

Monergism



**OF GOD,
THE AUTHOR, OBJECT,
AND END OF ALL RELIGION**

JOHN BROWN OF HADDINGTON

The book cover features a central photograph of a person's hands clasped in prayer, resting on a wooden surface. The background is a dark, grid-patterned fabric. The cover is framed by a vibrant purple and pink geometric design consisting of overlapping triangles and lines. The word 'Monergism' is printed in a light purple font in the upper right corner.

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By Pastor John Brown of Haddington

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CHAPTER 1:

Of the Nature or Perfections of God.

The Scripture represents mankind as instructed in the knowledge of God by his works of creation and providence, Ps 19:1-6; Rom 1:19-20,32 and Rom 2:14-15; Acts 14:15-17 and Acts 17:23. And, while it supposes, it also solemnly asserts and proves, his existence, and represents his Names, Nature, Perfections, Persons, Purposes, and Works.

The proper names which are ascribed to God in the Old Testament, are, El, which denotes him the strong and powerful God, Gen 17:1; Isa 9:6. Eloah, which represents him as the only proper object of worship, Gen 1:1; Ps 45:6-7. Shaddai, which denotes him to be all-sufficient and all-mighty, Gen 17:1; Exod 6:3. Hhheljon, which represents his incomparable excellency, absolute supremacy over all, and his peculiar residence in the highest heavens, Ps 50:14 and Ps 56:2. Adon, which marks him the great Connector, Supporter, Lord and Judge of all creatures, Ps 110:1; Ps 16:2. Jah, which may denote his self-existence and giving of being to his creatures, or his infinite comeliness and answerableness, to himself and to the happiness or his creatures, Exod 15:2; Ps 68:4; Ps 130:3; Isa 26:4. Ehjeh, I Am, or I Will Be, which denotes his self-existence, absolute independence, immutable eternity, and all-sufficiency to his people, Exod 3:14; Rev 1:4,8. Jehovah, which denotes his self-existence, absolute

independence, and unsuccessive eternity, with his effectual and marvellous giving of being to his creatures, and fulfilling his promises, Gen 2:4,7-8,16,19,21-22; Gen 3:1; Gen 10:9-10; Gen 12:1,4,7.—This name of God was known in the earliest ages of the world, Gen 4:1; Gen 9:26; Gen 5:29; Gen 14:22; Gen 15:7; Gen 24:7. And so God not being known to the patriarchs by it, means no more than that he had not demonstrated the propriety of it in any remarkable fulfilment of promises, Exod 6:3. This name often, in part, composes the names of persons or things; in that state, it merely denotes a relation to Jehovah, but taken simply by itself, it is never ascribed to any but God. 1. He alone is Jehovah, Ps 83:18; Isa 37:20; Isa 45:5-6. 2. This name is represented as a distinguishing name of God, Isa 42:8; Exod 15:3; Hos 12:5; Amos 5:8 and is his great and terrible name, Ps 99:3. 3. The excellency which it denotes is applicable to none but God, Ps 96:5; Isa 44:24.—Whereever an angel is called Jehovah, or Lord, in capitals in our translation, he must be understood to be the Son of God, who is the Messenger of Jehovah, or Messenger-Jehovah, Gen 16:13; Gen 18:13, etc.

In the New Testament, God is called Kurios or Lord, which denotes his self-existence, his establishment of, and his authority over all things;—and Theos, which represents him as the Maker, the Pervader, and the governing Observer of all things.—This name Theos, as well as El and Eloah, which we render God, is a name which represents his divine nature, not merely his power or office. 1. All persons having power and authority are not truly Gods, 1 Cor 8:5-6. 2. God is represented as a God by nature, to distinguish him from idols, Gal 4:8. 3. He was God before his power had formed any creatures, or he had any to govern, Rom 1:20; Rom 16:26; Ps 90:2. 4. Theotes, or Theiotes, godhead, means not power, or office, but a divine nature, Acts 17:29; Rom 1:20; Col 2:9. 5. No creature is called God without some limitation annexed, which plainly imports, that they are not so by nature: angels and magistrates are called gods, because of their being his deputies in his government of the world, and resembling his majesty, wisdom, power, and equity, Ps 97:7; Ps 82:6; John 10:34; Exod 4:16; Exod 7:1; Exod 22:28.—Idols, devils,

and men's bellies, are called gods, because they are often regarded or worshipped instead of the true God, Ps 115:4; 2 Cor 4:4; Phil 3:19.

God is represented by a multitude of metaphorical names, as a Man, a Lion, a Rock, etc.—Besides the names which represent the divine nature, there are others which represent particular persons in the godhead, as Father, Son, Jesus Christ, Holy Ghost or Spirit, Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14.—The titles which denote what relation God hath to others, belong to his name.—Some of them, as Creator of all the ends of the earth, Isa 40:28. Preserver of men, Job 7:20. King of nations, Jer 10:7. Lord of Hosts, belong to him as the God of nature.—Others as the God and Father of Christ, Eph 1:3; 1 Pet 1:3; John 20:17; 2 Cor 1:3. The God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, Exod 3:6.—The God and the Holy One of Israel, 2 Sam 23:3; Isa 48:17.—King of saints, Rev 15:3.—Father of mercies, and God of all comfort, 2 Cor 1:3.—The God of mercy, Ps 59:17.—The God of grace, 1 Pet 5:10.—The God of peace, Rom 16:20; 2 Cor 13:11; Heb 13:20.—The God of salvation, Ps 68:20.—The hearer of prayer, etc.—belong to him as God in Christ, reconciling the world to himself.

In respect of his substance, God is a most pure spirit, having an understanding and will, without any bodily parts, any affections or passions. 1. He is expressly represented as a Spirit, John 4:24; Num 24:2; Judg 3:10; Ezek 11:24; 2 Cor 3:17-18 and as the God, the Father, and the former of spirits, Num 16:22; Heb 12:9; Zech 12:1 with Luke 24:39. 2. He is represented as altogether incorporeal and invisible, Job 10:4; Job 9:11; Job 4:16-17; Job 23:3-4,8; Isa 40:18; Deut 4:15-16; Exod 33:20; John 5:37; John 1:18; Rom 1:20,23; 1 Tim 1:17; 1 Tim 6:16; Heb 11:27. 3. Immortal life is ascribed to him, Deut 33:40; Jer 10:10; 2 Cor 6:16; 1 Thess 1:9; 1 Tim 1:17; 1 Tim 4:10; 1 Tim 6:16; Acts 14:15; Rom 1:23; Rev 1:18; Gen 16:13; Ps 18:46. Which life is manifested in his giving and preserving that natural or spiritual life which his creatures enjoy, Acts 17:25-29; Ps 36:9; 1 Tim 6:13; Rom 4:17; 1 John 5:20; John 5:21,25-26,28; John 14:19. 4. Spiritual acts of thinking and willing are ascribed to him, Ps 33:11; Ps 40:5; Ps 139:2; Ps 147:4-5; Ps 92:3; Isa 55:8; Jer 29:11; Ps 115:3; Rev

4:11; Dan 4:35; Isa 46:10; Isa 14:24,27, Eph 1:11; Phil 2:13; Rom 9:16,18. 5. The power, wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, the persons, purposes, and works, hereafter proved to belong to him, harmoniously manifest him a most pure Spirit.—The bodily members attributed to him in Scripture, are but instructive emblems of his spiritual perfections and acts,—used in condescension to our weakness, Hos 12:10.—In this manner also, all the affections or passions of desire, joy, hope, fear, grief, anger, etc. ascribed to him are to be understood. Moreover, God having always dealt with men, in the way of covenant-connections, many of these affections are intended to represent him as a friend, or enemy, according to the tenor of these covenants. And the changes seemingly attributed to him, really import the change in, or on us, from being under the covenant of works, to be in the covenant of grace.

The attributes, perfections, or excellencies of God, are the essential and absolutely inseparable properties of his spiritual substance or nature. These may be distinguished into those called communicable, of which some faint, but infinitely defective resemblances, may be found among his creatures,—as knowledge, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth—and incommunicable, of which no resemblance can be found among his creatures,—as self-existence, absolute independence, absolute simplicity, infinity, unsuccessive eternity, unchangeableness, necessary oneness, and subsistence in three distinct persons.

I. The Knowledge of God

The knowledge of God is that intellectual perfection, by which he discerns objects.—He knows all things, Ps 147:5; John 21:17; 1 John 1:5; 1 John 3:20; Heb 4:13; Job 34:21-22; Job 36:4-5; Ps 94:7-10; Ps 139:4-7; Jer 23:24.—He knows, 1. Himself in all his unbounded perfections and mysterious purposes, Matt 11:27; John 1:18; John 10:15; 1 Cor 1:10; Jer 29:11; Acts 15:18. 2. All his creatures, great and small, possibly or really existent, Ps 147:4; Matt 10:30 Acts 15:18;

Deut 29:29; Job 12:22; Job 28:8,10,24; Job 26:4-6; Job 24:1; Job 34:21-22; 2 Chron 16:9; Prov 15:3; Ps 33:13-15; Ps 11:4; Ps 138:6; Jer 23:24; 2 Tim 2:19. 3. All the actions of his creatures, good and bad, Prov 5:21; Prov 15:3; Job 34:21-22; Ps 69:5; Ps 90:8; Ps 139:7-13; Ps 33:13-18; Ps 34:15; Ps 1:6; Ps 56:8; Neh 1:7; 1 Sam 2:3; Jer 16:17; Jer 32:19; Isa 26:7; Hab 1:13. 4. All the secret properties and thoughts or desires of human hearts, Gen 6:5; Heb 4:12-13; Ps 139:1-4; Ps 7:9; Ps 38:9; 1 Chron 28:9; 1 Sam 16:7; Deut 31:21; Prov 15:11; Prov 16:2; Prov 21:2; Luke 16:15; Amos 4:13; Jer 17:5,9-10; Jer 16:17; Acts 1:24; Rev 2:23; Rom 8:27; 2 Chron 6:30; John 2:24-25; 1 Cor 4:5. 5. All future things, Ps 139:3-4; Isa 45:20-21; Isa 41:21-24; Isa 42:9; Isa 46:9-10; Jer 29:11; Dan 2:20-22; Acts 15:18 and hence he hath foretold most of them, Gen 3:14-19 and Gen 6:9; Gen 9; Gen 12-13; Gen 49; Lev 26; Deut 27-33, etc. 6. The connections between possible things, which never actually happen, as he knows what his power can produce, and what dependence one circumstance must have upon another, Ezek 3:6-7; Matt 11:21,23.

God knows all these things. 1. Necessarily from himself, Ps 147:5; 1 John 1:5; Dan 2:20-22. 2. Intuitively, by a simple glance, not as we know things, by any course of reasoning or succession of ideas, Heb 4:13; Job 28:23-28. 3. Independently of all instruction from objects or teachers, Isa 40:13-14; Rom 11:33-34; Job 40:2. 4. Distinctly and comprehensively,—in their nature, number, properties, and conditions, 1 John 1:5; Isa 40:21; Ps 147:4; Ps 139:12-14. 5. Infallibly, Matt 5:18; Isa 14:24,26-27; Acts 15:8; Ps 139:1-4; Ps 11:4. 6. Unchangeably,—let the created objects change as much as they will; for all these changes proceed from his sovereign will, Acts 15:18; Isa 46:10.— But conditional declarations of his will must be carefully distinguished from predictions, 1 Sam 23:11-12; Jon 3.

II. The Wisdom of God

1. As proposing the most proper ends for his conduct, Rom 11:36; Prov 16:4; Isa 43:21. 2. As choosing suitable means, 2 Sam 14:14. 3.

As leading him to act by those means in proper circumstances of time and place, Gal 4:4; Eph 1:10; Ezek 16:8; Ezek 28:25-26; Ezek 29:21. 4. As leading to act by a right rule or plan, Eph 1:11; Isa 46:10; Jer 29:11, is called his wisdom.

It appears that God is wise. 1. The Scriptures plainly declare that he is wise, Job 12:13,16; Job 36:4-5; Job 38-39; Job 28:12,22-28; Prov 8; Rom 11:33-34; Isa 40:13-14; Dan 2:20; 1 Cor 1:21-25; 1 Cor 3:18; Eph 3:10; 1 Tim 1:17; Jude 25; Rom 16:27. 2. He gives much wisdom to his creatures, 1 Kings 3:12; 1 Kings 4:29; Ezra 7:25; Job 35:10-11; Job 36:22; Job 38:16; Prov 2:6-7; Prov 8:12; Eccles 2:26; Eph 3:10; James 1:5; Isa 28:26; Job 32:8; Matt 16:17; Isa 48:17; Isa 29:24; Jer 31:34. 3. His wisdom is extensively and clearly manifested, 1. In his purposes,—in forming so perfectly exact a plan of all that comes to pass in time and eternity,—and of every thing in such perfect correspondence with his principal and subordinate ends, Isa 40:13-14; Isa 46:10; Isa 14:26-27; Eph 1:8-11. 2. In his creation of all things, Prov 8:22-31.—In the amazing variety of creatures, seeds, instincts, members, endowments, vegetative, sensible, or rational,—and of dispositions, quantities, forms, voices, etc. Ps 104:24; Gen 1.—In their beauty, and in their order, with respect to themselves, and in their situations and motions, Eccles 3:11.—In their fitness to answer their respective ends,—and in so connecting things one with another, in an almost infinity of forms, Hos 2:21-22. 3. In his providence, in 1. His upholding and governing every creature and all its actions and motions, in exact correspondence to the ends appointed in every particular moment of time, Heb 1:3; Eph 1:11. 2. In making awful and threatening providences an introduction to the most glorious and delightful events. Thus Sarah's long continued barrenness introduced her becoming the mother of multitudes of nations. Jacob's dishonourable exile introduced his receiving of singular manifestations from God; his wrestling and lameness, his reception of the invaluable blessing, Gen 21; Gen 28; Gen 32.—Horrible wickedness, fearful sorrow and anguish, and lasting debasement, introduced the glorious advancement of Joseph, and the entrance and happiness of Jacob with his children into Egypt, Gen 37-47. The

terrible miseries of the Israelites under their Egyptian oppressors, and under Saul, etc. introduced their most glorious deliverances and happiness, Exod 1; Josh 24; 1 Sam 4-31; 2 Sam 1-10; 1 Chron 11-29; 1 Kings 1-10.—Ignorance and wickedness, carried to the uttermost, did, as it were, prepare the world for the incarnation and atonement of Christ, and the honourable spread of his gospel, Rom 1-3; Rom 5:20-21; Titus 3:3-5. The persecution and murder of the Son of God, in our nature, by men, were instrumental in promoting the salvation of men through him, John 11:47-52. Horrible power and progress in impiety and filthiness, have, as it were, introduced distinguished favours from God, and the most singular holiness of life, Rom 5:20-21; Acts 9:22,26; Gal 1:12-24; 1 Cor 15:9-10; 1 Thess 2:1-10; 1 Cor 6:10-11. 3. In promoting his own holy and glorious ends amidst all the different, contrary, or wicked ends of his instruments, Isa 10:5-12; Isa 44:28; Isa 45:1-5.—Thus, while the Egyptians hastened the Israelites out of their country, that they might get rid of their plagues, God hastened them out that he might fulfil his promise to Abraham to a day, if not to a minute, Exod 12:41-42 with Gen 15:13-16. Contrary to the intention of Augustus, the Roman emperor, war or other accidents retarded the enrolment of his subjects in Canaan, till it could bring the virgin Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem to bring forth her divine child, that he, herself, and her husband, might all be enrolled in the public imperial registers of the world, as descendents of David and citizens of Bethlehem, where they resided but a short time, Luke 2; Matt 2; Mic 5:2; Isa 11:1. 4. In his promoting multitudes of ends in one act. Thus the selling of Joseph for a slave, saved the Egyptians and their neighbours from perishing by famine,—corrected Jacob's sinful indulgence of his children,—promoted Joseph's honour,—and drew his father's family into Egypt, Gen 37-47; Ps 105. 5. In promoting ends which are exceedingly remote. Balak's hiring of Balaam to curse the Israelites, and Balaam's predictions thus occasioned, served to spread the report of the future incarnation of Christ among the eastern nations.—This, about 1500 years after, led the wise men to observe his Star, and come by its direction to worship him at his birth. Their presents supported Him, his mother, and supposed father, while they were exiles in Egypt,

Num 22-24 with Matt 2. 6. In easy counterplotting his most crafty enemies, and making their most violent opposition of his will the very mean of promoting it, Prov 21:30; Ps 33:10; Job 5:12-13; Job 12:16-20; Isa 29:14; 1 Cor 1:20,25,27. Thus the hardness of Pharaoh's heart rendered the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt more honourable and God-like. The alarming invasions of Judea in the days of Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah, issued in the glory and the enrichment of the Jews, 2 Chron 20; Isa 33:3,7; Isa 36; Isa 37. 7. In his exact timing of events. The Israelites were restrained from entering Canaan, till the rebellions despisers of it were all dead,—till the iniquity of the Canaanites was full, and they had weakened themselves by their intestine wars, Num 14:26; Gen 15:16; Judg 1. The incarnation of Christ was delayed, till the need of him to save men was fully manifest;—till repeated and widespread warnings had raised a sufficient expectation of him;—till the Jews had become wicked enough to persecute and murder him;—and till they had fallen under the power of the Romans, who crucified their slaves, Gal 4:4; Matt 2-27; John 5-19. The church, or her true members, seldom meet with remarkable deliverances till their troubles have come to an extremity, Mic 4:10; Ps 12:5; Deut 32:36; Isa 33:10; Isa 41:17-18; Dan 12:1; Ps 142:4-5; Ps 124; Acts 12:6-14; Rev 11:7-15.

More particularly, God's wisdom appears in his providential government of irrational creatures. 1. In guiding them all to promote ends, which are subservient to the general good of the world, as well as to his own glory, Prov 16:4; Ps 104; Ps 148. 2. In thus guiding them without their own design, and yet agreeably to their diversified instincts. 3. In promoting his government by such means and instruments, as seem to take all the honour of the work, and yet reserving it all for himself, Rom 11:36; Rev 4:11-13.—It more abundantly appears in his government of mankind. 1. In giving them laws suited to their nature, their condition, their conscience, and their comfort, Rom 7:12,14; 1 Tim 1:8; Ps 19:7-10; Ps 119. 2. In giving them sufficient ability, inclinations, and assistance to obey these laws, unless a curse procured by their disobedience prevent it, Phil 2:12-13; Phil 1:6; Isa 26:12; 2 Thess 1:11. 3. In affording them proper

motives and encouragements to obedience suited to their condition, Isa 55:1-7; Jer 3; Hos 14; 1 Cor 15:58; Heb 10-13. 4. In the amazing suitable intimations of his will to them. Christ was long exhibited in promises and types before he appeared in the flesh. He uttered several undervaluing-like words to his mother, whom, he foresaw, the Papists would idolize. "He peculiarly rebuked and recorded the faults of Peter, whom, he foresaw, they would blasphemously avow to be the infallible Head of their church. The doctrine of justification by free grace, through faith in Christ's imputed righteousness, is chiefly delivered in an Epistle to the church at Rome, where, he foresaw, it would be peculiarly corrupted and denied, John 2:4; Luke 11:27-28; Matt 12:48-49; Matt 14:31; Matt 16:22-23; Matt 26:34-35,69-75; Luke 5:8; John 13:6-10; John 18:19; John 18:11; John 19:26; John 21:20-22; Gal 2:11-14; Rom 1-10. 5. In limiting their sinfulness, and bringing glory to himself, and good to them, out of it; and in making the rage and power of sin contribute to destroy itself, and advance the glory of his free grace, Ps 76:10; Rom 5:20-21. 6. In that manner, the means, the tendency, and even the timing of every change made upon their state, nature, or condition, harmoniously concur to mark his displeasure with sin, and to manifest the exceeding riches of his grace, Rom 5:12-21; 2 Thess 1:6-11; Acts 22:6; 1 Tim 1:11-17; 1 Cor 8-10; Gal 1:15-16,22-23; Eph 1:3-10; Eph 2:1-10.

But, 4. In nothing doth the wisdom of God appear so much as in our redemption through Christ. It appears in the person of the Redeemer. 1. In choosing him, who was the middle person in the godhead, and the Son of God, to mediate between God and us, and make us the friends and children of God, that thus the order of mission and operation might correspond with that of the subsistence of the divine nature, John 3:16; Rom 8:16-17; Isa 61:1; Isa 48:16. 2. In so uniting his finite and infinite natures, that they delightfully subsist in one person, without any confusion, composition, or opposition, 1 Tim 3:16; Jer 31:22; Isa 7:14; Isa 9:6; Zech 13:7; John 1:14; Phil 2:6-7. 3. In investing him with mediatorial offices, infinitely well calculated to promote his own glory in the honour of Christ and our everlasting happiness, Isa 49:1-9; Isa 42:1,8; Isa 61;

Isa 1:3; Phil 2:6-13; Luke 2:10-14; Eph 3:21; 1 Pet 4:11. 4. In the form and order of his states of abasement and exaltation, infinitely answerable to our guilty, polluted, and wretched condition,—to the covenants and honour of every divine person, Luke 2:10-14; Phil 2:6-11; Luke 24:26; Heb 2:10; Heb 13:20.—It appears in the purchase of our redemption by the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, 1. In reconciling the seemingly discordant perfections of the Deity, by the abasement and death of him, in whom they dwell, Ps 85:10; Matt 3:15; Heb 2:10 with Col 2:9. 2. In at once manifesting his greatest hatred of sin, and his greatest love to sinners, Rom 5:6-10; Rom 3:24-26; Rom 8:3. 3. In executing his infinite wrath on Christ, from infinite love to him and to us in him, Matt 3:17; Matt 17:5; Isa 53:10; 1 John 4:9-10. 4. In rendering the shame, ignominy, suffering, and death of Christ the grand mean of honour, happiness, and life to him, as Mediator, and to us in him, Phil 2:6-11; Heb 2:8-10; Isa 53:10-12; Rom 5:9-11,15-21. 5. In making men's contempt, abuse, and murder of his Son, the mean of finishing transgression, making an end of sin, bringing in an everlasting righteousness, and destroying the dominion of Satan in the world, Dan 9:24; 1 John 3:5-6,8; 1 Pet 2:24; 1 Pet 3:18; Rev 5:9. 6. In thus making every one of his perfections promote its own glory, by the strangest means.—Justice, by punishing the innocent Messiah, and by procuring pardon, peace, and happiness for sinful guilty men,—Mercy, by drawing down fearful punishment on God's beloved Son, that it might bestow everlasting favours upon the children of Satan,—rebels against God, and heirs of hell.—It appears in the publication of our redemption, in that, 1. All the reports included in it exactly correspond with our necessities, and with the ends for which they were intended and appointed, 1 Tim 1:15. 2. The publication was gradual, as men could bear it, Heb 1:1. 3. The form of it was suited to the infant, or more adult, state of the church, and so was less or more spiritual, Heb 1:1; Heb 10:1; John 1:17; Col 2:17. 4. Imperfect hints relative to the incarnation of the Son of God, and his atonement for sin, were preserved or spread among the heathens, as a mean of facilitating the spread and belief of the gospel, Acts 17:23. 5. God took particular care to have all the leading facts of revelation singularly attested. 6.

The more noted declarations of divine truth were remarkably well-timed. Those by Moses were published, when the Israelites in the wilderness had the utmost leisure to consider them. The reports of Christ's resurrection were published fifty days after it, when the murderous Jews had time to come to themselves, when the facts were exactly remembered, and when a part of fourteen nations, who attended the feast of Pentecost, were present to hear and spread them, Acts 2. 7. In choosing such instruments and opportunities for this publication, as rendered his own power and goodness in the success of it more obvious, 2 Cor 4:7.—It also appears in the application of our redemption. 1. The persons to whom it is ordinarily applied, are such as we would least expect should have his singular regard; and yet that is made to manifest his glory, 1 Cor 1:25-31; 1 Tim 1:13,16. 2. Their own or their neighbour's sinful conduct or misery often occasions the application. Thus Onesimus' theft and deserting his service, occasioned his conversion to Christ, Philem 10-16. 3. Even the rage of lust and overwhelming trouble are made the means of applying it, Rom 5:20-21; Rom 7:8-13; Isa 33:12-24; 2 Chron 33:11-12; Hos 2:7,14; Hos 5:15; Job 33:14-30. 4. All things, especially such as they most dislike, are made to work together for the good of the elect, and particularly of believers, Rom 8:28; 2 Cor 4:17; 1 Cor 3:22.

III. The Power of God

The Power of God is that essential perfection of his nature, by which he can do every thing not base or sinful.—It is no disparagement but honour to his power, that he cannot do that which implies a contradiction in its very nature,—as to satisfy an immortal soul with earthly portions, or make one under the reigning power of sin relish spiritual delights;—or that he cannot do that which is contrary to his own existence,—as to die,—become weak,—sleep, etc. or which is contrary to his moral perfections,—as to lie,—love sin,—deny himself;—or which is contrary to his own fixed purpose.—But it may be observed, that God's purpose doth not limit his power itself, but the

exercise of it. His power ought therefore never to be distinguished into absolute and ordinate. His power itself cannot be bounded, and the exercise of it cannot be inordinate.

