

PREFACE,

BY THE LATE REV. MR. ADAM GIBB, EDINBURGH.

THAT a defence of the gospel by Dr. OWEN, such as is the ensuing Treatise, is above my recommendation, will be as readily acknowledged by me, as it can be alleged by any other; and the whole occasion of my appearing in any preface thereto, is the particular concern which I have had in this edition.

My singular esteem of the book, together with its being very scarce, and yet peculiarly suited to the present circumstances of the truth, made me readily encourage a proposal by a Bookseller in town, of getting it reprinted from a copy in my hands; which is of the first edition, published at London by the author, in the year 1648, being the only copy that I have seen. But a very considerable difficulty occurred, from the extraordinary incorrectness of that edition; whereof the author heavily complains, in a note at the close, where he rectifies a few of the *errata*, ascribing it to his *distance from the press*,—and *something else*, to have made *the printer instrumental in the divulging of which* (says he) *would have been too much tyranny*.

In that edition, beside many errors and omissions as to words, there is an almost-continual misplacing of the *points*; which greatly confounds the sentences, and the parts whereof sentences consist, The Scripture-texts also, whereof very many are used, are generally both wrong cited and repeated.—At the same time, the *subdivisions* of the chapters are in great confusion; whereby the chain of the author's method, which *is* very close and accurate, lies much out of the reader's view. But special care has been taken, in this edition, to have all these disadvantages remedied; which I could not be satisfied to neglect, considering the importance of the book, when the matter was laid to my hand, though the task was evidently tedious and laborious. Moreover, I have often made new divisions of the paragraphs; and have sometimes made a small amendment as to the connection of the language, yet no way affecting the sense or matter thereof.

In this edition, there are likewise the following alterations. 1. The *title* is somewhat abridged, *for* bringing it more conveniently into the present form. 2. The *marginal contents*, which run along in the former edition, are omitted; as appearing of very small, if any, benefit, and not so convenient in this form. 3. These things are also left out, *viz.* A *dedication* to the Earl of Warwick, which seemed of no importance to the book in this period: Two *attestations* by Stanley Cower, and Richard Byfield; than whom, the author himself, as to his abilities *in* the cause of truth, was afterwards more generally known: And an *appendix*, concerning some errors published by Mr. Joshua Sprigge; whose book, and the errors noticed in it, are now buried. 4. The *content's* prefixed to the former' edition, being confused, and without reference to the pages; a

new list of contents is now added. 5. The *Scheme* of the various acceptations of the word world, is likewise put into a new form, and a literal translation of it is placed on the opposite column. 6. I have added some *notes* to several pages; and have given the *dates* included in parentheses, to the *Testimonies* of the Ancients at the close.

I may now take occasion to remark some things, as to the matter of this book. It is generally versant about the *second article* of the thorough-pac'd Arminians; which is, as it were, the *center* of their whole scheme, viz. the doctrine *universal redemption*. This doctrine, about 140 years ago, and afterwards, did raise a great deal of noise and confusion, with very pernicious effects, especially in Holland and England; to which a remedy of considerable success was applied, by the famous Synod of Dort. But by the time that Dr. Owen came to write against this error (which was about 50 years after the first venting of it by *James Arminius*, and 30 years after the condemnation thereof by the Synod of Dort) there had been various improvements of its dress. Wherefore, the following Treatise did more especially deal with a *new set* of *Universalists*; who declined to avow the other four Arminian points (which deny *particular election*, the *efficacy of God's grace*, in conversion, the *impotence of man's will* therein, and the *final perseverance of the saints*) though indeed all *the five* are really inseparable; and yet pretended to separate the *universal* point (about the *extent of Christ's death*) from the rest: which having laid over with fairer colours, they triumphed upon their new mode, as if there could be *no true and free gospel* without it.

