη*, that it may be like a river, perpetually fed with rain and fresh streams so that it continues to swell and increase till it fills all its banks, and floods the adjacent plains.

***In knowledge***— Of God's nature, perfections, your own duty and interest, his work upon your souls, and his great designs in the Gospel.

***And in all judgment***— *και παση αισθησει*. In all spiritual or moral feeling; that you may at once have the clearest perception and the fullest enjoyment of those things which concern your salvation; that ye may not only know but feel that you are of God, by the Spirit which he has given you; and that your feeling may become more exercised in Divine things, so that it may be increasingly sensible and refined.

**Verse 10. *That ye may approve things that are excellent***— *εις το δοκιμαζειν υμας τα διαφεροντα*. To the end that ye may put to proof the things that differ, or the things that are in are more profitable. By the pure and abundant love which they received from God they would be able to try whatever differed from the teaching they had received, and from the experience they had in spiritual things.

***That ye may be sincere***— *ινα ητε ειλικρινεις*. The word *ειλικρινεια*, which we translate sincerity, is compounded of *ειλη*, the splendor of the sun, and *κρινω*, I judge; a thing which may be examined in the clearest and strongest light, without the possibility of detecting a single flaw or imperfection. "A metaphor," says Mr. Leigh, "taken from the usual practice of chapmen, in the view and choice of their wares, that bring

them forth into the light and hold up the cloth against the sun, to see if they can espy any default in them. Pure as the sun.” Be so purified and refined in your souls, by the indwelling Spirit, that even the light of God shining into your hearts, shall not be able to discover a fault that the love of God has not purged away.

Our word sincerity is from the Latin sinceritas, which is compounded of sine, without, and cera, wax, and is a metaphor taken from clarified honey; for the mel sincerum, pure or clarified honey, is that which is sine cera, without wax, no part of the comb being left in it. Sincerity, taken in its full meaning, is a word of the most extensive import; and, when applied in reference to the state of the soul, is as strong as the word perfection itself. The soul that is sincere is the soul that is without sin.

**Without offense**— *απροσκοποι*. Neither offending God nor your neighbor; neither being stumbled yourselves, nor the cause of stumbling to others.

**Till the day of Christ**— Till he comes to judge the world, or, till the day in which you are called into the eternal world. According to this prayer, a man, under the power and influence of the grace of God, may so love as never to offend his Maker, to the latest period of his life. Those who deny this, must believe that the Spirit of God either cannot or will not do it; or, that the blood of Christ cannot cleanse from all unrighteousness. And this would be not only antisciptural, but also blasphemous.

**Verse 11. Being filled with the fruits of righteousness**— By righteousness we may understand, here, the whole work of the Spirit of God, in the soul of a believer; and by the fruits of righteousness, all holy tempers, holy words, and right actions. And with these they are to be filled, *πεπληρωμενοι*, filled up, filled full; the whole soul and life occupied with them, ever doing something by which glory is brought to God, or good done to man.

**By Jesus Christ**— That is, according to his doctrine, through the power of his grace, and by the agency of his Spirit.

**Unto the glory and praise of God.**— God being honored when the work of his grace thus appears to men in the fruits of righteousness; and God is praised by all the faithful when his work thus appears. Every genuine

follower of God has his glory in view by all that he does, says, or intends. He loves to glorify God, and he glorifies him by showing forth in his conversion the glorious working of the glorious power of the Lord.

**Verse 12.** *That the things which happened unto me*— St. Paul was at this time a prisoner at Rome, and it appears probable that he had already been called to make a defense for himself, and to vindicate the doctrines of the Gospel; and this he had been enabled to do in such a manner that the honor of the Gospel had been greatly promoted by it. As the Philippians loved him greatly, he felt it right to give them this information relative to his state, and how God had turned his bonds to the advantage of that cause on account of which he was bound.

**Verse 13.** *My bonds-are manifest in all the palace*— In consequence of the public defense which he was obliged to make, his doctrines must be fully known in the court, and throughout the whole city, as on his trial he would necessarily explain the whole. The praetorium, *πραιτωριον*, which we here translate palace, signifies the court where causes were heard and judged by the praetor or civil magistrate; it sometimes signifies the general's tent, and at others, the emperor's palace. It is supposed that it is used in this latter sense here. There were, no doubt, persons belonging to the emperor's household who would bring the news of so remarkable a case to the palace; for we find that there were Christians even in Caesar's household; Philippians 4:22.

**Verse 14.** *Waxing confident*— Finding the effect produced by the public defense which the apostle made, they were greatly encouraged, and the more boldly and openly proclaimed the doctrine of Christ crucified.

*The word*— The doctrine of Christ; several excellent MSS. and versions add, some *θεου*, others *κυριου*, the word of God, or the word of the Lord. This is a respectable reading, and is probably genuine.

**Verse 15.** *Some-preach Christ even of envy and strife*— These must have been the Judaizing teachers, who insisted on the necessity of connecting the Mosaic rites with the Christian institutions; and, probably, denounced Paul to the Jews dwelling at Rome as not only an enemy to the law and the prophets, but also as a very imperfect Christian, because he declared

strongly against the doctrine of circumcision, etc.; and no doubt endeavored to prejudice him with the heathen Romans.

The word preach is not to be taken here as implying that the different persons mentioned were what we call preachers of the Gospel: all that we can understand from St. Paul's use of the word is, that they proclaimed Christ as the promised Messiah, espoused the Christian cause, and contended, whether in public or private, that this Jesus was the Christ; but nothing of this kind appears to have been intended in reference to the conversion of sinners.

*Some also of good will.*— Some, through mere benevolence to the apostle, both espoused his doctrine and vindicated his cause.

**Verse 16. *Preach Christ of contention***— The Judaizing teachers, they also preach Christ; they acknowledge that Jesus is the Christ or promised Messiah, and preach him as such.

*Not sincerely*— οὐχ ἀγνῶς. Not chastely, garbling the Gospel; not speaking the whole truth, but just what served their purpose; and at the same time they denounced the apostle as an enemy to the Divine institutions, because he spoke against circumcision.

**Verse 17. *The other of love***— Through a sincere desire, not only to make known the way of salvation to the people, but also to vindicate and help the apostle, because they considered him as appointed by God to preach and defend the Gospel. The 16th and 17th verses are transposed by ABDEFG, and several others; the Syriac, Arabic of Erpen, Coptic, Sahidic, Aethiopic, Armenian, Vulgate, Itala, and several of the fathers. On this evidence Griesbach transposed them in his edition.

**Verse 18. *What then?***— It is a matter of little importance to me how Christ is preached, provided he be preached. I rejoice that any thing is known of him; and am truly glad that the Gospel is even made partially known, for this will lead to farther inquiries, and in the end be of service to the truth.

**Verse 19. *This shall turn to my salvation***— That is: It will be the means of my temporal safety; of my deliverance; for so the word σωτηρία is here to be understood. The Jews had denounced the apostle as an enemy

to Caesar; but he knew that, when the nature of the Gospel should be fully known, the Romans would see that he could be no enemy to Caesar who proclaimed a prince whose kingdom was not of this world; and who had taught, in the most unequivocal manner, that all Christians were to give tribute to whom tribute was due, and while they feared God to honor also the king, though that king was Nero.

***Through your prayer***— Knowing them to be genuine followers of Christ, he was satisfied that their prayers would be very available in his behalf; and under God he places much dependence upon them.

***The supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ***— The word *επιχορηγια*, which we translate supply, signifies also furnishing whatever is necessary. The Spirit of God he expected to help all his infirmities, and to furnish him with all the wisdom, prudence, strength of reason, and argument, which might be necessary for him in the different trials he had to pass through with his persecutors, and the civil powers, at whose judgment-seat he stood.

**Verse 20. *Earnest expectation***— He had the most confident expectation that God would stand by him, so that he should be enabled, with the utmost liberty of speech, *εξ παση παρρησια*, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God; and, should he have the liberty of doing so, he was utterly regardless what the issue might be relative to himself. Whether life or death, was to him perfectly equal, and perfectly indifferent, providing Christ were magnified-his person, nature, doctrine, etc., shown to be, what they really are, most noble, most excellent, most necessary, and most glorious.

**Verse 21. *For to me to live is Christ***— Whether I live or die, Christ is gain to me. While I live I am Christ's property and servant, and Christ is my portion; if I die-if I be called to witness the truth at the expense of my life, this will be gain; I shall be saved from the remaining troubles and difficulties in life, and be put immediately in possession of my heavenly inheritance. As, therefore, it respects myself, it is a matter of perfect indifference to me whether I be taken off by a violent death, or whether I be permitted to continue here longer; in either case I can lose nothing.

**Verse 22. *But if I live in the flesh***— Should I be spared longer, I shall labor for Christ as I have done; and this is the fruit of my labor, that Christ shall be magnified by my longer life, Philippians 1:20.

***Yet what I shall choose I wot not.***— Had I the two conditions left to my own choice, whether to die now and go to glory, or whether to live longer in persecutions and affliction, (glorifying Christ by spreading the Gospel,) I could not tell which to prefer.

**Verse 23. *For I am in a strait betwixt two***— Viz. the dying now, and being immediately with God; or living longer to preach and spread the Gospel, and thus glorify Christ among men.

***Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ***— *την επιθυμιαν εις το αναλυσαι*. It appears to be a metaphor taken from the commander of a vessel, in a foreign port, who feels a strong desire *αναλυσαι*, to set sail, and get to his own country and family; but this desire is counterbalanced by a conviction that the general interests of the voyage may be best answered by his longer stay in the port where his vessel now rides; for he is not in dock, he is not aground, but rides at anchor in the port, and may any hour weigh and be gone. Such was the condition of the apostle: he was not at home, but although he was abroad it was on his employer's business; he wishes to return, and is cleared out and ready to set sail, but he has not received his last orders from his owner, and whatever desire he may feel to be at home he will faithfully wait till his final orders arrive.

***Which is far better***— *πολλω-μαλλον κρεισσον*. Multo magis melior, VULGATE; much more better. The reader will at once see that the words are very emphatic.

**Verse 24. *To abide in the flesh***— It would certainly be gain to myself to die, but it will be a gain to you if I live. If I die I shall go immediately to glory; if I live I shall continue to minister to you, and strengthen you in the faith.

**Verse 25. *Having this confidence, I know that I shall abide***— Convinced that it is necessary that I should live longer, for the spreading and defense of the Gospel, I am persuaded that I shall now be liberated. This was in fact the case, for, after having been two years in bonds at Rome, he was released.

***For your furtherance***— In the way of righteousness.

***And joy of faith***— And happiness in that way. The farther a man proceeds in the way of truth, the stronger his faith will be; and the stronger his faith, the greater his joy or happiness.

**Verse 26. *That your rejoicing may be more abundant***— Men rejoice more in recovering a thing that was lost, than they do in a continual possession of what is of much greater value.

**Verse 27. *Let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel***— The apostle considers the Church at Philippi as a free or imperial city, which possesses great honors, dignities, and privileges; and he exhorts them to act, **αξιως**, worthy of or suitably to those honors and privileges. This is the idea that is expressed by the word **πολιτευεσθε**, act according to the nature of your political situation, the citizenship and privileges which you possess in consequence of your being free inhabitants of Christ's imperial city, the Church. The apostle resumes the same metaphor, Philippians 3:20: **ημων-το πολιτευμα εν ουρανοις υπαρχει**. For our citizenship is in heaven; but in this last verse he puts heaven in the place of the Church, and this is all right; for he, who is not a member of the Church of Christ on earth, can have no right to the kingdom of heaven, and he who does not walk worthy of the Gospel of Christ cannot be counted worthy to enter through the gates into the city of the eternal King.

***Whether I come and see you***— Leaving the matter still in doubt as to them, whether he should again visit them.

***In one spirit***— Being all of one mind under the influence of the Holy Ghost.

***Striving together***— **συναθλουντες**: Wrestling together, not in contention with each other, but in union against the enemies of the Gospel faith — the doctrine of Christ crucified, and freedom from all Mosaic rites and ceremonies, as well as from sin and perdition, through his passion and sacrifice.

**Verse 28. *In nothing terrified by your adversaries***— So it appears that the Church at Philippi was then under persecution.



**Which is to them**— ἡτις αυτοις εστιν. Some very judicious critics consider ητις as referring to πιστις, the faith of the Gospel, which they, the heathen, considered to be a token of perdition to all them who embraced it; but, as the apostle says, it was to them the Philippians, on the contrary, the most evident token of salvation; for, having embraced the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, they were incontestably in the way to eternal blessedness.

**Verse 29. Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ**— ὑμιν εχαρισθη. To you it is graciously given; it is no small privilege that God has so far honored you as to permit you to suffer on Christ's account. It is only his most faithful servants that he thus honors. Be not therefore terrified by your enemies; they can do nothing to you which God will not turn to your eternal advantage. We learn from this that it is as great a privilege to suffer for Christ as to believe on him; and the former in certain cases (as far as the latter in all cases) becomes the means of salvation to them who are thus exercised.

**Verse 30. Having the same conflict**— When Paul preached the Gospel at Philippi he was grievously persecuted, as we learn from Acts 16:19-40, being stripped, scourged, thrown into prison, even into the dungeon, and his feet made fast in the stocks. This was the conflict they had seen in him; and now they heard that he had been sent prisoner to Rome as an evil doer, and that he was at present in bonds, and shortly to be tried for his life before the Roman emperor to whom he had been obliged to appeal.

1. It was no small encouragement to these persons, (1.) That whatever sufferings they met with they were supported under them. (2.) That they suffered in the same cause in which their illustrious apostle was suffering. (3.) That they suffered, not because they had done any evil, or could be accused of any, but because they believed in the Son of God, who died for them and for all mankind. (4.) That all these sufferings were sanctified to their eternal good.

2. And God is able to make the same grace abound towards us in like circumstances; it is for this purpose that such consolatory portions are left on record. He who is persecuted or afflicted for Christ's sake, is most eminently honored by his Creator.

## CHAPTER 2.

*The apostle beseeches them by various considerations, to live in unity and in the spirit of the Gospel, loving each other; and each to prefer his brother to himself, 1-4. He exhorts them to be like-minded with Christ, who, though in the form of God, and equal with God, made himself of no reputation, and humbled himself to the death of the cross for the salvation of man; in consequence of which he was highly exalted, and had a name above every name; to whose authority every knee should bow, and whose glory every tongue should acknowledge, 5-11. They are exhorted to work out their own salvation through his power who works in them, that they may be blameless, and that the apostle's labor may not be in vain, 12-16. He expresses his readiness to offer his life for the Gospel, 17, 18. Intends to send Timothy to them, of whom he gives a very high character; yet hopes to see them himself shortly, 19-24. In the meantime sends Epaphroditus, who had been near death, and whom he begs them to receive with especial tenderness, 25-30.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 2.

**Verse 1.** *If there be therefore any consolation*— The **εἰ**, if, does not express any doubt here, but on the contrary is to be considered as a strong affirmation; as there is consolation in Christ, as there is comfort of love, etc.

The word **παρακλήσις**, translated here consolation, is in other places rendered exhortation, and is by several critics understood so here; as if he had said: If exhorting you in the name of Christ have any influence with you, etc. It is extremely difficult to give the force of these expressions; they contain a torrent of most affecting eloquence, the apostle pouring out his whole heart to a people whom with all his heart he loved, and who were worthy of the love even of an apostle.

*If any comfort of love*— If the followers of Christ, by giving proofs of their ardent love to each other in cases of distress, alleviate the sufferings of the persecuted;

***If any fellowship of the Spirit***— If there be an intimate relation established among all Christians, by their being made mutual partakers of the holy Ghost;

***If any bowels and mercies***— If you, as persons whom I have brought to God at the hazard of my life, feel sympathetic tenderness for me now, in a farther state of suffering;

**Verse 2. *Fulfil ye my joy***— Ye ought to complete my joy, who have suffered so much to bring you into the possession of these blessings, by being like-minded with myself, having the same love to God, his cause, and me, as I have to him, his cause, and you.

***Being of one accord***— Being perfectly agreed in labouring to promote the honor of your Master; and of one mind, being constantly intent upon this great subject; keeping your eye fixed upon it in all you say, do, or intend.

**Verse 3. *Let nothing be done through strife***— Never be opposed to each other; never act from separate interests; ye are all brethren, and of one body; therefore let every member feel and labor for the welfare of the whole. And, in the exercise of your different functions, and in the use of your various gifts, do nothing so as to promote your own reputation, separately considered from the comfort, honor, and advantage of all.

***But in lowliness of mind***— Have always an humbling view of yourselves, and this will lead you to prefer others to yourselves; for, as you know your own secret defects, charity will lead you to suppose that your brethren are more holy, and more devoted to God than you are; and they will think the same of you, their secret defects also being known only to themselves.

**Verse 4. *Look not every man on his own things***— Do nothing through self-interest in the things of God; nor arrogate to yourselves gifts, graces, and fruits, which belong to others; ye are all called to promote God's glory and the salvation of men. Labor for this, and every one shall receive the honor that comes from God; and let each rejoice to see another, whom God may be pleased to use in a special way, acquiring much reputation by the successful application of his talents to the great work.

**Verse 5. *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus***—

Christ labored to promote no separate interest; as man he studied to promote the glory of God, and the welfare and salvation of the human race. See then that ye have the same disposition that was in Jesus: he was ever humble, loving, patient, and laborious; his meat and drink was to do the will of his Father, and to finish his work.

**Verse 6. *Who, being in the form of God***— This verse has been the subject of much criticism, and some controversy. Dr. Whitby has, perhaps, on the whole, spoken best on this point; but his arguments are too diffuse to be admitted here. Dr. Macknight has abridged the words of Dr. Whitby, and properly observes that, “As the apostle is speaking of what Christ was before he took the form of a servant, the form of God, of which he divested himself when he became man, cannot be any thing which he possessed during his incarnation or in his divested state; consequently neither the opinion of Erasmus, that the form of God consisted in those sparks of divinity by which Christ, during his incarnation, manifested his Godhead, nor the opinion of the Socinians, that it consisted in the power of working miracles, is well founded; for Christ did not divest himself either of one or the other, but possessed both all the time of his public ministry. In like manner, the opinion of those who, by the form of God understand the Divine nature and the government of the world, cannot be admitted; since Christ, when he became man, could not divest himself of the nature of God; and with respect to the government of the world, we are led, by what the apostle tells, Hebrews 1:3, to believe that he did not part with even that; but, in his divested state, still continued to uphold all things by the word of his power. By the form of God we are rather to understand that visible, glorious light in which the Deity is said to dwell, 1 Timothy 6:16, and by which he manifested himself to the patriarchs of old, Deuteronomy 5:22, 24; which was commonly accompanied with a numerous retinue of angels, Psalm 68:17, and which in Scripture is called The Similitude, Numbers 12:8; The Face, Psalm 31:16; The Presence, Exodus 33:15; and The Shape of God, John 5:37. This interpretation is supported by the term **μορφή**, form, here used, which signifies a person’s external shape or appearance, and not his nature or essence. Thus we are told, Mark 16:12, that Jesus appeared to his disciples in another **μορφή**, shape, or form. And, Matthew 17:2,

μετεμορφωθη, he was transfigured before them — his outward appearance or form was changed. Farther this interpretation agrees with the fact: the form of God, that is, his visible glory, and the attendance of angels, as above described, the Son of God enjoyed with his Father before the world was, John 17:5; and on that as on other accounts he is the brightness of the Father's glory, Hebrews 1:3. Of this he divested himself when he became flesh; but, having resumed it after his ascension, he will come with it in the human nature to judge the world; so he told his disciples, Matthew 16:27: The Son of man will come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, etc.. Lastly, this sense of μορφη θεου, is confirmed by the meaning of μορθη δουλου, Philippians 2:7; which evidently denotes the appearance and behavior of a servant or bondman, and not the essence of such a person." See Whitby and Macknight.

*Thought it not robbery to be equal with God*— If we take these words as they stand here, their meaning is, that, as he was from the beginning in the same infinite glory with the Father, to appear in time — during his humiliation, as God and equal with the Father, was no encroachment on the Divine prerogative; for, as he had an equality of nature, he had an equality of rights.

But the word αρπαγμαον, which we translate robbery, has been supposed to imply a thing eagerly to be seized, coveted, or desired; and on this interpretation the passage has been translated: Who, being in the form of God, did not think it a matter to be earnestly desired to appear equal to God; but made himself of no reputation, etc. However the word be translated, it does not affect the eternal Deity of our Lord. Though he was from eternity in the form of God-possessed of the same glory, yet he thought it right to veil this glory, and not to appear with it among the children of men; and therefore he was made in the likeness of men, and took upon him the form or appearance of a servant: and, had he retained the appearance of this ineffable glory, it would, in many respects, have prevented him from accomplishing the work which God gave him to do; and his humiliation, as necessary to the salvation of men, could not have been complete. On this account I prefer this sense of the word αρπαγμαον before that given in our text, which does not agree so well with the other expressions in the context. In this sense the word is used by Heliodorus, in his AETHIOPICS, lib. vii. cap. 19, etc., which passage Whitby has produced,

and on which he has given a considerable paraphrase. The reader who wishes to examine this subject more particularly, may have recourse to Heliodorus as above, or to the notes of Dr. Whitby on the passage.

**Verse 7. *But made himself of no reputation***— ἑαυτον εκενωσε· He emptied himself — did not appear in his glory, for he assumed the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man. And his being made in the likeness of man, and assuming the form of a servant, was a proof that he had emptied himself—laid aside the effulgence of his glory.