That God is Almighty, is evident, 1. From express declarations of Scripture, Gen 17:1; Gen 18:14; Gen 48:3; Deut 32:39; Deut 3:24; Job 9:4,10,19; Job 36:5; Job 38:22-23; Job 41:10; Ps 45:3; Ps 68:34; Ps 89:13; Ps 72:18; Ps 24:8,10; Ps 96:2-7; Ps 115:3; Ps 93:1; Ps 62:11; Isa 9:6; Isa 26:4; Isa 40:28-29; Isa 63:1; Jer 32:17; Matt 19:26; Luke 1:35,37,49; Rom 1:20; Eph 1:19; Eph 3:20; Rev 1:8; Rev 19:15. 2. From that abundant power which he hath communicated to his creatures, luminaries, vegetables, brutes, men, and angels, Job 36-41; Judg 15-16; 2 Sam 21; 2 Sam 23; 1 Chron 11; 1 Chron 20; Ps 103:20; 2 Thess 1:7. 3. From the manifold and amazing displays of his power in his works of Creation, Providence, and Redemption.

In Creation, his almighty power appears, 1. In making all things of nothing, Heb 11:3; Gen 1; Col 1:16; Rom 11:36. 2. In forming such multitudes of creatures at once, Ps 33:6; Col 1:16; Gen 1; Ps 148; Exod 20:11. 3. In forming them of the same nothing, or of unfit matter, in so many diversified forms, Gen 1; Ps 104; Ps 148. 4. In forming them all with the greatest ease, by his mere word, Ps 33:6,9; Gen 1; Gen 2:7; Heb 11:3. 5. In making them all without any instrumental cause, Gen 1; Ps 33:6,9; Heb 11:3. 6. In forming them as instantaneously as his glory admitted, Ps 33:6,9; Gen 1; Gen 2:7; Exod 20:11.

In Providence, his almighty power appears, 1. In his preservation of all things in their different nature, forms, stations, motions, or rest, Ps 148; Ps 136; Ps 104; Ps 119:90; Col 1:17; Rev 4:11. 2. In the propagation of vegetables in the ground, and especially of animals in the womb, or in eggs, or from pieces of dissected ones,—and by means of heat, moisture, etc. Ps 104; Ps 147-148; Ps 139:14; Job 10:8-12. 3. In exciting and producing all their motions or actions, Ps 147:15-18; Ps 104:10-14,27,30; Ps 135:7; Ps 136:5-9; Job 38-41; Dan 3:17; Dan 4:17; Dan 2:21; Acts 17:28; Rom 12:36. 4. In restraining

unruly beasts, wicked men, and devils, at his pleasure, Ps 65:7 and Ps 76:10; Prov 21:1; Rev 20:2. 5. In changing men's dispositions and inclinations, as he pleases, Gen 33:4; Gen 35:5; 1 Sam 10:9,26; 1 Sam 24:17-18; Esther 6:1-2; Ps 105:25; Ps 106:45. 6. In making so many millions of unruly inclinations harmoniously promote his one design, notwithstanding all their own different or contrary ones, Exod 2-14; Isa 10:5-7; Isa 27:9. 7. In destroying his and his people's enemies, when they are at their strongest, and delivering his favourites when most weak and distressed, Deut 32:33,35-36,41-43; Isa 37:6-7,35; Isa 33:10; Isa 43:17-18 and Isa 45:13; Esther 3-10; Exod 1-14; Exod 18:11; Ezek 37:1-14; Mic 4:10; Dan 12:1; Rev 11:7-15; Rev 20:9. 8. In effecting the greatest events by weak means, or by none at all, Isa 41:15-16; 1 Kings 20:14; Judg 6:15; Judg 7:2-22; 2 Chron 14:11.—or by means merely casual. Thus the lighting of a viper on Paul's hand, brought about the conviction of the Maltese, Acts 28:3-10. Moses, the deliverer of the Israelites, was preserved from death and fitted for his work, by the daughter of their oppressor coming to wash herself in the Nile, Exod 2:11. A post, with tidings of an invasion, preserved David, the anointed king of Israel, from being murdered by Saul, 1 Sam 23:26;—or by means calculated and intended for an opposite purpose by the agents. Thus Joseph's abasement promoted his exaltation to be lord over his father and brethren, Gen 37-47. The fall of mankind, the abasement and murder of Christ, promoted the eternal happiness of men, the honour of Christ, and the glory of God, Rom 5:12-21; Phil 3:6-11. The building of Babel hastened the dispersion of mankind through the world, Gen 11. 9. In the strangely diversified success of human affairs. Persons poor, weak, or inactive, perform things, which others of great wealth, parts, powers and activity, cannot, Ps 78:71-72; Amos 5:9; Acts 1-8. 10. In making bad men befriend his people and his cause, contrary to all the dictates of carnal policy. Thus Cyrus, Darius, Artaxerxes, etc. gave part of their wealth to rebuild the Jewish temple, or promote the worship at it, Ezra 1; Ezra 4-5; Ezra 7; Neh 2. In the days of Cicero, gold was carried from Rome to adorn it. 11. In marvellously infatuating or defeating the best counsellors or counsels of men, Isa 44:25; Isa 33:11; 2 Sam 17:8; Job 5:12-13; Ps 33:10; Isa 8:10. 12. In working

such multitudes of miracles, both under the Old, and under the New Testament, Gen 7-8; Gen 19:24; Gen 21:1-2; Exod 3-20; Num 11; Num 16-17; Josh 3-5; Josh 10; Judg 6; 1 Kings 17-18; 2 Kings 1-8; 2 Kings 13; 2 Kings 19-20; Matt 2:2; Matt 4:24-25; Matt 11:5; Matt 14-15; Matt 17; Matt 20-21; Acts 1-20; Acts 28; Rom 15:19; Heb 2:4. 13. In raising the dead, and making all men and devils appear before his awful tribunal to receive their final sentence, Matt 25:30-45; Rev 20:12,14. 14. In the everlasting execution of his sentences, in punishing the wicked and glorifying the righteous, and in supporting both under their respective weights of wrath or blessedness, 2 Thess 1:9-10; 2 Cor 4:17. 15. In the terrible conflagration and the glorious renovation of our lower world at the last day, 2 Pet 3:10,12.

But the almighty power of God chiefly appears in his work of redemption, Eph 1:19-20.—It appears on Christ the Redeemer, 1. In the miraculous conception of his manhood by a virgin, Isa 7:14; Jer 31:22; Luke 1:35; Matt 1:20. 2. In the more than miraculous union of his two natures, which are infinitely different in substance and dignity,—and yet in such manner, that all human personality was prevented, John 1:14; 1 Tim 3:16; Isa 9:6; Zech 13:7; Rom 9:5. 3. In the miracles which he wrought, Acts 10:38; Matt 4-21; Mark 1-6; Luke 4-20; John 2-11. 4. In the tremendous punishment inflicted on him, and in the full support of him under it, Zech 13:7; Zech 3:9; Isa 53:4-10; Isa 50:6-7,9; Isa 42:1; Ps 22; Ps 69; Matt 26-27. 5. In enabling him to such patience and resignation under his sufferings, of which he had a perfectly quick sense, Isa 53:7; Heb 12:2-3; John 18:11-12,27; Matt 26:39,42. 6. In raising him from the dead, justifying and glorifying him, Rom 1:4; Rom 6:4; Rom 4:25; 1 Tim 3:16; Eph 1:19-20,23; Ps 110:1-7; Phil 2:7-11; Heb 2:8-9; 1 Pet 1:20-21.—It appears in the Publication of Redemption, 1. In the propagating doctrines so contrary to the carnal reason, the common customs, the deep-rooted lusts, and strongly supported laws of mankind, 1 Cor 1:20-24; 1 Cor 3:18; Titus 3:3; Rom 1:21-32; Rom 3:10-18. 2. In propagating the gospel by so unfit-like instruments, that just before had manifested so much cowardice, ignorance, or wickedness, Matt 26; Acts 1-9. 3. In propagating it by simple

declarations, enforced with no temporal authority or worldly influence, 2 Cor 10:4-5; Zech 4:6. 4. In the amazing spread and influence of these declarations had on the hearts and lives of millions of ignorant, outrageous, and obstinate sinners, for convincing, converting, and sanctifying them, Acts 2-21; Acts 26:17-18; Rom 1:8; Rom 15:19; 1 Cor 6:10-11; Col 1:5-6; Eph 3:8-9; 2 Cor 10:4-5; 1 Thess 1:5,9; 1 Thess 2:12-13; Titus 3:3-7.—It also appears in the Application of our Redemption. 1. In the thorough conviction of the most stupid, hardened, and biassed consciences, John 16:9-11; Rom 3:19; Heb 4:12; Ps 45:5. 2. In uniting men to Christ, and thus implanting in them a divine nature, or new habits or principles of grace, in opposition to the whole power of Satan, the world, and indwelling lusts, Deut 30:6; Ezek 36:26; Ps 100:3; 2 Cor 10:4-5; Luke 8:24; Luke 11:21-22; Eph 1:19; 1 Thess 1:5; 2 Thess 1:11. 3. In the preservation of weak graces in men's souls, amidst an infinity of corruptions and temptations to sin, 1 Pet 1:5; Jude 1. 4. In pardoning such multitudes of heinous offences, at, and after our union to Christ; and in applying these pardons with such almighty influence as to quiet our consciences, however fearfully awakened, Num 14:17-19; Isa 43:24-25; Isa 44:22; Isa 45:22,24-25; Isa 57:18-19. 5. In the mortification of almost almighty corruption by his word, and the agency of his spirit, Rom 8:13; Gal 5:17,24. 6. In the miraculous exploits which his people have, or do perform through faith, Phil 4:13; Col 1:10-11,28-29; Gal 1:16; Gal 2:20; 2 Cor 12:7-9; Heb 11; Matt 17:20; Mark 9:25. 7. In conferring abundant comfort, and everlasting happiness upon all his people, notwithstanding all that sin, Satan, and the world can do to distress and ruin them, Isa 65:18; Ps 51:10-11; Rom 8:15-18,28-39; 2 Cor 4:17; Ps 31:19; Ps 73:23-26; Isa 35:10; Isa 45:17; Isa 60:19-20.

IV. The Sovereignty of God.

Not only hath God an almighty power of ability, but also a power of unbounded sovereignty,—by which, as one free from all obligation of law or force, of motive or influence without himself, he may form,

support, and govern his creatures in what manner he pleaseth, Dan 4:34-35.—His sovereign dominion over his creatures is founded on the infinite dignity and excellency of his nature, Ps 86:8; Ps 89:6-8, and on his being the Contriver, Creator, Preserver, and last end of them, Ps 95:3,5; Isa 1:2-3; Isa 43:12; 1 Cor 6:19-20; Prov 16:4; Rom 11:36.—It extends over all creatures, 1 Tim 1:17; 1 Tim 6:15. Whether in heaven, Isa 45:12; Ps 103:19-20; Ps 148:1-4. Or in earth, Job 12:15,18; Ps 47:7-9; Ps 24:1; Ps 50:10; Prov 21:1; Hag 2:8; Dan 4:35; Ps 104-106; Ps 147-148. Or in hell, Ps 78:49; 1 Kings 22:22; Luke 22:31; Rev 20:2,7.

It is evident, that God hath an absolute sovereignty over all things. 1. From express declarations of Scripture, Exod 33:10; Rom 9:16,18-23; Matt 20:15; Ps 95:3-4; Ps 96:6; Ps 115:3; Ps 135:6; Ps 75:6-7; Ps 22:28-29; Job 25:2; Dan 4:34-37; Dan 2:21; Eph 1:11; Acts 17:24,26. 2. From the characters ascribed to him in Scripture, as Lord of hosts; King of nations; King of the whole earth; Only Potentate; King of kings; Lord of lords; Most High, etc. Ps 84:12; Ps 80:4,14,19; Ps 47:7; Jer 10:7-10; 1 Tim 6:15; Rev 17:14; Rev 19:16; Exod 18:11; Deut 10:17; Gen 14:18-22; Ps 50:14; Ps 56:2; Ps 83:18. 3. All the liberty, property, or authority, which creatures have, with respect to themselves or others, is derived from God, Acts 17:28; Prov 8:15-16; Ps 82; Rom 13:1-6; 1 Cor 4:7; Rom 11:36. 4. His sovereignty is displayed in his works of creation, providence, and redemption.—In creation, it appears in his forming such diversified creatures of the same nothing, or of the same unfit matter, and with so many and diversified connections among themselves, Gen 1.—In providence it appears, 1. In the diversified degree and duration of that support which he affords to his creatures. 2. In the forms, extent, and continuance, of his positive laws, and their binding influence on men's consciences. 3. In the manner, time, place, or objects, to whom his laws are published; or of the writing of them on men's hearts;—and in the, at first, unperceived exceptions of his law, as in Abraham's offering up his son, or in a man's marrying the childless widow of his brother. 4. In the objects, instruments, forms, degrees, and seasons of his favour. 5. In the nature, seasons, degrees,

instruments, and objects, of his corrections and punishments,—and their proportion to, and correspondence with the sins, on account of which they are inflicted, Dan 4:35; Ps 115:3; Ps 135:6; Matt 11:25-26; Matt 20:15.—In redemption,—it is manifested, 1. On the Redeemer,—in God's calling him to be our surety to pay our debt;—and to be our spiritual Head;—in fixing the time of his payment,—the place of his birth, life, and death,—the parts, forms, degrees, and continuance of his sufferings, and the forms, degrees, and periods of his exaltation in his own person, or in the happiness of his people, Isa 42:6; Luke 11:13; Luke 13:32-33; John 18:11; Heb 2:10; Phil 2:7-11. 2. On the persons of the redeemed,—in choosing any at all;—in choosing some, while others, no worse, are passed by;—and in allotting to them such particular means, opportunities, seasons, forms, and degrees of gifts and grace; and such intermixed temptations, troubles, deliverances, and comforts, Matt 11:25-26; Rom 9:18,23; Exod 33:19; Matt 20:1,15; 1 Cor 1:26-30. 3. In qualifying such particular persons, of those that remain unregenerate, and at such particular seasons, with such individual forms and measures of gifts, and common graces, to render them useful in promoting the honour of the Redeemer, and the conversion and edification of his redeemed, John 6:70; Heb 6:4-5; Num 23-24.

V. The Holiness of God

The holiness of God is that essential perfection of his nature, which lies in perfect freedom from, and hatred of all sin, and in perfect love to every thing holy and pure.—That God is infinitely holy appears, 1. From express declarations of Scripture, Josh 24:19; 1 Sam 2:2, Exod 15:11; Ps 89:35; Ps 11:7; Ps 99:9; Prov 30:3; Hab 1:12-13; Isa 6:3; Rev 4:8; John 17:11; Dan 9:24; Ps 16:10; Acts 3:14; Rom 1:4; Luke 1:35. Nay, holiness is represented as his beauty, Exod 15:11; Ps 27:4; his grandeur, Ps 89:35. Amos 4:2; and more than forty times he is called the Holy One of Israel or Jacob, Hab 3:3; Hab 1:12; Isa 1:4,10,20; Isa 43:14; Isa 29:23, etc. 2. Every thing relating to God is called holy, on account of its connection with and conformity to him;—as the

manhood of his Son, Luke 1:35; Acts 4:27,30;—his name, Ps 111:9; Lev 20:3;—his arm or power, Ps 98:1;—the place where he manifests himself;—heaven or the temple, Ps 20:6; Isa 57:15; Jon 2:4; Ps 99:9; Exod 3:4; Rev 21:10;—his Sabbaths, Exod 16:23; Isa 58:13;—his covenant and promise, Dan 11:28,30; Luke 1:72; Ps 105:42;—his word, law, and gospel, Rom 1:2; Rom 7:12; 2 Tim 3:15;—his work, Ps 145:17;—his angels, Rev 14:10; Matt 25:31;—his prophets, 2 Pet 1:21; 2 Pet 3:2; Luke 1:70; Rev 18:20; Rev 22:6;—his ministers, 1 Thess 2:10; Rev 18:20;—his people, Exod 19:6; Col 1:22; Col 3:12; Heb 3:1; 1 Thess 5:27; 1 Pet 2:9. 3. His holiness is manifested in his works of creation, providence, and redemption, Ps 145:7.

In creation it appears, in forming every creature, which was capable of holiness, perfect in it, Gen 1:20,27; Rev 14:10 with Jude 6.—In providence, it appears, 1. In giving to all his rational creatures a moral law, requiring the most perfect and uninterrupted holiness of heart and life,—and enforced with the most powerful sanction of rewards and punishments, Rom 7:12; Matt 22:37,39; Rom 12-13; Col 3-4; Eph 4-6; 1 Thess 4-5; 1 Pet 1-5; Exod 20:3-17. 2. In prescribing the most proper means of promoting holiness, Gen 2:17; Titus 2:11-12; Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 11:23-29. Even all the sacrifices, purifications, and punishments, prescribed by the Jewish laws, marked the holiness of God, Lev 1-23; Num 5-6; Num 15; Num 19; Num 28-29; Lev 10:1-3. 3. And so permitting sin as not to have any active hand in, or give any encouragement to it, Hab 1:12-13; Ps 4:5-6; Jer 44:4; Prov 16:16-19. 4. In fixing standing marks of his detestation of sin upon the first introducers of it, or any particular form of it; as on devils, women, Cain, the old world, the builders of Babel, Sodomites, oppressors of the church, profaners of God's worship, presumptuous rebels against his established government, despisers of his promised favours, etc. Jude 6; 2 Pet 2:4-5; Gen 3-4; Gen 7; Gen 11; Gen 19; Exod 1-14; Lev 10; Num 14; Num 16; Isa 5:16. 5. In publicly manifesting his detestation of men on account of their most secret sins, Ps 50:21; Ps 10:8,11,14; Ezek 14:3-8; Ezek 8:7-18; 2 Sam 12:11-12; Jer 16:17-18. 6. In marking all the wicked with the most shameful distance and disgrace in the last judgment, 1 Thess 4:16-17; Matt

25:33; Ps 1:5; Ps 138:6. 7. In his everlasting exclusion of unholy angels and men from his presence, and marking them with the most tremendous tokens of his detestation, Matt 25:41,46; Ps 9:17; Rev 20:10,15; Rev 14:10-11; 2 Thess 1:8-9. Even these providential acts, which we are apt to imagine impure, are perfectly holy. He tempts men, merely by trying their obedience, or in permitting them to be enticed to sin, by Satan, evil men, or their own sinful lusts, 2 Sam 25:1; Matt 6:12; James 1:13-14. He bids men curse, merely by giving them an opportunity of doing it, 2 Sam 16:12. He hardens men in sin, when he justly withholds his heart-softening grace, and permits Satan, their neighbours, or their own lusts, to render them more stupid, perverse, and obstinate, Exod 4-14; Isa 63:17; Isa 6:9-10. He delivers men up to vile affections, a reprobate mind, or strong delusions, or to their own lusts, when he justly withholds his restraining or sanctifying influences, and permits their sinful corruptions to decoy or drag them into wickedness, error, and folly, Rom 1:24-28; 2 Thess 2:9-11; Isa 66:4; Ps 81:12. His deceiving of men imports his abandoning them to the temptations of Satan and their own deceitful heart, Jer 4:10; Ezek 14:9; 1 Kings 22:19-22.— Thus, in all these, he wisely, holily, and justly renders sin its own punishment.—In redemption, the holiness of God appears, 1. In his choosing men, that they might be holy, Eph 1:4; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 1:2; 1 Pet 2:9. 2. In exhibiting his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, even under the curse, which is the strength of sin, and amidst infinite temptations, as an incomparably perfect and glorious pattern of holiness in heart and life, Luke 1:35; Matt 3:15; John 8:29; John 17:4; John 18:11; Heb 5:8; Heb 7:26. 3. In punishing, even without mercy upon his own Son, sin imputed, withdrawing his comfortable smiles from him, and shutting out his prayers as if he had been a real sinner, Matt 26-27; Ps 22; Ps 69; Ps 89:38; Isa 53; Rom 8:3,32; Heb 2:10. 4. In giving Christ to purchase holiness for men, and making him to them, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 1:18-19; 1 Cor 1:30. 5. In so forming the gospel in all its declarations, promises, and invitations, as may best convey, and encourage us to holiness in heart and life, 1 Tim 6:3; 1 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:4; Titus 2:11-12; 2 Cor 7:1; John 15:3; John 17:17; Luke 1:74-75;

Ps 119:9,11,26. 6. In so framing the whole scheme of our redemption, that holiness of our heart and life is the end of every thing in it, Eph 1:3-4; Heb 13:12; Heb 9:14; 1 Cor 6:11; Titus 2:14; Titus 3:8,14; Ezek 36:25-27; Luke 1:74-75; 1 Thess 4:3,7; 1 Thess 5:23; Rom 6:14; Rom 7:4-6; Eph 4:11-13; Isa 27:9; Heb 12:10-11; 2 Cor 3:18; 1 John 3:2. 7. In effectually rendering men holy by the manifestations of his own holiness in the gospel, 2 Cor 3:18; 2 Cor 4:4,6. 8. In the sharp correction of his peculiar favourites for their unholiness, and even for sins which appear far less criminal than some others, Amos 3:2; Rev 3:19; Heb 12:6-11; Ps 99:8; Ps 119:67,71; Ps 89:31-34; Ps 73; Ps 77; Ps 88; 1 Sam 2-3; Num 12; Num 20:12; Deut 32:51. 9. In making perfect holiness a principal ingredient of our eternal happiness, Eph 5:25-27; 1 John 3:3; Jude 25.

VI. The Justice of God

The Justice of God is that essential property of his nature, which disposes him to render to himself, and to all his creatures, that which is right and equal.—It is evident that God is just or righteous: 1. The Scriptures expressly declare this; Ps 11:7; Ps 25:8; Ps 7:9; Ps 9:8; Ps 92:15; Ps 99:4; Ps 119:75,137; Exod 9:27; Exod 34:7; Gen 18:25; Deut 10:17; Deut 32:4; Jude 1,7; 1 Sam 3:18; 2 Chron 19:7; Job 8:3; Job 9:15; Job 34:10-12,19; Job 35:6-8; Job 36:3; Job 37:23; Jer 12:1; Isa 26:7; Dan 9:16; 2 Thess 1:6-7; 2 Tim 4:8; Heb 6:10; Acts 10:33-34; Rom 3:4,26; Rom 9:13-14. 2. The remains of equity among men proceed from, and are beloved by God, 2 Sam 22:26-28; Ps 7:9; Ps 11:7; Hos 14:9; Gen 18:23,25. 3. His infinite justice and equity appear, 1. In his giving the most righteous laws to his creatures, suited to their original abilities, and requiring the most perfect equity towards God, their neighbours, and themselves,—insisting chiefly on the principal points of equity; and that such as bear rule over others, should shew themselves distinguished patterns of it, Neh 9:13; Rom 7:12; Ps 119:75,137-138,142; Ps 19:8-11; Hos 14:9; Isa 26:7; Matt 23:23; Matt 22:37,39; Deut 16:18-19; 2 Sam 23:3; 2 Chron 19:6,9; Ps 82. 2. In annexing to those laws proper sanctions of rewards and

punishments, Ps 11:5-7; Ps 7:9-14; Ps 9:8,17; Isa 1:19-20; Isa 3:10-11; Rom 2:6-10; 2 Thess 1:6-10. 3. In rewarding men's good behaviour in the most proper time, manner, and degree, Ps 19:11; 1 Cor 15:58; Rev 14:13; 2 Tim 4:7-8.—In his rewarding the resemblances of good works performed by wicked men, 1 Kings 21:29; 2 Kings 10:30; Jon 3.—In rewarding the imperfect graces and works of his people, Rev 1:3; Rev 2:7,11,19,26-27; Rev 3:5,12,20,22; Rev 14:13; Rev 22:14; Col 3:24-25; 1 Cor 15:58; 1 Cor 9:24-25; 2 Tim 4:7-8; Matt 5:3-10.—and in largely rewarding the meritorious service of Christ as our Surety, Isa 49:5-6; Isa 53:10-12; Phil 2:7-11; Heb 2:8-10; Heb 12:2; John 17:4-5; Ps 22:27,31. 4. In bestowing all the purchased blessings of the new covenant upon the most vile, guilty, and rebellious men, on account of that righteousness which Christ, their Surety, performed in their stead, Rom 3:24-26; Rom 4:25; Rom 5:6-11,15-21; Rom 8:1-4,33-34; 2 Cor 5:14-21; 1 Thess 5:9-10; Eph 1:3-8; Eph 2:1-8,14; 1 Pet 1:18-21; 1 Pet 2:24; 1 Pet 3:18; Heb 9:12,14-15; Heb 10:10,14; 1 John 1:7,9; 1 John 2:1-2; 1 John 4:9-10; Rev 1:5-6; Rev 5:9-10; 2 Tim 4:8. 5. In his seasonable, severe, and well-proportioned chastisements of his people, which, as disagreeable, are due to them for offending their gracious Father,—and as calculated to promote their sanctification and comfort, are due to them as represented by their law-fulfilling Surety, Christ, Job 36:7-10; Ps 89:30-34; Ps 99:8; Ps 94:12; Prov 3:12; Heb 12:6-11; Rev 3:19. 6. In afflicting innocent animals, only in so far as they are connected with guilty sinners. And, who knows how far their present suffering may be balanced in their future restoration into the glorious liberty of the children of God? Isa 24; Hos 4:2-3; Jer 12:4; Jer 14:5-6; Job 1:16 with Rom 8:20-23; 2 Pet 3:13. 7. In infallibly punishing national sins with national judgments in this world, as there is no opportunity of punishing societies, as such, in the future state;—and in marking their sins in their punishments,—as in the case of the old world,—Sodomites, Egyptians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Jews, Papists, etc. Gen 6-7; Gen 19; Exod 1-14; Isa 33; Isa 37; Jer 25; Jer 46-51; Judg 1-12; 2 Kings 17; 2 Kings 25; Matt 23:32-39; Matt 24; Rev 6-20. 8. In punishing wicked men in this life, in a form, though not in a degree proportioned to their sins, and often by permitting them to fall into other sins, Job

18; Job 20; Job 27; Ps 92:7; Ps 37:20; Ps 35:26; Ps 7:10-16; Ps 58:9-10; Ezek 18; Ps 73:18-20; Ps 31:12; Gen 4; Gen 9:25; Isa 66:4; Isa 63:17; Hos 4:13-17; 2 Thess 2:9-11; Rom 1:18-32. 9. In publicly condemning wicked angels and men, and punishing them in hell for ever, Matt 25:41,46; 2 Thess 1:8-9; Rev 14:9-11; Rev 20:10,12. 10. Especially in exacting from his only and infinitely beloved Son, as our Surety, the very same obedience and satisfaction which were due from us to his broken law,—in the very same nature which had sinned, and under the very same overwhelming curse, Matt 3:15; Luke 24:26; Isa 53; Ps 22; Ps 69; Matt 26-27; Rom 3:24-26; Rom 5:6-10; Rom 8:3,32; Isa 42:21; Heb 2:10; Heb 5:8; 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 1:18-19; 1 Pet 2:24; 1 Pet 3:18; Gal 3:13; Phil 2:7-8.