But this paint was soon washed off, so far as to discover the native grimness of its visage: And many devices were afterwards used, with great industry, by Mr. Baxter and his followers, for restoring its reputation, in attempting to conceal its deformity, by fresh varnishing. However, for many years back, the *universal scheme* has scarce retained any other being than according to its original grossness, till of late, that some new essays have been made, in this country, to renew it under a plausible disguise (much the same with Baxter's) by which alone it is calculated for imposing upon serious people: a brief account whereof may be serviceable, for recommending the use of this Treatise. And,

1st, About five years ago, there was published, *A Treatise on Justifying Faith*, ascribed to¹ Mr. Fraser of Brae; wherein the Arminian point of universal redemption is largely set forth, in somewhat of a new dress. A great part of the book, indeed, is employed to that purpose, and with a very methodical appearance, as the matter is

¹ The book is ascribed to Mr. Fraser; but what concern he had in it, I know of none who can ascertain. The Publisher, indeed, declares, in his Preface, that it is published "without any alterations, which may be seen by the copy from which it is printed, it being prepared for the press by the Author's own hand." Yet this same Publisher cannot be supposed to have been ignorant, that there was not one scrap of the alleged Author's hand, in the copy which he speaks of; but that it had been transcribed, partly by a boy and girl when at school, partly by he knew not whom, from he knew not what other copy, a good many years after Mr. Fraser's death: and very few who know him, will depend on his fidelity, as to publishing the manuscript which he had, "without any alterations," especially considering the above circumstance.

classed under manifold titles, of *chapters, sections, suppositions, positions, assertions, reasons, arguments, objections, answers, conclusions, inferences* and *uses*: and yet, after all, it is a very hotch-potch and mass of confusion wherein truths and errors are promiscuously and foully kneaded through-other, with much looseness and self-contradiction.

I was saying, that the universal scheme is there set forth, in somewhat of a new dress; yet there is not, by far, so much *new* in it, as the generality of its friends imagine. The whole of what is plausible in it, is but a repeating, with some new turns of exordium, a huddle of raw notions and vain pretences, which were exploded above an hundred years ago; as the reader may readily observe, in perusing this book, and may as readily be surprised in finding, that ignorance of former times, or a presumption of having to do with people ignorant thereof, is the best apology that any can have, for mistaking *new flourishes* with what has been so long ago discussed, weighed in the balances, and sound wanting. All, then, that is really new, in the quarrelled doctrine of the said book, is not any thing of new ornaments to the universal scheme; but only some new horrors of that scheme, which the author has found himself shut up unto, in his pretended answering of objections; and which need not to be debated in any course of reasoning, but only to be set in open view, for being immediately detested. As,

1. The old Universalists, when teaching that Christ died for all men, were greatly perplexed and divided, about contriving any proper *end* of his death, with respect to such as perish. And (which the reader will see afterwards) it was, objected to them, as a necessary consequence of their scheme, that, if Christ's blood was not spilt in vain with respect to such, it behoved to he shed for them, only that they might be the *deeper damned*: But this abominable tenet they would not take with, as following upon their principles; they were not sufficiently hardened for pushing matters so far. And while it was allowed on all hands, that these who finally reject Christ, as offered to them, do thereby bring upon themselves *a sorer punishment*; it has also been allowed, till of late, that this sorer punishment is properly derived from the curse of the broken covenant of works; wherein vindictive justice prosecutes the sinner, not only for his original sin, but likewise for all his actual sins, according to all the aggravations wherewith they are found clothed.

But the foresaid consequence is boldly adopted, for a new part of the scheme, in the book referred to; as the author, in order to give an air of self-consistency to the scheme, is hardy enough to teach; that the *deeper damnation* of these who perish, belongs to the *covenanted end and intendment* of Christ's death. For he scruples not to affirm, that Christ laid down his life for those who perish; "with this intention, end and purpose, that they might be made fit objects of gospel-vengeance and wrath, wrath of a gospel-kind, as a sorer and worse punishment than law-wrath; for which end they were given to him, and purchased by him:" And that this their deeper damnation,

“belongs to the travail of his soul, of which he sees and is satisfied,” as having died for them *out of hatred!*

Here, then, is a very *new end* devised, for the death of Christ; that he died on purpose to get the generality of mankind thereby bought up from *law-wrath*, or from the hands of divine justice in the law-curse; that he might have them in *his own hands*, at his own disposal, for getting his own *greater* and *other* kind of *hatred* wrecked upon them, in bringing them under a sorer punishment, of what is called (by a horrid new style) *gospel-wrath and vengeance*; for the gaining of which end, unto a gratifying of his hatred upon them, he willingly submitted to all ignominy, yea poured out his own soul unto death! And thus, for the sake of making an Arminian heresy hang together, there must be a blasphemous traducing of the glorious Mediator and his death, by a doctrine which may well make the ears of them that hear to tingle.