**Verse 8. *And being found in fashion as a man***— και σχηματι ευρεθεις ως ανθρωπος. This clause should be joined to the preceding, and thus translated: Being made in the likeness of man, and was found in fashion as a man.

***He humbled himself***— Laid himself as low as possible: 1. In emptying himself—laying aside the effulgence of his glory. 2. In being incarnate — taking upon him the human form. 3. In becoming a servant — assuming the lowest innocent character, that of being the servant of all. 4. In condescending to die, to which he was not naturally liable, as having never sinned, and therefore had a right in his human nature to immortality, without passing under the empire of death. 5. In condescending, not only to death, but to the lowest and most ignominious kind of death, the death of the cross; the punishment of the meanest of slaves and worst of felons. What must sin have been in the sight of God, when it required such abasement in Jesus Christ to make an atonement for it, and undo its influence and malignity!

**Verse 9. *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him***— If by his humiliation he has merited pardon and final salvation for the whole world, is it to be wondered that the human body, in which this fullness of the Godhead dwelt, and in which the punishment due to our sins was borne upon the tree, should be exalted above all human and all created beings? And this is the fact; for he hath given him a name, το ονομα, the name, which is above every name: το is prefixed to ονομα here by ABC, 17, Origen, Dionysius Alexandrinus, Eusebius, Cyril, and Procopius. This makes it much more emphatic. According to Ephesians 1:20, 21, the man Christ Jesus is exalted to the right hand of God, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not

only in this world, but also in that which is to come. From which it appears that no creature of God is so far exalted and so glorious as the man Christ Jesus, human nature being in him dignified infinitely beyond the angelic nature; and that this nature has an authority and pre-eminence which no being, either in heaven or earth, enjoys. In a word, as man was in the beginning at the head of all the creatures of God, Jesus Christ, by assuming human nature, suffering and dying in it, has raised it to its pristine state. And this is probably what is here meant by this high exaltation of Christ, and giving him a name which is above every name. But if we refer to any particular epithet, then the name JESUS or Savior must be that which is intended; as no being either in heaven or earth can possess this name as he who is the Redeemer of the world does, for he is the only Savior; none has or could redeem us to God but he; and throughout eternity he will ever appear as the sole Savior of the human race. Hence, before his birth, Gabriel stated that his name should be called JESUS; giving for reason, he shall SAVE his people from their sins. The qualifications of the Savior of the world were so extraordinary, the redeeming acts so stupendous, and the result of all so glorious both to God and man, that it is impossible to conceive a higher name or title than that of JESUS, or Savior of the world.

**Verse 10. *That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow***— That all human beings should consider themselves redeemed unto God by his blood, and look for an application of this redemption price; and that all who are saved from their sin should acknowledge him the author of their salvation. In a word, that **παν επουρανιων**, all the spirits of just men made perfect, now in a state of blessedness; **και επιγειων**, all human beings still in their state of probation on earth; **και καταχθονιων**, and all that are in the shades below, who have, through their own fault, died without having received his salvation; should acknowledge him.

**Verse 11. *And that every tongue should confess***— That all those before mentioned should acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, or absolute governor, and thus glorify God the Father, who has exalted this human nature to this state of ineffable glory, in virtue of its passion, death, resurrection, and the atonement which it has made, by which so many attributes of the Divine nature have become illustrated, the Divine law magnified and made honorable, and an eternal glory provided for man.

Others by things in heaven understand the holy angels; by things on earth, human beings generally; and by things under the earth, fallen spirits of every description. Perhaps the three expressions are designed to comprehend all beings of all kinds, all creatures; as it is usual with the Hebrews, and indeed with all ancient nations, to express, by things in heaven, things on earth, and things under the earth, all beings of all kinds; universal nature. See similar forms of speech, Exodus 20:4; Deuteronomy 4:17, 18; Psalm 96:11; and Ezekiel 38:20. But intelligent beings seem to be those which are chiefly intended by the words of the apostle; for it appears that nothing less than absolute rule over angels, men, and devils, can be designed in these extraordinary words, and by confessing him to be Lord we may understand that worship which all intelligent creatures are called to pay to God manifested in the flesh; for all should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. And the worship thus offered is to the glory of God; so that far from being idolatrous, as some have rashly asserted, it is to the honor of the Divine Being. We may add, that the tongue which does not confess thus, is a tongue that dishonors the Almighty.

**Verse 12.** *As ye have always obeyed*— Continue to act on the same principles and from the same motives; having the same disposition which was in Christ; laboring so as to promote his glory.

*Work out your own salvation*— Go on, walking by the same rule, and minding the same thing, till your salvation be completed: till, filled with love to God and man, ye walk unblamably in all his testimonies, having your fruit unto holiness, and your end everlasting life.

*With fear and trembling*— Considering the difficulty of the work, and the danger of miscarriage. If you do not watch, pray and continually depend on God, your enemies will surprise you, and your light and life will become extinct; and then consider what an awful account you must give to Him whose Spirit ye have grieved, and of whose glory ye have come short.

**Verse 13.** *For it is God which worketh in you*— Every holy purpose, pious resolution, good word, and good work, must come from him; ye must be workers together with him, that ye receive not his grace in vain; because he worketh in you, therefore work with him, and work out your own salvation.



***To will and to do***— το θελειν και το ενεργειν. The power to will and the power to act must necessarily come from God, who is the author both of the soul and body, and of all their powers and energies, but the act of volition and the act of working come from the man. God gives power to will, man wills through that power; God gives power to act, and man acts through that power. Without the power to will, man can will nothing; without the power to work, man can do nothing. God neither wills for man, nor works in man's stead, but he furnishes him with power to do both; he is therefore accountable to God for these powers.

Because God works in them the power to will and the power to do, therefore the apostle exhorts them to work out their own salvation; most manifestly showing that the use of the powers of volition and action belongs to themselves. They cannot do God's work, they cannot produce in themselves a power to will and to do; and God will not do their work, he will not work out their salvation with fear and trembling.

Though men have grievously puzzled themselves with questions relative to the will and power of the human being; yet no case can be plainer than that which the apostle lays down here: the power to will and do comes from GOD; the use of that power belongs to man. He that has not got this power can neither will nor work; he that has this power can do both. But it does not necessarily follow that he who has these powers will use them; the possession of the powers does not necessarily imply the use of those powers, because a man might have them, and not use or abuse them; therefore the apostle exhorts: Work out your own salvation.

This is a general exhortation; it may be applied to all men, for to all it is applicable, there not being a rational being on the face of the earth, who has not from God both power to will and act in the things which concern his salvation. Hence the accountableness of man.

***Of his good pleasure.***— Every good is freely given of God; no man deserves any thing from him; and as it pleaseth him, so he deals out to men those measures of mental and corporeal energy which he sees to be necessary; giving to some more, to others less, but to all what is sufficient for their salvation.

**Verse 14. *Do all things without murmurings***— γογγυσμων, και διαλογισμων· Without grumblings and altercations. Be patient in, and contented with, your work; and see that ye fall not out by the way.

**Verse 15. *That ye may be blameless***— In yourselves, and harmless to others.

***The sons of God***— Showing by your holy conduct that ye are partakers of the Divine nature.

***Without rebuke***— Persons against whom no charge of transgression can justly be laid.

***A crooked and perverse***— Probably referring to the Jews, who were the chief opponents and the most virulent enemies which the Christian Church had.

***Among whom ye shine***— Be like the sun and moon; bless even the perverse and disobedient by your light and splendor. Let your light shine before men; some will walk in that light, and by its shining God will be glorified. It is evident that the apostle, by φωστρηες εν κοσμοω, lights in the world, refers to the sun and moon particularly, and perhaps to the heavenly bodies in general.

**Verse 16. *Holding forth the word of life***— An allusion, some think, to those towers which were built at the entrance of harbours, on which fires were kept during the night to direct ships into the port. Genuine Christians, by their holy lives and conversation, are the means of directing others, not only how to escape those dangers to which they are exposed on the tempestuous ocean of human life, but also of leading them into the haven of eternal safety and rest.

***That I have not run in vain***— This appears to be a part of the same metaphor; and alludes to the case of a weather-beaten mariner who has been long tossed on a tempestuous sea, in hazy weather and dark nights, who has been obliged to run on different tacks, and labor intensely to keep his ship from foundering, but is at last, by the assistance of the luminous fire on the top of the tower, directed safely into port. Live so to glorify God and do good to men, that it shall appear that I have not run and labored in vain for your salvation.

**Verse 17. *Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service***— The metaphor appears to be still carried on. As it was customary for the weather-beaten mariner, when he had gained his port, to offer a sacrifice, **θυσια**, to God, of some particular animal which he had vowed while in his state of danger, and this was considered to be a religious service, **λειτουργια**: the apostle, pursuing the idea, states himself to be willing to become the libation, (for so much the word **σπενδομαι** imports,) that was to be poured upon the sacrifice. Parkhurst observes that the apostle compares the faith of the Philippians to the sacrificial victim, and his own blood shed in martyrdom to the libation, i.e. the wine poured out on occasion of the sacrifice. Raphelius observes that Arrian uses the phrase **σπενδειν επι τη θυσια** for pouring out the libation after the sacrifice. The apostle had guided them safely into port; their faith in the atoning death of Christ was their sacrifice; and he was willing that his blood in martyrdom should be poured out as a libation on that sacrificial offering.

**Verse 18. *For the same cause also do ye joy***— Should I be thus offered, as I shall rejoice in it, do ye also rejoice that I am counted worthy of this high honor.

**Verse 19. *But I trust in the Lord Jesus***— He is governor and disposer of all events, being above all principality and power; and I humbly confide in his power and goodness that I shall be a little longer spared to visit you again, Philippians 2:24, and to be able to send Timothy shortly to you.

***When I know your state.***— By the correct information which I shall receive from Timothy.

**Verse 20. *For I have no man like-minded***— None of all my fellow helpers in the Gospel have the same zeal and affectionate concern for your prosperity in every respect as he has. He is **ισοψυχος**: of the same soul; a man after my own heart.

**Verse 21. *For all seek their own***— This must relate to the persons who preached Christ even of envy and strife, Philippians 1:15; these must be very careless whether souls were saved or not by such preaching; and even those who preached the Gospel out of good will might not be fit for such an embassy as this, which required many sacrifices, and consequently much love and zeal to be able to make them.

**Verse 22. *Ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me***— The Philippians had full proof of the affectionate attachment of Timothy to Paul, for he had labored with him there, as we learn from Acts 16:1-3; 17:14; and we find from what is said here that Timothy was not a servant to the apostle, but that he had served with him. They both labored together in the word and doctrine; for apostles and Christian bishops, in those times, labored as hard as their deacons. There were no sinecures; every one was a laborer, every laborer had his work, and every workman had his wages.

**Verse 23. *How it will go with me***.— The apostle was now in captivity; his trial appears to have been approaching, and of its issue he was doubtful; though he seems to have had a general persuasion that he should be spared, see Philippians 2:19, 24.

**Verse 25. *Epaphroditus, my brother, etc.***— Here is a very high character of this minister of Christ; he was, 1. A brother — one of the Christian family; a thorough convert to God, without which he could not have been a preacher of the Gospel. 2. He was a companion in labor; he labored, and labored in union with the apostle in this great work. 3. He was a fellow soldier; the work was a work of difficulty and danger, they were obliged to maintain a continual warfare, fighting against the world, the devil, and the flesh. 4. He was their apostle — a man whom God had honored with apostolical gifts, apostolical graces, and apostolical fruits; and, 5. He was an affectionate friend to the apostle; knew his soul in adversity, acknowledged him in prison, and contributed to his comfort and support.

**Verse 26. *Ye had heard that he had been sick***.— “In this passage,” says Dr. Paley, “no intimation is given that the recovery of Epaphroditus was miraculous, it is plainly spoken of as a natural event. This instance, together with that in the Second Epistle to Timothy, Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick, affords a proof that the power of performing cures, and, by parity of reason, of working other miracles, was a power which only visited the apostles occasionally, and did not at all depend upon their own will. Paul undoubtedly would have healed Epaphroditus if he could; nor would he have left Trophimus at Miletum sick, had the power of working cures awaited his disposal. Had this epistle been a forgery, forgery on this occasion would not have spared a miracle; much less would

it have introduced St. Paul professing the utmost anxiety for the safety of his friend, yet acknowledging himself unable to help him, which he does almost expressly in the case of Trophimus, Him have I left sick; and virtually in the passage before us, in which he felicitates himself on the recovery of Epaphroditus in terms which almost exclude the supposition of any supernatural means being used to effect it. This is a reverse which nothing but truth would have imposed.” *Horae Paulinae*, page 234.

**Verse 27. *Lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.***— The sorrows of his death, added to the sorrow he endured on account of his sickness; or he may refer to his own state of affliction, being imprisoned and maltreated.

**Verse 28. *The more carefully***— *σπουδαιοτερως*. With the more haste or despatch; because, having suffered so much on account of his apprehended death, they could not be too soon comforted by seeing him alive and restored.

**Verse 29. *Receive him therefore in the Lord***— For the Lord’s sake receive him, and as the Lord’s servant; and hold such zealous, disinterested, and holy preachers in reputation — honor those whom ye perceive God hath honored.

**Verse 30. *For the work of Christ***— Preaching the Gospel, and ministering to the distressed.

***He was nigh unto death***— Having labored far beyond his strength.

***Not regarding his life***— Instead of *παραβουλευσαμενος τη ψυχη*, not regarding his life, *παραβουλευσαμενος*, risking his life, is the reading of ABDEFG, and is received by Griesbach into the text. His frequent and intense preaching, and labouring to supply the apostle’s wants, appear to have brought him nigh to the gates of death.

THE humiliation and exaltation of Christ are subjects which we cannot contemplate too frequently, and in which we cannot be too deeply instructed.

1. God destroys opposites by opposites: through pride and self-confidence man fell, and it required the humiliation of Christ to destroy that pride and self-confidence, and to raise him from his fall. There must be an indescribable malignity in sin, when it required the deepest

abasement of the highest Being to remove and destroy it. The humiliation and passion of Christ were not accidental, they were absolutely necessary; and had they not been necessary, they had not taken place. Sinner, behold what it cost the Son of God to save thee! And wilt thou, after considering this, imagine that sin is a small thing? Without the humiliation and sacrifice of Christ, even thy soul could not be saved. Slight not, therefore, the mercies of thy God, by underrating the guilt of thy transgressions and the malignity of thy sin!

2. As we cannot contemplate the humiliation and death of Christ without considering it a sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and atonement for sin, and for the sin of the whole world; so we cannot contemplate his unlimited power and glory, in his state of exaltation, without being convinced that he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God through him. What can withstand the merit of his blood? What can resist the energy of his omnipotence? Can the power of sin?-its infection? -its malignity? No! He can as easily say to an impure heart, Be thou clean, and it shall be clean; as he could to the leper, Be thou clean, and immediately his leprosy was cleansed. Reader, have faith in Him; for all things are possible to him that believeth.

3. There are many ungodly men in the world who deny the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, and affect to ridicule those who profess to have received what they know Christ has purchased and God has promised, and which, in virtue of this, they have claimed by faith; because, say these mockers, "If you had the Spirit of God, you could work miracles: show us a miracle, and we will believe you to be inspired." Will these persons assert that St. Paul had not God's Spirit when he could neither heal himself, nor restore his friends and fellow helpers from apparent death? What then doth their arguing prove? Silly men, of shallow minds!

## CHAPTER 3.

*The apostle exhorts the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord, 1. And to beware of false teachers, 2. Shows that Christians are the true circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, 3. And that himself had more reason to trust in the flesh than any of the Jews, 4-6. But that he counted all things loss for Christ, 7-11. He longs after a conformity to Christ in his death, and presses onward to the attainment of his high calling, 12-14. Exhorts them to be like-minded, 15-17. Warns them against certain persons who were enemies to the cross of Christ, 18, 19. Shows the nature of their heavenly privileges, and the resurrection and glorification of the human body, 20, 21.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 3.

**Verse 1. *Rejoice in the Lord.***— Be always happy; but let that happiness be such as you derive from the Lord.

***To write the same things***— He means those which he had formerly preached to them or to other Churches, for he had but one Gospel; and we may rest assured that the doctrine of this epistle was the same with his preaching.

***For you it is safe.***— It is much better to have these Divine things committed to writing than confided to memory. By the latter they may be either lost or corrupted, by the former they will be preserved.

**Verse 2. *Beware of dogs***— The Jews, who have here the same appellation which they formerly gave to the Gentiles: because the Gentiles were not included in the covenant, they called them DOGS; and themselves, the children of the Most High. Now, they are cast out of the covenant and the Gentiles taken in; therefore they are the dogs, and the Gentiles the children.

***Evil workers***— Judaizing teachers, who endeavored to pervert the Gospel.

**The concision.**— **κατατομην**. The cutting or excision; not **περιτομην**, the circumcision: the word is used by the apostle to degrade the pretensions which the Jews made to sanctity by the cutting in their flesh. Circumcision was an honorable thing, for it was a sign of the covenant; but as they now had rejected the new covenant, their circumcision was rendered uncircumcision, and is termed a cutting, by way of degradation.

**Verse 3. *We are the circumcision***— WE, who have embraced the faith of Christ crucified, are now entered into the new covenant, and according to that new covenant, worship God in the Spirit, exulting, **καυχωμενοι**, making our boast of Christ Jesus, as our only Savior, having no confidence in the flesh — in any outward rite or ceremony prescribed by the Jewish institutions.

**Verse 4. *Though I might also have confidence***— If any of them have any cause to boast in outward rites and privileges, I have as much; yea, more.

**Verse 5. *Circumcised the eighth day***— This was the time that the law required the males to be circumcised; and we find, from Genesis 17:14, both in the Samaritan Pentateuch and in the Septuagint, though the clause is now lost out of the common Hebrew text, that the male child, which is not circumcised the eighth day, shall be cut off from among his people: this precept was literally observed in the case of St. Paul.

***Of the stock of Israel— Regularly descended from the patriarch Jacob. Of the tribe of Benjamin***— The most favourite son of that patriarch and a tribe that did not revolt with Jeroboam, 1 Kings 12:21, nor pollute the worship of God by idolatry.

***A Hebrew of the Hebrews***— Though born in a heathen country, Tarsus, yet both my parents were Hebrews; nor has there ever been any strange blood mixed with that of our family.

***Touching the law, a Pharisee***— One that not only received the law and the prophets as coming from God; but belonged to that sect which, of all others, was most scrupulously attached to it.



**Verse 6. *Concerning zeal***— As to my zeal for Pharisaism, I gave the fullest proof of it by persecuting the Church of Christ; and this is known to all my countrymen.

***Touching the righteousness***— And as to that plan of justification, which justification the Jews say is to be obtained by an observance of the law, I have done every thing so conscientiously from my youth up, that in this respect I am blameless; and may, with more confidence than most of them; expect that justification which the law appears to promise.

**Verse 7. *But what things were gain***— The credit and respect which I had, as being zealously attached to the law, and to the traditions of the elders, I counted loss for Christ — I saw that this could stand me in no stead; that all my acts of righteousness were nothing on which I could depend for salvation; and that Christ crucified could alone profit me; for I found that it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin.

**Verse 8. *I count all things but loss***— Not only my Jewish privileges, but all others of every kind; with every thing that men count valuable or gainful, or on which they usually depend for salvation.

***The excellency of the knowledge of Christ***— That superior light, information, and blessedness which come through the Gospel of Jesus Christ; justification through his blood, sanctification by his Spirit, and eternal glory through his merits and intercession. These are the blessings held out to us by the Gospel, of which, and the law, Jesus Christ is the sum and substance.

***I have suffered the loss of all things***— Some translate δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην, for whom I have thrown away all things — I have made a voluntary choice of Christ, his cross, his poverty, and his reproach; and for these I have freely sacrificed all I had from the world, and all I could expect from it.

***And do count them but dung***— The word σκυβάλα means the vilest dross or refuse of any thing; the worst excrement. The word shows how utterly insignificant and unavailing, in point of salvation, the apostle esteemed every thing but the Gospel of Jesus. With his best things he freely parted, judging them all loss while put in the place of Christ crucified; and Christ crucified he esteemed infinite gain, when compared

with all the rest. Of the utter unavailableness of any thing but Christ to save the soul the Apostle Paul stands as an incontrovertible proof. Could the law have done any thing, the apostle must have known it. He tried, and found it vanity; he tried the Gospel system, and found it the power of God to his salvation. By losing all that the world calls excellent, he gained Christ, and endless salvation through him. Of the glorious influence of the Gospel he is an unimpeachable witness. See the concluding observations on the 9th chapter of the Acts, on the character of St. Paul. {Acts 9:43}

**Verse 9. *And be found in him***— Be found a believer in Christ, not having mine own righteousness — not trusting in any thing I have done or could do, in order to my salvation; relying on no scheme of justification, set up either formerly by myself or by others.

***But that which is through the faith of Christ***— That justification which is received by faith through the atonement made by Christ.

***The righteousness which is of God***— God's method of justifying sinners through faith in his Son. See the notes on Romans 3:21, 23, 25, where this subject is treated at large.

**Verse 10. *That I may know him***— To be the true and promised Messiah, and experience all that salvation which he has bought by his blood.

***The power of his resurrection***— In having this body of my humiliation raised from death, and made like unto his glorious body. This seems to be the sole meaning of the apostle; for it is in virtue of Christ's resurrection that we are to be raised incorruptible and immortal.