Such is the infinite holiness and justice of God's nature, that he cannot suffer sin to pass without adequate punishment. 1. The Scripture represents him as so infinitely holy and just, that he cannot but hate and detest sin, and mark his abhorrence of it, Exod 34:7; Hab 1:12-13; Ps 5:4-6; Ps 11:5-7; Ps 9:5; Ps 50:21; Jer 44:4; Neh 1:2-3; Prov 6:16-19; Prov 16:5; Zech 11:8;—and as a Governor and Judge, who cannot but maintain the honour of that law which sinners trample on, and do right to his innocent creatures, which are hurt by their wickedness, Isa 42:21; 2 Thess 1:6-8; Rom 1:18,32; Rom 2:2,6-10; Gen 18:25. 2. Men's consciences represent him thus holy and just; and hence accuse and torment them when they offend him, and push them to appease him by sacrifices, services, etc. Acts 28:4; Rom 1:32; Rom 2:14-15. 3. The law of God manifests this truth. Most of his moral precepts depending on his very nature and indispensable prerogative of government, must to the violations of them, have an adequate sanction annexed; as otherwise, haters and blasphemers of God would appear as much beloved by him, as the most pious and virtuous persons, contrary to Rom 2:7-10; Isa 3:10-11; Isa 1:19-20.—All the ceremonial laws manifested, that without satisfaction to God's justice, there could be no remission of sin, Heb 9:22. And, if God's nature had not required an adequate punishment, the ceremonial offerings might have made atonement for sin, contrary to Heb 10:3-4. 4. If God's holiness and justice did not necessarily require him to

punish sin in an adequate manner, how could his infinite mercy and goodness admit any punishment of it, as without real necessity, all punishment is an approach towards wanton cruelty? 5. If it had not been necessary to the honourable egress of his mercy towards sinful men, how could God have so fearfully punished his holy, his only begotten, and infinitely beloved Son? Or how could there be such distinguishing love, in giving him for a propitiation for our sins,—as the Scripture represents, Luke 24:26; Rom 3:25-26; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13; Titus 2:14; Heb 2:10; 1 Pet 1:18-19; 1 Pet 2:24; 1 Pet 3:18; John 3:16; Rom 5:6-10; Rom 8:32; 1 John 4:9-10; Eph 5:2; Gal 2:20; Rev 1:5.

To anticipate objections, it may be observed, 1. That God's mercy and justice are not contrary perfections, though the one cannot be exercised to the dishonour of the other. 2. That the effects of God's mercy and grace, being absolutely free and gratuitous, may be restrained, if he please; but the effects of his justice being a debt due to the honour of his nature and law, or the general welfare of his creatures, cannot be justly restrained, Gen 18:25; Deut 32:4; Ps 11:5-7; Ps 119:137; Dan 9:16; 2 Thess 1:6-9; Isa 5:10. 3. Though God's sovereign will regulate the circumstances of deserved punishment, the punishment itself is necessary. Magistrates may, by their own will, regulate the time, place, and manner of executing a murderer, but cannot, without flagrant injustice to their character, their laws, or their country, dismiss him unpunished. 4. Though God may delay the full punishment of sinners,—the longer he does so, it must be the more dreadful when it comes, Rom 2:4-5; Rom 9:22; Heb 10:26-31. 5. God's substitution of his own Son to bear the punishment due to his elect, instead of proving, that he could have dispensed with it, strongly proves the contrary, Rom 3:25-26; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13-14; Heb 2:10; Luke 24:26.

VII. The Goodness of God

The goodness of God is that essential property of his nature, which inclines him to regard and delight in himself, and to deal kindly with his creatures.—As it inclines him to affect, esteem, and delight in himself, or one divine person in another,—and to care for, to promote the welfare of creatures, and delight in and rejoice over them, it is called love, because love to himself and to his creatures, gives rise to, and animates his whole conduct, particularly his work of redemption, 1 John 4:8-10,16,19; Rom 5:8; John 3:16.—His love, in respect of the objects of it, may be distinguished into that which he bears to himself, Isa 5:16; Lev 10:3; Matt 11:27; John 1:18; John 3:35; that which he bears to all his creatures as such, Ps 104:31; Gen 1:31; and that redeeming love which he bears to his chosen of mankind, Deut 7:7-8; Deut 33:3; John 3:16; John 15:9-15; John 16:27; John 17:23,26; Rom 5:8,21; Rom 8:32; Gal 2:20; Eph 1:3-8; Eph 2:1-9; Eph 4:8-10,19; Rev 1:5.—His love to creatures is distinguished into his love willing their welfare, Rom 9:16,18; Exod 33:19; Ps 86:15; his love doing them good, John 3:16; Rom 8:32-39; Ps 5:12; Isa 63:7; Isa 59:8-10; Eph 5:2; 1 John 3:1; 1 John 4:9-10; his love delighting in them, Ps 147:11; Ps 149:4; Ps 35:27; Isa 62:5; Zeph 3:17. These are but the same love exercising itself in different forms.—God's goodness, as it inclines him to make or supply his creatures, to none of which he owes either being or any thing else, is called bounty, Ps 116:7; Ps 119:17; 1 Kings 3:6.—As it inclines him to do good to those that are undeserving or ill-deserving, it is called grace, or free favour, Rom 3:24; Rom 5:20-21; Eph 2:5,7-8; Eph 1:6-7; 2 Cor 8-9; Ps 5:12. As it inclines him to pity, help, and provide for, persons in misery, it is called mercy or compassion, Ps 102:8,11-17; Ps 86:5,15; Ps 89:1-2,28; Ps 111:4; Ps 112:4; Rom 9:16,18.—And as he takes peculiar pleasure in thus manifesting his goodness, in the redemption of men, mercy is attributed to him several hundred times in Scripture, Ps 136; Ps 100; etc. he hath bowels ascribed to him, Isa 63:7,15; Jer 31:20; Hos 11:8; and is represented as full of compassion, Ps 78:38; Ps 86:15; Ps 111:4; Ps 112:4; Ps 145:8.—And, as his goodness inclines him to forbear for a time, punishing the affronts done him, it is called patience and longsuffering, Rom 2:4; Rom 9:22; Rom 15:7; 2 Pet 3:9,15; Exod 34:6; Ps 86:15.

It is most evident, that God is good. 1. The Scriptures in passages innumerable represent him as good,—as only good,—as kind,—gracious, merciful, and longsuffering, Ps 25:8, Ps 36:7; Ps 119:68; Ps 145:7-9; Matt 19:17; Isa 63:7; Zech 9:17; Ps 33:15; Ps 107; Ps 136; Ps 34:8; Ps 144:2; Ps 63:3-6; Ps 40:11; Ps 69:16; Joel 2:12-13; Jer 3:13; Eph 2:5,7; Eph 1:6-8; Mic 7:18-20; Neh 9:17; 2 Pet 3:9,15; Exod 34:6-7. 2. All that goodness which is to be found among creatures, animate or inanimate, rational or irrational, originates from God, Rom 11:36; Ps 119:68; James 1:17; 1 Cor 4:7; Gen 1-2. 3. The goodness of God, is most extensively and clearly manifested in his works of creation, providence, and redemption.

In creation it appears, 1. In his forming all creatures in order, that they might share of his kindness and bounty,—he having no need either of their existence or service, Ps 16:2. 2. In forming such vast multitudes of creatures,—in such diversified qualities, situations, orders, connections, and mutual dependencies, that the goodness of all might contribute to the advantage of each, Gen 1. 3. In creating angels so many in number, so high in dignity, so excellent in quality, and so capable of enjoying himself, Ps 104:4; Ps 103:20-21. 4. In forming man—his body so beautiful, so marvellously compacted of a multitude of members, and fitted to promote his true happiness,—his soul endowed with so many excellent faculties, qualifying it for the enjoyment of God himself, as his chief good, and marvellously united to his body, that he might at once partake of an earthly and an heavenly felicity, Gen 2:6-7; and that, by a particular consultation of the divine persons, he was formed in the image of God, Gen 1:26-27; Gen 9:6; and that his formation was so timed as to come into a world fully fitted and furnished for his immediate happiness, Gen 1-2.

In providence, God's goodness appears, 1. In his upholding innumerable numbers of creatures in order to render them partakers of his favours, Ps 36:6-7; Zech 9:17; Ps 104; Ps 107; Ps 145; Ps 148. 2. In governing them all, to the best advantage of all in general, Ps 119:68; Ps 104-105; Ps 107; Ps 136; Ps 145; Ps 147-148; Job 37; Job 41. 3. In so distributing his goodness among them, that they may all

depend on, and taste it, in each other; and even worms may teach angels and men the mysteries of the Godhead, Job 12:8-9. 4. In his peculiarly kind deportment towards angels and men, while they kept their first estate,—giving them good laws, suited to their natures, and conducive to their happiness; in entering into a covenant of friendship with men; if not also with angels, though not by a representative, Job 38:7; Gen 2:16-17. 5. In permitting sin to enter into the world, chiefly, that it might afford an occasion of opening his infinite treasures of redeeming love and grace, Rom 5:8,20-21; Eph 2:1-8; Eph 1:6-8; Gen 3. 6. In his amazing patience toward sinful men,—in not smiting and even damning them in the very act of sinning, but deferring his vengeance as long as the vindication of his own perfections and good of his creatures in general can permit, Gen 6:3; Gen 15:13,16; Rom 9:22.—In repeating his warnings, before he punish or correct, Lev 26; Deut 27-32; Judg 2; 2 Kings 17; Ps 78; Ps 106; Isa 1; Ezek 20; Mal 4; Matt 24; Rev 8-20; etc.—In inflicting his judgments by progressive degrees, and with an apparent reluctancy, Isa 9-10; Ezek 20; Amos 3-4; Amos 6; Ezra 9:7; Joel 1:3; Judg 10:16; Isa 1:24; Lam 3:33; Hos 6:4-5; Hos 11:8; Ps 78:38.—And in moderating his judgments, loading men with his favours, notwithstanding many and great provocations, Ps 103:10; Ezra 9:13; Job 11:6; Job 33:27; Isa 57:17-19; Isa 43:24-25; Lam 3:22,31-32; Matt 26-27 with Acts 2-9; Titus 3:3-7. 7. In working an infinity of wonderful and miraculous works for the welfare of persons and nations, Exod 2-20; Deut 32:6; Ezek 20; Neh 9; Ezra 1-10; Esther 1-10; Matt 1-28; Luke 1-24; John 1-21; Acts 1-28; Rom 15:19; Heb 2:4.—The histories or predictions of Scripture are full of them. 8. In his wonderful care of our world, notwithstanding its present defilement with sin,—as of irrational creatures, Ps 145:9; Ps 147:8-9; Ps 104:11-22; Deut 22:7; Deut 25:4; Lev 22:28.—of slaves, Exod 21:2-10,27; Deut 23:15.—of criminals, Deut 21:22-23; Deut 25:1-3.—of the poor, of widows, and fatherless children, Exod 23:11; Lev 19:13,33-34; Lev 25:35,39,47; Ps 9:18; Ps 10:14,18; Ps 12:5; Ps 35:11; Ps 41:1-3; Ps 68:5,10; Ps 82:3; Ps 69:33; Ps 72:4,13; Ps 107:41; Ps 109:31; Ps 132:15; Ps 146:9; Exod 22:22; Deut 14:29; Deut 10:18; Deut 16:11,14; Deut 24:17,19-21; Deut 26:12-13; Prov 15:25; Prov 19:17; Prov

23:11,18; Isa 1:17,23; Jer 7:6; Zech 7:10; Jer 49:11; Hos 14:3; James 1:27.—of wicked men, Matt 5:45; Ezek 20; Acts 14:16-17; Jon 3; Jon 4:11; 1 Kings 21:29; Ezek 29:18-20.—of societies, in dictating or suggesting proper rules of government to them, putting part of his own honour and authority on their magistrates for their benefit, Ps 107:31-32; Jer 18:9; Rom 13:1-6; 1 Tim 2:1-2; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet 2:13-14,17; Ps 82:9. In so timing his favours, particularly deliverances, that they become doubly valuable.—Delays of them till we be brought to an extremity, afford us opportunities of acting faith, and encouraging ourselves in him alone, John 11:15-44; 2 Chron 20:7,12; Ps 42-43,—and granting them in the very crisis of extremity, stirs us up to improve our new covenant interest in him, Ps 123:3; Ps 44:23-26; Exod 15:1-2; Ps 103; Ps 116; Ps 118; Ps 40; Ps 13; Ps 18.—Earthly comforts are cut off, to prepare us for his intended spiritual favours, Ps 102:23-24; Ps 142:4-5.—And remarkable deliverances afforded to prevent future calamities. Thus, the destruction of the Egyptians, and Israel's deliverance at the Red Sea, made the hearts of the Canaanites to melt, Josh 9:9-10; Josh 2:9-11.

In the origin, the impetration, and the application of redemption, the goodness of God still more gloriously appears.—In its origin, it appears, 1. In that absolutely free and infinitely abundant grace in God himself is the only primary cause of it, John 3:16; 1 John 4:9-10,19; Rom 5:8,20-21; Eph 2:4,7. 2. In that the redeeming work was begun an infinity of ages before we were ruined, Eph 1:4-5; 2 Tim 1:9; Titus 1:2; 1 Pet 1:19-20; Prov 8:23,31; Matt 25:34. 3. In that, moved by mere free love, all the divine persons heartily joined in the contrivance and plan of it, and took their respective share of the work,—the Father to exert the grace,—the Son to advance the merit,—and the Holy Ghost to apply the purchased benefits;—the Father to make the exceeding great and precious promises,—the Son to ratify them in his obedience and death, and purchase the things promised,—and the Holy Ghost to put them, and all the blessings which they contain, into our possession;—the Father to adopt us for his children,—the Son to redeem us for his mystical members,—and the Holy Ghost to renew and sanctify our heart, and make us meet habitations

for God, Prov 8:23-31; Ps 40:6-8; Isa 48:16; Isa 53:10-12; Isa 61:1-3; Isa 49:1-6.—In the impetration of our redemption, God's goodness appears, 1. In that the deliverance is infinitely more important, costly, sure, and delightful, than creation itself, Eph 1:3-8; Eph 2:1-8; Rev 1:5-6; Rev 5:9-10. 2. That, not fallen angels, whose nature is of more importance and dignity, but fallen men are delivered, Heb 2:14,16; Jude 6. 3. That the only begotten Son of God is the Redeemer and Surety of such mean, sinful, and infamous creatures, John 3:16; 1 John 4:9-10. 4. That he, by the most complete obedience, and the most dreadful, but voluntary sufferings, magnified his Father's law, and satisfied his justice, that he might open an abundant egress for displaying his favours to usward, Heb 2:10; Heb 5:8; Heb 13:12; Heb 1:3; Gal 3:13; 2 Cor 5:21; Isa 53:4-5,10; Isa 42:21; Rom 8:3-4; Rom 10:4. 5. That he thus manifested his love, after men had, for four thousand years, continued in the most uninterrupted, horrid, outrageous, and progressive rebellion against him, Gal 4:4; Gen 3 through Mal 4; Rom 3:10-19; Rom 1:18-32; Rom 5:6-10,20-21. 6. That notwithstanding God's most dreadful curse lay upon Christ from his conception till his death, the Holy Ghost marvellously furnished him for, and supported him under his arduous work, John 3:34; Heb 9:14. 7. That God accepted this satisfaction due from us, from his own Son in our stead,—justified and glorified him as our Representative, and constituted him our advocate, that our faith and hope might be in himself, Rom 3:25-26; Rom 5:6-11,15-21; Rom 8:3-4,32-34; Rom 4:25; Rom 10:4; Isa 50:7,9; Isa 52:13-15; Isa 53:2-12; John 4:9-10; John 2:1-2; Eph 5:2; Gal 2:20; 1 Pet 1:18-21; 1 Tim 3:16; Heb 7:25. In the application of this purchased redemption, the goodness of God is manifested, 1. In that all the blessings of it are lodged in the hands of Christ, our elder brother, as Administrator of the new covenant, Col 1:19; Ps 68:18; Matt 11:27; Matt 28:18; John 3:35; Isa 49:6; Ps 72:17; Ps 21:4. 2. That Christ is exalted to the right hand of God, solemnly to take in feftment on, and possession of eternal happiness, in our name; to intercede for us, and pour down the Spirit on us; to apply to us all the benefits of his purchase, John 14:2-3,26; John 16:7-14; Eph 2:5-7; Heb 6:19-20; Heb 7:25; Heb 4:14-16; 1 John 2:1-2. 3. That in him all

the blessings of redemption lie ready for us, in exceeding great and precious promises, which are published to us in the gospel, Matt 22:4; 2 Pet 1:4; 2 Cor 1:20; Isa 55:1-7; Rev 22:17; Prov 1:20-23; Prov 8:4; Prov 9:5; John 6:39. 4. That these prepared blessings are so infinitely great and many, and must be bestowed upon us, Ps 31:19; Ps 36:6-10; Ps 65:4; Ps 68:10,18-22; Eph 1:3-8; Eph 2:4-10; Eph 3:17-19. 5. That the offers of these blessings in the gospel are so particularly directed to sinners, even of the worst kind, Ezek 36:25-31; Isa 43:24-25; Isa 46:12-13; Isa 1:18; Isa 55:1-7; Jer 3; Matt 9:13; Matt 18:11; 1 Tim 1:15. 6. That these offers of salvation are granted and continued, notwithstanding men's multiplied and dreadful provocations, fearful abuse, contempt, and opposition to them, Acts 3:15,26; Isa 1:3-18; Isa 57:17-18. 7. That these offers are so great, so earnest, so engaging, so free, and condescending, Ps 34:8,11; Ps 50:7; Ps 81:8-10; Prov 1:20,23; Prov 8:4-36; Prov 9:1-6; Prov 23:26; Song 3:11; Song 4:8; Song 5:2; Isa 1:18; Isa 45:22-25; Isa 46:12-13; Isa 49:1-12; Isa 55:1-7; Isa 65:1-2; Zech 9:9,12; Matt 11:5,28-30; Matt 22:1-9; Luke 14:16-23; John 7:37-39; John 6:37-40; 2 Cor 5:18-21; Rev 22:17. 8. That many, if not most, of those who have these offered blessings conferred upon them, in respect of their former outward circumstances, tempers, or morals, were of the very dregs of mankind, Luke 19:10; Matt 22:9; Matt 9:13; 1 Cor 1:25-31; 1 Tim 1:13,15-16. 9. That God taketh such pleasure in the application of redemption, Isa 65:1-2; Isa 62:5,11; Isa 61:1-2,10; Jer 32:38-41; Jer 31:18-20; Mic 7:19; Zeph 3:17. 10. That the most outrageous sinners are often received by God with distinguished marks of compassion and kindness, Luke 15:20-22; Luke 7; Luke 23; John 4; Acts 2; Acts 4; Acts 6; Acts 9; Acts 22; Acts 26; 1 Cor 15:8-10.

Gal 1:15-16; 1 Tim 1:13-16. 11. That amidst strange and furious opposition, Christ and his Spirit enter into men's hearts, in order to apply his benefits, Rom 7:8-25; Luke 11:21-22; Ps 110:2-3; 2 Cor 10:4-5. 12. That he deals so tenderly with his people when they offend him, Ps 103:12-13; Isa 57:17-19; Jer 31:18-20; Jer 3; Hos 6:4; Hos 11:8. 13. That he closely adheres to them, sympathizes with them under all their troubles, and delivers them as soon as it can be for

their real advantage, Zech 2:8; Isa 63:9; Isa 40:11; Isa 41:10,14,17-18; Isa 46:4; Luke 18:8; delights to converse with them, and to hear and answer their prayers, Jer 32:41; Jer 33:3; Zeph 3:17; Isa 62:4-5; Isa 30:18,21; Isa 58:9; Isa 65:24; Isa 45:11; Luke 11:9; Matt 7:7; Ps 50:15; Ps 91:15; Ps 85:6,8; Song 2:14; Song 8:13.—In fine, God's goodness appears in manifold respects, in all the particular blessings of our election, union with Christ, justification, adoption, sanctification, spiritual comfort, and eternal glory;—and in all the means of grace, ordinary or solemn, Eph 1:3-8; Eph 2:1-10; Rom 5:15-21.

VIII. The Truth of God

The truth of God is not here taken for the reality of his existence, and the necessary possession of infinite excellency, on account of which he is called the true God, in opposition to such as are gods only in respect of name, but have no infinite or independent perfection, Jer 10:10; but it means that essential property of his nature, by which he is infinitely free from, and abhors all deceit and falsehood. It may be distinguished into his sincerity, uprightness, or candour, which consists in the exact agreement of his words and works with his thoughts, inclination, or will; and his veracity or faithfulness, which consists in the exact correspondence of his works with his declarations, predictions, promises, and threatenings, and with all these relations in which he stands to his creatures.

It is most evident, that God is true in these respects: 1. The Scriptures expressly represent him as a God of truth, that cannot lie or fail to perform his word, Num 23:19; 1 Sam 15:29; Titus 1:2; Heb 6:17-18; Heb 10:23; 2 Tim 2:13; 1 Thess 5:24; 1 Cor 1:9; 1 Cor 10:13; Deut 7:9; Deut 32:4; Neh 9:8; Ps 33:4; Ps 89:1-2,5,8,14,35; Ps 36:5; Ps 119:38,49,70,160; Ps 111:7-8; Ps 100:5; Ps 25:10; Ps 31:5; Isa 25:1; Isa 65:16; John 17:17; Rom 3:3-4; 1 Pet 4:19; Rev 1:5; Rev 3:15; John 14:16-17. 2. His independence, infinite holiness, equity, power, and majesty, set him above all possibility of, or temptation to deceit or falsehood, Num 23:19; 1 Sam 15:29; Heb 6:16-21; 2 Tim 2:13. 3. All

that candour and faithfulness which is among mankind, or regard to it, proceed from him, James 1:17; 1 Cor 4:7. 4. This candour or faithfulness is manifested in, 1. The self-consistency of all his words, notwithstanding their being spoken on very different occasions, Ps 119:30-31,43,86-87,90,104,128,138,142,160,163. 2. None of his words are contrary to the discoveries of his perfections, which are made by the light of nature or by Revelation, 2 Tim 2:13; Deut 32:4. 3. His whole work of providence, with all the dispositions and actions of mankind, plainly confirm the leading truths of his word, compare Exod 34:6-7; Deut 32:4 with the history of his works, Gen 3 through Esther 10; Isa 1 through Mal 4; Matt 1 through Rev 22; Ps 78; Ps 103; Ps 107; Ps 136; Ps 145-149; Jer 17:9; Rom 3:10-20; Rom 8:7-8; Rom 1:24-32; Matt 5:19; with the history of mankind, Gen 4; Gen 6; Gen 11; 2 Kings 17; Neh 9; Ezek 16; Ezek 20; Ezek 23; Isa 59; Jer 2-23; Jer 44; etc. 4. All the principal acts of his providence in the world are a manifest fulfilment of his inspired predictions. 5. He hath, or doth, accomplish those promises, threatenings, or predictions, which, to us, appear most unlikely to be fulfilled, or which he had the strongest-like reasons to shift, as of the incarnation, sufferings, and death of his Son, the calling of the Gentiles,—and the Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification of sinful men, Gal 4:4-6; Isa 53; Matt 1 through Acts 28; 1 Cor 6:9-11; Eph 1-3; Rom 1-11; Col 1-2. 6. His truth and faithfulness will be most fully manifested in the last judgment, when all the works of God and men shall be exactly compared with his word,—and in the everlasting happiness or misery of angels and men, Rev 20:12-15; Matt 25:31-46; 2 Thess 1:6-10; Rom 2:6-10.