2. In the foresaid book, we have the doctrine of a *double satisfaction* for the sins of those who perish; *one* satisfaction made by Christ on the cross, and *another* by themselves in hell. On this footing, “that God, who exacts the double satisfaction, is above all law; his will and sovereign pleasure, is the rule of all equity; if he had pleased to exact twenty satisfactions, he could not be unjust, for in that he willed it, it was therefore just: and he that, without the least stain of injustice, exacted of Christ his life for sin, a price that did far exceed the demerit of the elect; why may he not exact, over and above what Christ suffered for reprobates, even another kind of satisfaction from them in hell? If he took an overplus of satisfaction from Christ, why may he not take it from reprobates?” According to which doctrine, God is much more glorified in the damnation of reprobates, than in the salvation of the elect, as for these last he gets only a *single satisfaction*.

And thus also, for the better settlement of an *Arminian heresy*, the eternal foundations of justice and equity, in the *divine nature*, must be overturned; and no room left for *righteousness*, among the divine attributes.

3. There is another, but contradictory cut, upon the doctrine of double satisfaction for the sins of reprobates: That “it is the person of the *Father*, to whom Christ made satisfaction; and it is the person of the Son, to whom satisfaction is made in hell by reprobates!” And thus, all these of mankind who perish, must be the eternal objects of the *Father's* love and good-will. *He* is fully Satisfied for all their sins, *he is pacified toward them for all that they have done*: but they must perish eternally under the more inexorable wrath and hatred of the *Mediator!* O how dreadful is the precipice of error!

These, then, are all the new things, the new abominations, of what is called *Brae's* scheme. And so essential are these points to the new and (as is pretended) more *evangelical* mode of the scheme, that whenever the friends of it shall give up with them, they must find themselves reduced unto a wallowing, along with their predecessors, in the old mire of *conditional Redemption* and *Free-will*.

2ndly, These who have first made an open appearance under the banner of what is called *Brae's* scheme, are a couple of *novices* who (with a pair of sham-elders) arrogated the name of *The Reformed Presbytery*; and though there has been too much of Arminianism in church-judicatures before, yet they are the first *Arminian judicature*, wholly constituted on such a footing, that has ever yet appeared in this island: nor is it to be reckoned among the smallest provocations in this day of blasphemy, that any should have pretended to constitute themselves, in the name of Christ, just for displaying a banner against the glory of his *effectual* redemption and mediation. It is true, they set up as the only men for celebrating the Mediator's glory, but how is it that they do so? Why, by venting another doctrine about his mediatory kingdom, which leaves him *nothing* but as *Mediator!* And when some worms on his footstool, have thus attacked his God-head, they will make amends by complimenting him with a Socinian kind of glory, which they forged in the year 1753! However, in the righteous judgment of God, that mock-presbytery was dissolved, very soon after they had taken up their Arminian stand; *one* of the two being left to put a sad bite upon his brother, and the poor people who had chosen him for one of their guides, by turning suddenly so *catholic*, that he almost got over the length of *Roman-catholic* at one leap.

These Gentlemen, then, upon a breach from their brethren for that very purpose, have retailed the *new mode of Arminianism* in a pamphlet which they published about fifteen months ago, under the mimic form of a judicial deed, viz. *The true State of the Difference between the Reformed Presbytery and some Brethren who lately deserted them* (as they pretend, though themselves were the deserting minority) &c. In this performance they generally side themselves with, and recommend the *whole scheme* of the late book ascribed to Mr. Fraser; though, in setting it forth, they are quite mute about the particular *horrors* thereof, which have been mentioned. But, as a new-set-up tradesman readily falls on some new turn of the business, for gaining a character; so they *improve* a little upon their author, by adding one piece of *novelty*, which lies in representing our Lord's death as *clothed* with a twofold, a *general* and *special appointment*;² though, indeed, this new device turns out to nothing more than their author's doctrine of a *common* and *special* redemption.