***And the fellowship of his sufferings***— Christ died, not only as a victim for sin, but as a martyr to the truth. No creature can have fellowship with him in his vicarious sufferings; as a martyr to the truth, St. Paul wished to imitate him. Not only in the apostle, but in the primitive Christians generally, there seems to have been a strong desire after martyrdom.

**Verse 11. *The resurrection of the dead***.— That is, the resurrection of those who, having died in the Lord, rise to glory and honor; and hence St. Paul uses a peculiar word which occurs no where else in the New Testament, *ἐξανάστασις*. The words, as they stand in the best MSS., are as follow: *εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν*, to that resurrection

which is of the dead. This glorious resurrection, and perhaps peculiarly glorious in the case of martyrs, is that to which St. Paul aspired. The word **αναστασις** signifies the resurrection in general, both of the just and unjust; **εξαναστασις** may signify that of the blessed only.

**Verse 12. *Not as though I had already attained***— **ουχ οτι ηδη ελαβον**. For I have not yet received the prize; I am not glorified, for I have not finished my course; and I have a conflict still to maintain, and the issue will prove whether I should be crowned. From the beginning of the 11th to the end of the 17th verse there is one continued allusion to the contests at the Olympic games; exercises with which, and their laws, the Philippians were well acquainted. {Philippians 3:11-17}

***Either were already perfect***— **η ηδη τετελειωμαι**. Nor am I yet perfect; I am not yet crowned, in consequence of having suffered martyrdom. I am quite satisfied that the apostle here alludes to the Olympic games, and the word **τετελειωμαι** is the proof; for **τελειωθηναι** is spoken of those who have completed their race, reached the goal, and are honored with the prize. Thus it is used by Philo, Allegoriar. lib. iii. page 101, edit. Mangey: **ποτε ουν, ω ψυχη, μαλιστα νεκροφορειν (νικοφορειν) σεαυτην υποληψη· αραγε ουχ οταν τελειωθης και βραβειων και στεφανων αξιωθης** “When is it, O soul, that thou shalt appear to have the victory? Is it not when thou shalt be perfected, (have completed thy course by death,) and be honored with prizes and crowns?”

That **τελειωσις** signified martyrdom, we learn most expressly from Clemens Alexand., Stromata, lib. iii. page 480, where he has these remarkable words: **-τελειωσιν μαρτυριον καλουμεν, ουχ οτι τελος του βιου ο ανθρωπος ελεβεν, ως οι λοιποι, αλλ’ οτι τελειον εργον αγαπης ενεδειξατο**. “We call martyrdom **τελειωσις**, or perfection, not because man receives it as the end, **τελος**, or completion of life; but because it is the consummation **τελειος**, of the work of charity.”

So Basil the great, Hom. in Psalm 116:13: **ποτηριον σωτηριου ληψομαι· τουτεστι, διψων επι την δια του μαρτυριου τελειωσιν ερχομαι**. “I will receive the cup of salvation; that is, thirsting and earnestly desiring to come, by martyrdom, to the consummation.”

So OEcumenius, on Acts 28: *παντα ετη απο της κλησεως του παυλου, μεχρι της τελειωσεως αυτου, τριακοντα και πεντε*. “All the years of Paul, from his calling to his martyrdom, were thirty and five.”

And in Balsamon, Can. i. Ancyran., page 764: *τον της τελειωσεως στεφανον αναδησασθαι* is, “To be crowned with the crown of martyrdom.”

Eusebius, Hist. Eccles, lib. vii. cap. 13, uses the word *τελειουσθαι* to express to suffer martyrdom. I have been the more particular here, because some critics have denied that the word has any such signification. See Suicer, Rosenmuller, Macknight, etc.

St. Paul, therefore, is not speaking here of any deficiency in his own grace, or spiritual state; he does not mean by not being yet perfect, that he had a body of sin and death cleaving to him, and was still polluted with indwelling sin, as some have most falsely and dangerously imagined; he speaks of his not having terminated his course by martyrdom, which he knew would sooner or later be the case. This he considered as the *τελειωσις*, or perfection, of his whole career, and was led to view every thing as imperfect or unfinished till this had taken place.

***But I follow after***— *διοωκω δε*. But I pursue; several are gone before me in this glorious way, and have obtained the crown of martyrdom; I am hurrying after them.

***That I may apprehend***— That I may receive those blessings to which I am called by Christ Jesus. There is still an allusion here to the stadium, and exercises there: the apostle considers Christ as the brabeus, or judge in the games, who proclaimed the victor, and distributed the prizes; and he represents himself as being introduced by this very brabeus, or judge, into the contest; and this brabeus brought him in with the design to crown him, if he contended faithfully. To complete this faithful contention is what he has in view; that he may apprehend, or lay hold on that for which he had been apprehended, or taken by the hand by Christ who had converted, strengthened, and endowed him with apostolical powers, that he might fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life.

**Verse 13. *I count not myself to have apprehended***— Whatever gifts, graces, or honors I may have received from Jesus Christ, I consider every

thing as incomplete till I have finished my course, got this crown, and have my body raised and fashioned after his glorious body.

***This one thing I do***— This is the concern, as it is the sole business, of my life.

***Forgetting those things which are behind***— My conduct is not regulated nor influenced by that of others; I consider my calling, my Master, my work, and my end. If others think they have time to loiter or trifle, I have none: time is flying; eternity is at hand; and my all is at stake.

***Reaching forth***— The Greek word **επεκτεινομενος** points out the strong exertions made in the race; every muscle and nerve is exerted, and he puts forth every particle of his strength in running. He was running for life, and running for his life.

**Verse 14. *I press toward the mark***— **κατα σκοπον διωκω**. I pursue along the line; this is a reference to the white line that marked the ground in the stadium, from the starting place to the goal, on which the runners were obliged to keep their eye fixed; for they who transgressed or went beyond this line did not run lawfully, and were not crowned, even though they got first to the goal. See the concluding observations on 1 Corinthians 9:27.

What is called **σκοπος**, mark or scope, here, is called **κανων**, the line, i.e. the marked line, Philippians 3:16. When it was said to Diogenes, the cynic, “Thou art now an old man, rest from thy labors;” to this he answered: **ει δολιχου εδραμον, προς τω τελει με ανειναι, και μη μαλλον επιτειναι**; “If I have run long in the race, will it become me to slacken my pace when come near the end; should I not rather stretch forward?” Diog. Laert., lib. vi. cap. 2. sec. 6.

***For the prize of the high calling of God***— The reward which God from above calls me, by Christ Jesus, to receive. The apostle still keeps in view his crown of martyrdom and his glorious resurrection.

**Verse 15. *As many as be perfect***— As many as are thoroughly instructed in Divine things, who have cast off all dependence on the law and on every other system for salvation, and who discern God calling them from above by Christ Jesus; be thus minded; be intensely in earnest for eternal life, nor ever halt till the race is finished.

The word **τελειοι**, perfect, is taken here in the same sense in which it is taken 1 Corinthians 14:20:- Be not CHILDREN in understanding-but in understanding be ye MEN, **τελειοι γινεσθε**, be ye perfect — thoroughly instructed, deeply experienced. 1 Corinthians 2:6:- We speak wisdom among the perfect, **εν τοις τελειοις**, among those who are fully instructed, adults in Christian knowledge. Ephesians 4:13:- Till we all come-unto a perfect man, **εις ανδρα τελειον**, to the state of adults in Christianity. Hebrews 5:14:- But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, **τελειων**, the perfect — those who are thoroughly instructed and experienced in Divine things. Let us therefore, says the apostle, as many as be perfect — as have entered fully into the spirit and design of the Gospel, be thus minded, viz. Forget the things which are behind, and stretch forward along the mark for the prize.

***If in any thing ye be otherwise minded***— If ye have not yet entered into the full spirit and design of this Gospel, if any of you have yet remaining any doubts relative to Jewish ordinances, or their expediency in Christianity, God shall reveal even this unto you; for while you are sincere and upright, God will take care that ye shall have full instruction in these Divine things.

**Verse 16. *Whereto we have already attained***— Let us not lose that part of the race which we have already run, let us walk by the same rule — let us keep the white line continually in view, let us mind the same thing, always considering the glorious prize which is held out by God through Christ Jesus to animate and encourage us.

The MSS., versions and fathers of the Alexandrian recension or edition, and which are supposed by Griesbach and others to contain the purest text, omit the words **κωνοι, το αυτο προνειν**, and read the verse thus: Whereunto we have already attained let us walk; or, according to what we have already attained, let us regulate our life, There is so much disagreement about the above words in the MSS., etc., that most critics consider them as a sort of gloss, which never made an original part of the text. Dr. White says, Certissime delenda; “Most certainly they should be obliterated.”

**Verse 17. *Brethren, be followers-of me***— In the things of Christ let me be your line, and my writings preaching, and conduct, your rule.

**And mark them**— *σκοπεῖτε*. Still alluding to the line in the stadium, keep your eye steadily fixed on those who walk — live, as ye have us — myself, Timothy, and Epaphroditus, for an ensample.

**Verse 18. *For many walk, etc.***— The Judaizing teachers continue to preach, who wish to incorporate circumcision, and other ordinances of the law, with the Gospel.

***They are the enemies of the cross of Christ***— They rather attribute justification to the Levitical sacrifices, than to the sacrificial death of Christ; and thus they are enemies to that cross, and will not suffer persecution for its sake. They please the world, and are in no danger of reproach.

**Verse 19. *Whose end is destruction***— This is the issue of their doctrine and of their conduct. They are here described by three characters: 1. Their god is their belly — they live not in any reference to eternity; their religion is for time; they make a gain of godliness; and live only to eat, drink, and be merry. 2. Their glory is in their shame — they lay it down as a proof of their address, that they can fare sumptuously every day, in consequence of preaching a doctrine which flatters the passions of their hearers. 3. They mind earthly things — their whole study and attention are taken up with earthly matters; they are given to the flesh and its lusts; they have no spirituality, nor do they believe that there is or can be any intercourse between God and the souls of men. But their lasciviousness and uncleanness seem to be principally intended. See Kypke. Despicable as these men were, the apostle's heart was deeply pained on their account: 1. Because they held and taught a false creed; 2. Because they perverted many by that teaching; and, 3. Because they themselves were perishing through it.

**Verse 20. *Our conversation is in heaven***— *ἡμῶς-το πολιτευμα*. Our city, or citizenship, or civil rights. The word properly signifies the administration, government, or form of a republic or state; and is thus used by Demosthenes, page 107, 25, and 262, 27. Edit. Reiske. It signifies also a republic, a city, or the inhabitants of any city or place; or a society of persons living in the same place, and under the same rules and laws. See more in Schleusner.

While those gross and Jewish teachers have no city but what is on earth; no rights but what are derived from their secular connections; no society but what is made up of men like themselves, who mind earthly things, and whose belly is their god, WE have a heavenly city, the New Jerusalem; we have rights and privileges which are heavenly and eternal; and our society or fellowship is with God the Father, Son, and Spirit, the spirits of just men made perfect, and the whole Church of the first-born. We have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts; and regard not the body, which we know must perish, but which we confidently expect shall be raised from death and corruption into a state of immortal glory.

**Verse 21. *Who shall change our vile body***— Ὅς μετασχηματισεῖ το σωμα της ταπεινωσεσ ημων· Who will refashion, or alter the fashion and condition of, the body of our humiliation; this body that is dead — adjudged to death because of sin, and must be putrefied, dissolved, and decomposed.

***That it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body***— εις το γενεσθαι αυτο συμμορφον τω σωματι της δοξης αυτου· That it may bear a similar form to the body of his glory. That is: the bodies of true believers shall be raised up at the great day in the same likeness, immortality, and glory, of the glorified humanity of Jesus Christ; and be so thoroughly changed, as to be not only capable through their immortality of eternally existing, but also of the infinite spiritual enjoyments at the right hand of God.

***According to the working***— κατα την ενεργειαν· According to that energy, by which he can bring all things under subjection to himself. Thus we find that the resurrection of the body is attributed to that power which governs and subdues all things, for nothing less than the energy that produced the human body at the beginning, can restore it from its lapsed and degraded state into that state of glory which it had at its creation, and render it capable of enjoying God throughout eternity. The thought of this glorious consummation was a subject of the highest joy and confidence amongst the primitive Christian. This earth was not their home; and they passed through things temporal so as not to lose those which were eternal.

1. THE preceding chapter, to which the first verse of the succeeding should be joined, contains a fund of matter the most interesting that can well be



conceived. The apostle seems to stand on the verge of eternity, and to have both worlds opened to his view. The one he sees to be the place in which a preparation for the other is to be attained. In the one he sees the starting place, where the Christian is to commence his race; in the other the goal at which his course terminates, and the prize which he is there to obtain. One is the place from and over which the Christian is to run; the other is that to which he is to direct his course, and in which he is to receive infinite blessedness. In the one he sees all manner of temptations and hinderances, and dangers standing thick through all the ground; in the other he sees the forerunner, the Lord Jesus, who has entered into the heaven of heavens for him, through whom God calls him from above, **της ανω κλησεως του θεου**, Philippians 3:14: for what he hears in the Gospel, and what he sees by faith, is the calling of God from above; and therefore he departs from this, for this is not his rest.

2. The nearer a faithful soul comes to the verge of eternity, the more the light and influence of heaven are poured out upon it: time and life are fast sinking away into the shades of death and darkness; and the effulgence of the dawning glory of the eternal world is beginning to illustrate the blessed state of the genuine Christian, and to render clear and intelligible those counsels of God, partly displayed in various inextricable providences, and partly revealed and seen as through a glass darkly in his own sacred word. Unutterable glories now begin to burst forth; pains, afflictions, persecutions, wants, distresses, sickness, and death, in any or all of its forms, are exhibited as the way to the kingdom, and as having in the order of God an ineffable glory for their result. Here are the wisdom, power, and mercy of God! Here, the patience, perseverance, and glory of the saints! Reader, is not earth and its concerns lost in the effulgence of this glory? Arise and depart, for this is not thy rest.

## CHAPTER 4.

*The apostle exhorts them to stand fast in the Lord, 1. And beseeches Euodias and Syntyche to be of one mind in Divine things, 2. And requests his true yokefellow to help them to a good understanding, 3. Gives them directions concerning their temper and frame of mind, 4-7. And how to act in all respects as becomes the purity and excellence of the Gospel, as they had heard from and seen in him, 8, 9. Thanks them for their attention to him in his captivity, in sending him what was necessary for his support, though he had learned to be contented in all situations in life, 10-14. Mentions particular cases in which they had ministered to him; promises them, through the riches of glory in Christ, a supply of all their spiritual wants; and renders thanks to God, 15-20. Salutes all the saints, and those particularly of the emperor's household, 21, 22. And concludes with his usual apostolical benediction, 23.*

## NOTES ON CHAP. 4.

**Verse 1. *Therefore, my-beloved***— Because ye have this armor, and those enemies, and God for your support, see that ye stand fast in him. This verse most unquestionably belongs to the preceding chapter.

**Verse 2. *I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche***— These were two pious women, as it is generally supposed, who were deaconesses in the Church at Philippi, and who in some points of doctrine and discipline had disagreed. He exhorts them to be of the same mind, that is, to compose their differences; and, if they could not perfectly agree to think and let think, and to avoid all public opposition, as their dissension would strengthen the hands of the common enemy, and stumble those who were weak. But it is more likely that Euodias was a woman, and Syntyche a man, and probably the husband of Euodias; and that it is Syntyche whom the apostle calls true yokefellow in the next verse.

**Verse 3. *Help those women which labored with me***— Both in the Grecian and Asiatic countries women were kept much secluded, and it was

not likely that even the apostles had much opportunity of conversing with them; it was therefore necessary that they should have some experienced Christian women with them, who could have access to families, and preach Jesus to the female part of them. The apostle tells us that certain women labored with him in the Gospel, and were assistants to others also who had assisted him.

Some think the women here were Euodias and Syntyche; but I rather incline to the opinion that Syntyche was a male, and Euodias his wife. EUODIAS signifies a pleasant scent; SYNTYCHE, fortunate. There have been a number of conjectures who these persons were, and who is meant by the true yokefellow; but as there is nothing certain known on the subject, it is useless to propagate conjecture.

*With Clement also*— Supposed to be the same who was afterwards bishop of Rome, and who wrote an epistle to the Corinthians, which is still extant.

*Whose names are in the book of life*.— Who are genuine Christians; who are enlisted or enrolled in the armies of the Lord, and have received a title to eternal glory. The reader is requested to refer to the note on Exodus 32:32, 33, and the concluding observations at the end of that chapter, {Exodus 32:35} where the writing in and blotting out of the book of life are particularly considered, and the difficulties on the subject removed. See also on Luke 10:20.

**Verse 4. *Rejoice in the Lord alway***— Be continually happy; but this happiness you can find only in the Lord. Genuine happiness is spiritual; as it can only come from God, so it infallibly tends to him. The apostle repeats the exhortation, to show, not only his earnestness, but also that it was God's will that it should be so, and that it was their duty as well as interest.

**Verse 5. *Let your moderation be known***— The word **ἐπιεικὲς** is of very extensive signification; it means the same as **ἐπιεικεῖα**, mildness, patience, yieldingness, gentleness, clemency, moderation, unwillingness to litigate or contend; but moderation is expressive enough as a general term. "Moderation," says Dr. Macknight, "means meekness under provocation, readiness to forgive injuries, equity in the management of business,

candour in judging of the characters and actions of others, sweetness of disposition, and the entire government of the passions.”

***The Lord is at hand.***— A phrase something similar to the Maranatha of 1 Corinthians 16:22: The Lord is Judge, and is at hand to punish. Schoettgen supposes, from this verse, taken in connection with the preceding, that Euodias and Syntyche were of a quarrelsome disposition; and hence the exhortation and threatening in the third and fifth verses.

**Verse 6. *Be careful for nothing***— μηδεν μεριμνατε· Be not anxiously solicitous; do not give place to carking care, let what will occur; for anxiety cannot chance the state or condition of any thing from bad to good, but will infallibly injure your own souls.

***By prayer and supplication***— God alone can help you; he is disposed to do it, but you must ask by prayer and supplication; without this he has not promised to help you.

By prayer — solemn application to God from a sense of want.  
Supplication — continuance in earnest prayer. With thanksgiving, for innumerable favors already received; and for dangers, evils, and deaths turned aside. And let your souls be found in this exercise, or in the disposition in which this exercise can be performed, at all times, on all occasions, and in all places.

**Verse 7. *And the peace of God***— That harmonizing of all passions and appetites which is produced by the Holy Spirit, and arises from a sense of pardon and the favor of God;

***Shall keep your hearts***— φρουρησει· Shall keep them as in a strong place or castle. Your hearts — the seat of all your affections and passions, and minds — your understanding, judgment, and conscience through Christ Jesus; by whom ye were brought into this state of favor, through whom ye are preserved in it, and in whom ye possess it; for Christ keeps that heart in peace in which he dwells and rules. This peace passeth all understanding; it is of a very different nature from all that can arise from human occurrences; it is a peace which Christ has purchased, and which God dispenses; it is felt by all the truly godly, but can be explained by none; it is communion with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

**Verse 8. *Finally, brethren***— The object of the apostle is to recommend holiness and righteousness to them in every point of view; and to show that the Gospel of Christ requires all its professors to have the mind that was in Christ, and to walk as he himself also walked. That they were not to attend to one branch of righteousness or virtue only, but to every thing by which they might bring honor to God, good to their fellow creatures, and credit to themselves.

***Whatsoever things are true***— ὅσα ἀληθῆ· All that is agreeable to unchangeable and eternal truth. Whether that which is to be learned from the nature and state of created things, or that which comes immediately from God by revelation.

***Whatsoever things are honest***— ὅσα σιμνα· Whatever is grave, decent, and venerable. Whatever becomes you as men, as citizens, and as Christians.

***Whatsoever things are just***— ὅσα δίκαια· Whatsoever is agreeable to justice and righteousness. All that ye owe to God, to your neighbor, and to yourselves.

***Whatsoever things are pure***— ὅσα ἀγνα· Whatsoever is chaste. In reference to the state of the mind, and to the acts of the body.

***Whatsoever things are lovely***— ὅσα προσφιλη· Whatsoever is amiable on its own account and on account of its usefulness to others, whether in your conduct or conversation.

***Whatsoever things are of good report***— ὅσα εὐφημα· Whatsoever things the public agree to acknowledge as useful and profitable to men; such as charitable institutions of every kind, in which genuine Christians should ever take the lead.

***If there be any virtue***— If they be calculated to promote the general good of mankind, and are thus praiseworthy;

***Think on these things.***— Esteem them highly, recommend them heartily, and practice them fervently.

Instead of εἰ τις ἐπαινος, if there be any praise, several eminent MSS., as D\*EFG, add ἐπιστημης, of knowledge; and the Vulgate and the Itala

have disciplinae, of discipline; but none of these appear to be an original reading.

**Verse 9. *Those things, which ye have-learned***— From my preaching and writing;

***And received***— By faith, as a revelation from God;

***And heard***— From my preaching, and that of those who labored with me; and heard from me, in my private communications with you; and heard of me from other Churches;

***And seen in me***— While living and labouring among you;

***Do***— Take them for the rule of your faith and practice.

***And the God of peace***— He who is the author of peace, the lover of peace, and the maintainer of peace; he who has made peace between heaven and earth, by the mission and sacrifice of his Son, shall be ever with you while you believe and act as here recommended.