To anticipate objections, it must be observed, 1. That God may declare to men what is their duty, without manifesting his own secret intentions. His law is the only rule of our duty; and his purpose the only rule of his own conduct, Mic 6:8 with Deut 29:29; Isa 8:20; Isa 55:8-11; Eph 1:11. 2. That God may permit others to deceive, or be deceived, without having any deceit in himself, or in his conduct, 1 Kings 22:22-23; Ezek 14:9 with Deut 32:4; Ps 25:8,10. 3. That when promises, threatenings, or predictions, have in them a condition

expressed or understood, the fulfilment of them doth not fall due, and ought not to be looked for, unless that condition be first fulfilled, Mark 16:16; Jon 3; 1 Sam 23:11-12; Isa 38:1.

My Soul, stop thy contemplation of the Most High, and ask thyself, as in his presence: If God be a Spirit, am I spiritually-minded, and a worshipper of Him in spirit and in truth? Do I detest and banish every carnal imagination of him from my heart?—Is he the all-knowing and only wise God? Do I then behave as one ever naked and open to his view? Do I reverently avoid all prying into his secrets? Do I relish all his oracles, as the storehouse and fountain of all true wisdom and knowledge to my heart? Do I cordially approve all his ordinances, and admire his whole word, purpose, and work? Do I acknowledge him in all my ways, that he may direct my paths; and in the most perplexing cases, trust to his skill and power for my deliverance?—If he be Almighty,—a Sovereign Ruler, am I, in the view of my own weakness, still blushing, still trembling before him? Do I always labour to check the very first risings of my heart in rebellion against Him? Do I, without staggering, rest the whole burden of my salvation upon Him? Do I rejoice in Him, and firmly expect deliverance from Him, when I apprehend all things working against me? Do I ascribe all that I am and have, except my sinfulness, to Him? And am I contented with all that I meet with in providence, as the doing of my Lord?—Am I holy as he is holy; pure as he is pure? Do I abhor myself and all my righteousness in his sight? Do I chiefly delight in his holiness? And doth even the contempt of it by others excite my love to, and esteem of it? Do I, in all my dealings with Him, labour to act under a deep impression of his holiness? Do I, above all things, hate sin?—my own sin?—my most refined and secret sin? Do I always labour in the gospel-glass to behold his holiness, that I may be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord?—Under the affecting views of his justice, do I revere every dispensation of his providence, and kindly acknowledge, that unto him as my Lord belongeth righteousness, and unto me, shame and confusion of face? Do I live in perpetual wonder, that his infinite equity can suffer such a sinner to live; nay, will save me? Do I

continually flee from all my own righteousness to that of Jesus Christ, and rest on it alone for my eternal salvation?—If God be good, —be Love, am I, with amazement, believing his lovingkindness, and applying it to my own heart? Am I opening my mouth wide, that he may fill it? Am I satisfied with his goodness, as the source and the substance of all my happiness? Do I reckon all things, as coming from his hand, as good,—very good for me? Do I, above all, desire to be an eternal debtor and unparalleled miracle of his redeeming goodness? And, all inflamed herewith, how burns my heart with love to Him that first loved me, and gave his Son for me?—Do I love them that hate me? and do good to, and pray for them that despitefully use me?—If he be the God of truth, have I set to my seal, that he hath given me eternal life in his Son? Have I found his promises and eaten them; have they been to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart? Do I hold them fast, and refuse to let them go? Have I rejoiced at finding them, as one that findeth great spoil,—and chosen them to be my heritage for ever?—Is this God, who is manifested in all around me,—in all before, behind, above, or below me, for ever in mine eye, and in all the powers of my soul?—Is he my Saviour, my Father, my Husband,—my Friend, my Master, my Portion, my Pattern, my God; —my all?

The Inimitable or Incommunicable Perfections of God are,

I. His self-existence and absolute independence, in respect of which, his being and nature are necessary. He cannot but be; and be what he is, and is altogether in and of himself, Exod 3:14; Rev 1:8; Rev 16:5; Rev 22:6. He hath no dependence on any creature; but every creature, in its existence, nature, and operation, is wholly dependent on him, Ps 102:26-27; Ps 16:2; Job 22:2; Job 35:6-7.—And, from this his absolute sovereignty and dominion doth proceed, Dan 4:34-35; Dan 2:20,22; Matt 11:26; Matt 20:15.

II. His absolute simplicity, in respect of which he is absolutely free from all composition, and every thing in him is God himself. 1. He is represented as a simple abstract, as,—light,—love,—life, 1 John 1:5; 1 John 4:8,16; 1 John 5:20. 2. Being the independent and absolutely first being, he could have none to unite compounding parts in him, Isa 41:4; Isa 44:6. 3. Being incorruptible and unchangeable, he cannot consist of divisible parts, Rom 1:23; 1 Tim 1:17; 1 Tim 6:16; Mal 3:6. 4. Being infinite, there cannot be any thing added to another in him, Jer 23:23; 1 Kings 8:27. 5. Being perfect in the highest degree, he cannot be compounded of things which, taken separately, would be imperfect, Job 11:7.

III. His infinity, which denotes him as great and excellent in every respect, as he can be. It includes the unbounded excellency of his nature. Hence he is represented as great, Deut 32:3; 1 Chron 16:25; Ezra 5:8; Job 36:26; Job 37:22; Titus 2:13; Ps 29,—greater than all men,—than all nations, Ps 35:10; Ps 104:1; Ps 86:8; Ps 89:5-8; Dan 4:32; Isa 40:12-22;—greater than all things, greater than all gods, Job 11:7-9; 1 Kings 8:27; Ps 86:8; Exod 18:11;—as transcending all possible limits of excellency, Job 11:7; Ps 145:3; Ps 147:5.—It also includes the unbounded extent of his presence. The being of his essence, wherever space or any creature could be, is called his immensity, 1 Kings 8:27, and its being wherever creatures actually are, is called his omnipresence, Ps 139:7-10; Jer 23:23-24; Eph 4:6; 1 Cor 12:6.—God is peculiarly present with Christ. His nature in the person of the Son is united to, and dwells with his manhood, Col 2:9; 1 Tim 3:16; Rom 8:3; Gal 4:4. And he delightfully dwells in him as God-man Mediator, 2 Cor 5:19.—He is present with his saints, graciously dwelling in their heart, and thus affording them his peculiar favour, help, and comfort, John 14:16,23; 2 Cor 13:14; Rom 8:14-17,26-27; Gal 4:6; 1 Cor 3:16-17; 1 Cor 6:18-19; 2 Cor 6:16; Rev 21:3; Eph 2:19-22; 1 John 4:4,16; 1 John 3:24; John 17:21-23,26; Ps 39:12.—He was present with his prophets and apostles, in his infallible inspiring influence on their minds, in their declaration of his will to men, 1 Pet 1:11; 2 Pet 1:21; 2 Sam 23:2; Heb 1:1.—He is present in his church, in his oracles, and in the instituted ordinances

of his worship, in the representatives of his authority, and in the influences of his Spirit, Matt 18:20; Matt 28:20; Exod 20:24; John 17:21; 1 Cor 12:12-13,28; Eph 4:11-13; 1 John 1:3,5,7; 1 Pet 1:12.—He was present in the Jewish tabernacle and temple at Jerusalem, or at Bethel, Sinai, etc. in the manifested symbols of his glory, power, and grace, and in his solemn ordinances of worship, Exod 25:8,22; Exod 29:43; 1 Kings 5:5; 1 Kings 8:11; Gen 28:16-17; Gen 48:3; Exod 3:4; Exod 19:11; Ps 68:17; Ps 132:5; Ps 80:1-2.—He is present in heaven in the most glorious manifestation of his excellencies, Isa 66:1; Ps 115:3; Matt 6:9; Heb 12:23; Phil 3:20; John 14:2-3; John 4:14; John 8:1.—He is present in hell, in the most dreadful execution of his wrath, Ps 139:8; 2 Thess 1:9; Rev 14:10-11; Mark 9:44,46.—He is present with all creatures, in observing, supporting, and governing them, Heb 1:3; Heb 4:13; Ps 139:12-13; Jer 23:23-24; Col 1:17; 1 Cor 12:6.

IV. His absolute eternity consists in his being without beginning, ending, or succession of duration, which indeed is nothing else than his infinity as it respects duration. It is manifest, that he is eternal in this manner. 1. The Scripture expressly represents him as eternal or everlasting, without any limitation, Gen 21:33; Deut 33:29; Ps 9:7; Ps 55:19; Prov 8:23,25; Isa 40:28; Isa 57:15; Dan 6:26; Jer 10:10; Rom 16:26; Rev 4:8-9; Hab 1:12.—And, he alone is eternal, without beginning or succession of duration, Ps 90:2,4; Ps 92:8; Ps 102:24-28; 2 Pet 3:8; Rom 1:23; 1 Tim 1:17; 1 Tim 6:16; Isa 9:6; Isa 57:15; James 1:17. He alone is the First and the Last, Isa 41:4; Isa 44:6; Isa 48:12; Rev 1:8,11; Rev 21:6; Rev 22:13. 2. The days, years, and succession, competent to his creatures, are represented as unapplicable to him, Job 36:26; Job 10:4; Ps 90:4; 2 Pet 3:8; Dan 7:9,24. Ps 102:24,27; Job 10:5; Isa 43:13. 3. Many eternal things, as eternal life,—strength,—mercy,—dominion,—throne, etc. are ascribed to him, Deut 32:40; Deut 33:27; Rev 4:9; Rev 5:14; Isa 26:4; Ps 103:17; Ps 136; Dan 4:3,34; Dan 6:26; Ps 93:2; Lam 5:19; Isa 51:6-8; Ps 33:11; Ps 135:13.—And we can as easily conceive how God's unsuccessive eternity coexists with the successive duration of his creatures, as we can conceive how his omnipresence coexists with all

material substances, without having any corporeal extension in himself.

V. His unchangeableness is that essential property of his nature, by which he is from eternity to eternity, without any alteration, always the same; and it is often expressly ascribed to him in Scripture, James 1:17; Mal 3:6; 1 Tim 1:17; Rom 1:23; Ps 102:24-27; Heb 1:11-12; Heb 13:8; Heb 6:18; Isa 46:4; Isa 57:15; Exod 3:14; Num 23:19; Titus 1:2; 2 Tim 2:13.—He is unchangeable, 1. In his existence, that he cannot cease to be, 1 Tim 1:17; 1 Tim 6:16; Rom 1:25; Ps 102:24-27. 2. In his essence or nature, that he cannot cease to be whatever he is, in his perfections of wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, or truth, etc. 2 Tim 2:13; Isa 26:4; Deut 32:4; Ps 103:17; Ps 90:2; Exod 3:14. 3. In his actual knowledge of things, 1 Cor 2:16; Acts 15:18; Heb 4:13; Job 11:7-9. 4. In his will and purpose, Heb 6:17-18; Isa 14:24,27; Isa 46:10; Ps 33:11; Rom 9:11; Job 23:13. 5. In his words,—his doctrines, laws, promises, threatenings, or predictions, Num 23:19; 1 Sam 15:29; Heb 6:18; Ps 119:87. 6. In his essential presence, that he cannot properly remove from one place to another, 1 Kings 8:27; Jer 23:23-24. 7. In his duration, which is neither less nor greater. He hath never existed longer, nor hath any less future duration to enjoy, Ps 90:2,4; 2 Pet 3:8.—His formation of his creatures from nothing, or his changing of their forms in his providence, infers no change in himself. His power and will to create, preserve, or govern them, in such a manner, being the very same from all eternity.—New relations between him and his creatures infer not a change in him, but in them.

VI. His oneness, in respect of which, on account of his infinite perfection, there neither is, nor can be any other like to, or equal with him. This doth not mean, that there is but one Supreme God, as Arians and Socinians profess, who admit subordinate gods. Nor that there is but one specific divine nature, which different beings may possess, as Tritheists pretend: Nor that there is but one divine person exhibited in different characters, and by different names, as Sabellians contend. But it means, that there neither is, nor can be

any more than one individual, or as others speak, numerical divine substance. This the necessary self-existence of God, his absolute eternity, infinity, omnipotence, and sovereignty, which exclude every rival partaker, demonstrate. And multitudes of scriptures expressly declare it, Deut 4:35,39; Deut 6:4; Deut 32:39; Deut 33:26; 1 Sam 2:2; 2 Sam 7:22; 1 Kings 8:23; 2 Kings 19:15; 1 Chron 15:26; Ps 18:31; Ps 35:10; Ps 86:8; Ps 148:13; Ps 89:6,8; Ps 115:4-8; Isa 43:10-15; Isa 44:26; Isa 45:5,18-22; Jer 10:8-15; Jer 14:22; Hos 13:4; Exod 20:3; John 17:3; Rom 3:30; 1 Cor 8:6; Eph 4:6; James 2:19; James 4:12; 1 Tim 2:5.—But none of these texts exclude the Son, or the Holy Ghost, from true and supreme godhead. Nay, the very characters ascribed to the one only true God, are ascribed to each of these two persons, compare Isa 44:6 with Rev 1:8,11.—Isa 45:22-23 with Rom 14:9-10; Phil 2:10-11.—John 17:3 with 1 John 5:20-21.—Rom 3:30 with Isa 53:11.—In 1 Cor 8:6; 1 Tim 2:5. One God means the divine nature, as distinguished from Christ the Mediator.—Nor are the distinct persons in the godhead represented as having similar, but the very same names, attributes, counsel, will, and work, compare Ps 33:6; Isa 44:24.—Rom 10:12; Luke 2:11; Rom 11:34; Isa 40:13; 2 Cor 3:18.—Deut 6:4; Ps 83:18; Jer 23:6.—Ezek 8:3; Matt 15:31; Luke 1:16-17; 2 Sam 23:3.—Rom 7:25; Gal 6:2; Rom 8:2; Deut 6:16; 1 Cor 10:9; Acts 5:9.—1 Cor 2:16; Rom 8:27.—1 Thess 4:3; Acts 22:14; Acts 9:15,17; 2 Pet 1:21.—Ezek 37:3-14; 2 Cor 12:9; Rom 15:19.—Rom 16:26; Rev 22:13; Heb 9:14.—John 7:28; Rev 3:7; 1 John 5:6; John 14:17.—Rev 15:4; Acts 3:14; Dan 9:24; 1 John 2:20; John 14:26.—Jer 23:24; Ezek 1:22; Ps 139:7.—Deut 30:20; Col 3:4; Rom 8:10.—Ps 100:3; John 1:3; Job 33:4.—John 5:21; 1 Cor 15:45; John 6:63; Rom 8:11.—John 6:45; Gal 1:12; John 14:26.—1 John 1:3; 2 Cor 13:14.—1 Cor 14:25; 2 Cor 13:5; John 14:17; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 3:17; Rom 8:11.—Phil 3:15; Gal 1:12; Luke 2:26; Heb 1:1; 2 Cor 13:3; Mark 13:11.—Isa 49:7-8; Acts 13:3.—1 Cor 6:14; John 2:19; 1 Pet 3:18.—Isa 48:17; John 10:3; Rom 8:14.—2 Cor 3:5-6; 1 Tim 1:12; Acts 20:28—Jude 1; Heb 2:11; Rom 15:16.—1 Cor 12:16; Col 3:11; 1 Cor 12:11.—In which texts, in about twenty-four instances, that which is ascribed to God in the first, is ascribed to the Son and the Holy Ghost in those that immediately follow.

VII. His subsistence in three distinct persons, the first the Father, the second the Son, and the third the Holy Ghost, proceeding from both.—It is evident, from the independence, simplicity, eternity, and unchangeableness of the divine nature, that in whatever form it subsists, that form must be a necessary perfection or excellency of it, without which it could not at all exist.—The personal properties of these persons being thus as absolutely necessary, as the existence of the divine nature itself,—and each having that whole nature which necessarily subsists in such persons, as above related to one another, there neither is, nor can be, an inferiority in, or dependence upon, one person, more than another. But of this mystery in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2:

Of the Persons in the Godhead.

A person is a thinking substance, which can act by itself. Or, it is an intelligent agent, which is neither a part of, nor sustained by another.—The characteristics of a person are, 1. That it be possessed of a rational understanding and will. 2. That the pronouns he, and especially I and thou, be applicable to it, not merely in figurative, but in the most plain and simple language. 3. That thinking, speaking, judging, sending, and other personal acts, be competent to it. 4. That it be capable of personal offices or stations, as prophet, priest, king, teacher, advocate, captain, etc.—But, as the divine nature infinitely differs from a created one, so a divine person infinitely differs from a created one. 1. All created persons are separate or separable in their substance one from another: but divine persons, in their substance, are perfectly one and the same with, and in one another, John 10:30;

John 14:9-10. 2. Different created persons can have only a substance of the same kind, not the same individual one. But divine persons have, and must have, each of them the very same individual or numerical substance, 1 John 5:7; John 10:30. 3. Every created person is a distinct being, in, or by, though not from itself. But all divine persons are, and must be, one being.

It hath been formerly proved, that the infinite nature of God can subsist in a plurality of persons. The Scripture manifests that it doth so. 1. Elohim, which means God in the plural, or the worshipful ones, is used in the Old Testament about two thousand times, to denote the true God. And, it is often connected with a verb in the singular number, Gen 1:1,3, etc.—and sometimes with a verb or adjective plural, Gen 20:13; Gen 35:7; Deut 4:7; Josh 24:19; 1 Sam 17:26,36; Ps 58:11; Jer 10:10; Dan 5:18,20.—Even in Ps 45:6.

Elohim may denote Christ, who is the express image of the invisible God: and in Ps 45:7, it may denote the Father and Spirit who anoint him. Nay, though in one passage it should mean but one divine person, it will not follow, that in some thousands it should lose its natural signification.—Angels, Magistrates, Moses, and idols, are called Elohim, because they occupied the place of these divine persons, as messengers, deputies, or rivals, Ps 97:7; Ps 82:1,6; Exod 22:28; Exod 7:1; Judg 2:12. 2. The true God is often represented as more than one person, Gen 1:26; Gen 3:22; Gen 11:7; Job 35:10; Ps 78:25. (Abirim) Eccles 12:1; Eccles 5:8; Prov 9:10; Prov 30:3; Hos 11:12; Isa 45:15; Isa 54:5; Isa 6:8 with John 12:39; Acts 28:25-26.—Isa 41:21-23; Song 1:11; Song 8:9; Dan 4:17, (the decreeing watchers being the same as the Most High, Dan 4:24.)—Mal 1:6; John 3:11; John 14:21,23; John 17:21-22. 3. More persons than one are represented as Jehovah or God, Gen 19:24; Ps 45:6-7; Ps 68:17-18; Jer 23:5-6; Jer 33:15-16. 4. Many passages of Scripture represent Jehovah as an Angel or Messenger,—which are to be understood of the Son of God, sent forth to announce and officiate in the work of our redemption, Gen 16:7-12; Gen 18:12-13,20,26-32; Gen 22:11-12;

Heb 6:13-18; Gen 48:16; Exod 3:2-15; Exod 23:20-21; 1 Cor 10:9.—
Zech 2:3,5,8,10; Zech 3:1-2.

It is fully evident, that there are precisely three persons in the one godhead, or divine essence or substance, from, 1. The scriptural account of God's creation of all things, Gen 1:1-3; Ps 33:6 with Eph 3:9; Acts 4:24,27; Heb 1:2; John 1:3; Job 26:13; Ps 104:30. 2. From the account of his creation of man, Gen 1:26; Ps 95:6-8; Heb 3:6-7; Isa 54:5; Eccles 12:1; Job 33:4. 3. From the account of his common providence, John 5:17; Heb 1:3; Ps 104:30; Isa 34:16. 4. From the account of the Israelites' deliverance from Egypt, Isa 63:9-10,14. 5. From the account of his covenanting with the Israelites, Hag 2:4-7. 6. From the account of his general plan as to our redemption from our sinfulness and misery, Eph 1:3-14; 1 Pet 1:2. 7. From the account of his mission of Christ to be our Mediator, Isa 48:16 with Isa 48:12-13,17. 8. From the account of Christ's incarnation, Luke 1:35. 9. From the account of God's anointing Christ and his people, Isa 11:2; Isa 61:1-2; 2 Cor 1:22. 10. From the account of Christ's baptism, Matt 3:16-17; John 1:32-34. 11. From the account of his ministrations and assistance therein, Isa 42:1; Matt 12:18. 12. From the account of his offering himself in sacrifice to God, Heb 9:14. 13. From the account of his and his people's resurrection, Rom 1:4; Rom 8:11.14. From the institution of baptism, Matt 28:19. 15. From Christ's promises of the Spirit to his apostles and followers, John 14:16-17,26; John 15:26; John 16:5-15. 16. From the account of God's changing our spiritual state and nature, Rom 8:2-3; 1 John 3:20,24; 1 Cor 6:11; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Pet 1:2-3. 17. From the account of our adoption into God's family, Gal 4:6; Rom 8:14-17. 18. From the account of our supplies of sanctifying grace, Eph 1:17-20; 2 Cor 1:21-22; 2 Cor 3:14-16; 1 Thess 3:11-13; 2 Thess 3:5. 19. From the account of our prayer and access to God, Zech 12:10; Rev 1:4-5; Eph 2:17-18. 20. From the account of our glorification, John 14:2-3 with Eph 1:14; 2 Cor 1:22. 21. From the account of God's giving of gifts to church-officers, 1 Cor 12:3-6. 22. From the account of the inspiration of Scripture, 2 Sam 23:2-3; 2 Pet 1:17-21. 23. From the account of the unity of the church, Eph 4:4-6. 24. From the triple repetition of the name or epithets ascribed to

God, Num 6:24-26; Isa 33:22; Dan 9:19; Isa 6:3; Rev 4:8. But this is not so evidently conclusive. 25. From the account of the subject preached by faithful ministers, and their assistance in their work, 1 John 4:2; Rom 15:16,19,30; 1 Cor 12:3. 26. From the account of Christ's manner of working miracles, Matt 12:28. 27. From the account of the marvellous efficacy of the gospel, 2 Cor 3:3; 1 Thess 1:4-6. 28. From the account of the dreadful nature of unbelief, Heb 10:29. 29. From the representation of believers' earnest study, Jude 20-21. 30. From the account of their spiritual comforts, Rom 8:9; 1 Pet 4:14. 31. From the apostolical benediction, 2 Cor 13:14. 32. From the heavenly attestation of the gospel record, 1 John 5:7.—In which multitude of inspired texts we find one person under the name of Jehovah, God, Father, or represented as primary agent; a second under the name of the Word, Son, Servant, Angel, Anointed, Jesus Christ, Desire of all nations, and represented as the Saviour of men; and a third, called the Spirit, Holy Ghost, God, Lord, etc.

Indeed, the Socinians, modern Arians, and some others, contend that the last-mentioned text, John 5:7, is spurious; because, 1. "Many Greek manuscripts want it." But many of these also want other texts: and the similarity of the 5:7 and John 5:8 made a careless transcriber apt to overleap one of them. 2. "Many of the ancient translations want it." But none of these translations are of great weight in this matter, for they want much more of the New Testament. Nor are any of them, except the Syriac and Jerome's Latin one, much worth. 3. "The ancient Fathers do not quote it, when, in their disputes with heretics, it would have been much to their purpose." But that might be, because they had deficient copies, or cared not to adduce a text which their opponents might have rejected.—Let it be further observed, 1. The orthodox had no temptation to forge it, having plenty of proof for their faith concerning the Trinity beside. But the Antitrinitarians had strong temptations to drop it out of their copies, which is also more easily done. And yet perhaps it originated from no design, but from the hurry of a transcriber, amidst the rage of persecution. 2. About 1400 years ago, we find complaints of some Antitrinitarians attempting to corrupt the Scripture: but never, till of

late, that the orthodox had done so. 3. This text is referred to by Tertullian about AD 200, quoted by Cyprian about AD 250, and by Athanasius, or one in his name, about AD 350. Jerome hath it in his translation about AD 400, and admitting it to be in all the best Greek copies, he severely blames the want of it in the old Latin version. Soon after, it is quoted by Eucherus and Vigilius. In AD 484 the African bishops quote it in the Confession of their faith which they presented to Hunneric their Arian king; and about thirty years after, Fulgentius, when required by an Arian king to produce his objections against the Arians, quoted it three times. When the Vulgate Latin translation was solemnly, and with great care, corrected from Greek and Latin manuscripts, by order of Charles the Great, about AD 800, and again by the famed University of Sorbonne, about two hundred years after, this text was retained. Erasmus, who inclined to Arianism, first suspected it, and dropt it out of his first edition of the New Testament: but restored it in his subsequent editions, upon the credit of an old British copy. It is said, that nine of Stephen's sixteen manuscripts from which he printed his excellent edition of the Greek New Testament, had this text. No doubt, many of the manuscripts, from which other principal editions were formed, are now lost. A printed copy is even more authentic than almost any manuscript extant, the oldest of which were written some hundred years after all these of the apostles were either worn out, or lost: for, more learning and care have been exercised to render some printed editions correct, than perhaps was taken on all the manuscripts written for a thousand years before the Reformation. 4. The passage appears deficient and unconnected if this verse be dropt. Mill and Bengelius have therefore honestly retained it, in their excellent editions, notwithstanding they have fairly, and with much more candour than Michaelis, represented the objections against it.