But one of their apprentices seem greatly enamoured with this improvement of the scheme, as if it were sufficient for gaining a complete victory over the truth of the gospel. He has been pothering in a Printing-house for a good time back, in order to

² For imposing upon people who do not understand Latin, as if their new style about these different suits of clothes, had been ever heard of in the world before; they play a nasty trick, p. 39. in translating these words of the English Divines at the Synod of Dort, about Chris's death for the elect, viz. "Secundum aeternum Dei beneplacitum specialiter illis destinato;" as if they signified, "clothed with a special appointment according to the gracious purpose of God from everlasting;" when the true sense is, "specially destined for them, according to the eternal good-pleasure of God."

make a more wordy display of that invention, as he, perhaps, is looking for better success (according to the frenzy of the time) than such friends of the cause, who might some way tolerably be seen in print. I have seen the first half-sheet of his piece, which is at length got bungled out, (entitled, *A Letter to a Friend in America, &c.*) and, if the stock be like the sample, as full of poor undigested crudities, after all its down-takings, up-makings, and clouty mendings, at the press; his party will have no great reason to boast of it. But more particularly, what is the great theme of *Peter Reekie's* piece? Why, he tells us by the *title*, that therein “is *clearly* held forth the *peculiar* interest that the *Elect* have in the death of Christ, by virtue of a *special appointment*, in opposition to *Arminians*: as also the *common* interest *mankind-sinners* have in his obedience and death, as constitute by a *general anointment*, God's great and gracious ordinance for their salvation, as contradistinguished from *fallen angels, &c.*” And he proceeds to tell us, with a special mixture of ignorance and assurance, that “the *special appointment* maintains all that the orthodox hold against the *Arminians*.” That “it was the *special interest* our Reformers contended so earnestly for;” but that “the *general relation* betwixt Christ and sinners of man-kind, was not the proper word of their testimony.” And thus our *new Universalists* must be licked clean of *Arminianism*, at the expense of our Reformers, and of common reason.

But let us a little blow aside this smoky vapour, and turn up the mask which is thus put on for deceiving the simple, by observing that,

1. It Seems the death of Christ is a very naked thing; no way fit for being seen or regarded, but as it gets on an additional clothing of some *appointments*; while *clothes* are very separable from the person or thing that wears them. And so, according to this doctrine, our Lord's death is of no benefit or avail to *any*, in *itself* considered; either materially, as to its absolute value; or formally, as being undergone by him in the capacity of a New Covenant-head or Surety: but all advantage by, it, must be derived from other distinct *appointments* wherewith it is *clothed*; and which can leave no room to gospel-hearers for any distinct improvement of his death. Because,

2. Our *new Universalists* are agreed, that what they call the *special appointment*, respects only the *Elect as such*; that therefore it is not immediately laid out in the gospel, as a ground of faith to any, being what none have ado with, till they know themselves to be elect: and that, therefore, under the gospel-dispensation, men have only the *general appointment* to meddle with, as freely proposed unto their faith.— And what is this *general* appointment, as distinguished from the *special*? Is it anything else, according to this new scheme, but an appointment of Christ's death for the *deeper damnation* of the generality of mankind? Wherefore, a preaching up of the *general* appointment (when once the smoke is cleared away) appears to be nothing else, but a calling men to the faith of deeper *damnation*; while they dare not aim at the faith of *salvation*, upon the *special* appointment, till once they know that they are elect. And is not this *rare new gospel*? But,

3. Their scheme can bear no tolerable sense, till they add a third appointment; which is plainly implied, in their way of handling the *other two*: and this is, that as they make the *special* appointment to be for the salvation of the elect, and then, the *general* appointment is for the deeper damnation of all others; they must add another *common* appointment, comprehending both. And what must this common *appointment* of Christ's death be for? Why, neither immediately for *salvation* nor *damnation*; but for *either* of the two, according as it shall turn out, by men's faith or unbelief. Yea, this indeed is the very marrow of *Brae's* Scheme, the main point aimed at therein: whereupon, *up must go the old Dagon* of free-will. And, at best, this new doctrine of appointments turns out only to a teaching us, that Christ, by his death, purchased *nothing* at all for *any* of mankind; but only purchased a right and liberty for God the Father, *to save or not*, as he pleased: which vile pretence, the reader will afterwards find tried and cast.