**Verse 10. *But I rejoiced in the Lord***— Every good comes from God, either immediately from his providence or from his grace; therefore the apostle thanks God for the kindness of the Philippians towards him; for it was God that gave them the power, and directed their hearts to use it.

***Hath flourished again***— They had helped him before, Philippians 2:25; they had ceased for a time, and now they began again. This is evidently designed by the apostle, as the word **ανεθαλετε** implies, which is a metaphor taken from the reviviscence of flowers in spring which seemed dead in winter. For the time in which they were apparently remiss he makes a delicate apology: Ye were careful, but ye lacked opportunity; or rather **ηκαρισητε**, ye had not ability, ye wanted the means; as the word sometimes implies.

**Verse 11. *Not that I speak in respect of want***— I am quite unconcerned in this respect; leaving the whole of my support, while bound for the testimony of Jesus, to the providence of God.

***For I have learned***— I am so satisfied with the wise providence and goodness of God, that I know whatever he determines is the best; and therefore I am perfectly contented that he should govern the world in that

way which seems best to his godly wisdom. How true is the proverb, A contented mind is a continual feast! What do we get by murmuring and complaining?

**Verse 12. *I know-how to be abased***— I have passed through all these states; I know how to conduct myself in each, and how to extract good from all. And he had passed through these things, especially the hardships, so that he had learned the lesson perfectly, as the word *μεμνημαι* implies; he was thoroughly instructed; fully initiated into all the mysteries of poverty and want, and of the supporting hand of God in the whole. See here the state to which God permitted his chief apostle to be reduced! And see how powerfully the grace of Christ supported him under the whole! How few of those who are called Christian ministers or Christian men have learned this important lesson! When want or affliction comes, their complaints are loud and frequent; and they are soon at the end of their patience.

**Verse 13. *I can do all things***— It was not a habit which he had acquired by frequent exercise, it was a disposition which he had by grace; and he was enabled to do all by the power of an indwelling Christ. Through Him who strengtheneth me is the reading of some of the best MSS., versions, and fathers; the word *χριστω*, Christ, being omitted.

**Verse 14. *Ye have well done***— Though I have learned all these important lessons, and am never miserable in want, yet ye have done well in sending me relief in the time of affliction.

**Verse 15. *In the beginning of the Gospel***— When, having preached to you, I went forth into Macedonia, I received help from none of the Churches which I had founded, but from you alone. I received nothing from any others, and nothing was offered me.

**Verse 16. *For even in Thessalonica***— While labouring to plant the Church there, he was supported partly by working with his hands, 1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9; and partly by the contributions sent him from Philippi. Even the Thessalonians had contributed little to his maintenance: this is not spoken to their credit.

**Verse 17. *Not because I desire a gift***— I do not speak thus to incite you to send me a farther gift; I speak this on the general subject, because I wish

you to bear such fruit as shall abound to your account in the day of the Lord.

**Verse 18. *I have all***— Ye have now sent me so much by Epaphroditus, that I abound in all the necessaries of life.

***Having received-the things***— Probably a supply of clothes and such like necessaries, as well as of money.

***An odor of a sweet smell***— Alluding to the sacrifices offered up under the law. With what ye have done to me, his servant, God is well pleased. See Ephesians 5:2, and the note there.

**Verse 19. *My God shall supply all your need***— As you have given to me in my distress, God will never suffer you to want without raising up help to you, as he raised you up for help to me.

***According to his riches***— His fullness is infinite; and through Christ, whose followers we are, he will dispense every requisite blessing of providence, grace, and glory, to you.

**Verse 20. *Now unto God and our Father***— God is our Father in Christ Jesus; and such pity as a father hath for his children, such has the Lord for them that fear him; as a father is concerned for the support and life of his children, so is God concerned for you. A father may be poor, and unable to help his most beloved children; God, your Father, is infinite in his riches of his grace and glory, and out of his abundance we have all received, and grace for grace. Therefore, to God our Father, be glory for ever and ever!

**Verse 21. *Salute every saint***— Remember to present my affectionate wishes to every Christian at Philippi.

***The brethren which are with me***— Those who were fellow laborers with him, generally supposed to be Aristarchus, Mark, Justus, Epaphras, Luke, and Demas. See the end of the epistles to the Colossians, and to Philemon.

**Verse 22. *All the saints***— All the Christians now at Rome.

***They that are of Caesar's household***.— Nero was at this time emperor of Rome: a more worthless, cruel, and diabolic wretch never disgraced the name or form of man; yet in his family there were Christians: but whether



this relates to the members of the imperial family, or to guards, or courtiers, or to servants, we cannot tell. If even some of his slaves were converted to Christianity, it would be sufficiently marvellous. Converts to Christianity in this family there certainly were; and this shows how powerfully the Divine word had been preached and spread. That the Empress Poppaea may have been favourably inclined to Christianity is possible; for Josephus relates of her, *Antiq.*, lib. xx. cap. 7: **θεοσεβης γαρ ην**. She was a worshipper of the true God; it is not likely, therefore, that she threw any hinderances in the way of her servants who might wish to embrace the Christian faith. St. Jerome, in Philemon, states that St. Paul had converted many in Caesar's family; *A Caesare missus in carcerem, notior familiae ejus factus, persecutoris Christi domum fecit ecclesiam.* "Being by the emperor cast into prison, he became the more known to his family, and he turned the house of Christ's persecutor into a church." Some imagine that Seneca, the preceptor of Nero and the poet Lucan, were converted by St. Paul; and there are still extant, and in a MS. now before me, letters which profess to have passed between Paul and Seneca; but they are worthy of neither. They have been printed in some editions of Seneca's works. See the remarks below.

**Verse 23. *The grace of our Lord***—The usual apostolical benediction, which has often occurred, and been more than once explained. See on Romans 1:7, and Galatians 6:18. The word **ημων**, our, is omitted by many MSS. and several versions, which simply read, The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

***Be with you all.***—Instead of **παντων**, all, **πνευματος**, Spirit, is the reading of ADEFG, several others, with the Coptic, Sahidic, Aethiopic, Armenian, Vulgate, and Itala; besides several of the Fathers.

There are various subscriptions to this epistle in the different MSS. and versions. In the common GREEK text it stands thus: It was written to the Philippians from Rome by Epaphroditus. The Epistle to the Philippians was written from Rome, and sent by Epaphroditus. — SYRIAC. To the Philippians. — AETHIOPIC. The end of the Epistle; it was written at Rome, and sent by Epaphroditus. — ARABIC. To the Philippians by Timothy and Epaphroditus. — COPTIC.

1. THE MSS. generally agree with the versions, and all unite in stating that this epistle was written and sent from Rome, so that the common subscription may well stand. Yet there have been some strong objections made against this, as far as the place is concerned. Some foreign critics have maintained, that were it to be granted that the apostle was now a prisoner for the testimony of Christ, yet it does not follow that he was a prisoner at Rome, for he himself tells us, 2 Corinthians 11:23, that he was in prisons more abundant; and, consequently, he might be in prison somewhere else: but they have gone farther, and denied that this epistle was written while Paul was a prisoner; affirming that he had been already liberated, and that of this there are several evidences in the epistle itself. J. Christopher Wolf, in his *Curae*, has considered all these objections in detail, and appears to have answered them in a very satisfactory manner. That St. Paul was now in prison, these words seem clearly to prove, Philippians 1:16:- The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds. This strongly argues that he was then suffering imprisonment, and that certain persons of perverse minds preached the Gospel in such a way as was calculated to make his bonds still more grievous. And, as he sends the salutations of saints which were of Caesar's household, it seems most evident that he was then at Rome; as, had he been a prisoner in any of the provinces, it is not likely that he would send to Philippi the greetings of those who lived at Rome.

2. The cause of this imprisonment has been variously understood. Theodorus Metochita says it was in consequence of his having converted Nero's baker, and one of his concubines; at which the emperor, being enraged, ordered him to be cast into prison: but the authority on which this rests is scarcely sufficient to render it credible.

3. Paul is generally allowed to have been twice imprisoned at Rome: this was, without doubt, the first time of his being there in bonds, as there is every appearance that he was delivered after this; but his second imprisonment issued in his martyrdom. Every apostle of God is immortal till his work is done. Paul became a martyr when God saw that there was no farther need either for his preaching or his writing; he had kept and defended the faith, and had finished his course; God took him then from the evil to come; and crowned him with the glory which his Redeemer had

provided for him, in reference to which he lived, and after which he had continually aspired.

4. Reader, be thankful to God, who, in pity to thy weakness, has called thee to believe and enjoy, and not to suffer for his sake. It is not for us to covet seasons of martyrdom; we find it difficult to be faithful even in ordinary trials: yet, as offenses may come, and times of sore trial and proof may occur, we should be prepared for them; and we should know that nothing less than Christ in us, the hope of glory, will enable us to stand in the cloudy and dark day. Let us, therefore, put on the whole armor of God; and, fighting under the Captain of our salvation, expect the speedy destruction of every inward foe; and triumph in the assurance that death, the last enemy, will, in his destructions, shortly be brought to a perpetual end. Hallelujah! The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Amen and Amen!

Finished correction for the press, Dec. 16th, 1831. — A. C.

**PREFACE**

**TO THE**

**EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE**

**TO THE**

**COLOSSIANS.**

COLOSSE, or rather Colassa, (see on Colossians 1:1,) was a city of Phrygia Pacatiana, now a part of Natolia, in Asia Minor, seated on an eminence on the south side of the river Maeander, now Meinder, near to the place where the river Lycas enters the earth, and begins to run under ground, which course it continues for about three-quarters of a mile, before it emerges and falls into the Maeander. Of this ancient city not much is known: it was situated between Laodicea and Hierapolis, and at an equal distance from either; and to this place Xerxes came in his expedition against Greece.

The government of this city is said to have been democratic, and its first magistrate bore the title of archon and praetor. The Macedonians transferred Colosse to the Persians; and it afterwards passed under the government of the Seleucidae. After the defeat of Antiochus III., at the battle of Magnesia, it became subject to Eumenes, king of Pergamus: and when Attalus, the last of his successors, bequeathed his dominions to the Romans, this city, with the whole of Phrygia, formed a part of the proconsular province of Asia; which division subsisted till the time of Constantine the Great. After the time of this emperor, Phrygia was divided into Phrygia Pacatiana, and Phrygia Salutaris: and Colosse was the sixth city of the first division.

The ancient city of Colosse has been extinct for nearly eighteen hundred years; for about the tenth year of the Emperor Nero, about a year after the writing of this epistle, not only Colosse, but Laodicea and Hierapolis, were destroyed by an earthquake, according to Eusebius; and the city which was raised in the place of the former was called Chonos or Konos, which name it now bears. See New Encyclopedia. On modern maps Konos is situated about twenty miles NE. of Dagnizlu, in lat. about 38° north, and in long. 29° 40' east of London.

The epistle to this city appears to have been written about the same time with that to the Philippians, viz. towards the end of the year 62, and in the ninth of the Emperor Nero.

That the two epistles were written about the same time is rendered probable by the following circumstance: In the Epistle to the Philippians, Philippians 2:19, St. Paul purposes to send Timothy to Philippi, who was then with him at Rome, that he might know their state. As Timothy joins with the apostle in the salutation at the beginning of this epistle, it is evident that he was still at Rome, and had not yet been sent to Philippi; and as St. Paul wrote the former epistle nearly at the close of his first imprisonment at Rome, the two epistles must have been written within a short space of each other. See the preface to the Epistle to the Philippians.

When, or by whom, Christianity was first preached at Colosse, and a Church founded there, we cannot tell; but it is most likely that it was by St. Paul himself, and during the three years in which he dwelt at Ephesus; for he had then employed himself with such zeal and diligence that we are told, Acts 19:10: "That all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." And that Paul preached in Phrygia, the district in which this city was situated, we learn from Acts 16:6: "Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia;" and at another time we find that "he went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples;" Acts 18:23. It has, however, been argued, from Colossians 2:1, of this epistle, that Paul had never been at Colosse; for he there says: I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh. But the consequence drawn from these words does not absolutely follow. Dr. Lardner alleges a variety of

considerations which induced him to believe that the Churches of Colosse and Laodicea were founded by St. Paul, viz.

1. That the apostle was twice in Phrygia, in which were Colosse, Laodicea, and Hierapolis. See the places above quoted from the Acts of the Apostles.
2. That he does in effect, or even expressly, say that he had dispensed the Gospel to the Colossians, Colossians 1:21-25. See particularly the 23rd, 24th, and 25th verses.
3. From several passages in the epistle it appears that the apostle does not speak as to strangers, but to acquaintances, disciples, and converts. Some think that Epaphras, who is called their apostle, Colossians 1:7, was the first who planted Christianity among the Colossians.

But the arguments drawn from Acts 16:6; 18:23, referred to above, are quite invalidated, if we allow the opinion of some learned men, among whom are Suidas, Calepine, Munster, and others, that the Colossus, a gigantic statue at Rhodes, gave its own name to the people among whom it stood; for the ancient poets call the inhabitants of the island of Rhodes, Colossians; and hence they thought that the Colossians, to whom St. Paul directs this epistle, were the inhabitants of Rhodes. This opinion, however, is not generally adopted.

From a great similarity in the doctrine and phraseology of this epistle to that written to the Ephesians, this to the Colossians has been considered an epitome of the former, as the Epistle to the Galatians has been considered an abstract of that to the Romans. See the concluding observations on the Epistle to the Galatians; and the notes on Colossians 1:4, of this epistle, and elsewhere.

Whether the Colossians to whom the apostle addresses this epistle were Jews or Gentiles, cannot be absolutely determined. It is most probable that they were a mixture of both; but that the principal part were converted Jews is most likely. This, indeed, appears to have been the case in most of the Asiatic and Grecian Churches; for there were Jews, at this time, sojourning in almost every part of the Roman empire, which then comprehended the greatest portion of the known world.

The language of this epistle is bold and energetic, the sentiments are grand, and the conceptions vigorous and majestic. The phraseology is in many places Jewish; and the reason is obvious: the apostle had to explain subjects which never had a name in any other language. The mythology of the Gentiles could not furnish terms to explain the theology of the Jews; much less, the more refined and spiritual system of Christianity.

**THE**  
**EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE**

**TO THE**

**COLOSSIANS.**

Chronological Notes relative to this Epistle.

Usherian year of the world, 4066. — Alexandrian era of the world, 5564. — Antiochian era of the world, 5554. — Constantinopolitan era of the world, 5570. — Year of the Eusebian epocha of the Creation, 4290. — Year of the Julian period, 4772. — Year of the minor Jewish era of the world, 3822. — Year of the Greater Rabbinical era of the world, 4421. — Year from the Flood, according to Archbishop Usher, and the English Bible, 2410. — Year of the Cali yuga, or Indian era of the Deluge, 3164. — Year of the era of Iphitus, or since the first commencement of the Olympic games, 1002. — Year of the Nabonassarean era, 809. — Year of the era of the Seleucidae, 374. — Year of the Spanish era, 100. — Year of the Actiac or Actian era, 93. — Year from the birth of Christ, 66. — Year of the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 62. — Year from the building of Rome, according to Varro, 814. — Year of the CCXth Olympiad, 2. — Jesus, high priest of the Jews. — Common Golden Number, 6. — Jewish Golden Number, 3. — Year of the Solar Cycle, 15. — Dominical Letter, C. — Jewish Passover, April 10th. — Easter Sunday, April 11th. — Epact, or the moon's age on the 22nd of March, or the Xth of the Calends of April, 25. — Year of the reign of Nero Caesar, the sixth emperor of the Romans, 9. — In the first year of Albinus, governor of the Jews. — Year of Vologesus, king of the Parthians, 12. — Year of Domitius Corbulo, governor of Syria, 3. — Roman Consuls, P. Marius Celsus, and L. Asinius Gallus, from Jan. 1st to July 1st; and L. Annaeus Seneca, the philosopher, and Trebellius Maximus, for the remainder of the year.



## CHAPTER 1.

*The salutation of Paul and Timothy to the Church at Colosse, 1, 2. They give thanks to God for the good estate of that Church, and the wonderful progress of the Gospel in every place, 3-6; having received particulars of their state from Epaphroditus, which not only excited their gratitude, but led them to pray to God that they might walk worthy of the Gospel; and they give thanks to Him who had made them meet for an inheritance among the saints in light, 7-12. This state is described as a deliverance from the power of darkness, and being brought into the kingdom of God's dear Son, 13, 14. The glorious character of Jesus Christ, and what He has done for mankind, 15-20. The salvation which the Colossians had received, and of which the apostle had been the minister and dispenser, 21-26. The sum and substance of the apostle's preaching, and the manner in which he executed his ministry, 27-29.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 1.

**Verse 1. *Paul, an apostle-by the will of God***— As the word *αποστολος*, apostle, signifies one sent, an envoy or messenger, any person or persons may be the senders: but the word is particularly restrained to the messengers of the everlasting Gospel, sent immediately from God himself; and this is what St. Paul particularly remarks here when he calls himself an apostle by the will of God; signifying that he had derived his commission from an express volition or purpose of the Almighty.

***And Timotheus***— Though Timothy is here joined in the salutation, yet he has never been understood as having any part in composing this epistle. He has been considered as the amanuensis or scribe of the apostle.

**Verse 2. *To the saints***— Those who professed Christianity. See the note on Ephesians 1:1.

***Which are at Colosse***— Instead of *εν κολοσσαις*, at Colosse, or among the Colossians, ABC, and many other excellent MSS., with both the Syriac, Coptic, Slavonic, Origen, Gregory Nyssen, Amphilochus,

Theodoret, Damascenus, Theophylact, and others, read *εν κολασσαϊς* in Colassa, or among the Colassians; and this is most probably the true reading. That this city perished by an earthquake, a short time after the date of this epistle, we have the testimony of Eusebius. That which at present is supposed to occupy the site of this ancient city is called Konos. For other particulars see the preface to this epistle. {Colossians 1:1}

*Grace be unto you*— See on Romans 1:7.

*And the Lord Jesus Christ.*— This clause is omitted by many MSS., several versions, and some of the fathers. Griesbach has left it out of the text, not, in my opinion, on sufficient evidence.

**Verse 3.** *We give thanks to God*— Who is the author of all good; and from whom the grace, which has produced your conversion, has sprung by his mission of Christ Jesus. See the note on Ephesians 1:15, 16.

**Verse 4.** *Since we heard of your faith*— This is very similar to Ephesians 1:15. And it is certain that the apostle seems to have considered the Church at Ephesus, and that at Colassa to have been nearly in the same state, as the two epistles are very similar in their doctrine and phraseology.

**Verse 6.** *Which is come unto you*— The doctrine of the Gospel is represented as a traveler, whose object it is to visit the whole habitable earth; and, having commenced his journey in Judea, had proceeded through Syria and through different parts of Asia Minor, and had lately arrived at their city, every where proclaiming glad tidings of great joy to all people.

*As it is in all the world*— So rapid is this traveler in his course, that he had already gone nearly through the whole of the countries under the Roman dominion; and will travel on till he has proclaimed his message to every people, and kindred, and nation, and tongue.

In the beginning of the apostolic age, the word of the Lord had certainly free course, did run and was glorified. Since that time the population of the earth has increased greatly; and, to follow the metaphor, the traveler still continues in his great journey. It is, the glory of the present day that, by means of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Bibles are multiplied in all the languages of Europe; and by means of the Christian missionaries,

Carey, Marshman, and Ward, whose zeal, constancy, and ability, have been rarely equalled, and perhaps never surpassed, the sacred writings have been, in the compass of a few years, translated into most of the written languages of India, in which they were not previously extant. In this labor they have been ably seconded by the Rev. Henry Martyn, one of the East India Company's chaplains, who was taken to his great reward just when he had completed a pure and accurate version of the New Testament into Persian. The Rev. R. Morrison, at Canton, has had the honor to present the whole of the New Testament, in Chinese, to the immense population of that greatest empire of the earth. May that dark people receive it, and walk in the light of the Lord! And, by means of the Wesleyan missionaries, the sacred writings have been printed and widely circulated in the Singhalese and Indo-Portuguese, through the whole of the island of Ceylon, and the pure word of the Gospel has been preached there, and also on the whole continent of India, to the conversion of multitudes. Let every reader pray that all these noble attempts may be crowned with unlimited success, till the earth is filled both with the knowledge and glory of the Lord. *Talia secla currite! Amen.*

***And bringeth forth fruit***— Wherever the pure Gospel of Christ is preached, it is the seed of the kingdom, and must be fruitful in all those who receive it by faith, in simplicity of heart.

After **καρποφορουμενον**, bringeth forth fruit, ABCD\*EFG, many others, both the Syriac, Erpen's Arabic, the Coptic, Sahidic, Aethiopic, Armenian, Slavonic, Vulgate, and Itala, together with many of the fathers, add **και αυξανομενον**, and increaseth. It had not only brought forth fruit, but was multiplying its own kind; every fruit containing seed, and every seed producing thirty, sixty, or a hundredfold. This reading is very important, and is undoubtedly genuine.

***The grace of God in truth***— Ye were fruitful, and went on increasing in the salvation of God, from the time that ye heard and acknowledged this doctrine to be of God, to spring from the grace or benevolence of God; and received it in truth, sincerely and uprightly, as his greatest gift to man.