I. The Character of Father

The character of the Father ascribed to God, sometimes equally respects all the divine persons, and marks their creation and kind

preservation of persons or things, Mal 2:10, Heb 12:9. But, most frequently and emphatically, it denotes the first person of the Godhead, as related to the second, as his son.—It is evident, that the Father, in this view, is a distinct person: 1. He is expressly called a person, Heb 1:3. 2. He subsists by himself, and hath life in himself, John 5:26. 3. He is a thinking and willing agent, John 5:17,22. 4. Manifold personal relations and acts are ascribed to him. He from all eternity begat the second person as his only coessential Son, Ps 2:7. He consulted with him concerning our redemption, Zech 6:13. He foreordained and set him up for our Mediator, 1 Pet 1:20; Prov 8:23, and entered into a covenant of grace with him, Ps 89:1-37; Ps 40:5-8; Isa 53:10; Isa 49:6-9. He promised, sent, and brought him into the world, Jer 31:22; Zech 3:8-10; Luke 1:35; Heb 1:6. He gave him his commission to, and furniture for his work, John 10:18; John 20:21; Isa 11:2-3; Isa 42:1,6; Isa 49:1-6; Isa 61:1-3; Matt 3:16-17; John 1:32,34; John 3:34-35; Col 1:19. He stood by him in his love, care, power, and providential assistance and comfort, during his abasement, Isa 42:1-7; Isa 49:2-8; Isa 50:7,9. He spoke in him, wrought by him, and bore witness to him, Heb 1:1; 2 John 5:19-22,32; 2 John 8:16-19; Acts 10:38. He gave him to the death, and in due time raised him from it, Rom 8:32; Acts 2:23-24; 1 John 4:9-10; 1 Pet 1:21. He crowned him with glory and honour, exalted him to his own right hand, gave him as Mediator all power in heaven and on earth, and made him head over all things to his church, John 17:5; Heb 2:9; Ps 110:1; Acts 2:32-33,36; Phil 2:9-11; Matt 28:18; John 5:22; Eph 1:20-22; 1 Cor 15:24-27. He promised, and sends the Holy Ghost, who proceeds from him, to anoint Christ as man and Mediator, and to send and qualify his prophets and apostles, ministers and people, Ps 45:7; Joel 2:28; Luke 24:49; John 14:26; John 15:26. He predestinated elect men to everlasting holiness and happiness, Rom 8:28-30; Eph 1:4-5; Luke 12:32; Matt 20:23. He proposed the new covenant as terms of their salvation to his Son, Isa 53:10-12; Ps 89:3-4; Heb 2:10. Having accepted his atoning and reconciling righteousness in their stead, he savingly discovers him to them, draws them to him, and in him justifies and reconciles them to himself, Jer 31:32-34; Matt 11:25; Gal 1:16; John 6:44-45; 2 Cor 5:18-

21; Rom 8:11,14-18; Titus 3:5-6. He, by his Spirit, confirms and comforts them, and brings them to complete and everlasting happiness, 2 Cor 1:21-22; Eph 3:20-21; John 10:28-29; John 17:11,24; John 14:16-17,21,23; 2 Thess 2:16-17; Heb 2:10; Rev 6:17.

It was never denied by any but Atheists, that the Father is the Most High God. And, 1. The Scripture expressly declares it, Rom 15:6; 2 Cor 1:3; Phil 2:11; Eph 1:3,17; Heb 1:1,3; 1 Pet 1:2-3; John 20:17. And he is called Jehovah, Jer 23:5; Jer 34:15; Ps 110:1; Isa 43:5-6,8; Isa 49:1,4-5,7-8; Isa 50:4-5; Isa 53:6,10; Isa 61:1. 2. Divine perfections are ascribed to him, as self-existence, John 5:26. Eternity, Rev 1:4; Eph 1:4. Absolute all-sufficiency, 1 Cor 15:28. Omnipresence with all his saints, 1 John 1:3-7; John 14:21,23. Omniscience, 2 Cor 11:31. Almighty power, Mark 14:36. Absolute sovereignty, Matt 11:25-27; Matt 26:53; John 3:35; John 10:29; John 14:28; 1 Cor 11:3; 1 Cor 15:24,27-28; Eph 4:6. 3. Divine works are ascribed to him, as Creation, Eph 3:9; Isa 42:5. Providence, John 5:17; Matt 11:25.—forgiving sin, Luke 23:34; Eph 4:32; raising up Christ and his people from the dead, John 5:21; Heb 13:20 Rom 8:11. 4. Divine worship is performed to him by Christ and his people, John 11:41; John 12:27-28; John 14:26; John 17; Eph 1:17; Eph 3:14; Matt 28:19.

II. The Second Person in the Godhead

The second person in the Godhead is called the Word, or Word of God, because he is the perfect resemblance of his Father, even as our words are of our mind. He is the great Speaker for us to God, in his ancient engagements and his continual intercession. He is the subject-matter and end of all divine revelations, and their principal publisher, Luke 1:2; 2 Pet 1:16; Acts 20:32; Heb 4:12; John 1:1-2,14; 1 John 1:1; 1 John 5:7; Rev 19:13.—He is called the Son of God on account of his relation to the Father, by whom he is begotten, Ps 2:7; John 1:14; John 3:10; Rom 8:3,32; Rom 1:3; Gal 4:4.—That he is the Son of God, hath been attested by his Father, in repeated declarations from heaven, Matt 3:17; Matt 17:5.—by himself, John

5:16-17; John 10:30,36; John 17:11,24-25; John 19:7; Mark 14:61-62; Matt 11:25-26.—by the Holy Ghost, in forming his human nature, and in his baptismal unction, Luke 1:32,35; Matt 3:16; John 1:33-34.—by John the Baptist, and by apostles and saints, John 1:33-34.—Matt 16:15-16; John 6:69; John 11:27; Acts 3:7; 1 John 5:5.—It hath been confessed by devils, Matt 8:28-29; Mark 3:11; Mark 5:7; Luke 4:41, and by wicked men, perhaps just then converted, Matt 14:33; Mark 15:39.

But he is not the Son of God, by his miraculous conception and birth:

1. The Holy Ghost is never represented as his Father, nor could be, without admitting two fathers in the Godhead. That holy thing born is the called, the Son of God, because his manhood subsisted in the person of the Son of God. Luke 1:35.
2. He had the character and relation of Son of God, long before his conception or birth, Prov 30:4; Ps 2:7; Gal 4:4; John 3:16-17.
3. According to his human nature or flesh, he is the Son of man,—of Abraham, of David, and not the Son of God.
4. His being made of a woman, was subsequent to his being the Son of God, Rom 8:3,32; Gal 4:4.
5. His extraordinary conception and birth could never render him the only begotten Son of God, as he is termed, John 1:14; John 3:16,18; 1 John 4:9, since Adam was his son by creation, and Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist, were procreated by extraordinary influence,—though indeed very different from that which was exerted in the production of Christ's manhood.—Nor is he called the Son of God on account of God's raising him from the dead; for, 1. He was the Son of God long before, Matt 3:17; Matt 17:5; John 5:16-17; John 10:30,36; Mark 14:61,62; Matt 16:15-16; John 6:69; John 1:49.
2. If his resurrection had rendered him the only Son of God, he would have been his own father, as he raised himself, John 10:17-18; John 2:19.
3. This could not have rendered him the only begotten Son of God, as millions beside have or shall be raised from the dead, Matt 27:52-53; John 5:28-29; 1 Thess 4:14,16; Rev 20:12. Nor doth Acts 13:33 import, that he became the Son of God by his resurrection, but that his Sonship was manifested by it, compare Rom 1:3-4.—and that his resurrection publicly proved, that the word of salvation,

particularly that in Ps 2:7-8 was then exhibited, given, and fulfilled to men.—Nor, doth his mediatorial office constitute him the Son of God. 1. A mission on an errand, or an appointment to service, cannot, in the nature of things, constitute Sonship. 2. His Sonship is represented as prior to his commission to, or execution of his mediatorial office, John 3:16; Gal 4:4; 1 John 4:9-10; 1 John 3:8; Heb 5:8. 3. His mediatorial office derives virtue from his divine Sonship, and so his Sonship cannot depend on it, Heb 4:14. 4. His being from the Father, in respect of his Sonship, is expressly distinguished from his being sent to execute his mediatorial office, John 7:29.

But he is the Son of God by necessary and eternal generation;—that is, by such necessity, that the divine nature cannot at all exist, without subsisting in him, in the form and relation of a Son to the first person. 1. In many texts of Scripture, he is simply called the Son of God, and in that character represented as the Most High God,—the Lord God of his people,—the Lord God,—God the Saviour, Luke 1:16-17,32,35,46-47,—as coming from heaven, and above all, John 3:31; Matt 11:27,—and as the object of faith and worship, John 3:18,36; John 9:35-38; Matt 4:33; Matt 27:54; or, as the same with God, Heb 1:8; 1 John 3:8 with 1 Tim 3:16.—and as equal with his Father, Matt 28:19; John 5:21. 2. God hath given the most solemn and emphatic testimonies to his divine Sonship, Matt 3:17; Matt 17:5. The first of these texts, literally translated, runs, This is that my Son,—my beloved one, in whom I am well pleased. And in the other, we are commanded to hear him, as infinitely superior to Moses and Elias, his then visitants, who had been the most extraordinary of all the Old Testament prophets. This manifests, that he was Judah's God, and the Lord God, Isa 40:9.—And, it is observable, that in all his instructions he never professed to teach in the name of another, but in his own: Verily I say unto you, or the like, plainly importing, that he himself was that Jehovah, in whose name the prophets had delivered their messages, Matt 5-7; John 3; John 5-8; John 10; etc. 3. The Scriptures represent him as God's own Son,—his proper Son,—his Son of himself, John 1:14,18; John 3:16,18; Rom 8:3,32; 1 John 4:9,12. If these expressions do not represent him as the Son of God

by natural generation, what can do it? 4. His being the Christ, Messiah, or Mediator, is plainly distinguished from his being the Son of God, John 1:49; John 6:69; Matt 16:16; Heb 5:8; 1 John 4:14. 5. When he was charged with blasphemy in making himself equal with God, by calling himself the Son of God, he plainly acquiesced in their interpretation of his words; and instead of shewing them that his claim of Sonship to God did not infer his claim of equality with God, he took occasion further to assert and demonstrate his supreme Godhead, John 5:16-29; John 10:30-36; John 19:7; Matt 26:63-65. Nay, perhaps making himself equal with God, John 5:18, are not the words of the persecuting Jews, but of the inspired Evangelist. 6. It was not from acts properly mediatorial, but from divine acts, that he was concluded to be the Son of God, Matt 4:3,6; Matt 14:33; Matt 27:40,54; John 1:49. 7. If the title, The Son of man, import his possession of a real manhood, his character, The Son of God, God's proper Son,—Son of himself, and only begotten Son of God, must certainly import his possession of the divine nature,—of true and supreme Godhead.—Now, if he be the Son of God by nature, he must be his eternal Son, begotten from all eternity; for nothing that is not necessarily eternal in the highest sense, can be natural to God. Nor is there the least impropriety in God's calling his own eternity this day, as with him an unsuccessive eternity is ever present, Ps 2:7 with Isa 43:13; Mic 5:2. Nor is the generation of his Son there represented as an event decreed, but as antecedent to, and fundamental of God's grant of the Gentiles to him for his mediatorial inheritance, Ps 2:8-9.

The Son of God is a distinct person from the Father and the Holy Ghost. 1. Personal powers of rational understanding and will are ascribed to him, Matt 11:27; John 1:18; John 5:21; John 17:2,24. 2. He subsists as a person by himself, John 5:26; Heb 1:3. 3. The personal epithets I, thou, he, are ascribed to him in the most plain passages of Scripture, Matt 5; John 3; Isa 49:1-9; Isa 42:1-7. 4. He is invested with, and executes the personal offices of Mediator, Surety, Prophet, Priest, King, etc. 1 Tim 2:5; Heb 7:22; Acts 3:22; Ps 110:4; Ps 2:6; Matt 23:8-10. 5. Multitudes of personal acts are ascribed to him,—as, engaging his heart, Jer 30:21; taking our nature upon him,

Heb 2:14; fulfilling all righteousness in our stead, Matt 3:15; Luke 24:26; rising from the dead, John 2:19; John 10:17-18; ascending to heaven, Heb 1:3; making continual intercession for us, etc. Heb 7:26; Rom 8:34.

It is no less evident, that the Son is God equal with the Father. 1. The names, which are proper to none but the Supreme God, are ascribed to him, as I am, or I am that I am, Exod 3:14; Rev 1:8—Jehovah, Exod 17:7; 1 Cor 10:9.—Isa 6:1-9; John 12:39-41—Isa 40:3,9-10; Matt 3; Luke 1:16-17,76. Luke 3—Jer 23:5-6; Jer 33:15-16; 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 2:24; 1 Pet 3:18.—Zech 12:10; John 19:19,34,37; Rev 1:7; Zech 11:12-13; Matt 27:9—Zech 11:8,11; Isa 8:13-14; 1 Pet 2:6-8; Luke 2:34; Ps 118:22; Matt 21:42—Isa 44:6; Rev 22:13—Isa 43:11; 2 Pet 1:1; 2 Pet 3:18—God, Ps 45:6; Heb 1:8—Isa 45:22-23; Rom 14:10-12; Phil 2:9-11—Isa 25:8-9; 2 Tim 1:10—Isa 35:4-5; Matt 11:3,5—Isa 7:14; Matt 1:23; 1 Tim 3:16; John 1:14—John 20:28; 2 Pet 1:1; Jude 4, in which last two texts, as well as in some others, Kai ought to be translated even,—God even our Saviour—Lord God even our Lord Jesus Christ.—God, the First and the Last, Isa 44:6; Isa 41:4; Rev 1:8,17-18; Rev 2:8; Rev 21:6; Rev 22:6,13,16,20.—the living and the true God, 1 John 5:20-21; Rev 1:18; Jer 10:10;—the great and the mighty God, Titus 2:13; Isa 9:6—the most high God, Ps 78:56; 1 Cor 10:9; Luke 1:76—the only wise God, Jude 4,24-25; Rom 16:27; 1 Tim 1:16-17—the God of glory, Acts 7:2—the only Lord God, Isa 44:6; Isa 45:15,22-23; Rom 14:11; Jude 4.—God over all blessed for ever, Rom 9:5—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Exod 3:6; Acts 7:30-32—the God of Israel, Luke 1:16-17; Matt 3:11; Ps 100:3; John 10:3; John 21:16-17; Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2—King of kings and Lord of lords, Rev 17:14; Rev 19:13-16; 1 Tim 6:14-15—King of glory, Ps 24:7-10—the Lord of hosts, and the God of the whole earth, Isa 54:5; John 3:29; Matt 9:15; 2 Cor 11:2—Jehovah the shepherd, Ps 23:1; John 10:2,16; Heb 13:20; 1 Pet 2:25; 1 Pet 5:4.

2. Such properties or attributes as belong only to the Most High God, are ascribed to him, as, The fulness of the Godhead, Col 2:9; John 16:15.—the form of God, and equal with God, Phil 2:6; Zech 13:7;

Heb 1:3; Col 1:15; John 5:18.—Oneness with the Father, John 10:30; John 14:9-10; 1 John 5:7.—Eternity, Rev 1:8,11; Prov 8:23-31; Mic 5:2; John 1:1; John 8:58; John 6:62; John 17:5; Isa 9:6; Heb 7:3,24-25; Rom 16:26; Mark 16:15.—Unchangeableness, Heb 13:8; Heb 1:12; Ps 102:24-27.—Almighty power, Phil 3:21; Rev 1:8; Rev 11:17-18; Rev 22:12-13,20; Isa 9:6; Isa 63:1; Isa 49:26.—Omnipresence, Matt 18:20; Matt 28:20; Col 1:17; Heb 1:3; John 1:8; John 3:13.—Omniscience, John 1:18; John 2:25; John 4:29; John 6:64; John 21:17; Matt 9:4; Matt 12:25; Matt 11:27; Rev 2:23; Heb 4:13; Col 2:3.—It was his created manhood which, during his humiliation, knew not the time of the last judgment, Mark 13:32.—Nay, he could not have executed any of his mediatorial offices of prophet, priest, or king, unless he had had the perfections of God in him, Deut 18:15-18; Matt 17:5; John 1:18.—Heb 7:25; Heb 9:14; Ps 110:4-5; Ps 2:6-9,12. 3. The works proper only to God are ascribed to him, as decreeing all things, Prov 8:22,30; Gen 1:26; Rev 1:8; John 13:18; John 15:16;—creating all things, Ps 33:6; John 1:3; Eph 3:9; Heb 1:2,10. And hence he is called the beginning of the creation of God, and the first begotten of every creature, Rev 3:14; Col 1:15; Col 1:10.—preserving and governing all things, Col 1:17-18; Heb 1:3; John 5:17,19.—working miracles, in his own person, in his own name, and by his apostles as moral instruments, Matt 4:24-25; Matt 11:5; John 5:21,36; John 21:25; Luke 6:19; Luke 8:46; Luke 10:9-10; Acts 3:6,16; Acts 4:10,29-30; Acts 9:34.—erecting a church and appointing her officers, Heb 3:3,14; Eph 4:11-12; Matt 16:18; Matt 28:18-20.—instituting sacraments and other ordinances, Matt 28:19; 1 Cor 11:23-29.—redeeming sinful men, Hos 1:7; Isa 45:17,22,24-25; Matt 20:28; Acts 20:28; Titus 2:14.—sending the Holy Ghost to apply his redemption, John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:7.—the effectual calling of rebellious sinners to himself, John 5:21,25; John 10:16; John 15:16.—justifying guilty sinners, Matt 9:6; Isa 53:11; 1 Cor 6:11; Col 3:13; Rev 1:5.—adopting men into the family of God, John 1:12; Jer 3:19; 2 Cor 6:18.—sanctifying their nature and life, Eph 5:26,29; Heb 2:11; Heb 13:12; Heb 9:14.—the almighty preservation of them in their gracious state, nature, and course, John 10:10,28; John 14:6; Col 3:3; Jude 1.—Raising himself and other

dead, John 2:19; John 10:17-18; John 5:21,28-29; Rom 1:4; 1 Pet 3:18.—Judging the world, bestowing eternal glory upon his saints, and executing everlasting punishment on his wicked enemies, John 5:22,28-29; Acts 17:31; Heb 2:10; Heb 7:25; Rev 3:21; 2 Thess 1:6-10; Rev 14:9-11.

4. That divine worship and honour which is due only to the Most High God, is ascribed to him, Matt 8:2. The same worship which is due to the Father, John 5:23.—As faith in him, John 14:1; John 17:3; 1 Pet 1:21; Ps 2:12; Jer 17:5.—Supreme love to him, 1 Cor 16:22; John 21:15-17; Eph 6:24; Mark 12:30,32-33.—Obedience and subjection of soul to him, Exod 23:21; Ps 2:9-12; Ps 22:7-31; Ps 45:5,11; Matt 17:5.—Baptism in his name, as equal, and one with that of the Father, Matt 28:19; Acts 19:5; Acts 10:48; 1 Cor 1:13.—Calling upon his name in prayer and praise, Heb 1:6; Phil 2:10; Acts 7:59-60; 1 Cor 1:2; 2 Thess 2:16-17; 2 Cor 12:8-10; Rev 1:5; Rev 5:9,13; Rev 7:10-12.

The Son of God became our Mediator, and assumed our nature; hence those scriptures which represent him as inferior to God, sent or rewarded by him, or, as bearing any character, or performing any work not proper to the Most High God, are to be understood of him as Man and Mediator,—and there are generally other texts almost parallel proving his Supreme Godhead, John 14:28; 1 Cor 11:3; 1 Cor 15:28; John 10:30; Phil 2:6; Zech 13:7; Matt 19:17 (read, there is none good but one God) Mark 2:7; 1 John 5:20; Jude 4; Col 2:9.—1 Cor 15:24,28; Luke 1:53;—Acts 10:42; Acts 17:31; Ps 50:6; Ps 7:8;—Acts 10:40; John 2:13;—John 3:16; Eph 5:2,25;—Eph 4:32; Col 2:13;—John 6:38; John 20:28.—Matt 23:9-10; Isa 9:6; Rev 21:7.—Luke 20:36; John 11:25.—Mark 13:32; John 21:17.—John 1:18; John 14:8-9.—1 Cor 15:27; Phil 3:20-21.—Matt 26,39;[1] Heb 5:7-8.—Matt 28:18; John 7:16; John 11:41; Isa 42:1; Isa 61:1; Isa 49:3, etc.—As God, he doth nothing but in joint operation with his Father, and nothing but what the Father is interested in, John 5:19.—All attempts to prove his inferiority to the Father, from his being begotten by him, perhaps proceed from men's ignorance of the true nature of human generation, or rather chiefly from making animal nature and

generation a standard, by which they judge of what belongs to an infinite Spirit, than which nothing can be more absurd and blasphemous.

III. It is sufficiently manifest that the Holy Ghost is a real and distinct Person in the Godhead.

1. Personal powers of understanding and will are ascribed to him, 1 Cor 2:10-11; 1 Cor 12:11; Eph 4:3. 2. He is joined with the other two divine persons as the object of worship and the fountain of blessings, Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; Rev 1:4-5; 1 John 5:7; John 14:16-17; John 15:26; John 16:7. 3. In the Greek a masculine article or epithet is joined to his name pneuma, which is naturally of the neuter gender, John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:13; Eph 1:13-14. 4. He appeared under the emblem of a dove, and of cloven

tongues of fire, Matt 3:16; Acts 2:3-4. 5. Personal offices of an Intercessor, Rom 8:26-27.—a Witness, John 15:26; Heb 10:15.—a Comforter or Advocate, John 14:16-17; John 15:26; John 16:7.—a Teacher and Guide, John 14:16-17,26; John 16:13-14, are ascribed to him. 6. He is represented as performing a multitude of personal acts, as teaching, speaking, Mark 13:11; Acts 28:25; witnessing, Acts 5:32; Acts 20:23; Rom 8:15-16; dwelling, John 14:17; 1 Cor 6:19; 2 Tim 1:14; sending of ministers, Acts 13:2-4; Acts 20:28; Matt 9:38; judging what is meet, Acts 15:28; forbidding, Acts 16:6-7.—As from all eternity he acted in the counsels of God, particularly in approving the new covenant plan of our redemption, and taking his proper share in its execution, so, in time, he acts distinctly, though not separately, from the Father and Son, in their whole work.—In respect of order, he finished the work of creation, Ps 33:6; Job 26:13. He qualified Moses, Bezaleel, Aholiab, Othniel, Ehud, Barak, Deborah, Gideon, and his three hundred soldiers, Samson and others, with uncommon strength of body, wisdom, or courage of mind, for their

respective work, Deut 34:7; Exod 31:3-6; Judg 3:10,15; Judg 4:9,14,21; Judg 6-7; Judg 13-16. He inspired the prophets and apostles with an infallible knowledge of the will of God, 1 Pet 1:11; 2 Pet 1:21. He endowed Balaam, Caiaphas, and others with prospects of future events, Num 23-24; John 11:50-52; 1 Kings 13:11-20. He wrought miracles unnumbered by Moses, Elijah, Elisha, Christ, the apostles, and others, Exod 4-17; Num 16-17; 1 Kings 18-20; 2 Kings 1-7; 2 Kings 13; Matt 12:22-28; Heb 2:4.—He framed the body, and created the soul of Christ in union to his divine person, Luke 1:34-35. He sanctified his manhood, forming it with every gift and grace of which it was capable, Isa 11:2-3; John 3:34. He increased this grace in proportion to the growing faculties of that manhood, Luke 2:40,52. He solemnly anointed and qualified him for his ministerial work, Matt 3:16; Isa 61:1-3; Isa 11:2-4; Luke 4:18; John 3:34. He directed him into and carried him through all his temptations from Satan, Matt 4:1. He assisted him in his working miracles, Matt 12:28, and in offering up himself a sacrifice to God, Heb 9:14. He raised him from the dead, Rom 1:4; Rom 8:11; Rom 6:4. He justified him, as our public Representative, 1 Tim 3:16. He filled his manhood with heavenly joys, Ps 45:7; Acts 2:28. By miraculous and saving influences, he vindicated him, as perfectly righteous in all his conduct,—as the fulfiller of all righteousness for men,—and as ascended to his Father's right hand, Acts 1-19; Luke 24:49; John 16:7-17; John 15:26.—He calls men to, and fits them with gifts and graces for public office in the church, Acts 2; Acts 13:2-4; Acts 20:28; Matt 9:38; 1 Cor 12; 1 Cor 14. He directs, assists, and succeeds them in their work, Acts 16:6-7; Heb 2:4; 1 Pet 1:11-12; 1 Thess 1:4; Acts 8:17; Acts 10:44; Acts 19:6-7; Rom 15:16,19.—He convinces men of their sin and misery, John 16:8-9. He enlightens their minds in the knowledge of Christ, John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:13,15; Eph 1:17-18; Eph 3:17-19; 1 Cor 2:10-12. He renews their will, John 3:5-6; Titus 3:5. He justifies them, 1 Cor 6:11. He sanctifies them, 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 1:2; Rom 15:16. He comforts them, John 14:16,26; John 15:26; John 16:7; Acts 9:31. He directs, leads, and draws them, 2 Thess 3:5; John 14:16-17; Ps 143:10; Rom 8:1,4,14; Gal 5:18,25. He enables them to mortify their sinful corruptions, Rom 8:13. He

upholds their graces in their spiritual life and courage, Ps 51:11-12; Gal 5:18,25. He actuates and enables their new nature to bring forth fruits of holiness, Eph 5:9; Gal 5:22-23; Ezek 36:27. He directs and assists them in prayer, Rom 8:15,26-27; Jude 20; Gal 4:6; Zech 12:10.—He assists them in self-examination, bears witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God,—and marks them as such by his presence in them, Rom 8:9,16; 1 John 3:24. He, as an earnest, seals them to the day of redemption, Eph 1:13-14; Eph 4:30; 2 Cor 1:21-22. He teaches them spiritual mysteries, 1 John 2:20,27; 1 Cor 2:10-12,15. He is vexed and grieved, when his influences are not cherished, Isa 63:10; Eph 4:30; 1 Thess 5:19. He will raise their dead bodies at the last day, Rom 8:11.