Upon the whole, it is evident, that all the flourish about a more *free* and *well-founded* preaching of the gospel, upon the new scheme, is a *mere cheat*; yea, this scheme, in its real import, leaves no room for any *faith*, or any gospel-*offer*, among any sinners in the world: while the Scripture-doctrine of *particular effectual redemption*, leaves the fullest room for a free offer of Christ to all, and lays out the surest ground for their faith, in the absolute and infallible sufficiency of his death for salvation, as freely proposed to their faith, without any respect to God's secret purposes concerning them. All this, the reader will find laid open, in the ensuing treatise: And there may be a further explaining of this matter, as the Lord shall direct, if the present flood continue to run forward, for reducing the *present mode* of *Arminianism*, to such confusion as hath covered that heresy in all its former shapes.

Though the *Universalists* all agreed in this position, that *Christ died intentionally for all men*; yet various turns were formerly given to the meaning hereof, some teaching, only, *that he so died for all if they believe it*: which the reader will afterwards find exposed; particularly from this absurdity which it runs into, of making *the act the cause of its object*. And, indeed, as Christ's dying intentionally for any, behoved to be true in fact *at the time of his death*, or never; it is a very gross absurdity to imagine, as if the *former truth* of this fact could have any dependence on an *after believing* thereof. But this must not be confounded with another thing, which is extremely different: I mean, a person's *special saving interest in Christ and his death*; as being actually invested with his justifying righteousness, and accepted in the sight of God on that account; which never becomes *true* in the case of any, *till* the moment of believing. For though a person has sufficient grounds in the word of grace, whereupon to believe this particular interest in Christ and his death, and though it is never *true* in the person's case, till the time of his believing; yet this doth not make *the act the cause of its object*: only, according to the mysterious order of grace, the Lord gives *truth* to that saving interest, *at the time* of faith's applying Christ to the soul.

Agreeably hereto, the Associate Presbytery do teach, in their *Act concerning the Doctrine of Grace*, that this persuasion is competent to a person, in the language of justifying faith, viz. “Jesus Christ is *mine*, I shall have life and salvation by him, and whatsoever Christ did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for *me*.” Thus, faith immediately terminates upon a *present* special interest in Christ, *Jesus Christ is mine*; as to which, it proceeds upon the present *revelation* and *offer* of him in the gospel, *looking out* to that, without *looking back* to any divine *purposes* or *intentions*: and whatever faith takes any other way of *entering* upon its object, is a vain fancy. In the next place, it is quite inseparable from the faith of this *special* interest in Christ, and must lie in the same act of faith, to believe eternal salvation by Christ; *I shall have life and salvation by him*. Now this faith of a *special saving* interest in Christ, must likewise be the same act, in this due order, terminate upon a special interest in all his redeeming work; ,*whatsoever Christ did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for me*.

As to which last article, we may observe, That it is entirely different from a believing that *Christ intentionally died for the person in particular*: as this faith is the same, upon the matter, with the faith of *election*; which, however attainable it be, can no way belong to faith *as justifying*. But when Christ, with his whole salvation, is applied by faith, upon the ground of the gospel offer and call; then, *whatsoever he did for the redemption of mankind*, doth therein actually *terminate*, upon the person, and is believed so to do. Wherefore, as to this plea of justifying faith, *whatsoever Christ did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for me*; the meaning is not, for me, by a *foregoing purpose* and *intention*; but the meaning is, *for me*, by a *following issue* and *termination* thereof upon me, through the gospel offer and call, embraced by faith. As, when a traveller is entertained in a house upon his way, he eats what is set before him, without any question, just upon seeing that, in its *nature*, it is every-way *suitable* and *sufficient* for his need, and that he *is freely invited* to the use thereof: And his very *eating* of the food, implies a concluding that all the *preparation* of it was *for him*; because the preparation of it terminates in him, by the food itself doing so; which yet is entirely different from his being otherwise informed, that the food was *intentionally* provided and made ready for him, before he saw it.—And all this is proper to be considered, along with what will be found in the last Chapter of this Book.

I conclude, with expressing my desire and hope, that this treatise may, through the Lord's blessing, be of special use to establish the faith of his people, against present stratagems for overthrowing the same.

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EDINBURGH, *February 7*.