**Verse 7. *As ye also learned of Epaphras—who is for you***— Who this Epaphras was we cannot tell; only it is likely that he was a Colossian, and became, by the call and grace of Christ, a deacon of this Church, faithfully

labouring with the apostle, to promote its best interests. Some think that he is the same with Epaphroditus, Epaphras being a contraction of that name, as Demas is of Demetrius; and it is remarkable that one of the Slavonic versions has Epaphroditus in this place. That he was a Colossian is evident from Colossians 4:12: Epaphras, who is one of you, ο εἰς ὑμῶν· some think that he was the first who preached the Gospel among this people, and hence called an apostle. He was raised up among themselves to be their minister in the absence of the apostle, and he showed himself to be worthy of this calling by a faithful discharge of his ministry, and by labouring fervently for them all, and pressing them forward, that they might stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

**Verse 8. *Your love in the Spirit.***— So we preached, and so ye believed. The heavenly flame in the heart of this minister communicated itself to those who heard him; it was like priest like people. They enjoyed a spiritual, energetic ministry, and they were a spiritual people; they had a loving spirit, and love through the Spirit of God which dwelt in them. And of this love of theirs in the Spirit, and particularly towards the apostle, Epaphras gave full proof, not only by describing to the apostle the affection they felt for him, but in presenting to him those supplies which their love to him caused them to furnish.

**Verse 9. *For this cause***— See on Ephesians 1:15, 16, where the same sentiment occurs.

***That ye might be filled***— Nothing could satisfy the apostle, either for himself or his hearers, but the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace. The Colossians had knowledge, but they must have more; it is their privilege to be filled with it. As the bright shining of the sun in the firmament of heaven fills the whole world with light and heat, so the light of the Sun of righteousness is to illuminate their whole souls, and fill them with Divine splendor, so that they might know the will of God, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; in a word, that they might have such a knowledge of Divine things as the Spirit of truth can teach to the soul of man.

**Verse 10. *That ye might walk worthy of the Lord***— Suitably to your Christian profession, exemplifying its holy doctrines by a holy and useful life. See the notes on Ephesians 4:1; and on Philipians 1:27.

***Unto all pleasing***— Doing every thing in the best manner, in the most proper time, and in a becoming spirit. Even a good work may be marred and rendered fruitless by being done improperly, out of season, or in a temper of mind that grieves the Holy Spirit.

***Being fruitful in every good work***— See on Colossians 1:6.

St. Paul exhorts the Christians at Colosse, 1. To walk — to be active in their Christian calling. 2. To walk worthily — suitably to the dignity of that calling, and to the purity of that God who had called them into this state of salvation. 3. To do every thing unto all pleasing; that God might be pleased with the manner, the time, the motive, disposition, design, and object of every act. 4. That they should be fruitful; mere harmlessness would not be sufficient; as God had sown good seed, he expected good fruit. 5. That every work should be good; they must not be fruitful in some works and fruitless in others. 6. That they should increase in religious knowledge as time rolled on, knowing, by genuine Christian experience, more of God, of his love, and of his peace, day by day.

**Verse 11. *Strengthened with all might***— That they might be able to walk worthy of the Lord, bring forth fruit, etc. See the notes on Ephesians 3:13, etc.

***According to his glorious power***— According to that sufficiency of strength which may be expected from him who has all power both in the heavens and in the earth.

***Unto all patience***— Relieving, hoping, and enduring all things.

***With joyfulness***— Feeling the continual testimony that ye please God, which will be a spring of perpetual comfort. See the notes on Ephesians 4:2.

**Verse 12. *Giving thanks unto the Father***— Knowing that ye have nothing but what ye have received from his mere mercy, and that in point of merit ye can never claim any thing from him.

***Which hath made us meet***— ἵκανῶσαυτι· Who has qualified us to be partakers, etc. Instead of ἵκανῶσαυτι, some MSS. and verF1 RG3flTf Tc (with

***Of the inheritance***— εἰς τὴν μερίδα τοῦ κληροῦ. A plain allusion to the division of the promised land by lot among the different families of the twelve Israelitish tribes. The κληρος was the lot or inheritance belonging to the tribe; the μερις was the portion in that lot which belonged to each family of that tribe. This was a type of the kingdom of God, in which portions of eternal blessedness are dispensed to the genuine Israelites; to them who have the circumcision of the heart by the Spirit, whose praise is of God, and not of man.

***Of the saints in light***— Light, in the sacred writings, is used to express knowledge, felicity, purity, comfort, and joy of the most substantial kind; here it is put to point out the state of glory at the right hand of God. As in Egypt, while the judgments of God were upon the land, there was a darkness which might be felt yet all the Israelites had light in their dwellings; so in this world, while the darkness and wretchedness occasioned by sin remain, the disciples of Christ are light in the Lord, walk as children of the light and of the day, have in them no occasion of stumbling, and are on their way to the ineffable light at the right hand of God. Some think there is an allusion here to the Eleusinian mysteries, celebrated in deep caves and darkness in honor of Ceres; but I have already, in the notes to the Epistle to the Ephesians, expressed my doubts that the apostle has ever condescended to use such a simile. The phraseology of the text is frequent through various parts of the sacred writings, where it is most obvious that no such allusion could possibly be intended.

**Verse 13. *Delivered us from the power of darkness***— Darkness is here personified, and is represented as having ἐξουσια, power, authority, and sway; all Jews and Gentiles, which had not embraced the Gospel, being under this authority and power. And the apostle intimates here that nothing less than the power of God can redeem a man from this darkness, or prince of darkness, who, by means of sin and unbelief, keeps men in ignorance, vice, and misery.

***Translated us into the kingdom, etc.***— He has thoroughly changed our state, brought us out of the dark region of vice and impiety, and placed us in the kingdom under the government of his dear Son, υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγαπῆς

αυτου, the Son of his love; the person whom, in his infinite love, he has given to make an atonement for the sin of the world.

**Verse 14. *In whom we have redemption***— Who has paid down the redemption price, even his own blood, that our sins might be cancelled, and we made fit to be partakers of the inheritance among the saints in light.

The clause, **δια του αιματος αυτου**, Through his blood, is omitted by ABCDEFG, and by most others of weight and importance; by the Syriac, Arabic of Erpen, Coptic, AEthiopic, Sahidic, some copies of the Vulgate and by the Itala; and by most of the Greek fathers. Griesbach has left it out of the text. It is likely that the reading here is not genuine; yet that we have redemption any other way than through the sacrifice of Christ, the Scriptures declare not. The same phrase is used Ephesians 1:7, where there is no various reading in any of the MSS., versions, or fathers.

***The forgiveness of sins***— **αφεσιν των αμαρτιων**. The taking away of sins; all the power, guilt, and infection of sin. All sin of every kind, with all its influence and consequences.

**Verse 15. *Who is the image of the invisible God***— The counterpart of God Almighty, and if the image of the invisible God, consequently nothing that appeared in him could be that image; for if it could be visible in the Son, it could also be visible in the Father; but if the Father be invisible, consequently his image in the Son must be invisible also. This is that form of God of which he divested himself; the ineffable glory in which he not only did not appear, as to its splendor and accompaniments, but concealed also its essential nature; that inaccessible light which no man, no created being, can possibly see. This was that Divine nature, the fullness of the Godhead bodily, which dwelt in him.

***The first-born of every creature***— I suppose this phrase to mean the same as that, Philippians 2:9: God hath given him a name which is above every name; he is as man at the head of all the creation of God; nor can he with any propriety be considered as a creature, having himself created all things, and existed before any thing was made. If it be said that God created him first, and that he, by a delegated power from God, created all things, this is most flatly contradicted by the apostle's reasoning in the 16th and 17th verses. {Colossians 1:16, 17} As the Jews term Jehovah **של עולם**

בְּכֹרֶת βεχορο σηελ ολαμ, the first-born of all the world, or of all the creation, to signify his having created or produced all things; (see Wolfius in loc.) so Christ is here termed, and the words which follow in the 16th and 17th {Colossians 1:16, 17} verses are the proof of this. The phraseology is Jewish; and as they apply it to the supreme Being merely to denote his eternal pre-existence, and to point him out as the cause of all things; it is most evident that St. Paul uses it in the same way, and illustrates his meaning in the following words, which would be absolutely absurd if we could suppose that by the former he intended to convey any idea of the inferiority of Jesus Christ.

**Verse 16. & 17. *For by him were all things created, etc.***— These two verses contain parts of the same subject. I shall endeavor to distinguish the statements of the apostle, and reason from them in such a way as the premises shall appear to justify, without appealing to any other scripture in proof of the doctrine which I suppose these verses to vindicate.

Four things are here asserted: 1. That Jesus Christ is the Creator of the universe; of all things visible and invisible; of all things that had a beginning, whether they exist in time or in eternity. 2. That whatsoever was created was created FOR himself; that he was the sole end of his own work. 3. That he was prior to all creation, to all beings, whether in the visible or invisible world. 4. That he is the preserver and governor of all things; for by him all things consist.

Now, allowing St. Paul to have understood the terms which he used, he must have considered Jesus Christ as being truly and properly God.

I. Creation is the proper work of an infinite, unlimited, and unoriginated Being; possessed of all perfections in their highest degrees; capable of knowing, willing, and working infinitely, unlimitedly, and without control: and as creation signifies the production of being where all was absolute nonentity, so it necessarily implies that the Creator acted of and from himself; for as, previously to this creation, there was no being, consequently he could not be actuated by any motive, reason, or impulse, without himself; which would argue there was some being to produce the motive or impulse, or to give the reason. Creation, therefore, is the work of him who is unoriginated, infinite, unlimited, and eternal. But Jesus Christ



is the Creator of all things, therefore Jesus Christ must be, according to the plain construction of the apostle's words, truly and properly GOD.

II. As, previously to creation, there was no being but God, consequently the great First Cause must, in the exertion of his creative energy, have respect to himself alone; for he could no more have respect to that which had no existence, than he could be moved by nonexistence, to produce existence or creation. The Creator, therefore, must make every thing FOR himself.

Should it be objected that Christ created officially or by delegation, I answer: This is impossible; for, as creation requires absolute and unlimited power, or omnipotence, there can be but one Creator; because it is impossible that there can be two or more Omnipotents, Infinites, or Eternals. It is therefore evident that creation cannot be effected officially, or by delegation, for this would imply a Being conferring the office, and delegating such power; and that the Being to whom it was delegated was a dependent Being; consequently not unoriginated and eternal; but this the nature of creation proves to be absurd. 1. The thing being impossible in itself, because no limited being could produce a work that necessarily requires omnipotence. 2. It is impossible, because, if omnipotence be delegated, he to whom it is delegated had it not before, and he who delegates it ceases to have it, and consequently ceases to be GOD; and the other to whom it was delegated becomes God, because such attributes as those with which he is supposed to be invested are essential to the nature of God. On this supposition God ceases to exist, though infinite and eternal, and another not naturally infinite and eternal becomes such; and thus an infinite and eternal Being ceases to exist, and another infinite and eternal Being is produced in time, and has a beginning, which is absurd. Therefore, as Christ is the Creator, he did not create by delegation, or in any official way.

Again, if he had created by delegation or officially, it would have been for that Being who gave him that office, and delegated to him the requisite power; but the text says that all things were made BY him and FOR him, which is a demonstration that the apostle understood Jesus Christ to be truly and essentially God.

III. As all creation necessarily exists in time, and had a commencement, and there was an infinite duration in which it did not exist, whatever was before or prior to that must be no part of creation; and the Being who existed prior to creation, and before all things — all existence of every kind, must be the unoriginated and eternal God: but St. Paul says, Jesus Christ was before all things; ergo, the apostle conceived Jesus Christ to be truly and essentially God.

IV. As every effect depends upon its cause, and cannot exist without it; so creation, which is an effect of the power and skill of the Creator, can only exist and be preserved by a continuance of that energy that first gave it being. Hence, God, as the Preserver, is as necessary to the continuance of all things, as God the Creator was to their original production. But this preserving or continuing power is here ascribed to Christ, for the apostle says, And by him do all things consist; for as all being was derived from him as its cause, so all being must subsist by him, as the effect subsists by and through its cause. This is another proof that the apostle considered Jesus Christ to be truly and properly God, as he attributes to him the preservation of all created things, which property of preservation belongs to God alone; ergo, Jesus Christ is, according to the plain obvious meaning of every expression in this text, truly, properly, independently, and essentially God.

Such are the reasonings to which the simple letter of these two verses necessarily leads me. I own it is possible that I may have misapprehended this awful subject, for *humanum est errare et nescire*; but I am not conscious of the slightest intentional flaw in the argument. Taking, therefore, the apostle as an uninspired man, giving his own view of the Author of the Christian religion, it appears, beyond all controversy, that himself believed Christ Jesus to be God; but considering him as writing under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, then we have, from the plain grammatical meaning of the words which he has used, the fullest demonstration (for the Spirit of God cannot lie) that he who died for our sins and rose again for our justification, and in whose blood we have redemption, was GOD over all. And as God alone can give salvation to men, and God only can remit sin; hence with the strictest propriety we are commanded to believe on the Lord Jesus, with the assurance that we shall

be saved. Glory be to God for this unspeakable gift! See my discourse on this subject.

**Verse 17.** See Clarke on “Colossians 1:16”

**Verse 18.** *He is the head of the body*— What the apostle has said in the two preceding verses refers to the Divine nature of Jesus Christ; he now proceeds to speak of his human nature, and to show how highly that is exalted beyond all created things, and how, in that, he is head of the Church — the author and dispenser of light, life, and salvation, to the Christian world; or, in other words, that from him, as the man in whom the fullness of the Godhead bodily dwelt, all the mercy and salvation of the Gospel system is to be received.

*The beginning, the first-born from the dead*— In 1 Corinthians 15:20, Christ is called the first-fruits of them that slept; and here, the chief and first-born from the dead; he being the first that ever resumed the natural life, with the employment of all its functions, never more to enter the empire of death, after having died a natural death, and in such circumstances as precluded the possibility of deception. The *αρχη*, chief, head, or first, answers in this verse to the *απαρχη*, or first-fruits, 1 Corinthians 15:20. Jesus Christ is not only the first who rose from the dead to die no more, but he is the first-fruits of human beings; for as surely as the first-fruits were an indication and pledge of the harvest, so surely was the resurrection of Christ the proof that all mankind should have a resurrection from the dead.

*That in all-he might have the pre-eminence*— That he might be considered, in consequence of his mediatorial office, as possessing the first place in and being chief over all the creation of God; for is it to be wondered at that the human nature, with which the great Creator condescended to unite himself, should be set over all the works of his hands?

**Verse 19.** *For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell*— As the words, the Father are not in the text, some have translated the verse thus: For in him it seemed right that all fullness should dwell; that is, that the majesty, power, and goodness of God should be manifested in and by Christ Jesus, and thus by him the Father reconciles

all things to himself. The *πληρωμα*, or fullness, must refer here to the Divine nature dwelling in the man Christ Jesus.

**Verse 20.** *And, having made peace through the blood of his cross*— Peace between God and man; for man being in a sinful state, and there being no peace to the wicked, it required a reconciliation to be made to restore peace between heaven and earth; but peace could not be made without an atonement for sin, and the consequence shows that the blood of Christ shed on the cross was necessary to make this atonement.

*To reconcile all things unto himself*— The enmity was on the part of the creature; though God is angry with the wicked every day, yet he is never unwilling to be reconciled. But man, whose carnal mind is enmity to God, is naturally averse from this reconciliation; it requires, therefore, the blood of the cross to atone for the sin, and the influence of the Spirit to reconcile the transgressor to him against whom he has offended! See the notes on 2 Corinthians 5:19, etc.

*Things in earth, or things in heaven.*— Much has been said on this very obscure clause; but, as it is my object not to write dissertations but notes, I shall not introduce the opinions of learned men, which have as much ingenuity as variety to recommend them. If the phrase be not a kind of collective phrase to signify all the world, or all mankind, as Dr. Hammond supposed the things in heaven may refer, according to some, to those persons who died under the Old Testament dispensation, and who could not have a title to glory but through the sacrificial death of Christ: and the apostle may have intended these merely to show that without this sacrifice no human beings could be saved, not only those who were then on the earth, and to whom in their successive generations the Gospel should be preached, but even those who had died before the incarnation; and, as those of them that were faithful were now in a state of blessedness, they could not have arrived there but through the blood of the cross, for the blood of calves and goats could not take away sin. After all, the apostle probably means the Jews and the Gentiles; the state of the former being always considered a sort of Divine or celestial state, while that of the latter was reputed to be merely earthly, without any mixture of spiritual or heavenly good. It is certain that a grand part of our Lord's design, in his incarnation and death, was to reconcile the Jews and the Gentiles, and

make them one fold under himself, the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. That the enmity of the Jews was great against the Gentiles is well known, and that the Gentiles held them in supreme contempt is not less so. It was therefore an object worthy of the mercy of God to form a scheme that might reconcile these two grand divisions of mankind; and, as it was his purpose to reconcile and make them one, we learn from this circumstance, as well as from many others, that his design was to save the whole human race.

**Verse 21. *And you, that were sometime alienated***— All men are alienated from God, and all are enemies in their minds to him, and show it by their wicked works; but this is spoken particularly of the Gentiles. The word **απαλλοτριω**, which we render to alienate, to give to another, to estrange, expresses the state of the Gentiles: while the Jews were, at least by profession, dedicated to God, the Gentiles were alienated, that is, given up to others; they worshipped not the true God, but had gods many and lords many, to whom they dedicated themselves, their religious service, and their property. The verb **αλλοτριω**, to alienate, being compounded here with the preposition **απο**, from, signifies to abalienate, to estrange utterly, to be wholly the property of another. Thus the Gentiles had alienated themselves from God, and were alienated or rejected by him, because of their wickedness and idolatry.

***Enemies in your mind***— They had the carnal mind, which is enmity against God; and this was expressed in their outward conduct by wicked works. See the note on Romans 5:10. The mind is taken here for all the soul, heart, affections, passions, etc.

**Verse 22. *In the body of his flesh***— By Christ's assumption of a human body, and dying for man, he has made an atonement for sin, through which men become reconciled to God and to each other.

***To present you holy***— Having saved you from your sins.

***Unblamable***— Having filled you with his Spirit, and written his law in your hearts, so that his love, shed abroad in your hearts, becomes the principle and motive to every action. The tree therefore being good, the fruit is also good.

***And unreprouable***— For, being filled with love, joy, peace, meekness, gentleness, and goodness, against these there is no law; and as they were called to love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and their neighbor as themselves, the whole spirit and design of the law was fulfilled in them, for love is the fulfilling of the law.

***In his sight***— At the day of judgment. None can enjoy heaven who have not been reconciled to God here, and shown forth the fruits of that reconciliation in being made holy and unblamable, that, when they come to be judged, they may be found unreprouable.

**Verse 23. *If ye continue in the faith***— This will be the case if you, who have already believed in Christ Jesus, continue in that faith, grounded in the knowledge and love of God, and settled — made firm and perseveringly steadfast, in that state of salvation.

***And be not moved away***— Not permitting yourselves to be seduced by false teachers.

***The hope of the Gospel***— The resurrection of the body, and the glorification of it and the soul together, in the realms of blessedness. This is properly the Gospel HOPE.

***To every creature which is under heaven***— A Hebraism for the whole human race, and particularly referring to the two grand divisions of mankind, the Jews and Gentiles; to both of these the Gospel had been preached, and to each, salvation by Christ had been equally offered. And as none had been excluded from the offers of mercy, and Jesus Christ had tasted death for every man, and the Jews and Gentiles, in their great corporate capacity, had all been invited to believe the Gospel; therefore, the apostle concludes that the Gospel was preached to every creature under heaven, as being offered without restrictions or limitations to these two grand divisions of mankind, including the whole human race.

**Verse 24. *Rejoice in my sufferings for you***— St. Paul always considers his persecutions, as far as the Jews were concerned in them, as arising from this simple circumstance-his asserting that God had chosen the Gentiles, and called them to enjoy the very same privileges with the Jews, and to constitute one Church with them.

It was on this account that the Jews attempted his life at Jerusalem, when, in order to save it, he was obliged to appeal to Caesar; the consequences of which persecution he was now suffering in his imprisonment in Rome. See on Colossians 4:2.

**Verse 27. *The riches of the glory***— God manifests to these how abundantly glorious this Gospel is among the Gentiles; and how effectual is this doctrine of Christ crucified to the salvation of multitudes.

***Which is Christ in you, the hope of glory***— In this and the following verse there are several remarkable particulars:—

I. We find here the sum and substance of the apostle's preaching.

1. He preached Christ, as the only Savior of sinners.

2. He proclaimed this Christ as being in them; for the design of the Gospel is to put men in possession of the Spirit and power of Christ, to make them partakers of the Divine nature, and thus prepare them for an eternal union with himself. Should it be said that the preposition *εν* should be translated among, it amounts to the same; for Christ was among them, to enlighten, quicken, purify, and refine them, and this he could not do without dwelling in them.

3. He preached this present and indwelling Christ as the hope of glory; for no man could rationally hope for glory who had not the pardon of his sins, and whose nature was not sanctified; and none could have pardon but through the blood of his cross; and none could have glorification but through the indwelling, sanctifying Spirit of Christ.

II. We see the manner in which the apostles preached.

1. They warned every one — they showed every man his danger; they proved that both Jews and Gentiles were under sin; and that the wrath of God was revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men; that time and life were uncertain; and that now was the day of salvation.