It is no less evident, that the Holy Ghost is a divine person equal in power and glory with the Father and Son. 1. Names proper only to the Most High God are ascribed to him, as Jehovah; 2 Sam 23:2; Num 12:6; 1 Pet 1:11; 2 Pet 1:21.—Deut 32:12; Isa 63:10.—Isa 6:8-10; Acts 28:25.—Exod 17:7; Heb 3:9.—Lev 16:2; Heb 9:7-8.—Jer 31:31-34; Heb 10:15-16.—God, Isa 61:1; Ezek 11:5; Heb 1:1.—Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor 3:16; 1 Cor 6:19; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:21. The Most High God, Ps 78:56; Heb 3:7,9.—The Lord, 2 Thess 3:5; Matt 9:38; 2 Cor 3:17-18, the conclusion of which may be read, "by the Lord the Spirit." 2. Attributes proper only to the Most High God are ascribed to him,—as Eternity, Gen 1:1-2; Heb 9:14. Omnipresence, Ps 139:7; 1 Cor 3:16; 1 Cor 6:19; 2 Tim 1:14; Rom 8:9; John 14:17. Omniscience, 1 Cor 2:10-11; John 16:13; 2 Pet 1:21; 1 Pet 1:11. Almighty power and sovereign dominion, Isa 11:2; Luke 1:35; Acts 6:10. Divine holiness, Isa 63:10-11; Rom 1:4. 3. Works competent only to God are ascribed to him,—as creating all things, Gen 1:2; Ps 33:6; Ps 104:30; Job 26:13; Job 32:4. Preserving all things, Ps 104:30; Isa 34:16. Working miracles, Matt 12:28; 1 Cor 12:4; Heb 2:4. Forming Christ's human nature, Luke 1:35; Jer 31:22. Anointing Christ, Isa 42:1; Isa 11:2; Isa 61:1; Ps 45:7; John 3:34, and perhaps sending him, Isa 48:16. Governing the church, Matt 9:38; Acts 7:51; Acts 13:2,4; Acts 20:28; Acts 15:28. Bestowing extraordinary spiritual gifts, 1 Cor 12; Heb 2:4. Foretelling contingent futurities, John 16:13; Acts 11:28; Acts 20:23; Acts 21:11; 1

Pet 1:11. Convincing men's consciences of their most secret sins, John 16:9. Enlightening their mind in the knowledge of spiritual things; Eph 1:17-18; Eph 3:16-19; 1 Cor 2:10,12,15-16. Justifying Christ and his people, 1 Tim 3:16; 1 Cor 6:11. Regenerating and sanctifying men's hearts, John 3:5-6; 1 Cor 4:11; Titus 3:5-6; 2 Thess 2:13; 2 Thess 3:5; 1 Thess 3:12-13; 1 Pet 1:2; Ezek 37:1-14. Comforting saints, and preserving them in grace, John 14:16,26; John 15:26; John 16:7; Eph 1:13-14; Eph 4:30; 2 Cor 1:21-22; Ps 51:11-12. Quickening saints and churches, when under fearful degrees of spiritual death, John 6:63; Rom 8:2; Ezek 37:1-14; Rev 11:11, and raising of the dead at the last day, Rom 8:11; Acts 26:8. 4. Worship proper only to God is required and ascribed to him. Prayer to him is exemplified, Song 4:16; Rev 1:4; 2 Thess 3:5, and commanded, Matt 9:38; Acts 13:2,4; Acts 16:5,7; Acts 20:28; 1 Cor 12:4-11; 1 Cor 2:4,11-12. Solemn appeals are made to him, Rom 9:1; Deut 6:13; Jer 17:10. In his name baptism is administered, Matt 28:19. Church judicatories meet and act, Acts 15:28; Acts 13:2,4, and solemn benedictions are emitted, 2 Cor 13:14.—The sin which is peculiarly committed against him is stated as unpardonable, though the worst of those against the Father and Son are not, Matt 12:32; Heb 6:4-8; Heb 10:26-31.

In all these texts of Scripture, in which something not proper to an intelligent and eternal person is ascribed to the Spirit or Holy Ghost, his name must be understood as meaning not himself, but his gifts and influences, John 7:39; Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17; Acts 10:44; Acts 19:6; Heb 2:4.—And wherever he is represented as inferior to, or sent, or given by the Father or Son, the text is to be understood of his station or agency in the work of our redemption,—of which, with his own choice, he is constituted the applier, John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:7; Ezek 36:27; 1 John 3:24.

The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Son, as well as from the Father. 1. He is represented as the Spirit of the Son as well as of the Father, Gal 4:6; 1 Pet 1:11; Phil 1:19. 2. He is sent and communicated by the Son, as well as by the Father, John 16:7,13-15; John 20:22; Prov 1:23. But

whether he proceeds from the Son, precisely in the same manner as from the Father, we know not.

These three divine persons are distinguished from one another, 1. By their names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; Matt 3:16-17; 1 John 5:7; John 14:16-17. 2. By their order of subsistence; the Father the first; the Son the second; and the Holy Ghost the third, 1 John 5:7; Matt 28:19. But to mark their equality, they are sometimes mentioned in a different order, 2 Cor 13:14; Rev 1:4-5; 1 Thess 3:5. 3. By their different order of operation. The Father acts from himself through the Son and by the Spirit. The Son acts from the Father and by the Spirit: And the Spirit acts from both the Father and the Son, John 3:16; John 1:1-3; John 5:17,19; John 15:26; John 14:26; John 16:7. 4. By their different stations, which, in a delightful correspondence with their natural order of subsistence, they have voluntarily assumed in the work of our redemption:—the Father as the Creditor, Judge, Master, and Rewarder;—the Son as the Mediator, Surety, Servant, Pannel, etc.;—and the Holy Ghost as the Furnisher, Assistant, and Rewarder of the Mediator, and the Applier of the redemption purchased by him, Zech 3:8; Zech 13:7; Isa 13:1,6-7; Isa 49:1-9; Isa 53:2-12; John 16:8,15; Eph 1:17-18; Eph 3:16-19; Eph 4:30; Ezek 36:27. 5. And chiefly by their personal properties. —The Father is neither begotten by, nor proceeds from any other person, but, being first in order, he begets the Son, and hath the Holy Ghost proceeding from him. The Son is begotten by the Father, and hath the Holy Ghost proceeding from him. The Holy Ghost neither begets, nor is begotten, but proceeds from both the Father and the Son, John 1:14,18; John 3:16; John 14:26; Gal 4:4-6; 1 Pet 1:11.—To contend that these properties belong only to these divine persons, as connected with man's redemption, is really to admit the Sabellian heresy, which represents the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as but one divine person, manifested in three different forms in that work: For, if no known differences be admitted, no real distinction of those persons can be admitted. If we assert that these properties must belong to the redemption-scheme, because they are ordinarily found in near connection with something pertaining to it; we must,

for the same reason, give up all the evidences as to the true godhead of the Son and Holy Ghost. Mean while these properties are so mysterious, that we can no more comprehend or explain them, than we can do the self-existence, infinity, and unsuccessive eternity of God.

To prevent or obviate objections against this deep mystery of three distinct persons in one godhead, it may be observed, 1. That the doctrine concerning it, being unfolded only by Revelation, we ought to use as few words as possible concerning it but such as are scriptural. We are certain that God perfectly knows himself, though we do not; and that his expressions concerning himself, though we should not understand them, are just and safe; whereas those of human invention may be neither; and may lead us, unawares, into blasphemous views or representations of Him. 2. This doctrine of the Trinity of persons in the Godhead, being wholly derived from Revelation, though learned men may know better what cannot be true with respect to it, yet they can have no more positive knowledge of it, than any diligent searcher of the Scriptures, who is of a moderate capacity. No human learning therefore can, in the least, authenticate either apprehensions or expressions concerning it. 3. It being plainly evident from God's own word, that each of these three persons is equally the Most High and the only true God, no term or phrase must be admitted, in the explication of their personal properties, which can in the least interfere with the divine equality or absolute independence of any one of them.—Subordinate Godhead is no Godhead at all, nor any thing but a mere chimera in men's brain. By calling the Father the fountain of the Deity or of the Trinity, by saying that the divine essence is communicated,—or the Son and Spirit are produced,—or that they have a personal though not an essential dependence on the Father, learned men have inadvertently hurt this mystery, and given occasion for its enemies to blaspheme. 4. It is certainly absurd to attempt an explication of the personal properties, beget,—begotten,—proceeding,—by terms which are more unintelligible: and, how to find clearer ones, I know not. 5. As God himself hath no where exemplified any explication of this mystery of

the subsistence of three persons in one godhead by any similitude drawn from natural things, it must in itself be very daring, and very hurtful and darkening to the truth, for any man to attempt it. 6. As nothing more concerning this mystery can be known or believed, than is plainly revealed in Scripture by God, who hath an infinitely perfect knowledge of himself, and who cannot lie, the cordial belief of this doctrine is very properly required of every adult person, as absolutely necessary to salvation. Nor can any man, without the belief of it, have any true knowledge of the covenant of grace,—of the incarnation of Christ, of his satisfaction for sin, or of any thing else in the work of our redemption. 7. The doctrine of the Trinity of persons in one Godhead is so far from being merely speculative, as some pretend,—that without the spiritual knowledge of it, no motive to, or exercise of piety or virtue, can be rightly understood or practised.—The whole of practical religion consists in distinct fellowship with these divine persons,—with the Father, in discerning, believing, and admiring his love, and in returning it, in grateful desires after, delight in, reverence of, and obedience to him;—with the Son, in receiving him, as God-man full of grace and truth, as our Head, Husband, and Saviour, in resting on his righteousness, and in receiving and improving all his purchased blessings, to render us lovers of God and of men for his sake;—and with the Holy Ghost, in preparing for, receiving, cooperating with, and improving his personal presence and manifold gracious influences, for the sanctification and comfort of our heart, and the rendering our life truly pious and profitable.

Reflection. Now, O my soul, think what an insignificant nothing I am before this infinite, this eternal, this all-mysterious God!—How little a portion I have known or even heard of him!—How astonishing, if he be a Saviour,—an Husband,—a God,—an all in all, to mean,—to vile,—to monstrous,—murderous me!—Alas, why did, why do I, ever exchange this inestimable pearl of great price,—this unbounded treasure of godhead itself,—this infinite Lover, nay, love,—for that which is of no, of worse than no value?—Why despise eternal love, for the sake of a transient shadow?—of a taste of gall and

wormwood?—of vanity and vexation of spirit?—Alas, why doth ever my heart turn from him? Why do my desires after him ever cool or flag?—Why is my love, my life, ever unanswerable to his unchangeable excellency and kindness?—When these infinite three are ever with me,—are all my own,—why am I not always ravished with their loves?—Why am I not ever listening to their voice, and pouring out my heart into their bosom? Why doth not my soul talk with them, when I sit down, and when I rise up?—Have these honoured, these true and faithful, these unchangeable three, by solemn oath, attested and confirmed every promise of the new covenant, that I might have strong consolation and good hope through grace? Dare I then stagger at the promises through unbelief, and not be strong in the faith, giving glory to God?—O thrice happy new-covenant state, in which the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost undertake all for me,—perform all for, and in me,—and are all in all to me!—Thrice happy heaven, where the glittering vanities of creation shall be for ever forgotten, and a three-one redeeming God shall be for ever seen,—for ever known,—for ever immediately enjoyed as my God, and my all in all.

CHAPTER 3:

Of the Decrees and Purposes of God.

God acts on himself in contemplating, loving, and delighting in himself; and in the persons of the Godhead knowing, loving, delighting in, and consulting with each other, Matt 11:27; John 1:17; John 3:35; Col 1:13; Zech 6:13; Isa 48:16. But few hints of this agency on himself, except in so far as it terminates on his creatures, are revealed to us in Scripture.—His agency respecting his creatures includes his forming a plan of his conduct in his own mind in his purpose or decree,—and his execution of that plan in his works of creation and providence.

Nothing can be more evident, than that God, in his purpose, has fixed the whole plan of his works. 1. From the perfection of his nature. If his knowledge be infinite and unchangeable, he must from eternity have known every thing as perfectly as he ever can do in time. If the whole existence, nature, form, and every motion or act of every creature, depend on his sovereign will, he could have no knowledge how to make and manage them but from his own purpose. Abstracting from it, they might have been, or not been,—might have existed in this, or in a thousand other different forms, or conditions.—No placing of creatures in any supposable circumstances can infallibly secure any particular behaviour.—Of the angels who attended Jehovah in heaven, some stood fast, and others fell from their first estate of perfect holiness and happiness, 1 Tim 5:21; Ps 103:20; Jude 6; 2 Pet 2:4. How many men have, like Jacob and Esau, lain in the same womb, even at the same time, and had the same patterns and education, and yet their behaviour and their end have been exceedingly different, Gen 25-28; Rom 9; Heb 12:15-17; Mal 1:2,4. If God be infinitely wise, how could he, in a random manner, commence and carry on such an important work, so closely connected with an infinitely glorious end? How could he but so plan his work, that all the parts of it might harmoniously promote his general and particular ends? If he be of one mind, which none can change, he, in his purpose, must have unalterably fixed every thing which he effects in his work, Job 23:13. If he be almighty, no apprehended opposition could deter him from peremptorily fixing his plan; and no unruly freewill could defeat his intentions. 2. The manifold, marvellous, comely, and profitable connections of an infinity of dissimilar creatures, and the exact answerableness of each to its respective ends; nay, all the marks of infinite wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, which are to be found in the works of creation and providence, fully manifest, that they have been regulated by a fixed plan, which is exactly executed. 3. In Scripture, we find God's fixed plan of conduct frequently mentioned under the several designations of his will; appointment; decree; purpose; foreordination; good pleasure; thought; counsel; foreknowledge, Dan 4:35; Eph 1:5,9,11; Rev 17:17;—1 Thess 5:9; 1 Pet 2:8; Acts 2:23; Acts

4:28; Luke 22:22,29;—Ps 2:7; Ps 148:6; Dan 4:17,24; Zeph 2:2; Job 38:10;—Rom 8:28; Rom 9:11; Eph 1:9,11; Eph 3:11; 2 Tim 1:9; Jer 4:28; Jer 49:20; Isa 14:24,27; Isa 46:10;—Rom 3:25; Rom 8:29-30; Rom 9:23; 1 Pet 1:20; Matt 25:34;—Eph 1:5,11; Luke 12:32; Phil 2:13; 2 Thess 1:11;—Ps 33:11; Ps 40:5; Ps 92:5; Isa 55:8-9; Isa 14:24; Jer 29:11;—Isa 5:19; Isa 28:29; Isa 40:13-14; Isa 46:10-11;—Rom 8:29; Rom 11:2; Acts 15:18; 1 Pet 1:2. 4. Nothing more clearly manifests the existence of a divine decree, than God's circumstantiated predictions of an infinity of future events even the most contingent, and his exact fulfilment thereof, for almost six thousand years past, Amos 3:7; Matt 8:17; John 19:36, etc.

The inseparable connection between God's plan and his execution of it, with the necessarily exact conformity of the one to the other, which his perfections require, his word asserts, and his works plainly manifest, render it utterly impossible to offer any objection against his decrees, which will not equally militate against the actual facts in his works of creation and providence. On this, therefore, we ought particularly to insist in answering every cavil against the peremptory nature of his purpose.—If we find it undeniably manifest, that, in his providence, he hath permitted sin to enter into, or abound in the world; and that particular persons, by far the greatest part of mankind, apparently die in their sins, multitudes of them having never so much as heard of the way of salvation through Christ,—how absurd to deny, that God purposed to permit sin thus to enter and abound?—or to contend, that all men are equally predestinated to everlasting life?—or, that Christ died equally for them all, in order to purchase it for them?—If thousands of men be dying every day, and thus entering into an eternity of inconceivable happiness or misery, how absurd to assert, that God, in his plan, hath fixed nothing relative to the circumstances or the issue of their death?—How can we, without blasphemy, ascribe headlong unconcerted work to the Most High?—This inseparable connection between God's purpose and the execution of it, also manifests, that, in both, he must carry on the same design of glorifying himself and doing good to his creatures, especially to his favourite people, Prov 16:4; Rom 11:36;

Rom 9:22-23; Rom 8:28,30; Eph 1:6; Isa 43:3-4,21; Isa 44:28; 2 Pet 3:9; 1 Cor 3:22.—God's plan, though first in order of nature, being only manifested to us by his word and works, our whole conduct must be regulated by these, not in the least by his unknown purpose.

Every thing which was made in creation, or which happens in providence, was foreordained in the decree of God in that precise form, Acts 15:18; Acts 17:26; Eph 1:11; Isa 46:10-11; Isa 14:24,27;—the most contingent and wicked not excepted, Gen 50:20; Gen 45:5,7; Acts 2:23-24; Acts 4:27-28. And hence so many of them were foretold, Gen 3:14-19; Gen 4:12; Gen 6-9; Gen 12:2-3,7; Gen 13:15-17; Gen 15:4-7,13-21; Gen 16:10-12; Gen 17:4-8,16-21; Gen 18:10,14,18; Gen 19:13; Gen 20:12-13; Gen 22:17-18; Gen 25:23; Gen 27:28-29,39-40; Gen 28:13-15; Gen 37:7-10; Gen 40:13,19; Gen 41:25-32; Gen 48-49; Exod 3-17; Lev 26; Deut 28-33; Josh 1; Judg 2; Judg 4; Judg 6-7; 1 Sam 2-3; 1 Sam 8; 1 Sam 13; 1 Sam 15-16; 2 Sam 7; 1 Kings 9; 1 Kings 11; 1 Kings 13-14; 1 Kings 16-17; 1 Kings 19; 1 Kings 22; 2 Kings 7; 2 Kings 10; 2 Kings 13; 2 Kings 21; Ps 2; Ps 21-22; Ps 45; Ps 47; Ps 67-69; Ps 72; Ps 46-100; Ps 110; Ps 132; Isa 1 through Mal 4; Matt 23-25; 1 Tim 4; 2 Tim 3-4; 2 Pet 2-3; 2 Thess 1-2; Rev 5-22.

The form and duration of every man's life, with the time and manner of his death, are precisely fixed in the decree of God. 1. The Scripture plainly affirms this, Job 7:1; Job 14:5; Acts 17:26,28; Eccles 3:1-2; Eccles 5:17; Eccles 9:12; Ps 31:15; Ps 139:16; Ps 39:4-5. 2. God hath frequently foretold the manner, the time, and the means of man's life or death,—as of the life of Ishmael, Gen 16:12; Isaac, Gen 17-18; Jacob and Esau, Gen 25:23; Moses, Exod 4; Israelites after his death, Deut 28-33; Samson, Judg 13; Saul, 1 Sam 8-10,13,15; Solomon, 2 Sam 7:12-15; Josiah, 1 Kings 13:2; Cyrus, Isa 44:26-28; Isa 45:1-4,13; Isa 46:11; and especially of Christ, Isa 7:14; Jer 23:5-6; Jer 31:22; Mic 5:2; Mal 3:1-2, etc. And of the death of the wicked inhabitants of the old world, Gen 6:3,7; of the Sodomites, Gen 19:13,17; of the murmuring and rebellious Israelites, Num 14; Num 16; of David's infant, 2 Sam 12:14; of Abijah, 1 Kings 14:12; of Ahab and Jezebel, 1

Kings 22:28; 1 Kings 21:22-23,29; of Ahaziah, 2 Kings 1:4; of Belshazzar, Dan 5:25-26; of Peter, John 21:18; of Paul, 2 Tim 4:6-7; of Christ, Luke 13:32; Luke 18:32-33; John 7:30; John 12:33; John 13:1; John 18:1,13; Ps 22; Ps 69; Isa 53; of Eli's sons, 1 Sam 2:34; of David's subjects, 2 Sam 24:15; of Sennacherib's army, Isa 10; Isa 29-33; Isa 37; Isa 30:27-33; of the Jews by the Romans, Isa 65:12; Deut 28:16-68; Lev 26; Ps 21:8-12; Matt 23-24; of the heathen emperors of Rome, and their armies, Ps 110:5-6; Rev 6:12-17.—But, to prevent objections, it must be observed, 1. That men's life is said to be shortened, when it doth not extend to an ordinary length, or to that of which their constitution seemed capable, Job 15:32; Job 17:1; Ps 55:23; Ps 102:23-24; Prov 10:27; Eccles 7:17. 2. That prolonging of men's life, denotes merely the long enjoyment of it, but not any lengthening of it beyond the measure or period fixed for it in God's purpose, 1 Kings 3:14; Exod 20:12; Deut 4:40; Deut 30:18; Prov 10:27.—Hezekiah had fifteen years added to his life, after a mortal disease had threatened his dissolution,—but not one moment added to the time of his life, as allotted him in God's decree, Isa 38:1,5.

All things which come to pass in creation or in providence, were decreed by God, 1. From all eternity, Acts 15:18. All of them, in innumerable respects, are connected with our redemption through Christ, which, from all eternity, was purposed and prepared for by God, 1 Cor 2:7; Eph 1:4; Rom 8:28-32; 1 Cor 3:22-23. 2. Most wisely, the most proper and important ends being fixed together with all the forms and connections of things, in that manner which might best promote these ends, Prov 16:4; Rom 11:33-34. Hence the decrees are called a counsel, Isa 46:10-11; Eph 1:11; Heb 6:17. 3. Most absolutely, according to his own good pleasure, without any dependence on the free will or agency of any creature, as a cause of his purpose, Jer 18:4,6; Matt 11:26; Rom 9:20-21; Eph 1:5,9; Isa 46:10. But as men's moral behaviour is often a mean for its execution, his promises and threatenings in his word, often run in a conditional form, Isa 1:19-20; Lev 26; Deut 4-30; Ezek 18; Ezek 33. 4. In a fixed and unalterable manner, that every thing and every circumstance of it must necessarily happen precisely according to the plan of the

decree, Ps 33:11; Ps 115:3; Ps 135:6; Prov 19:21; Prov 21:30; Num 23:19; 1 Sam 15:29; Heb 6:17; Eph 1:9,11; Acts 15:18; Matt 18:7; 1 Cor 11:19; Acts 2:23-24; Acts 4:28; Isa 14:24,27; Isa 46:10.

The predestination of angels and men to their everlasting state of holiness and happiness, or of sin and misery, and fixing all the diversified means thereof, are the principal matter of the divine decree.—The Scriptures plainly manifest, that some, nay many, particular angels, were predestinated to everlasting holiness and happiness, to the praise and glory of God's bounty and love, though, as they sinned not, they were not chosen in Christ, nor to salvation, 1 Tim 5:21; Dan 7:10; Rev 5:11; Ps 103:20-21;—and that others were passed by,—to be permitted to fall into sin, and continue, and more and more abound in it; and on account of it, to be for ever justly punished with everlasting destruction, to the praise of the glory of his holiness and justice, Matt 25:41. By this purpose, as well as by their own sinful corruption and guilt, and the curse of God lying upon them on account of it, they are reserved as in chains till the last judgment, Jude 6; 2 Pet 2:4. But the predestination of men, in which we are more immediately concerned, is more fully revealed in the Scriptures.