2. They taught every man in all wisdom — they considered the world in a state of ignorance and darkness, every man being through sin ignorant of himself and God; and the apostles taught them to know themselves, viz., that they were sinners, wretched, helpless, and perishing; and they taught them to know God, in his purity, justice, and truth, and in his mercy through Christ Jesus. Thus they instructed men in all wisdom; for the knowledge of a man's self and his God constitutes all that is essentially necessary to be known for present and eternal happiness.



III. The end which the apostles had in view in thus preaching Christ: to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. The words **τελειον εν χριστω**, perfect in or through Christ, signify two things: 1. That they should be thoroughly instructed in the doctrines of Christianity, so that they should know the truth as it is in Jesus. 2. That they should be made partakers of the grace of the Gospel, so that they might be saved from all their sins, and be filled with His fullness. The succeeding chapter amply proves that nothing less than this entered into the apostle's design. Men may dispute as they please about Christian perfection, but without it no soul shall ever see God. He who is not saved from all sin here, cannot, to his joy, see God hereafter. This perfection of which the apostle speaks, and to which he labored to bring all men, was something to be attained in and through Christ. The apostles preached Christ in the people; and they preached him as crucified for mankind. He who died for them was to live in them, and fill their whole souls with his own purity. No indwelling sin can be tolerated by an indwelling Christ; for he came into the world to save his people from their sins.

IV. We see who were the objects of the apostle's ministry: the Jews and Gentiles; **παντα ανθρωπον**, every man, the whole human race. Every man had sinned; and for every sinner Christ had died; and he died for them that they might be saved from all their sins. The apostles never restrained the offers of salvation; they made them frankly to all, believing that it was the will of God that all should believe and be saved: hence they warned and taught every man that they might, at the day of judgment, present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; for, although their own personal ministry could not reach all the inhabitants of the earth, yet it is by the doctrines which they preached, and by the writings which they have left on record, that the earth is to be filled with the knowledge and glory of God, and the souls of men brought to the enjoyment of the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace.

**Verse 29. *Whereunto I also labor***— In order to accomplish this end, I labor with the utmost zeal and earnestness; and with all that strength with which God has most powerfully furnished me. Whoever considers the original words, **αγωνιζομενος κατα την ενεργειαν αυτου την ενεργουμενην-εν δυναμει**, will find that no verbal translation can convey their sense. God worked energetically in St. Paul, and he wrought

energetically with God; and all this was in reference to the salvation of mankind.

1. THE preceding chapter contains the highest truths in the Christian religion, conveyed in language peculiar to this apostle; a language never taught by man, clothing ideas as vast as the human mind can grasp, and both coming immediately from that inspiration of the Almighty which giveth understanding.

2. What the apostle says on the Godhead of Christ has already been distinctly noted; and from this we must conclude that, unless there be some secret way of understanding the 16th and 17th verses, {Colossians 1:16, 17} which God has nowhere revealed, taken in their sober and rational sense and meaning they must for ever settle this very important point. Let any man of common sense and reason hear these words, whose mind had not been previously warped by any sentiment on the subject, and who only knew, in religious matters, this one great truth, that there is a God, and that he made and governs all things; and then let him be asked, Of whom doth the apostle speak this? Would he not immediately answer, He speaketh of God? As to the difficulties on this subject, we must consider them difficulties rather to our limited intellect, than as belonging to the subject. We can know but little of an infinite and eternal Being; nothing, properly speaking, but what himself is pleased to reveal. Let us receive, this with gratitude and reverence. See my discourse on the sum and substance of apostolic preaching.

## CHAPTER 2.

*The apostle shows his great concern for the Church at Colosse and at Laodicea; and exhorts them to steadfastness in the faith, and to beware of being seduced by specious and enticing words, 1-5. And to walk in Christ, as they had been taught, and to abound in faith and holiness, 6, 7. To beware of false teachers, who strove to pervert the Gospel, and to lead their minds from him in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwells; with whom they were filled; by whom they had received spiritual circumcision; and into whom they were baptized and were quickened, and raised from a death of sin to a life of righteousness, 8-12. He points out their former state, and the great things which Christ had done for them, 13-15. Warns them against particular tenets of the Judaizing teachers relative to meats, drinks, holydays, festivals, and the specious pretences of deceivers, 16-19. And shows that all the things taught by these, though they had a show of wisdom, yet perished in the using, and were the commandments and doctrines of men, 20-23.*

### NOTES ON CHAP 2.

**Verse 1.** *What great conflict*— The word *αγων*, which we here render conflict, is to be understood as implying earnest care and solicitude, accompanied, undoubtedly, with the most fervent application to the throne of grace in their behalf. The *αγωνιζομενος* of the preceding verse gave the apostle occasion to use the word *αγων* here. He agonized with God, and his agony was for them.

**Laodicea**— A city of Asia Minor, on the borders of Caria, Phrygia, and Lydia. It was originally called Diospolis, or the city of Jupiter, and afterwards Rhoas; but obtained the name of Laodicea from Laodice, the wife of Antiochus. It is now called Ladik. It was formerly celebrated for its commerce, and the fine black wool of its sheep. Colosse, or the city of the Colossians, lay between it and Hierapolis. This Hierapolis was also a town of Phrygia, famous for its hot baths: it is now called Bambukholasi.

*As many as have not seen my face in the flesh*— From this it has been conjectured that St. Paul had never been at either Colosse or Laodicea, and this, from the letter of the text, appears probable; and yet, his having passed more than once through this country, preaching and strengthening the Churches, renders it very improbable. It is, therefore, most likely that we should understand the apostle as speaking collectively; that he had the most earnest concern, not only for the welfare of those Churches with which he was acquainted, such as Colosse and Laodicea, but also for those to whom he was not personally known.

**Verse 2.** *That their hearts might be comforted*— That they might have continual happiness in God, having constant affiance in him.

*Being knit together in love*— The word *συμβιβασθεντων*, or *συμβιβασθεντες*, which is the true reading, but both of equal import here, signifies being united, as the beams or the timbers of a building, by mortices and pins. The visible Church of Christ cannot be in union with God unless it have unity in itself, and without love this unity is impossible.

*Unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding*— That is, that they might have the most indubitable certainty of the truth of Christianity, of their own salvation, and of the general design of God to admit the Gentiles into his Church. This is the grand mystery of God, which was now laid open by the preaching of the Gospel.

*And of the Father, and of Christ*— These words are variously written in different MSS., versions, and fathers: The mystery of God-of God in Christ-of God who is in Christ-of God concerning Christ-of God who is Christ-of the God Christ-of God and Christ-of God the Father of Christ-of God the Father, and our Lord Christ-of God and the Father of Christ-of God the Father, in Christ-of the God Christ Jesus, Father and Lord, etc., etc., etc.

This great variety of versions leaves the strongest presumption that the words in question are glosses which have crept into the text, and are of no authority. Griesbach has left them out of the text.

**Verse 3.** *In whom are hid*— Or rather in which; referring to the mystery mentioned above. In this glorious scheme of Christianity all the

treasures—the abundance and excellency, of wisdom and knowledge are contained. No scheme of salvation, or Divine knowledge, ever equalled in its depth and excellency the Gospel plan. A scheme which the wisdom of God alone could devise, and which his power and infinite mercy alone could accomplish.

**Verse 4. *Lest any man should beguile you***— The word παραλογιζεται means to deceive by sophistry or subtle reasoning, in which all the conclusions appear to be fairly drawn from the premises, but the premises are either assumed without evidence, or false in themselves; but this not being easily discovered, the unthinking or unwary are carried away by the conclusions which are drawn from these premises. And this result is clearly intimated by the term πιθανολογια, enticing words, plausible conclusions or deductions from this mode of reasoning. The apostle seems to allude to the Gentile philosophers, who were notorious for this kind of argumentation. Plato and Socrates are not free from it.

**Verse 5. *For though I be absent in the flesh***— It is hardly possible that such words as these in this verse could have been used to perfect strangers; they argue a considerable knowledge of the people, and a knowledge founded on personal acquaintance. The original is exceedingly soft and musical:-

ει γαρ και τη σαρκι απειμι,  
αλλα τω πνευματι συν υμιν ειμι,  
χαιρωμ και βλεπων υμων την ταξιν, κ.τ.α.

The whole verse shows that this Church was sound in doctrine, and strict in discipline. They had steadfast faith in Christ, and regular order or discipline among themselves.

**Verse 6. *As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus***— Many persons lay a certain stress on the words as and so, and make various fine heads of discourses from them; viz. As ye received Christ in a spirit of humility, so walk in him; as ye received him in a spirit of faith, so walk in him, etc., etc. This may be all proper in itself; but nothing of the kind was intended by the apostle. His meaning is simply this: Seeing ye have embraced the doctrine of Christ, continue to hold it fast, and not permit yourselves to be turned aside by sophistical or Judaizing teachers.

**Verse 7. *Rooted and built up in him***— It is not usual with the apostle to employ this double metaphor, taken partly from the growth of a tree and the increase of a building. They are to be rooted; as the good seed had been already sown, it is to take root, and the roots are to spread far, wide, and deep. They are to be grounded; as the foundation has already been laid, they are to build thereon. In the one case, they are to bear much fruit; in the other, they are to grow up to be a habitation of God through the Spirit. See the notes on Ephesians 2:21, 22; 3:17.

***Abounding therein with thanksgiving.***— No limitation is ever set to the operations of God on the soul, or to the growth of the soul in the knowledge, love, and image of God. Those who are brought into such a state of salvation should abound in gratitude and loving obedience, as they grow in grace.

**Verse 8. *Beware lest any man spoil you***— The word *συλλαγωγῶν*, from *σῦλη*, prey, and *αγειν*, to lead or carry away, signifies to rob, or spoil of their goods, as if by violence or rapine. Their goods were the salvation they had received from Christ; and both the Gentile and Jewish teachers endeavored to deprive them of these, by perverting their minds, and leading them off from the truths of Christianity.

***Philosophy and vain deceit***— Or, the vain or empty deceit of philosophy; such philosophizing as the Jewish and Gentile teachers used. As the term philosophy stood in high repute among the Gentiles, the Jews of this time affected it; and both Philo and Josephus use the word to express the whole of the Mosaic institutions. So the former: *οἱ κατα μωσην φιλοσοφουντες*: “Those who embraced the philosophy of Moses;” PHIL., Deuteronomy Nomin. Mutand. And the latter; *τρια παρα ιουγαιοις ειδη φιλοσοφειται*: “There are three systems of philosophy among the Jews,” (Bell. Jud., lib. ii. cap 8, sec. 2,) meaning the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, as immediately follows. The Jewish philosophy, such as is found in the Cabala, Midrashim, and other works, deserves the character of vain deceit, in the fullest sense and meaning of the words. The inspired writers excepted, the Jews have ever been the most puerile, absurd, and ridiculous reasoners in the world. Even Rabbi Maymon, or Maimonides, the most intelligent of them all, is often in his

master piece (the Moreh Nevochim, the Teacher of the Perplexed) most deplorably empty and vain.

**After the rudiments of the world**— According to the doctrine of the Jewish teachers; or, according to the Mosaic institutions, as explained and glossed by the scribes, Pharisees, and rabbins in general. We have often seen that **העולם הזה** haolam hazzeh, this world, of which **του κόσμου τούτου** is a literal translation, is frequently used to express the Jewish system of rites, ceremonies, and institutions in general; what the apostle calls the tradition of men, namely, what men, unauthorized by God, have taught as doctrines received from him. Our Lord frequently refers to and condemns these traditions.

**Not after Christ**.— Not according to the simple doctrine of Christ, viz.: HE died for our offenses; believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.

**Verse 9. For in him dwelleth all the fullness**— This is opposed to the vain or empty doctrine of the Gentile and Jewish philosophers: there is a fullness in Christ suited to the empty, destitute state of the human soul, but in the philosophy of the Jews and Gentiles nothing like this was found; nor indeed in the more refined and correct philosophy of the present day. No substitute has ever been found for the grace of the Lord Jesus, and those who have sought for one have disquieted themselves in vain.

By the Godhead or Deity, **θεοτης**, we are to understand the state or being of the Divine nature; and by the fullness of that Deity, the infinite attributes essential to such a nature.

**Bodily**. — **συματικως** signifies truly, really; in opposition to typically, figuratively. There was a symbol of the Divine presence in the Hebrew tabernacle, and in the Jewish temple; but in the body of C

figures; not only effectively, as God dwells in good men, but substantially or personally, by the strictest union, as the soul dwells in the body; so that God and man are one Christ.” See Parkhurst.

**Verse 10. *And ye are complete in him***— **καὶ εἰστε ἐν αὐτῷ πεπληρωμένοι**. And, ye are filled with him. Our word complete quite destroys the connection subsisting in the apostle’s ideas. The philosophy of the world was empty, **κενή**, but there was a **πληρωμα**, or fullness, in Christ; the Colossians were empty — spoiled and deprived of every good, while following the empty philosophy and groundless traditions of Jewish and Gentile teachers; but since they had received Christ Jesus they were **πεπληρωμένοι**, filled with him. This is the true meaning of the word, and by this the connection and assemblage of ideas in the apostle’s mind are preserved. No fanciful completeness in Christ, of a believer, while incomplete in himself, is either expressed or intended by St. Paul. It is too bad a doctrine to exist in the oracles of God.

***The head of all principality***— See the notes on Colossians 1:16, 17.

**Verse 11. *In whom also ye are circumcised***— All that was designed by circumcision, literally performed, is accomplished in them that believe through the Spirit and power of Christ. It is not a cutting off of a part of the flesh, but a putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, through the circumcision of Christ; he having undergone and performed this, and all other rites necessary to qualify him to be a mediator between God and man; for, being made under the law, he was subject to all its ordinances, and every act of his contributed to the salvation of men. But by the circumcision of Christ, the operation of his grace and Spirit may be intended; the law required the circumcision of the flesh, the Gospel of Christ required the circumcision of the heart. The words **τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν**, of the sins, are omitted by ABCD\*EFG, several others, by the Coptic, Aethiopic, Armenian, Vulgate, and Itala; and by Clement, Athanasius, Basil, Cyril, and several others. Griesbach has omitted them.

**Verse 12. *Buried with him in baptism***— Alluding to the immersions practised in the case of adults, wherein the person appeared to be buried under the Water, as Christ was buried in the heart of the earth. His rising again the third day, and their emerging from the water, was an emblem of the resurrection of the body; and, in them, of a total change of life.



***The faith of the operation of God***— They were quickened, changed, and saved, by means of faith in Christ Jesus; which faith was produced by the operation or energy of God. Believing is the act of the soul; but the grace or power to believe comes from God himself.

**Verse 13. *And you, being dead in your sins***— See the notes on Ephesians 2:1, etc.

***The uncircumcision of your flesh***— This must refer to that part of the Colossian Church which was made up of converted heathens, for the heathens alone were uncircumcised.

**Verse 14. *Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances***— By the hand-writing of ordinances the apostle most evidently means the ceremonial law: this was against them, for they were bound to fulfill it; and it was contrary to them, as condemning them for their neglect and transgression of it. This law God himself has blotted out.

Blotting out the hand-writing is probably an allusion to Numbers 5:23, where the curses written in the book, in the case of the woman suspected of adultery, are directed to be blotted out with the bitter waters. And there can be little doubt of a farther allusion, viz., to the custom of discharging the writing from parchment by the application of such a fluid as the muriatic acid, which immediately dissolves those ferruginous calces which constitute the blackening principle of most inks. But the East India inks, being formed only of simple black, such as burnt ivory, or cork, and gum water, may be wiped clean off from the surface of the paper or parchment by the application of a wet sponge, so as to leave not one legible vestige remaining: this I have often proved.

***Nailing it to his cross***— When Christ was nailed to the cross, our obligation to fulfill these ordinances was done away. There may be another reference here to some ancient mode of annulling legal obligations, by nailing them to a post; but I do not recollect at present an instance or example. Antiquated laws are said to have been thus abrogated.

**Verse 15. *And having spoiled principalities and powers***— Here is an allusion to the treatment of enemies when conquered: they are spoiled of their armor, so much the word *απεκδύειν* implies; and they are exhibited with contumely and reproach to the populace, especially when the victor

has the honor of a triumph; to the former of which there is an allusion in the words **εδειγματισεν εν παρρησια**, making a public exhibition of them; and to the latter in the words **θριαμβευσας αυτους**, triumphing over them. And the principalities and powers refer to the emperors, kings, and generals taken in battle, and reserved to grace the victor's triumph. It is very likely that by the **αρχας και εξουσιας**, principalities and powers, over whom Christ triumphed, the apostle means the **נְשִׂאוֹת** nesioth and **רֹשׁוֹת** roshoth, who were the rulers and chiefs in the Sanhedrin and synagogues, and who had great authority among the people, both in making constitutions and explaining traditions. The propagation of Christianity in Judea quite destroyed their spiritual power and domination; just as the propagation of Protestantism, which was Christianity revived, destroyed, wherever it appeared, the false doctrine and domination of the pope of Rome.

*In it.*— The words **εν αυτω** refer rather to Christ, than to the cross, if indeed they be genuine; of which there is much reason to doubt, as the versions and fathers differ so greatly in quoting them. Griesbach has left them out of the text.

**Verse 16.** *Let no man-judge you in meat, or in drink*— The apostle speaks here in reference to some particulars of the hand-writing of ordinances, which had been taken away, viz., the distinction of meats and drinks, what was clean and what unclean, according to the law; and the necessity of observing certain holydays or festivals, such as the new moons and particular sabbaths, or those which should be observed with more than ordinary solemnity; all these had been taken out of the way and nailed to the cross, and were no longer of moral obligation. There is no intimation here that the Sabbath was done away, or that its moral use was superseded, by the introduction of Christianity. I have shown elsewhere that, Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, is a command of perpetual obligation, and can never be superseded but by the final termination of time. As it is a type of that rest which remains for the people of God, of an eternity of bliss, it must continue in full force till that eternity arrives; for no type ever ceases till the antitype be come. Besides, it is not clear that the apostle refers at all to the Sabbath in this place, whether Jewish or Christian; his **σαββατων**, of sabbaths or weeks, most

probably refers to their feasts of weeks, of which much has been said in the notes on the Pentateuch.

**Verse 17. *Which are a shadow***— All these things were types, and must continue in force till the Christ, whom they represented, came; the apostle therefore says that the body — the substance or design of them was of Christ — pointed him out, and the excellent blessings which he has procured. The word **σκια**, shadow, is often used to express any thing imperfect or unsubstantial; while the term **σωμα**, body, was used in the opposite sense, and expressed any thing substantial, solid, and firm. The law was but the shadow or representation of good things to come; none should rest in it; all that it pointed out is to be sought and obtained in Christ.

**Verse 18. *Let no man beguile you***— **μηδεις υμας καταβραβευετω**. Let no man take the prize from you which the **βραβευς**, brabeus, or judge in the contests, has assigned you, in consequence of your having obtained the victory. This any reader will see, is an allusion to the Olympic and Isthmian games, and to the prizes assigned to these who had obtained the victory in one or more of the contests which there took place. The Colossians had fought and conquered under the direction of Christ, and he, as the sole judge in this contest, had assigned to them the prize; the false teachers, affecting great modesty, humility, and sanctity, endeavored to turn them aside from the Gospel, and to induce them to end in the flesh who had begun in the Spirit. Against these the apostle warns them.

***In a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels***— This is a difficult passage, and in order to explain it, I shall examine the meaning of some of the principal terms of the original. The word **θελειν**, to will, signifies also to delight; and **ταπειμοφροσυνη** signifies not only lowliness or humility of mind, but also affliction of mind; and **ταπεινουσιν την ψυχην**, Leviticus 16:20, 31, and in many other places, signifies to afflict the soul by fasting, and self-abnegation; and **θρησκευια** signifies reverence and modesty. Hence the whole passage has been paraphrased thus: Let no man spoil you of the prize adjudged to you, who delights in mortifying his body, and walking with the apparent modesty of an angel, affecting superior sanctity in order to gain disciples; intruding into things which he has not seen; and, notwithstanding his apparent humility, his mind is carnal, and he is puffed

up with a sense of his superior knowledge and piety. It is very likely that the apostle here alludes to the Essenes, who were remarkably strict and devout, spent a principal part of their time in the contemplation of the Divine Being, abstained from all sensual gratifications, and affected to live the life of angels upon earth. With their pretensions all the apostle says here perfectly agrees, and on this one supposition the whole of the passage is plain and easy. Many have understood the passage as referring to the adoration of angels, which seems to have been practised among the Jews, who appear (from Tobit, xii. 15; Philo, in lib. de Somn.; Josephus, War. lib. ii. cap. 8, sec. 7) to have considered them as a sort of mediators between God and man; presenting the prayers of men before the throne; and being, as Philo says, *μεγαλου βασιλεως οφθαλμοι και ωτα*, the eyes and ears of the great King. But this interpretation is not so likely as the foregoing.

**Verse 19. *And not holding the Head***— Not acknowledging Jesus Christ as the only Savior of mankind, and the only Head or chief of the Christian Church, on whom every member of it depends, and from whom each derives both light and life. For a farther explanation of these words see the notes on Ephesians 4:16, where the figures and phraseology are the same.

**Verse 20. *If ye be dead with Christ***— See the notes on Romans 6:3, 5.

***From the rudiments of the world***— Ye have renounced all hope of salvation from the observance of Jewish rites and ceremonies, which were only rudiments, first elements, or the alphabet, out of which the whole science of Christianity was composed. We have often seen that the world and this world signify the Jewish dispensation, or the rites, ceremonies, and services performed under it.