It is not agreed among divines, how God considered men in his predestinating purpose,—Whether as creatable and fallible; or as to be created and to fall; or as created and fallen; or as converted; or as having persevered in holiness till their death. The absurdity of the two last views will hereafter be exposed. The difference of the first three views, appears to me to originate in men making their own manner of thinking on the point, an exact exemplar to that of God's, and to be really reconcilable. In God's infinite mind, his whole purpose of predestination is but one simple thought, which, by our finite and weak minds, may be apprehended in the four following steps: 1. His purpose of manifesting the glory of his own perfections, particularly of his mercy and justice in his dealings with men. In respect of this, men can only be considered as creatable and fallible. 2. His purpose of creating men and permitting them to fall in their

common Head, in order to promote or occasion the glorification of his mercy or justice. In respect of this step, men must be considered as to be created and to fall. 3. His fore-appointment of some particular men for the manifestation of his mercy, and others as objects of the manifestation of the glory of his justice. In respect, of this step, men must be viewed as created and fallen. 4. His fixing the proper means for rendering the former vessels of mercy, and the latter vessels of his everlasting, but just indignation. In respect of this step, men must be considered as chosen or as passed by.—In these views, Supralapsarians, who reckon the objects of predestination, men, as creatable and fallible, or to be created and to fall,—and Sublapsarians, who reckon men as created and fallen to be the formal objects of it, may cordially agree.—The glory of God's perfections, as the last end of the whole purpose, is first presented to view; and the decree appears as whole and uniform as Supralapsarians need wish. And men, as sinners, are chosen to salvation in Christ, as Sublapsarians contend.—The above representation also plainly distinguishes God's predestinating purpose into its two important branches, election and reprobation.

In Scripture we find God electing men to some particular office,—Saul, David, and Cyrus, to be kings, 1 Sam 10:1,24; 1 Sam 15:17; 1 Sam 16:1,6-13; 2 Sam 7:8; Ps 78:70; Isa 44:28; Isa 45:1;—Bezaleel and Aholiab to frame and rear up his tabernacle, and Solomon to build his temple, Exod 31:2-6; 1 Kings 5:5; 1 Kings 8:19; 1 Chron 17:11-12; 1 Chron 22:9-10;—Aaron and his sons to be priests, Exod 28; Heb 5:4;—the Levites to be ministers of his sanctuary, Num 1:49-50; Num 3-4; Num 8; Num 17-18. Peter and Andrew, James and John, etc. to be his apostles, Matt 10:1-4; John 6:70; Acts 9:15; Eph 4:11.—We also find him electing the whole Israelitish nation to be his peculiar people, typical of the gospel church, and of his redeemed multitude, Exod 19:5-6; Lev 20:26; Deut 7:6; Deut 16:15; Deut 26:18; Isa 48:10; 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 7:9.—But there is also a divine election of some men to everlasting life, to the praise of the glory of his grace. 1. Some men plainly appear as chosen to more than membership in the visible church. Before the Jewish nation was completely unchurched,

some of them were a chosen generation, while others, according to the determination of God, stumbled at Jesus Christ, to their own everlasting ruin, 1 Pet 2:8-9; Matt 24:22,24,31; Luke 18:7; Rom 9:27; Rom 11:5,7; Isa 8:14-16,18. Some poor in this world were chosen, rich in faith, and heirs of the heavenly kingdom, James 2:5. 2. Many, who were called by the gospel to salvation in their external church-state, were not chosen, while a few were, Matt 20:16; Matt 22:14. 3. Some men are by God remarkably distinguished from all others,—as enrolled in the Lamb's book of life, and in heaven, Isa 4:3; Dan 12:1; Luke 10:20; Phil 4:3; Rev 3:5; Rev 13:8; Rev 20:12; Rev 21:27;—as separated from this, and pertaining to another world or kingdom, John 15:19; John 17:9,16; Matt 13:38; Mark 4:11; Num 23:9; Isa 43:21; Isa 63:18; 1 Pet 2:9; Luke 20:35;—as persons, of whom the Jews, when called children of the kingdom, are types, Matt 8:12.—They are represented as sprung from another root, and of another race or kindred; being of God, 1 John 4:4-6; 1 John 5:19; John 8:42,44,47;—of the light or day, Luke 16:8; 1 Thess 5:5.—from above, John 3:3,5-6; John 8:32.—as subject to another Head, Christ, and God reconciled in him, Isa 63:19; Matt 23:8,10; John 10:3,26-27; John 6:37; John 5:40;—as perfectly secured from condemnation, and inseparable from the love of Christ and his Father, Rom 8:33-39; John 10:28-29; John 13:1; Jude 1; 2 Tim 2:19; Isa 49:15-16;—as appointed to salvation, 1 Thess 1:4-5; 1 Thess 5:9; 2 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 2:9-10,19; Matt 20:23; Matt 24:31; Matt 25:34; Luke 12:32; and appointed to faith as the mean of receiving it,—and hence men believe or not, as they are elected to eternal life or not, Titus 1:1-2; 2 Thess 3:2; Acts 13:48; John 10:26-27; Rom 11:7; Rom 8:28-30; 2 Tim 1:9; 2 Tim 2:19; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Thess 1:4-5.—It was not merely in their posterity, or in their external circumstances, but primarily in their persons, as connected with spiritual and eternal salvation, that God made a difference between Jacob and Esau, and he made Esau's behaviour promote the spiritual, if not also the temporal happiness of Jacob as well as of his seed, Gen 25:23-33; Gen 27-28; Gen 32-33; Gen 36:6; Mal 2:2-3; Rom 9:11-13.

In the decree of election, God doth not fix conditions of eternal life, and choose such as will fulfil them; but he sets apart particular persons to be infallibly made partakers of eternal salvation. 1. Particular persons, as hath been just stated, have their names written in the book of life, Luke 10:20; Rev 13:8; Rev 20:12; Rev 21:27; Isa 4:3, etc. 2. Some men are represented as particularly and personally chosen to everlasting life, Eph 1:4-6; Matt 20:16; Matt 22:14; John 10:3,26-27; John 13:18; John 17:9; John 6:37; Acts 13:48; Acts 18:10; Rom 8:28-30; Rom 9:13,23; Rom 11:5,7; 1 Thess 1:4; 1 Thess 5:9; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 1:2; 1 Pet 2:9; 2 Tim 1:9; 2 Tim 2:10. 3. The infallible and unalterable connection between election, redemption, and eternal salvation, necessarily requires that those very persons, who are actually saved, must have been elected to obtain that salvation, Ps 33:11; Isa 14:24,27; Isa 46:10; Rom 8:28-39; Rom 9:11-13,23; John 10:15-16,27-29.

God's election of these particular persons is absolute, proceeding wholly and only from his own infinitely wise and sovereign will and good pleasure; and altogether independent on their foreseen faith or good works. 1. The Scripture represents his election of them as merely depending on his own will, and as purposed in himself, Luke 12:32; Luke 10:21; Matt 11:25-26; Rom 9:11-13,16,18; Rom 11:5-6; Eph 1:5,9,11; Deut 7:8; Deut 9:4; Deut 10:15; 2 Tim 1:9. 2. God, who chooses them, is absolutely sovereign in his disposal of his favours, Gen 6:5; Gen 8:21; Dan 4:35; Isa 57:17-18; Isa 43:24-25; Rom 5:20-21; Rom 9:15-16,18,20-21; Ps 115:3; Ps 135:6; Job 33:13. 3. He could foresee no moral goodness in fallen and corrupted men, as moving Him to elect them to everlasting happiness, Gen 6:5; Gen 8:21; Ps 5:9-10; Ps 14:1-4; Isa 59:1-15; Rom 1:21-32; Rom 3:10-19,23; Rom 5:12; Rom 8:7-8; Titus 3:3; Jer 13:23; Jer 17:9; Eph 2:1-3; Eph 4:17-19; Job 14:4; Job 15:14,16; Matt 15:19. 4. No true faith or holy obedience, but what God himself works in them, can be found in any man, Phil 1:29; Phil 2:13; Eph 2:4-10; 2 Thess 1:11; James 1:17; 1 Cor 4:7; 2 Cor 3:5; Isa 26:12; Ps 57:2. Now God's own work in time can never be the condition of his choosing us before time to eternal life. 5. Our faith and holiness are the fruits of God's election of us; and

hence can never be the cause or condition of it, Acts 13:48; 1 Thess 1:4-5; 2 Thess 2:13; John 8:47; John 10:26-27; Eph 1:4; 1 Pet 1:2. 6. Our faith and holiness are properly parts of our salvation largely taken, and evidences that we are in the state and begun possession of it. And hence they are not so much as proper conditions of salvation, but means of receiving or improving it, and of preparing for the full enjoyment of it, Titus 3:5-7; Rom 7:4; Rom 6:14. How absurd then to suppose them conditions of God's electing us to that salvation! 7. If God's election of men to everlasting life depended on his foresight of their faith and good works, his redeeming love could be no such distinguished favour as the Scripture represents it, John 3:16; 1 John 3:1; 1 John 4:9-10,19; Jer 3:19; Jer 31:3; Job 35:7; Job 41:11; Deut 10:11; 1 Cor 1:29; 1 Cor 4:7; Eph 1:6; Eph 2:7; Rom 9:15-16,18; Rom 5:8,20-21. 8. So far are our good works from being the conditions upon which God elected us to everlasting life, that the making them procuring causes of our salvation is represented as altogether eversive of the grace of God therein manifested, Rom 4:4; Rom 11:6; Rom 9:16; Gal 2:21; Gal 5:2,4.

Men are chosen by God to everlasting life in Jesus Christ, as their representing Head. 1. Our election is expressly represented as in him, as our new covenant Head, and the great mean of the execution of that decree, Eph 1:4; Eph 3:11; 2 Tim 1:9; Titus 1:2. 2. The effects of our election are all enjoyed in Christ—as redemption, Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; 1 Cor 1:30; Rom 3:24-25;—effectual calling, Phil 3:14;—justification, Isa 45:24-25; 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:21.—adoption; Gal 3:26;—regeneration and sanctification, Eph 2:10; 1 Cor 1:2; Acts 26:18; 1 Cor 1:30.—preservation in grace, Jude 1; Col 3:3; John 14:19; John 10:28; John 15:5,7,—spiritual comfort, John 14:18; 2 Cor 1:5; 2 Thess 2:16-17;—and glorification, Rom 8:15-18; Eph 2:6; Isa 45:17,25; Isa 60:19; Col 3:3-4. 3. Without supposing our election to everlasting life in Christ as our Head, God's putting our stock of holiness and happiness in Adam, as our covenant-head, could not be so clearly vindicated, Rom 5:12-21; 1 Cor 15:21-22.—Nor does it appear, how we could have been recovered, quickened, justified, or sanctified by him, if we had not been chosen in him, Rom 3:10-26;

John 5:25-26; Acts 3:15,26; Rom 8:1-2; 1 John 5:12; John 14:19; Col 1:19; Col 2:9-10,13; Eph 2:10; Eph 3:17,19; Heb 2:12-16; 1 Cor 6:17; Titus 3:5.—But, though we were chosen in Christ as our Head, yet his mediatorial office and work are not the cause of our election, but only the cause of that salvation which we were chosen to obtain. 1. It hath been proved, that our election proceeds from the mere sovereign will of God.—It was of his mere free favour, that any men were elected to everlasting life. It was of his mere good pleasure, that such particular persons, and not others, were elected, Matt 11:25-26; Luke 12:32; Rom 9:11-23; 1 Cor 4:7; 1 Cor 1:25-30. 2. While Christ himself is, in God's electing purpose, chosen as our Head, his mediation is appointed in it, as the mean of executing it, and as the purchasing, procuring, and applying cause of our salvation therein decreed, Isa 42:1-7; Isa 49:1-6; 1 Pet 1:18-21; John 3:16-18; 1 John 3:5,8; 1 John 4:9-10. 3. Christ died for men considered as sinful in themselves, but loved of God, and elected to everlasting life,—that they might obtain it in a way consistent with his honour, Matt 1:21; John 10:10,14-15; John 15:13; Eph 5:2,23,25; Isa 49:3; Isa 42:21.

Men were thus elected in Christ to everlasting life from all eternity. 1. It hath been proved, that God decreed all things from all eternity, Acts 15:18. 2. Christ was set up as the mediatorial Head of elect men from all eternity, Ps 2:7-8; 1 Pet 1:20; Prov 8:23-31; Mic 5:2; John 17:24. 3. Elect men were foreknown and chosen to salvation before the foundation of the world, Rom 8:29; Rom 9:11,23; Eph 1:4; 2 Tim 1:9; Titus 1:2; Matt 25:34; Rev 13:8; Jer 31:3; 2 Thess 2:13.—How daring then to give God the lie, and contend, that he elects them only in time, at their death, etc. as their behaviour deserves! And how absurd to assert, that the beginning from which the Thessalonians were chosen, means the beginning of the gospel period.—It is certain, they did not hear the gospel, till not a few years after our Saviour's ascension, and the first erection of the gospel church, Acts 2-17.

God's purpose of election is unchangeable,—none who are elected can fall short of the grace or glory decreed for them, and none that are not elected can obtain it. 1. No unforeseen reason of alteration

can occur; nor can any change happen in his own love, power, wisdom, or equity, Acts 15:18; Ps 147:5; Isa 46:10; Mal 3:6; James 1:17. 2. The Scripture peremptorily declares, that all those very persons that were elected, shall obtain that salvation to which they were chosen, Rom 8:28-39; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Thess 5:9-10; 1 Thess 4:17; 1 Thess 5:23-24; Eph 1:4; John 6:37; John 17:9,12; Rom 11:7; Acts 2:47; Acts 13:48; 2 Tim 2:19; Isa 46:10; Isa 49:14-15; Isa 45:17; Isa 54:8-10; Rev 3:4-5; Matt 25:34; Luke 10:20; John 10:27-29; Heb 6:17-20.—But to anticipate objections, it must be observed, 1. That men whose names were never written in the book of life, may have that plainly manifested, Rev 22:19. 2. Men may be really blotted out of the book of the living on earth,—out of God's comfortable providential care,—out of the number of the visible members of his church,—or out of temporal life, Ps 69:28; Ps 139:16; Ps 87:6; Ezek 13:9; Neh 7:64; Exod 32:32, without any blotting them out of God's purpose of election to everlasting life. 3. By frequent and vigorous actings of faith,—by an holy conversation,—and by much impartial self-examination, we may render our election more certainly evident to our own souls, while we thus enjoy the fruits of it, 2 Pet 1:4-10; 1 Thess 1:4-5; Eph 1:3-9.—But nothing can render it more certain and fixed in itself, as a purpose of the unchangeable God, Job 23:13; Ps 33:11; Isa 14:24,27; Isa 46:10; Rom 9:11; Heb 6:17-18.

God's decree of election may, therefore, be thus described: An act, in which the eternal, unchangeable, infinitely wise, gracious, powerful, faithful, and sovereign God, intending to manifest to men the glory of his own perfections, particularly of his power, wisdom, sovereignty, and free grace, Rom 11:33; Eph 3:10; Matt 11:26; Matt 20:15-16; Rom 9:15-16,18-23; Rom 11:35-36; Eph 1:5-6; 1 Pet 2:9.—hath in his love foreknown and fore-chosen to the enjoyment of eternal salvation and all its benefits, Rom 8:29-30; 1 Pet 1:2; 2 Tim 2:19; John 3:16; Rom 5:8,21; Rom 9:13; 1 John 4:9-10; Isa 45:17; 1 Cor 1:30.—some persons of mankind,—the smaller number,—and whom he pleased,—as permitted, or to be permitted to fall into sin and misery, from which they could not recover themselves, Matt 20:16; Matt 22:14; 2 Tim 2:19; John 10:26-28; John 13:18; John 17:6,9,12; John 3:16;

John 15:19; Rom 8:29; Rom 9:16,18; Rom 5:8,10.—and hath predestinated them unto fellowship with, conformity to, adoption through, and joint heirship and eternal happiness in Christ, Eph 1:3-5; Rom 8:29.—and without being, in the least, moved to it, by any foreseen qualities or acts of theirs, natural or moral,—hath of his own mere will, sovereign grace, and good pleasure, Matt 11:25-26; Luke 12:32; Rom 9:11,15-16; Eph 1:5-6; 2 Tim 1:9; 1 Cor 1:26-28.—from all eternity, Matt 25:34; Eph 1:4; 2 Tim 1:9; Rev 13:8.—chosen them in Christ as their Head, Prov 8:23,31; Eph 1:4; 2 Tim 1:9.—in infinite mercy and compassion hath unalterably ordained and appointed them to be partakers of eternal salvation, life, and happiness through him, Rom 9:11,15-16,18,23; 2 Tim 1:9; 2 Tim 2:19; Acts 13:48; 1 Thess 5:9-10; 1 Thess 4:17; Isa 45:17; Rom 11:29.—and hath inscribed their names in his book of life, Luke 10:20; Rev 3:5; Rev 17:8; Rev 13:8; Rev 20:12; Rev 21:27; Phil 4:3; Isa 4:3.—thus distinguishing them from the rest of mankind, who are left to perish in their sinfulness and misery, 1 Cor 4:7; Rom 9:11-13; Eph 1:4.—and hath in that same wise and unchangeable counsel, appointed the mediation of Christ, an interest in his righteousness, effectual calling, faith, and holiness, as means of their obtaining and improving that eternal life,—that so his inflexible justice and infinite mercy may harmoniously shine forth therein, John 3:16-17; 1 John 3:5,8; 1 John 4:9-10; John 10:10-11,15,26-29; John 17:4,6,9; Eph 1:4; Eph 5:2,23-27; Col 1:19; Col 2:3,9-13; 2 Tim 1:9; 2 Tim 2:10,19; Isa 45:17,22,24-25; Acts 13:48; 2 Thess 2:13; Rom 4:16; Mark 16:16; Heb 11:6; Heb 12:14.

Objection I. "Such a scheme of election renders God a respecter of persons, contrary to Acts 10:34; Job 34:11,19; Deut 10:17-18; 2 Chron 19:7; Col 3:24-25; Rom 2:11; 1 Pet 1:17." Answer 1. It no more represents him as a respecter of persons than his actual saving of some men, and not of any devils, and his giving to some temporal privileges or eternal salvation, which he doth not bestow on others as deserving. 2. In his purpose of election, God shews no respect to persons on account of their being Jews or Gentiles, poor or rich, great or small, in the world, which is the meaning of these texts, but acts from his own sovereign love and free grace. 3. If God should

choose or reprobate, save or damn men, as their free will is pleased to exert itself, then, indeed, he would be a respecter of persons.

Objection II. "In the declarations of the gospel, which are an extract of God's purpose of election, eternal salvation is suspended on our faith, sincere obedience, and final perseverance in holiness, Mark 16:16; John 3:16,18,36; Rev 22:14; Rev 2:7,11,17,26-28; Rev 3:5,12,21; Gal 6:9; Matt 24:13; Rom 2:7,10; Isa 1:19; Isa 3:10."

Answer 1. Not one of these declarations represents God's electing decree in the conditions of its establishment, but merely exhibits the connection fixed in it between the different fruits of it, or the parts and degrees of salvation. 2. Faith, sincere obedience, and perseverance in holiness, are not proper conditions on which our eternal happiness is suspended; but being necessary fruits of election, means of, and preparations for happiness, they characterize the persons who have been elected and shall be glorified, John 10:27-29; Acts 13:48; 1 Thess 1:4-5; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 1:2; Eph 1:4; Rom 8:29-30.

Objection III. "An absolute, unconditional, and unchangeable election of particular persons to eternal happiness, enervates and renders altogether unprofitable the whole preaching and ordinances of the gospel, with all the good endeavours of mankind, and encourages them to sloth and wickedness,—for, if they be elected, they will certainly be saved, do what they will; and if they be not elected they will not be saved, let them do what they can." Answer 1. As in this decree the means of happiness are fixed along with, and inseparably from the end, it is highly absurd to contend, that the fixing the end will render the means unnecessary or unprofitable. 2. Even in the common affairs of life, they who believe that God hath unalterably foreordained all things which come to pass, are as diligent in their lawful employments, and as careful to provide and use food, raiment, houses, medicine, etc. as others who do not. 3. No man hath any reason to expect eternal happiness, but in the way of a diligent attendance on, and improvement of the ordinances of the gospel, public, private, and secret, according to his capacity and

opportunity,—and of earnest and persevering endeavours to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord, Rom 10:17; Isa 55:1-7; Matt 7:7,13-14; Matt 6:33, Luke 13:24; Prov 8:17,34-36; 2 Pet 1:3-11; Heb 11:6; Heb 12:14; 1 Cor 15:58; 2 Cor 7:1. 4. No man can have any evidence of his being elected by God, without an active study of holiness in all manner of conversation, 2 Pet 1:3-10; 2 Tim 2:19; Eph 1:4; Col 1:22; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 1:2. 5. Though our diligent attendance on gospel ordinances, our faith, repentance, or new obedience, cannot, in the least, promote God's making choice of us, and electing us to eternal life, as that was fixed long before we existed,—yet they mightily promote the execution of his electing purpose in our actual enjoyment of all the benefits of that salvation to which we were, from eternity, elected, Phil 2:12-13; 1 Cor 9:24-27; 1 Cor 15:58; Rom 5:1-5; Ps 19:11; Ps 84:7,11-12; Job 17:9; Prov 4:18; 2 Tim 4:7-8; Rev 3:7,12,21. 6. It is impossible for men cordially to believe the giving, the redeeming, the electing love of God, without being thereby delightfully constrained, and effectually animated to an earnest care of their salvation, and an active study of faith and holiness. Nor are we, the friends of unconditional election, afraid to compare practices with our opponents when they please, if they will but admit the exceeding broad law of God, in both its tables, to be the rule and standard of judgment, 1 Thess 1:3-10; Gal 2:19-20; 2 Tim 1:9; 2 Tim 2:19; 1 Cor 15:10; 1 Thess 2:1-10.

Objection IV. "An unconditional unalterable election of particular persons of mankind to everlasting life, is inconsistent with the wisdom, goodness, and integrity of God." Answer 1. If God, in providence, bring particular persons of mankind to everlasting life, it is but absurd blasphemy to rail at his fixed election of them to it in his eternal purpose, as if that were contrary to his nature. 2. If it be consistent with the perfections of God to choose particular angels, and render them eternally happy, how can it be inconsistent with them, that some particular men should be elected and rendered eternally happy? 3. Not an unconditional, but a conditional election of men is manifestly inconsistent with, and disgraceful to God's wisdom, goodness, and integrity. His wisdom is infinitely more

brightly displayed in that election which, without hurting a single creature, infallibly secures the salvation of thousands of millions, Rev 7:9, than in that which leaves matters so loose and undetermined, that Christ may die for all men,—intercede to his uttermost for them, and bestow all his ordinances upon them, and the Holy Ghost, with all his might, strive with each of them to no purpose,—their whole happiness depending on the proper exertions of their free will, a carnal mind, enmity against God, a heart deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.—It is infinitely more kind and gracious, unalterably to purpose to exert his almighty power, and other perfections, in order effectually to bestow that grace and glory, which are necessary to make them for ever holy and happy, upon unnumbered millions, than merely to resolve to give all men an infinitely improbable, nay impossible chance of being happy,—that is, to prepare happiness for them, upon condition that their desperately wicked heart convert itself to believe the gospel, love God, and persevere till death in all holy obedience to him; and meanwhile scarcely give the hundredth part of them the smallest hint of his proposals.—God in his word hath candidly declared, that of the many who are called by the gospel, few are chosen, and that few find the way that leadeth to eternal life, while many walk in the broad way which leadeth to destruction, Matt 20:16; Matt 22:14; Matt 7:13-14, and in Christian countries few, very few, bear the characters of saintship marked in his word.—How can our affirming that which is so manifest in his word and in his providence, be an impeachment of his candour?—If, in the declarations of the gospel, he assure men that it is both their duty and interest to believe in Jesus Christ for their eternal salvation, how is it an impeachment of his candour, to maintain that this indispensable rule of our duty to him is not necessarily the rule of his providential conduct toward us?—or to maintain, that he cannot inform us of our duty, without divulging to us his most secret purposes? It is time enough for us to claim the same rule of conduct with Jehovah, when our free will hath transformed our mean and desperately wicked nature into true Godhead.