***Why, as though living in the world***— Why, as if ye were still under the same dispensation from which you have been already freed, are ye subject to its ordinances, performing them as if expecting salvation from this performance?

**Verse 21. *Touch not; taste not; handle not***— These are forms of expression very frequent among the Jews. In Maccoth, fol. xxi. 1: “If they say to a Nazarite, Don’t drink, don’t drink; and he, notwithstanding, drinks; he is guilty. If they say, Don’t shave, don’t shave; and he shaves,

notwithstanding; he is guilty. If they say, Don't put on these clothes, don't put on these clothes; and he, notwithstanding, puts on heterogeneous garments; he is guilty." See more in Schoettgen.

**Verse 22.** *Which all are to perish with the using*— These are not matters of eternal moment; the different kinds of meats were made for the body,

what the state of the whole would have been, had not God, in his infinite mercy, blessed it with a revelation of his will. God has given directions concerning his worship; and he has appointed the seventh day for the peculiar exercises of spiritual duties: other times he has left to man's convenience; and they abuse the text who say that the appointment of particular times and places for religious service is will-worship. God prescribes the thing, and leaves it to man, except in the case of the Sabbath, to appoint the time and the place; nor is it possible to be too frequent in God's worship, any more than to be too fervent.

## CHAPTER 3.

*The apostle exhorts the Colossians to heavenly-mindedness after the example of Christ, that they may be prepared to appear with him in glory, 1-4. Exhorts them also to mortify their members, and calls to their remembrance their former state, 5-7. Shows how completely they were changed from that state, and gives them various directions relative to truth, compassion, meekness, long-suffering, forgiveness, charity, 8-14. Shows that they are called to unity and holiness; and commands them to have the doctrine of Christ dwelling richly in them; and how they should teach and admonish each other, and do every thing, in the name of the Lord Jesus, 15-17. The relative duties of wives, 18. Of husbands, 19. Of children, 20. Of fathers, 21. Of servants, 22. He concludes by showing that he that does wrong shall be treated accordingly, for God is no respecter of persons, 23-25.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 3.

**Verse 1. *If ye then***— εἰ οὖν· Seeing then that ye are risen with Christ; this refers to what he had said, Colossians 2:12: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him. As, therefore, ye have most cordially received the doctrine of Christ; and profess to be partakers of a spiritual religion, that promises spiritual and eternal things; seek those things, and look to be prepared for the enjoyment of them.

**Verse 2. *Set your affection on things above***— τὰ ἄνω φρονεῖτε· Love heavenly things; study them; let your hearts be entirely engrossed by them. Now, that ye are converted to God, act in reference to heavenly things as ye did formerly in reference to those of earth; and vice versa. This is a very good general rule: “Be as much in earnest for heavenly and eternal things, as ye formerly were for those that are earthly and perishing.”

**Verse 3. *For ye are dead***— To all hopes of happiness from the present world; and, according to your profession, should feel no more appetite for

the things of this life, than he does whose soul is departed into the invisible state.

***Your life is hid with Christ in God.***— Christ is your treasure; and where your treasure is, there is your heart. Christ lives in the bosom of the Father; as your heart is in him, ye also sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. Christ is the life of your souls; and as he is hidden in the bosom of the Father, so are ye, who live through and in him.

**Verse 4. *When Christ, who is our life***— When Christ comes to judge the world, ye shall appear with him in his glory, and in an eternal state of blessedness.

**Verse 5. *Mortify, therefore, you members***— **νεκρωσατε** Put them to death: the verb is used metaphorically to signify, to deprive a thing of its power, to destroy its strength. Use no member of your body to sin against God; keep all under dominion; and never permit the beast to run away with the man. To gratify any sensual appetite is to give it the very food and nourishment by which it lives, thrives, and is active. However the body may suffer by excessive sensual indulgences, the appetite increases with the indulgence. Deny yourselves, and let reason rule; and the animal will not get the ascendancy over the rational man. See the notes on Romans 6:11, etc.

***Inordinate affection***— **παθος** Unnatural and degrading passion; bestial lusts. See Romans 1:26, 27; and the notes there.

***Evil concupiscence***— **επιθυμιαν κακην**. As **επιθυμια** signifies strong and vehement desire of any kind, it is here joined with **κακη**, evil, to show the sense more particularly in which the apostle uses it.

***Covetousness, which is idolatry***— For the covetous man makes his money his god. Now, it is the prerogative of God to confer happiness; every godly man seeks his happiness in God; the covetous man seeks that in his money which God alone can give; therefore his covetousness is properly idolatry. It is true his idol is of gold and silver, but his idolatry is not the less criminal on that account.

**Verse 6. *The wrath of God cometh***— God is angry with such persons, and he inflicts on them the punishment which they deserve.



**Verse 7. *In the which ye also walked sometime***— When ye were in your unconverted state, ye served divers lusts and pleasures. See on Romans 7:5, and Ephesians 2:2.

**Verse 8. *But now ye also put on all these***— See on Ephesians 4:22. Being now converted, sin had no more dominion over them.

***Anger, wrath, etc.***— They had not only lived in the evils mentioned Colossians 3:5, but also in those enumerated here; and they had not only laid aside the former, but they had laid aside the latter also. They retained no bosom, no easily besetting, sin. They were risen with Christ, and they sought the things which were above.

***Blasphemy***— The word seems here to mean injurious and calumnious speaking.

**Verse 9. *Lie not one to another***— Do not deceive each other; speak the truth in all your dealings; do not say, “My goods are so and so,” when you know them to be otherwise; do not undervalue the goods of your neighbor, when your conscience tells you that you are not speaking the truth. It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but afterwards he boasteth; i.e. he underrates his neighbour’s property till he gets him persuaded to part with it for less than its worth; and when he has thus got it, he boasts what a good bargain he has made. Such a knave speaks not truth with his neighbor.

***Ye have put off the old man***— See the notes on Romans 6:6; and particularly on Romans 13:11-14. Ye have received a religion widely different from that ye had before; act according to its principles.

**Verse 10. *And have put on the new man***— See on Romans 12:1, 2.

***Is renewed in knowledge***— IGNORANCE was the grand characteristic of the heathen state; KNOWLEDGE, of the Christian. The utmost to which heathenism could pretend was a certain knowledge of nature. How far this went, and how much it fell short of the truth, may be seen in the writings of Aristotle and Pliny. Christianity reveals God himself, the author of nature; or, rather, God has revealed himself, in the Christian system with which he has blessed mankind. Christianity teaches a man the true knowledge both of himself and of God; but it is impossible to know one’s

self but in the light of God; the famous **γνωθι σεαυτον**, know thyself, was practicable only under the Christian religion.

**After the image of him that created him**— We have already seen that God made man in his own image; and we have seen in what that image consisted. See the notes on Genesis 1:26, and on Ephesians 4:23, 24. Does not the apostle refer here to the case of an artist, who wishes to make a perfect resemblance of some exquisite form or person? God in this case is the artist, man is the copy, and God himself the original from which this copy is to be taken. Thus, then, man is made by his Creator, not according to the image or likeness of any other being, but according to his own; the image **του κτισαντος**, of the Creator. And as the Divine nature cannot exist in forms or fashions, moral qualities alone are those which must be produced. Hence the apostle, interpreting the words of Moses, says that the image in which man was made, and in which he must be remade, **ανακαινουμενον**, made anew, consists in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness.

**Verse 11. Where there is neither Greek nor Jew**— In which new creation no inquiry is made what nation the persons belonged to, or from what ancestry they had sprung, whether in Judea or Greece.

**Circumcision nor uncircumcision**— Nor is their peculiar form of religion of any consideration, whether circumcised like the Jews, or uncircumcised like the heathens.

**Barbarian, Scythian**— Nor whether of the more or less tractable of the nations of the world; for although knowledge, and the most refined and sublime knowledge, is the object to be attained, yet, under the teaching and influence of the blessed Spirit, the most dull and least informed are perfectly capable of comprehending this Divine science, and becoming wise unto salvation.

**Bond nor free**— Nor does the particular state or circumstances in which a man may be found, either help him to or exclude him from the benefit of this religion; the slave having as good a title to salvation by grace as the freeman.

**But Christ is all, and in all.**— All mankind are his creatures, all conditions are disposed and regulated by his providence, and all human

beings are equally purchased by his blood. He alone is the source whence all have proceeded, and to him alone all must return. He is the Maker, Preserver, Savior, and Judge of all men.

**Verse 12. *Put on-as the elect of God***— As the principal design of the apostle was to show that God had chosen the Gentiles, and called them to the same privileges as the Jews, and intended to make them as truly his people as the Jews ever were, he calls them the elect or chosen of God; and as the Jews, who were formerly the elect, were still beloved, and called to be holy, so he calls the Colossians beloved, and shows them that they are called with the same holy calling.

***Bowels of mercies, etc.***— Be merciful, not in act merely, but in spirit and affection. In all cases of this kind let your heart dictate to your hand; be clothed with bowels of mercy — let your tenderest feelings come in contact with the miseries of the distressed as soon as ever they present themselves. Though I know that to put on, and to be clothed with, are figurative expressions, and mean to assume such and such characters and qualities; yet there may be a higher meaning here. The apostle would have them to feel the slightest touch of another's misery; and, as their clothes are put over their body, so their tenderest feeling should be always within the reach of the miserable. Let your feelings be at hand, and feel and commiserate as soon as touched. See on Ephesians 4:2. Instead of **οικτιριμον** mercies, in the plural, almost every MS. of importance, with many of the fathers, read **οικτιριμου**, bowels of mercy, in the singular. This various reading makes scarcely any alteration in the sense.

**Verse 13. *Forbearing one another***— Avoid all occasions of irritating or provoking each other.

***Forgiving one another***— If ye receive offense, be instantly ready to forgive on the first acknowledgment of the fault.

***Even as Christ forgave you***— Who required no satisfaction, and sought for nothing in you but the broken, contrite heart, and freely forgave you as soon as you returned to Him. No man should for a moment harbour ill will in his heart to any; but the offended party is not called actually to forgive, till the offender, with sorrow, acknowledges his fault. He should be ready to forgive, and while he is so, he can neither feel hatred nor malice towards

the offender; but, as Christ does not forgive us till with penitent hearts we return unto him, acknowledging our offenses, so those who have trespassed against their neighbor are not to expect any act of forgiveness from the person they have injured, till they acknowledge the offense. Forgive, says the apostle, **καθως και ο χριστος** even as Christ forgave you — show the same disposition and the same readiness to forgive your offending brethren, as Christ showed towards you.

**Verse 14. *And above all these things***— **επι πασι δε τουτοις**· Upon all, over all; as the outer garment envelopes all the clothing, so let charity or love invest and encompass all the rest. Even bowels of mercy are to be set in motion by love; from love they derive all their feeling, and all their power and promptitude to action. Let this, therefore, be as the upper garment; the surtout that invests the whole man.

***Which is the bond of perfectness.***— Love to God and man is not only to cover all, but also to unite and consolidate the whole. It is therefore represented here under the notion of a girdle, by which all the rest of the clothing is bound close about the body. To love God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength, and one's neighbor as one's self, is the perfection which the new covenant requires, and which the grace and Spirit of Christ work in every sincerely obedient, humble believer; and that very love, which is the fulfilling of the law and the perfection itself which the Gospel requires, is also the bond of that perfection. It is by love to God and man that love is to be preserved. Love begets love; and the more a man loves God and his neighbor, the more he is enabled to do so. Love, while properly exercised, is ever increasing and reproducing itself.

Instead of **τελειοτητος**, perfection, several reputable MSS., with the Itala, read **ενοτητος**, unity; but the former is doubtless the genuine reading.

**Verse 15. *And let the peace of God***— Instead of **θεου**, God, **ξριστου**, Christ, is the reading of ABC\*D\*FG, several others, both the Syriac, the Arabic of Erpen, Coptic, Aethopic, Armenian, Vulgate, and Itala, with several of the fathers; on this evidence Griesbach has inserted it in the text.

***Rule in your hearts***— **βραβευετω**· Let the peace of Christ judge, decide, and govern in your hearts, as the brabeus, or judge, does in the Olympic contests. No heart is right with God where the peace of Christ does not

rule; and the continual prevalence of the peace of Christ is the decisive proof that the heart is right with God. When a man loses his peace, it is an awful proof that he has lost something else; that he has given way to evil, and grieved the Spirit of God. While peace rules, all is safe.

***In one body***— Ye cannot have peace with God, in yourselves, nor among each other, unless ye continue in unity; and, as one body, continue in connection and dependence on him who is your only head: to this ye are called; it is a glorious state of salvation, and ye should be for ever thankful that ye are thus privileged.

**Verse 16. *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly***— I believe the apostle means that the Colossians should be well instructed in the doctrine of Christ; that it should be their constant study; that it should be frequently preached, explained, and enforced among them; and that all the wisdom comprised in it should be well understood. Thus the doctrine of God would dwell richly, that is, abundantly, among them. But there appears to be here an allusion to the Shechinah, or symbol of the Divine presence, which dwelt in the tabernacle and first temple; and to an opinion common among the Jews, which is thus expressed in Melchita, fol. 38, 4: **שם שבינה שם עמה כל מקום שהתורה**; In whatever place the LAW is, there the SHECHINAH is present with it. Nor is this a vain supposition; wherever God's word is seriously read, heard, or preached, there is God himself; and in that Church or religious society where the truth of God is proclaimed and conscientiously believed, there is the constant dwelling of God. Through bad pointing this verse is not very intelligible; the several members of it should be distinguished thus: Let the doctrine of Christ dwell richly among you; teaching and admonishing each other in all wisdom; singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord, in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. This arrangement the original will not only bear, but it absolutely requires it, and is not sense without it. See the note on Ephesians 5:19.

The singing which is here recommended is widely different from what is commonly used in most Christian congregations; a congeries of unmeaning sounds, associated to bundles of nonsensical, and often ridiculous, repetitions, which at once both deprave and disgrace the Church of Christ. Melody, which is allowed to be the most proper for devotional music, is

now sacrificed to an exuberant harmony, which requires, not only many different kinds of voices, but different musical instruments to support it. And by these preposterous means the simplicity of the Christian worship is destroyed, and all edification totally prevented. And this kind of singing is amply proved to be very injurious to the personal piety of those employed in it; even of those who enter with a considerable share of humility and Christian meekness, how few continue to sing with GRACE in their hearts unto the Lord?

**Verse 17. *Whatsoever ye do in word or deed***— Let your words be right, and your actions upright.

***Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus***— Begin with him, and end with him; invoke his name, and pray for his direction and support, in all that ye do; and thus every work will be crowned with all requisite success. Doing every thing in the name of God, and referring every thing to his glory, is as rational as it is pious. Could it be ever supposed that any person would begin a bad work in God's name? However, it is so. No people in the universe more strictly adhere to the letter of this advice than the Mohammedans; for they never undertake a work, eat meat, nor write a book, without prefacing all with:-

(Arabic)

Bismillahi, Arrahmani, Arraheemi;

“In the name of the most merciful and compassionate God.”

Not only books of devotion, but books on all arts and sciences, books of tales and romances, books of poetry, and those on the elements of reading, etc., begin thus; nay, it is prefixed to the (Arabic) *Lizit un Nissa*, one of the most abominable productions that ever came from the pen of man, and is precisely the same among the Mohammedans, as the infamous work of Nicholas Chorier, called *Elegantiae Latini Sermonis*, falsely attributed to John Meursius, has been among some called Christians. Of both, with a trifling hyberbole, it may be said: “Surely these books were written in hell, and the author of them must certainly be the devil.”

***Giving thanks to God***— Even praises, as well as prayers, must ascend to God through this Mediator. We have no authority to say that God will accept even our thanksgiving, unless it ascend to him through Christ Jesus.

**Verse 18. *Wives, submit yourselves***— Having done with general directions, the apostle comes to particular duties, which are commonly called relative; because they only belong to persons in certain situations; and are not incumbent on all. No woman has the duty of a wife to perform but she who is one, and no man has the duty of a husband to perform but he who is married.

The directions here to wives, husbands, children, parents, servants, and masters, are so exactly the same in substance with those in Ephesians 5:22-33; 6:1-9, that there is no need to repeat what has been said on those passages; and to the notes there the reader is requested to refer.

***As it is fit in the Lord.***— God commands it; and it is both proper and decent.

**Verse 19. *Be not bitter against them.***— Wherever bitterness is, there love is wanting. And where love is wanting in the married life, there is hell upon earth.

**Verse 20. *Children, obey-in all things***— That is, in the Lord — in every thing that your parents command you, which is not contrary to the will or word of God.

**Verse 21. *Fathers, provoke not***— See the notes on Ephesians 6:4.

**Verse 22. *Servants, obey***— See on Ephesians 6:5-8.

**Verse 24. *The reward of the inheritance***— Here, ye have neither lands nor property; ye are servants or slaves; be not discouraged, ye have an inheritance in store; be faithful unto God and to your employers, and Christ will give you a heavenly inheritance.

**Verse 25. *But he that doeth wrong***— It is possible for an unfaithful servant to wrong and defraud his master in a great variety of ways without being detected; but let all such remember what is here said: He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he has done; God sees him, and will punish him for his breach of honesty and trust. Wasting, or not taking proper care of the goods of your master, is such a wrong as God will resent. He that is unfaithful in that which is little, will be unfaithful in much, if he have opportunity; and God alone is the defense against an unfaithful servant.

***There is no respect***— God neither esteems nor despises any man because of his outward condition and circumstances; for there is no respect of persons with him. Every man is, in the eye of God, what he is in his soul: if holy, loved; if wicked, despised and rejected.



## CHAPTER 4.

*The duty of masters to their servants, 1. Continuance in prayer recommended, to which watchfulness and thanksgiving should be joined, 2. And to pray particularly for the success of the Gospel, 3, 4. Directions concerning walking wisely, redeeming of time, and godly conversation, 5, 6. He refers them to Tychius and Onesimus, whom he sends to them for particulars relative to his present circumstances, 7-9. Mentions the salutations of several then at Rome, of whom he gives some interesting particulars, 10-14. Sends his own salutations to the brethren in Laodicea, and to Nymphas and the Church at his house, 15. Directs this epistle to be read in the Church of the Laodiceans, and that to them to be read at Colosse, 16. Directions to Archippus relative to his ministry, 17. Concludes with salutations to the people at Colosse, to whom he sends his apostolical benediction, 18.*

### NOTES ON CHAP. 4.

**Verse 1.** *Masters, give unto your servants*— This verse should have been added to the preceding, to which it properly belongs; and this chapter should have begun with Colossians 4:2.

*That which is just and equal*— As they are bondmen or slaves of whom the apostle speaks, we may at once see with what propriety this exhortation is given. The condition of slaves among the Greeks and Romans was wretched in the extreme; they could appeal to no law; and they could neither expect justice nor equity. The apostle, therefore, informs the proprietors of these slaves that they should act towards them both according to justice and equity; for God, their Master, required this of them, and would at last call them to account for their conduct in this respect. Justice and equity required that they should have proper food, proper raiment, due rest, and no more than moderate work. This is a lesson that all masters throughout the universe should carefully learn. Do not treat your servants as if God had made them of an inferior blood to yours.

**Verse 2. *Continue in prayer***— This was the apostle's general advice to all; without this, neither wives, husbands, children, parents, servants, nor masters, could fulfill the duties which God, in their respective stations, required of them.

All might, power, and life come from God; his creatures are continually dependent upon him for all these: to earnest, persevering prayer, he has promised every supply; but he who prays not has no promise. How few wives feel it their duty to pray to God to give them grace to behave as wives! How few husbands pray for the grace suited to their situation, that they may be able to fulfill its duties! The like may be said of children, parents, servants, and masters. As every situation in life has its peculiar duties, trials, etc.; so to every situation there is peculiar grace appointed. No man can fulfill the duties of any station without the grace suited to that station. The grace suited to him, as a member of society in general, will not be sufficient for him as a husband, father, or master. Many proper marriages become unhappy in the end, because the parties have not earnestly besought God for the grace necessary for them as husbands and wives. This is the origin of family broils in general; and a proper attention to the apostle's advice would prevent them all.

***Watch in the same***— Be always on your guard; and when you have got the requisite grace by praying, take care of it, and bring it into its proper action by watchfulness; by which you will know when, and where, and how to apply it.

***With thanksgiving***— Being always grateful to God, who has called you into such a state of salvation, and affords you such abundant means and opportunities to glorify him.

**Verse 3. *Praying also for us***— Let the success and spread of the Gospel be ever dear to you; and neglect not to pray fervently to God that it may have free course, run, and be glorified.

***A door of utterance***— *θυραν του λογου*. The word *θυρα*, which commonly signifies a door, or such like entrance into a house or passage through a wall, is often used metaphorically for an entrance to any business, occasion or opportunity to commence or perform any particular work. So in Acts 14:27: The DOOR of faith is opened to the Gentiles; i.e.

there is now an opportunity of preaching the Gospel to the nations of the earth. 1 Corinthians 16:9: A great and effectual DOOR is opened unto me; i.e. I have now a glorious opportunity of preaching the truth to the people of Ephesus. 2 Corinthians 2:12: When I came to Troas—a DOOR was opened unto me; I had a fine opportunity of preaching Christ crucified at that place. So, here, the **θυρατου λογου**, which we translate door of utterance, signifies an occasion, opportunity, or entrance, for the doctrine of the Gospel. The same metaphor is used by the best Latin writers. Cicero, xiii. Ep. 10: Amiciliae fores aperiuntur; the DOORS of friendship are opened — there is now an opportunity of reconciliation. And Ovid, Amor. lib. iii., Eleg. xii. ver. 12:-

*JANUA per nostras est adaperta manus.*

*“The gate is opened by our hands.”*

Of this use of the word among the Greek writers Schleusner gives several examples. See also Revelation 3:8, where the word is used in the same sense. To multiply examples would be needless; the apostle excites them to pray, not that a door of utterance, i.e. a readiness and fluency of speech, may be given to him and his fellow laborers, but that they may have an opportunity of preaching the doctrine of Christ; and so the term **λογος** is to be understood here, as well as in many other places of the New Testament, in most of which we have either lost or obscured its meaning by translating it word instead of doctrine.

***The mystery of Christ***— The Gospel, which had been hidden from all former times, and which revealed that purpose long hidden in the Divine councils, that the Gentiles should be called to enjoy the same privileges with the Jews.

***For which I am also in bonds***— He was suffering under Jewish malice, and for preaching this very mystery; for they could not bear to hear announced, as from heaven, that the Gentiles, whom they considered eternally shut out from any participation of the Divine favor, should be made fellow heirs with them of the grace of life; much less could they bear to hear that they were about to be reprobated, and the Gentiles elected in their place. It was for asserting these things that they persecuted Paul at Jerusalem, so that to save his life he was obliged to appeal to Caesar; and

being taken to Rome, he was detained a prisoner till his case was fully heard; and he was a prisoner at Rome on this very account when he wrote this Epistle to the Colossians. See the note on Colossians 1:24.

**Verse 4.** *That I may make it manifest*— It was a mystery, and he wished to make it manifest — to lay it open, and make all men see it.

**Verse 5.** *Walk in wisdom*— Act wisely and prudently in reference to

abodes of endless misery to all those who are out of its antichristian and inhuman pale; this Church, I say, has been brought to this standard, and proved by the Scriptures to be fallen from the faith of God's elect, and to be most awfully and dangerously corrupt; and to be within its pale, of all others professing Christianity, would be the most likely means of endangering the final salvation of the soul. Yet even in it many sincere and upright persons may be found, who, in spirit and practice, belong to the true Church of Christ. Such persons are to be found of all religious persuasions, and in all sorts of Christian societies.

*Redeeming the time.*— See on Ephesians 5:16.

**Verse 6.** *Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt*— Let it be such as has a tendency to oppose and preserve from the corruption of sin. The rabbins say: "He who, in prayer, omits any word, should begin again at the beginning; for he who does not is like boiled pottage, in which there is no salt." Berachoth, fol. 34, 1. Let all your conversation be such as may tend to exemplify and recommend Christianity; let it not only be holy, but wise, gracious, and intelligent. A harsh method of proposing or defending the doctrines of Christianity only serves to repel men from those doctrines, and from the way of salvation. Salt, from its use in preserving food from corruption, and rendering it both savoury and wholesome, has always been made the emblem of wisdom. The word has been also used to express in composition or conversation what is terse, comprehensive, useful, elegant, and impressive. The term Attic salt has been used to express some of the principal beauties of the Greek tongue; of such beauties the Gospel of Christ has an endless store. See on Matthew 5:13, and Mark 9:50.

*How ye ought to answer every man.*— That your discourse may be so judiciously managed, that ye may discern how to treat the prejudices and meet the objections both of Jews and Gentiles.

**Verse 7.** *All my state shall Tychicus*— See the note on Ephesians 6:21. Tychicus well knew the apostle's zeal and perseverance in preaching the Gospel, his sufferings on that account, his success in converting both Jews and Gentiles, and the converts which were made in Caesar's household; he could give these to the Colossians in ample detail, and some of them it would not have been prudent to commit to writing.

**Verse 8. *That he might know your estate***— Instead of *ἵνα γνῶ τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν*, that HE may know YOUR affairs, ABD\*FG, many others, with the Aethiopic, Itala, Theodoret, and Damascenus, read *ἵνα γνῶτε τὰ περὶ ἡμῶν*, that YE may know OUR affairs; which is probably the true reading. Tychicus was sent to them, not to know their affairs, but with Onesimus, to carry this epistle and make the apostle's state known to them, and comfort their hearts by the good news which he brought. The next verse confirms this meaning.

**Verse 9. *With Onesimus—who is one of you***.— Onesimus was a native of some part of Phrygia, if not of Colosse itself; and being lately converted to the Christian faith by the instrumentality of the apostle, he would be able, on this account, to give them satisfactory information concerning the apostle's state, which would be doubly acceptable to them as he was their countryman. See the Epistle to Philemon.

***All things which are done here***.— FG, the Vulgate, Itala, Jerome, and Bede, add here *πραττομενα*, what is done, which we have supplied in Italics in our translation. These brethren could give an account of the transactions at Rome, relative to the apostle and Christianity, which it might not be prudent for him to commit to writing. See on Colossians 4:7. The reign of Nero was not only cruel, but suspicious, jealous, and dangerous.

**Verse 10. *Aristarchus my fellow prisoner***— Concerning Aristarchus, see Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:2; and see the note on this latter place. Aristarchus and Epaphras are mentioned as saluters in this epistle, and in that to Philemon written at the same time; but here he is said to be a prisoner, and Epaphras not. In that to Philemon, Epaphras is called a prisoner, and Aristarchus not. One of them is wrong, though it is uncertain which; unless both were prisoners. See Wall's Crit. Notes. As Aristarchus had been a zealous and affectionate adherent to St. Paul, and followed him in all his journeys, ministering to him in prison, and assisting him in preaching the Gospel in Rome, he might have been imprisoned on this account. We need not suppose that both he and Epaphras were imprisoned at the same time; about the same time they might be imprisoned, but it might be so ordered by the providence of God that when Aristarchus was imprisoned Epaphras was at liberty, and while

Epaphras was in prison Aristarchus was at liberty. This is a very possible and easily to be conceived case.

**Marcus**— See the account of this person, Acts 15:39. Though there had been some difference between the apostle and this Mark, yet from this, and 2 Timothy 4:11, we find that they were fully reconciled, and that Mark was very useful to St. Paul in the work of the ministry.

**Touching whom ye received commandments**— What these were we cannot tell; it was some private communication which had been previously sent to the Colossian Church.

**Verse 11. Jesus, which is called Justus**— Jesus, Joshua, or Jehoshua, was his name among his countrymen the Jews; Justus was the name which he bore among the Greeks and Romans.

**These only**— That is, only Aristarchus Marcus, and Jesus Justus, who were formerly Jews or proselytes; for **οι οντες εκ περιτομης**, they were of the circumcision, and assisted the apostle in preaching the Gospel. There were others who did preach Christianity, but they did it from envy and strife, in order to add affliction to the apostle's bonds. It is evident, therefore, that St. Peter was not now at Rome, else he certainly would have been mentioned in this list; for we cannot suppose that he was in the list of those who preached Christ in an exceptionable way, and from impure and unholy motives: indeed, there is no evidence that St. Peter ever saw Rome. And as it cannot be proved that he ever was bishop or pope of that city, the keystone of the triumphal arch of the pope of Rome is pulled out; this building, therefore, of his supremacy, cannot stand.

**Verse 12. Epaphras, who is one of you**— A native of some part of Phrygia, and probably of Colosse itself.

**A servant of Christ**— A minister of the Gospel.

**Labouring fervently for you**— **αγωνιζομενος**. Agonizing; very properly expressed by our translators, labouring fervently.

**That ye may stand perfect and complete**— **ἵνα στήτε τελειοι και πεπληρημενοι**. That ye may stand firm, perfectly instructed, and fully persuaded of the truth of those doctrines which have been taught you as the revealed will of God: this I believe to be the meaning of the apostle.

Instead of **πεπληρωμενοι**, complete or filled up, almost all the MSS. of the Alexandrian rescension, which are considered the most authentic and correct, have **πεπληροφορημενοι**, that ye may be fully persuaded. The word **πληροφορια** signifies such a complete persuasion of the certainty of a thing, as leaves the mind which has it neither room nor inclination to doubt; and **πληροφορεω**, the verb, has the same meaning, viz., to be thus persuaded, or to persuade thus, by demonstrative argumentation and exhibition of unquestionable facts.

This is such a persuasion as the Spirit of God, by means of the Gospel, gives to every sincere and faithful man; and from which arises the solid happiness of the genuine Christian. They who argue against it, prove, at least, that they have not got it.

**Verse 13. *He hath a great zeal for you***— Instead of **ζηλον πολυν**, much zeal, ABCD\*\*, several others, with versions and fathers, read **πολυν πονον**, much labor; they are here nearly of the same meaning, though the latter appears to be the better and genuine reading.

***Laodicea, and-Hierapolis***— These were both cities of Phrygia, between which Colosse, or the city of Colassa, was situated. See Colossians 2:1. The latter was called Hierapolis, or the holy city, from the multitude of its temples. Apollo, Diana, AEsculapius, and Hygeia, were all worshipped here, as appears by the coins of this city still extant.

**Verse 14. *Luke, the beloved physician***— This is generally supposed to be the same with Luke the evangelist. See the preface to the notes on this gospel. Some, however, suppose them to be different persons; because, where it is evident that Luke the evangelist is meant, he never has more than his simple name Luke; and because the apostle is supposed to intend a different person here, he adds, **ο ιατρος ο αγαπητος**, the beloved physician. The word **ιατρος** signifies a healer, and must not be restricted to physician, in the sense in which we use that word; he was surgeon, physician, and dispenser of medicines, etc., for all these were frequently combined in the same person.

**Verse 15. *Salute-Nymphas, and the Church-in his house.***— This person, and his whole family, which probably was very numerous, appear to have received the Gospel; and it seems that, for their benefit and that of



his neighbors, he had opened his house for the worship of God. In those primitive times there were no consecrated places, for it was supposed that the simple setting apart of any place for the worship of God was a sufficient consecration. See of those domestic churches, Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:19.

**Verse 16.** *Cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans*— That is: Let a copy be taken, and sent to them, that it may be read there also. This appears to have been a regular custom in the apostolic Church.

*That ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea*— Some suppose that this was an epistle sent from Laodicea to the apostle, which he now sent by Aristarchus to the Colossians, that they might peruse it; that thereby they might see the propriety of sending a copy of his epistle to them, to the Laodicean Church. Many eminent critics are of this opinion, which appears to me to be both forced and far fetched. Others think that the Epistle to the Ephesians is the epistle in question, and that it was originally directed to them, and not to the Ephesians. See the notes on Ephesians 1:1, etc. But others, equally learned, think that there was an epistle, different from that to the Ephesians, sent by St. Paul to the Laodiceans, which is now lost. There was an epistle under this direction in the times of Theodoret and Jerome, for both of them mention it; but the latter mentions it as apocryphal, *Legunt quidam et ad Laodicenses Epistolam, sed ab omnibus exploditur*; “Some read an Epistle to the Laodiceans, but it is exploded by all.” The seventh OEcumenic council, held in 787, states that the ancients allowed that there was an epistle with this direction, but that all the orthodox rejected it as supposititious.

An epistle *ad Laodicenses* is still extant in the Latin language, a very ancient copy of which is in the library *Sancti Albani Andegavensis*, St. Alban’s of Anjou. Hutter has translated it into Greek, but his translation is of no authority. Calmet has published this epistle, with various readings from the above MS. I shall subjoin it at the end of this epistle, and give my opinion relative to its use and authenticity. A copy of this epistle stands in this place as a portion of Divine revelation in one of my own MSS. of the Vulgate.

**Verse 17.** *Say to Archippus*— Who this person was we cannot tell; there have been various conjectures concerning him; some think he was bishop,

or overseer of the Church at Colosse, in the absence of Epaphras. Whatever he was, it has been supposed that he had been remiss in discharging the duties of his office; and hence this direction of the apostle, which appears here in the light of a reprehension. But if the same person be meant as in the Epistle to Philemon, Philemon 1:2, whom St. Paul calls his fellow laborer and fellow soldier, it cannot be supposed that any reproof is here intended; for, as the Epistle to the Colossians, and that to Philemon, were evidently written about the end of the year 62, Archippus could not be a fellow laborer and fellow soldier of the apostle at Rome, and yet a delinquent at Colosse at the same time. It is more likely, therefore, that the words of the apostle convey no censure, but are rather intended to stir him up to farther diligence, and to encourage him in the work, seeing he had so much false doctrine and so many false teachers to contend with.

**Verse 18.** *The salutation by the hand of me Paul.*— The preceding part of the epistle was written by a scribe, from the mouth of the apostle: this, and what follows, was written by the hand of St. Paul himself. A similar distinction we find, 1 Corinthians 16:21, and in 2 Thessalonians 3:17; and this, it seems, was the means by which the apostle authenticated every epistle which he sent to the different Churches. The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle, so I write.

*Remember my bonds*— See what proof ye have of the truth of the Gospel; I am in bonds on this account; I suffer patiently, yea, exult in the Lord Jesus, so perfectly am I upheld by the grace of the Gospel. Remember my bonds, and take courage. How eloquent were these concluding words! That such a man should be in bonds for the Gospel, was the fullest proof of the truth of the Gospel. A cunningly devised fable could not have imposed on Saul of Tarsus; he was fully satisfied of the truth of the doctrines of Christianity; he proclaimed them as truths from heaven; and for their sake cheerfully suffered the loss of all things. The bonds of such a man are a plenary proof of the truth of the doctrines for which he was bound.

*Grace be with you.*— May you still possess the favor and blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ: the apostle ends, as he began, this epistle. Without the grace of Christ they could not have become a Church; without this grace they could not continue to be one.

*Amen*— This is omitted by the most ancient and correct MSS.

The subscriptions, as usual, are various and uncertain:—

The common GREEK text has, To the Colossians, written from Rome by Tychicus and Onesimus.

The Epistle to the Colossians; written at Rome, and sent by the hand of Tychicus. SYRIAC.

To the Colossians. AETHIOPIC.

In the Vulgate there is no subscription.

The end of the epistle; and it was written from Rome, and sent by the hand of Tychicus and Onesimus. Praise be to God for ever and ever; and may his mercy be upon us. Amen. ARABIC.

Written from Athens by Tychicus, and Onesimus, and Mark, his disciples. COPTIC.

The MSS. are not less various than the versions:

To the Colossians. — That to the Colossians is completed; that to the Philippians begins. — That to the Colossians is finished; the First Epistle to the Thessalonians begins. — To the Colossians, from Rome. — Written to the Colossians from Rome. — Written from Rome by Tychicus, and Timotheus, and Onesimus. — Written by Paul and Timothy, and sent by Tychicus, and Onesimus.

That the epistle was written from Rome there is little cause to doubt: that Timothy might be the scribe is very probable, because it appears he was at Rome with the apostle in the same year in which this epistle was written. See Philippians 2:19. And that it was sent by Tychicus and Onesimus, seems evident from the 8th and 9th verses of this chapter. {Colossians 4:8, 9}

The common subscription has the consent of the greater number of the most recent and comparatively recent MSS., but this is not, in general, a proof of authenticity.

In the note on Colossians 4:16, I promised to subjoin what is called the Epistle to the Laodiceans: I give it here from the best copies, and add a literal translation, that the curious, whether learned or unlearned, may have

what some have believed to be authentic, and what has doubtless existed, in one form or other, from a very remote antiquity.

EPISTOLA PAULI APOSTOLI AD LAODICENSES,

1. Paulus, Apostolus, non ab hominibus, neque per hominem, sed per Jesum Christum. Fratribus qui estis (sunt) Laodiceae. 2. Gratia vobis et pax a Deo Patre nostro, et Domino Jesu Christo. 3. Gratias ago Christo per omnem orationem meam, quod permanentes estis, et perseverantes in operibus bonis, promissionem expectantes in die judicii. 4. Neque disturbent (deficiunt) vos quorumdam vaniloquia insimulantium veritatem (insanientium) ut vos avertant a veritate evangelii, quod a me praedicatur. 5. Et nunc faciet Deus, ut qui sunt ex me ad perfectionem veritatis evangelii sint deservientes, et benignitatem operum facientes quae sunt salutis vitae aeternae. 6. Et nunc palam sunt vincula mea, quae patior in Christo; in quibus laetor et gaudeo. 7. Et hoc mihi est ad salutem perpetuam, quod (ipsum) factum est in orationibus vestris, et administrante Spiritu Sancto, sive per vitam, sive per mortem. 8. Est enim mihi vivere vita in Christo, et mori gaudium (et lucrum.) 9. Et ipse Dominus noster in vobis faciet misericordiam suam, ut eandem dilectionem habeatis; et sitis unanimes. 10. Ergo, dilectissimi, ut audistis praesentiam Domini, ita sentite (retinete) et facite in timore; (Domini;) et erit vobis vita in aeternum: 11. Est enim Dominus qui operatur in vobis: 12. Et facite sine peccato quaecunque faeitis, (sine reatu,) et quod est optimum. 13. Dilectissimi, gaudete in Domino Jesu Christo, et cavete omnes sordes (sordidos) in omni lucro. 14. Omnes petitiones vestrae sint palam apud Deum. 15. Estote firmi in sensu Christi et quae integra, et vera, et pudica, et casta, et justa, et amabilia sunt, facite. 16. Et quae audistis, et accepistis, in corde retinete; et erit vobis pax. 17. Salutant vos omnes sancti. 18. Salutate omnes fratres in osculo sancto. 19. Gratia Domini nostri Jesu Christi cum spiritu vestro. Amen. 20. Et hanc facite legi Colossensibus; et eam quae est Colossensium vobis.

Ad Laodisenses scripta fuit e Roma, per Tychieum et Onesimum.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE LAODICEANS.

1. Paul, an apostle, not from men, nor by man, but by Jesus Christ, to the brethren which are in Laodicea. 2. Grace be to you, and peace from God

our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. 3. I give thanks to Christ in all my prayers, that ye continue and persevere in good works; waiting for the promise in the day of judgment. 4. Be not troubled with the vain speeches of certain who pretend to the truth, that they may draw away your hearts from the truth of the Gospel which was preached by me. 5. And may God grant that those who are of me, may be led forward to the perfection of the truth of the Gospel, and perform the benignity of works which become the salvation of eternal life. 6. And now my bonds are manifest, which I suffer in Christ, and in them I rejoice and am glad. 7. And this shall turn to my perpetual salvation, by means of your prayers and the assistance of the Holy Spirit, whether they be for life or for death. 8. For my life is to live in Christ; and to die will be joyous. 9. And may our Lord himself grant you his mercy, that ye may have the same love, and be of one mind. 10. Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have heard of the coming of the Lord, so think and act in the fear of the Lord, and it shall be to you eternal life. 11. For it is the Lord that worketh in you. 12. Whatsoever you do, do it without sin, and do what is best. 13. Beloved, rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ, and beware of filthy lucre. 14. Let all your prayers be manifest before God. 15. And be firm in the sentiments you have of Christ. And whatsoever is perfect, and true, and modest, and chaste, and just, and amiable, that do. 16. And whatsoever ye have heard and received retain in your hearts, and it shall tend to your peace. 17. All the saints salute you. 18. Salute all the brethren with a holy kiss. 19. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. 20. And cause this epistle to be read to the Colossians; and that to the Colossians to be read to you.

To the Laodiceans, written from Rome, by Tychicus and Onesimus.

Such is the composition which pretends to be the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Laodiceans, and of which I have endeavored to give a literal version; though even with the assistance of the various readings of the Anjou MS., which I have included in brackets, I found this difficult, so as to preserve any sense. Elias Hutter has published it after the Epistle to the Colossians, as if it were the genuine production of the apostle to whom it was attributed; and has taken the pains to exhibit it in twelve languages, viz.: Syriac, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, German, Bohemian, Italian, Spanish, French, English, Danish, and Polish. All, the Latin excepted, appear to be of his own composing. To criticise them would be lost labor; the Greek is

too bald to be the production of any remote age, and as to the English, no Englishman can understand it. The editor deserves the strongest reprehension, because he has associated it with the genuine epistles of St. Paul, without a single note of its spuriousness.

As to its being a work of St. Paul, little or nothing need be said; its barrenness of meaning, poverty of style, incoherency of manner, and total want of design and object, are a sufficient refutation of its pretensions. It is said to be the work of some heretics of ancient times: this is very unlikely, as there is no heresy, ever broached in the Christian Church, that could derive any support from any thing found in this epistle. It is a congeries of scraps, very injudiciously culled, here and there, from St. Paul's epistles; without arrangement, without connection, and, as they stand here, almost without sense. It is a poor, wretched tale, in no danger of ever being denominated even a cunningly devised fable. It should keep no company but that of the pretended Epistles of Paul to Seneca, to which I have in other cases referred, and of which I have given my opinion.

Should it be asked: "Why I have introduced it here?" I answer: To satisfy the curious reader, and to show how little ground there is for the opinion of some, that this epistle is of any importance; and to prove how miserably forgery itself succeeds when it endeavors to add to or corrupt the word of God. The sacred writings are of such a peculiar character that it is utterly impossible to imitate them with any kind of success. They bear, deeply impressed, the seal of infinite wisdom—a seal which no human art can counterfeit. This is the criterion by which the spurious gospels and apocryphal writings in general have been judged and detected; and this heavenly stamp, under the care of Divine Providence, will continue to be their chief preservative, as long as the sun and moon shall endure.

Finished correcting for a new edition, Dec. 16th, 1831. — A. C.

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