II. With respect to the reprobation of men, it may be observed, I. That God purposed to permit sin. 1. This the Scripture expressly affirms, Gen 50:20; Acts 2:23-24; Acts 4:27-28; hence, 2. He hath foretold multitudes of evil actions, Gen 15:16; Deut 31:16,20,29; Deut 32:6,15-21; Isa 1; Isa 5; Isa 10; Jer 25; Rev 6; Rev 8-9; Rev 11-13; 2 Tim 3:1-6,13; 2 Thess 2:3-12. 3. In time God actually permits much sin, Acts 14:16; 2 Thess 2:9-11; Gen 50:20; Gen 45:5,7; Ps 81:12; Rom 1:21-32. No sin, which hath been, or is in the world, can be said to have happened without his foreknowledge of it, Acts 15:18; Isa 46:10-11; Ps 147:5, or, notwithstanding all that his infinite power could have done to prevent and hinder it, Gen 18:14; Jer 32:17,27; Matt 19:26. Nay, his permission of it tends to the honour of his absolute sovereignty, infinite wisdom, holiness, and justice,—and to the advantage of established angels and men. II. God in his predestinating purpose, left some men unelected to perish in their sin, to the praise of the glory of his justice. 1. The Scriptures plainly declare this, Prov 16:4. (where pahhhal, hath made, signifies to appoint, ordain, prepare, Exod 15:17; Ps 31:19, even as poieo, Mark 3:14; Heb 3:2.) 1 Pet 2:8. (where stumbling denotes sinning) Jude 4. (where krima, condemnation, denotes the sinful cause of condemnation or what is criminal) John 9:39; Rev 13:8; 2 Cor 4:3-4; Rom 9:13-22; 1 Thess 5:9; 2 Thess 2:10-12-13. 2. In God's providence, which is an exact copy of his decree, Acts 15:18; Isa 46:10; Eph 1:11; Ps 33:11, multitudes appear plainly left to perish in their sin, Matt 7:13-14; 2 Thess 2:10-12; 2 Thess 1:8-9; Rev 13:3,8; Rev 17:17; Ps 9:17. Millions of fallen angels had never a Saviour provided for them, Jude 6; 2 Pet 2:4. Hundreds of millions of men, for many ages, have never been informed of the method of redemption through Christ, Ps 147:19-20; Prov 29:18; Eph 2:12; Acts 14:16; Acts 17:30.—The far greater part of those that hear the gospel, or at least are called Christians, are, by their rejection of it, ripened for hell, Matt 20:16; Matt 22:14; Matt 7:13-14; John 10:26; John 12:39-40; 2 Cor 4:3-4; Isa 6:9-10; Acts 28:26-27; Phil 3:18-19; 2 Tim 3:1-5; Rev 13:3,8; Rev 14:9-11. III. It follows that certain particular persons have been, in God's decree, appointed to wrath, Mal 1:2-3; Rom 9:11-18; 1 Thess 5:9; Jude 4; were never favourably known by

God, Matt 7:23; were never appointed or ordained to eternal life, Rev 13:8; Rev 17:8.—Nay, particular election of some necessarily infers a particular reprobation of others.—In which act of reprobation is included, 1. God's passing by certain persons, leaving them unelected, Matt 7:23; Rev 13:8; Rev 17:8. 2. A pre-appointment of them to undergo his just wrath, to be inflicted on them as the punishment of their foreseen sinfulness, 1 Thess 5:9. But it must be remarked, that though men's sins be foreseen and viewed in God's pre-appointment of them unto wrath, as the cause of their condemnation and punishment, yet they are not the cause of his leaving them unelected to perish in their sin; for, 1. Reprobates are no worse by nature than those that are elected, 1 Cor 1:26-27; 1 Cor 4:7; John 13:18; Eph 2:1-3. 2. Their practice was foreseen as no worse than that of many elected persons before their conversion, 1 Cor 6:9-11; Eph 2:1-13; 1 Tim 1:13,16; Titus 2:3-6. 3. The wickedness of unelected men is represented as the consequence, though not the proper effect of their reprobation, 2 Cor 4:3; John 10:26; John 12:39; 1 Pet 2:8-9; Jude 4; Rev 13:8.

Reprobation may therefore be described, "A simple act of an independent, sovereign, infinitely wise, powerful, righteous, and holy God,—whose thoughts are infinitely high, his judgments unsearchable, and his ways past finding out, Isa 55:9; Isa 40:13; Rom 11:33-34; Ps 92:5; Ps 147:5.—in which he, in his eternal and unchangeable counsel, Matt 25:34,41; Rom 9:11; James 1:17; Isa 46:10; Heb 6:17; Eph 1:11; Ps 33:11.—intending to manifest the glory of his absolute sovereignty, almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, unconceivable patience,—and particularly of his infinite holiness and avenging justice, Rom 11:36; Rom 9:11,15-22; Matt 20:15; Rom 11:33-34; Rom 2:4; Isa 5:4,16; Prov 16:4.—did, according to his own good pleasure, purpose in himself, to leave many particular men, no worse in themselves than others,—in their estate of sin and misery, into which they were to be permitted to fall, Rom 9:6-7,11,15-18,29; Rom 9:21; Rom 11:20-22; Rom 5:12; Eph 2:3; Matt 24:40-41;—and never to know them in the way of peculiar regard, or love them with any good will, or pity them in order to their effectual recovery,—nor

to choose, predestinate, distinguish from others, or ordain them to eternal life, Matt 7:23; Rom 8:29-30; Rom 9:13,15; Mal 1:2-3; John 13:18; 1 Cor 4:7; Acts 13:48; 1 Thess 5:9,—or write their names in his book of life, or set them apart for his sheep, people, children, or vessels of mercy, John 10:26; Rom 9:6-7,23; Hos 1:6,9; Mal 3:17;—and hence purposed to withhold from them all his undeserved favours of redemption and reconciliation through Christ,—of effectual calling, faith, justification, adoption, and sanctification, John 10:15,26; John 17:9; John 12:37-40; Matt 11:25-26; Matt 13:11,13; Rom 8:28-33; 2 Thess 3:2; Eph 2:8;—though not from them all his favours of common providence, gospel ordinances, spiritual gifts, or strivings of the Holy Ghost, by which they are rendered useful to his elect people, Acts 14:17; Acts 17:30; Rom 2:4; Rom 9:22; Exod 7:16-17; Lev 26:3-13; Deut 28:1-14; Isa 5:4; Matt 13:9; Matt 23:37; Heb 6:4-5; Heb 10:26,29; 2 Pet 2:20-21; 1 Cor 12:10; Gen 6:3; Isa 63:10; Acts 7:51;—and further determined in himself, that they, having rendered themselves miserable by their sin, original or actual, against law or gospel,—and become abusers or despisers of his benefits offered to, or bestowed on them, Rom 5:12; Eph 2:1-3,12; Rom 2:12,14-15; Mark 16:16; John 3:18,36; John 4:40; Rom 2:4-5; Rom 11:7-8; Matt 10:15; Matt 11:21-22; Job 8:4; Job 9:4; Ps 81:13; Acts 14:16.—should,—in an infinitely wise, sovereign, just, and holy manner, answerable to their own freedom of will and their rebellious inclinations, Deut 32:4; Ps 45:7; Jer 12:1; James 1:13; Matt 23:37-38; John 5:40; John 8:12; Acts 7:51,—be, for the punishment of their preceding sins,—spiritually blinded, hardened, and given up to strong delusions, vile affections, and a reprobate sense, Rom 9:22; Exod 14:4; John 12:40; Rom 9:15,17; Rom 11:7-8; Rom 1:24,28; 2 Thess 2:11; Isa 66:4;—and that they, persevering in their wickedness, and convicted by their own consciences of final impenitence, neither able to blame the just severity of God, nor to excuse their own ignorance, or their inability to accept of his offered salvation, Matt 27:4; Luke 16:24; Matt 25:25-26,44; Rom 2:14-15; Rom 1:20; Rom 9:19-20; Luke 22:22; John 5:40; should be eternally damned for their sins, Hos 13:9; Matt 25:41-42; Isa 5:11; Ezek 18:4; Rom 2:8-9; Rom 6:23; Eph 5:5-6; Col 3:6; 1 Cor 6:9-10; Gal 5:19-21.—as vessels

of wrath fitted to destruction,—children of wrath,—children of perdition,—hated of God,—appointed to evil and wrath,—separated, and before-ordained to condemnation, Rom 9:22; Eph 2:3; 2 Thess 2:3; John 17:12; Lam 3:37-38; Mal 1:3; Rom 9:13; Prov 16:4; 1 Thess 5:9; 1 Pet 2:8; Jude 4."

This awful doctrine of Reprobation, as well as of the Election of men, ought, with great prudence and holy awe, to be taught in the church.

1. It hath been proved that the Holy Ghost hath plainly taught it in his word, Rom 9:11-22; Rom 11:1-7.
2. Every thing taught in the Scripture, lawfully used, tends to promote men's holiness in heart and life, Rom 15:4; 2 Tim 3:16-17; 1 Pet 2:1-2; James 1:21; Ps 119:9,11.
3. Election and reprobation being so closely related and contrasted, the former can neither be taught nor conceived of, separately from the latter.
4. In his providence, which every man ought to observe, Ps 107:43; Hos 14:9; Isa 5:12. God copies out his decree of reprobation, in the life and in the death of the wicked, Jude 4; 1 Pet 2:8; Isa 46:10-11; Eph 1:11; Ps 33:11; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27-28; Acts 1:16-18,25; Luke 22:22; Phil 3:18-19.
5. A proper knowledge of this decree promotes right and reverential views of the sovereignty, power, wisdom, justice, and goodness of God, Matt 11:26; Rom 9:13,22-23; Eph 1:5-6.
6. The doctrine of reprobation, if duly taught, tends to alarm the wicked and render their consciences uneasy, till they obtain proper evidence that they are not included in it, and to render sin terrible to them:—And it excites saints to self-examination, and to lively gratitude to God their Redeemer, in a course of gospel holiness, Matt 25:41; Rom 1:18; 1 Thess 5:9-10; 2 Cor 5:10-11; Ps 116:16; Luke 1:74-75.—To render the whole decree of predestination as odious as possible, our opponents strain every nerve to run down that of Reprobation, which is so unpleasant to men's unrenewed heart.

Objection I. "Since the infinite perfections of God's nature necessarily requires, that all men should love and fear him, he cannot, in a consistence with that perfection, or even with common candour, lay any of them under an incapacity to do so." Answer 1.

Though the almighty operation of God's grace be absolutely necessary to remove men's incapacity of loving him,—yet, as his decree, in no respect, forced or drew that incapacity upon them, but they, in their first parents, voluntarily contracted it, in direct opposition to his commandment,—and do as early as possible personally approve of, and delight in it, he can be under no obligation to deliver them from it, especially, as his leaving them under it is but the just punishment of their sin. 2. God's purpose to permit men to fall into, or continue under a sinful incapacity of loving and fearing him, can never be more contrary to his perfection and sincerity, than his actual providential permission of both devils and men to fall into sin and continue in it.—To suppose that his purpose and providence are not perfectly correspondent, is to charge him with ignorance in forming his plan, or with folly, weakness, and changeableness, in the execution of it, Ps 50:21.

Objection II. "God, being infinitely merciful, good to all, his tender mercy over all his works, taking no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but willing that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, Ps 103:8; Ps 145:9; Ezek 33:11; 1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9,—cannot by an act of his will, fix so many thousands of his rational creatures, who are no worse than others, in sinfulness, or require them to receive his salvation, while their inward corruptions, permitted by himself, render them incapable." Answer 1. By what tie is this infinitely merciful God bound to preserve all his rational creatures in this original perfection of holiness, whether they will or not?—By what tie is he bound to shew favour to one sinner, who hath offended him, and sought his life?—By what tie is he bound to shew more favour to sinful men, than to fallen angels, who are his own rational creatures of a far higher rank? 2. What avails that infinite mercy, which is supposed to have predestinated all men (and why not all devils?) to everlasting happiness, if it bring but a few of them to it, nay, can bring none of them to it, but as their wicked free will pleases; nay, if it do not so much as inform the hundredth part of mankind of the only method of their salvation through Christ? 3. Of the small part of mankind who are properly invited by the gospel as

preached, to receive this salvation, multitudes, not by any influence of God's decree, but by their own self-approved enmity against it, obstinately reject it, John 5:40; Ps 81:11; Hos 11:2,7; Rom 8:7-8; Jer 17:9; Zech 7:11-12; Zech 11:8; Gen 6:5; Gen 8:21. 4. A scheme, which infallibly secures the eternal happiness, perhaps of many thousand millions of mankind, is infinitely more merciful than one which secures it for none, but suspends all upon the proper exertions of a free will, a carnal mind, enmity against God,—a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.—We allow, that every man that hears the gospel is warranted,—is solemnly called, and earnestly entreated by God to believe on Jesus Christ for salvation. We allow, that one single act of believing, which is ten thousand times less than perseverance in faith and holiness till death, will render a man's state unalterably happy for ever more.—We allow of God's giving, even to reprobates, the largest measures and highest degrees of the common influences of his Spirit to assist them towards acts of faith. Our opponents dare not pretend, that they allow more to their elect,—nay, to their choicest saints.—If men's free will can therefore turn the scale in their favour, and make them believe in Christ, we allow a method of eternal salvation a thousand times more easy to reprobates, than our opponents do to any man.

Objection III. "How can it consist with the infinite wisdom of God, to fix on the objects of his favour or of his abhorrence, without regard to their moral behaviour as the cause?—or, to appoint means of salvation for those to whom he hath decreed never to give that which is absolutely necessary to render these means effectual?—or, to require or expect the conversion of reprobates, when he himself hinders it by his unalterable decrees?" Answer 1. God abhors no creature, but on account of his sin, Gen 1:31; Ps 104:31. It would be very unwise in God to fix upon any of mankind as his favourites, from respect to their behaviour, since, in their unconverted state, not one of them can do any thing but what is abominable to him, in matter or manner, Ps 14:1-4; Rom 8:7-8; Rom 3:10-20; Jer 17:9; Eph 2:1-3; Titus 3:3.—But, both his wisdom and sovereignty are highly glorified in his choosing of many, the most unpromising, that so his

almighty power and infinite mercy may the more abundantly shine forth in his qualifying them for the most familiar fellowship with himself, and for his service, 1 Cor 1:25-29; 1 Tim 1:13-16; Rom 5:20-21.—2. God hath not granted the means of eternal salvation to the most of mankind:—nor doth his granting them to any exhibit his decree of saving them, but the true method of obtaining salvation, and their duty to comply with and improve it, Mark 16:16; Acts 16:31; Acts 2:37-39; John 3:14-18.

3. The Scripture never represents God as expecting the conversion of reprobates. To assert that he expects any thing which never happens, is to deny his infinite wisdom and knowledge. 4. God's requiring from gospel hearers their proper duty, is his appointed mean of effectually converting his elect,—even as Christ's calling of Lazarus to come forth, and the widow's son and ruler's daughter to arise, was his decreed mean of actually raising them from the dead:—and meanwhile it renders reprobates much more useful and happy in this world, than otherwise they would be.

Objection IV. "If God, by a secret and unchangeable act of his will, hath consigned multitudes of mankind to everlasting ruin, how can he, in a consistence with uprightness and sincerity, openly declare, that he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, Ezek 33:11; 1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9? How can he impose a law upon them, to be obeyed under pain of damnation, while he himself is unalterably resolved to withhold from them all power and ability to keep it? How can he be serious and earnest in calling men to repentance and salvation, if by his own unalterable purpose, he hath rendered both utterly impossible? How can he profess to wish their welfare, or promise them eternal life upon conditions which are infallibly hindered by his own decree;—or to offer it to them, upon whom he is unalterably determined never to bestow it?" Answer 1. The Scripture never declares, that God is inclined to have every individual of mankind, Judas, Antichrist, etc. saved, but the contrary, John 17:9,12; 2 Thess 2:4,11-12; Rom 9:22. Now, if one be appointed to wrath, it will affect

the sincerity of God, in the sense of the objection, as much as if it were ten thousand millions. 2. We readily grant, that men of all nations, ranks, and conditions, are actually saved, than which the Scripture never affirms any thing more universal on this point, 1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9; Joel 2:28; John 12:32; John 16:9; Rev 7:9. 3. Be the purpose of God what it will, his holy, just, good, and exceeding broad law, binds, and will for ever bind, both devils and men to holiness, nay to perfection in holiness; otherwise they could not commit sin, Rom 4:15; Rom 5:13; 1 John 3:4.—And, men's attempts to obey it are rewarded in this life, or in the next, with, at least, less degrees of punishment, Matt 11:21-24; Matt 12:41-42. 4. As, in ordinary cases, no man, in this life, can certainly know that he is included in God's reprobating decree,—and as it, in no case, lays any restraint or force upon men's will, it cannot be it, but their own inward corruption and enmity against God, which hinders their care or endeavours to promote their eternal happiness. 5. Most of those scriptures, in which God appears to wish men's welfare, and to promise them happiness on condition of their obedience, directly relate to the felicity of the Jews in Canaan, which they held upon the foot of such reformation and behaviour, as was partly in their own power, without any assistance of saving grace, Deut 5:29; Deut 32:29; Ps 81:13; Isa 1:19-20; Ezek 18:30-32; Ezek 33:11; Jer 6:8. 6. Spiritual pardon and salvation are never secured by promise to any but such as have true faith, and that not as a proper condition, but as a mean of receiving them,—and hence as a fruit of election, 2 Thess 2:2,13; Titus 1:2; Acts 2:47; Acts 13:48. 7. The gospel is so far from declaring that God intends to save all men, that it plainly affirms, that he intends to save but the smaller part of gospel-hearers, Matt 7:13-15,23; Matt 20:16; Matt 22:14. But it peremptorily declares, that Jesus Christ is able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by him;—that he and his salvation are equally suited to the needs of every hearer;—that, by the gracious appointment and infinitely free gift of God, he is the Official Saviour of mankind indefinitely considered, and will in no wise cast out any that come to him for salvation;—that it is the duty and interest of all gospel-hearers, as lost and self-ruined sinners, to exert all the powers of

their soul to the uttermost, in essaying to believe on and receive him and his salvation, as fully, freely, earnestly, and indefinitely offered to them;—that, not knowing but they are elected, they all ought, earnestly and repeatedly, to attempt this believing, in order to have certain proof that they are so;—that by means of gospel declarations, offers, and invitations, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, the adult elect are brought into their state of salvation, and many reprobates are qualified with spiritual gifts, which render them useful companions and assistants to the elect in this world. 8. Unless, in providence, God actually should save all men, especially all that hear the gospel, which it is manifest he doth not, the whole charge of the objection will fall upon him, with all its weight, if it have any.

Objection V. "It is inconsistent with God's infinite holiness to decree the permission of sin, or to command men to be holy as he is holy, while, by his unalterable purpose, he renders it impossible for them to be holy." Answer 1. Let our opponents reconcile the actual entrance of sin into the world, and the long continuance and spread of it, among devils and men, with the infinite holiness of an all-wise and almighty God,—and all the pretended inconsistency of his decree of permitting it will vanish of course. 2. Since God's decree of reprobation neither inclines nor forces men to sin, and is very rarely known to any particular person in this world, it is at once extremely uncandid and absurd, repeatedly to contend, that it renders any man sinful or retains him such. 3. Since, notwithstanding God's all-wise and almighty government of the world, there is very much sin in it, it is manifest, that his infinite holiness and nature doth not require him to do his uttermost to prevent it, or the ruin of devils or men by means of it,—though both it and his wisdom require him to glorify himself by means of sin, if it be permitted.

Objection VI. "It is inconsistent with the equity of God to consign innocent persons to eternal damnation, or to impose on men a law, which his own purpose renders him incapable of fulfilling." Answer 1. God hath not decreed to inflict damnation upon either angels or men, but as the due wages of their sin, Hos 13:9; Ezek 18:4; Rom

2:8-9; Rom 6:23; Rom 8:13; Ps 9:16-17. 2. If, as hath been repeatedly hinted, God neither tempt, incline, nor force men to sin;—nay, if, by his law, he solemnly forbid it, and by his providence deter and dissuade from it, why may he not justly damn men, if they will involve themselves in it? 3. It is highly absurd to imagine, that men's sinful disabling of themselves to obey the law of God deprives him of his right to require their obedience;—that their wickedness strips the Most High of his authority over them, and renders them independent governors of themselves in his room;—that sinful ignorance, perpetual drunkenness, or the like, can render blasphemy, hatred of God or men, murder, whoredom, theft, perjury, etc. altogether innocent, and can free men from all obligation to duty.

Objection VII. "As God can reap no advantage by it, it is shocking to suppose, that he fixed upon any of his rational creatures for the manifestation of his mercy or justice,—or that he made Adam, whose fall he foresaw, men's representative,—or that he brings any of them into being in order to damn them." Answer 1. Reprobation is in no respect founded upon God's imputation of Adam's first sin to his posterity, but altogether antecedent to it. 2. God's proper end in making men and every thing else was neither their damnation nor salvation, but his own glory. Is this unworthy of him? Rom 11:36; Prov 16:4. 3. If God did not from eternity foresee what multitudes of angels and men would fall into and perish in sin, where was his infinite knowledge, Ps 147:5; Acts 15:18; Isa 46:10? If he foresaw this, and yet created them, as it is certain he hath done, wherein is he a whit more benevolent than the above-described decree of reprobation admits? 4. If the actual entrance of sin and damnation among angels and men be not shockingly unworthy of God, how is it possible that his purpose relative thereto can be so?

Objection VIII. "Men in general are called by God to believe the gospel, and to make sure their election, which necessarily supposes that none of them are irreversibly reprobated." Answer 1. None but the hearers of the gospel, who are not perhaps the hundredth part of mankind, are called to make sure their election, 2 Pet 1:10; 2 Cor

13:5. 2. God's command to make sure our election, proves that only some, not all men, are elected to everlasting life: For, why labour, with all diligence, to make sure that which is common to every one, as common to their very rational nature? 3. If men's election be suspended on their final perseverance in faith and holiness, as our opponents contend, it cannot be made sure in this life, nor perhaps in that which is to come. Some angels no more persevered in heaven, than Adam did on earth, Jude 6; 2 Pet 2:4.

Objection IX. "If faith and holiness be the conditions of men's eternal salvation; if men's unbelief and impenitence be the conditions of their damnation, they must necessarily be the conditions of that decree which fixes their salvation or damnation." Answer 1. Faith, repentance, and new obedience, are not proper conditions of our salvation; but proceed from our being united to Christ, and interested in him and his salvation. They are first fruits of that salvation by which we receive and improve begun salvation, and are prepared for complete salvation in heaven, Phil 1:29; Eph 2:10; Rom 7:4; Rom 6:14; Rom 8:2. 2. It is extremely absurd to insist that the causes of a purpose, and the means of executing it, must be the very same. The Jews' murder of Christ was a mean of rendering him our atoning sacrifice. Was it therefore the cause of God's purpose, to set him forth to be our propitiation? Acts 2:23-24; Acts 4:27-28; Heb 2:10; Heb 5:8; Luke 24:26; John 3:16; Rom 5:8; 1 John 4:9-10,19. Paul's persecuting rage, and Onesimus's theft, were occasional means of their remarkable conversion to Christ. Were they therefore causes of their election to eternal life?—All things, sins, devils, troubles, etc. work together for believers' spiritual and eternal advantage, Rom 8:28; 2 Cor 4:17. Were therefore sins, devils, and troubles, the causes and conditions of believers' election to spiritual and eternal happiness?—Can fruit on trees be the cause of their root? or water in cisterns, vessels, or streams, be the cause of the fountain?

Reflection. Having thus reviewed the mysterious purposes of Jehovah, think, O my soul! if even the supposed possibility of his having loved me,—having so early loved me, and thought on me, in

my low estate,—ought not this, in the earliest periods of my life, to have excited and animated me to exercise my utmost care and diligence in improving the gospel method of certainly knowing that these things were so?—Upon the apprehension of a mere possibility of future existence in this world, what thoughts,—what cares,—what labours have I exercised about the concerns of it, from time to time?—Why then so few, and these so languid, so lifeless, about things of infinitely greater importance?—things of infinite—of everlasting consequence?—But, hath the great, the eternal God, thought,—always thought on, and loved me! And have I spent so many moments,—so many hours,—so many years of my short life,—without thoughts,—without high, fixed, and heart-inflaming thoughts of him?—without love, without superlative love, without an all-subjecting,—all-assimilating, love to him!—Hath the infinite Jehovah, with all his heart, chosen me to be his vessel of mercy, his jewel, his portion, his friend, his child, his bride!—Ought not I, if I had ten thousand hearts,—ought not I, with them all, to choose Him?—Choose Him, who is infinite loveliness and love, for my Saviour, my Friend, my Father, My Husband, my God, my All?—Passing by millions, not one of them worse, did he set me apart for himself! And shall not my soul prefer him to every trifle!—Whom, my Infinite All, have I in heaven but Thee? what on earth do I,—dare I, desire besides Thee?—Hath he, in his persons and perfections, so exerted himself in the establishment of my election,—my eternal salvation!—Let me work together with Him, giving all diligence to make my calling and election sure.—Did he choose me to holiness,—to love? Let me follow hard after it, as a part, a mean of my eternal felicity.—Hath his unchangeable purpose infallibly fixed me and my everlasting salvation, in himself!—Let me be stedfast, immoveable, alway abounding in the work of the Lord.—But, is there a tremendous purpose of reprobation? Break not through, my soul, unto the Lord to gaze. But, if I be uncertain with respect to my state, let me exceedingly fear and quake.—Let me escape for my life. Arise, O my sleeping soul!—cry mightily to thy God, thy offered Saviour, that he may think on me, that I perish not. Let me give him no rest, till my salvation go forth as a lamp that burneth; till he say, Fear not,

I am with thee; be not dismayed, I am thy God.—I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.—But have I, in God's light, perceived, that he hath not appointed me to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ?—Let me, then, for ever admire,—for ever adore, his sovereign mercy and grace, that left not me to perish in my sin, when he passed by thousands,—nay, millions of my brethren in iniquity, whose crimes, he foresaw, would be fewer, and far less aggravated, than mine.—Many, O Lord my God, are thy gracious thoughts to me-ward: they are gone above all thought: when I speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.

CHAPTER 4:

Of God's Execution of His Decrees in his Works of Creation and Providence.

God's execution of his decrees includes his giving a being to all things in creation, and his upholding and governing that being in providence. His work of creation was chiefly performed by him, without making use of any instruments, in the first six days of time. His work of providence, in which he employs instruments, hath been, is, and constantly will be, carried on through all eternity. As his decrees had no beginning, the execution of them will have no end.

I. The world did not exist from eternity. The actual infinity of the duration of matter or any other finite being, is altogether inconceivable. The late invention of useful arts;—the short reach of history into past periods of but a few thousand years;—the room on the earth for many more inhabitants, though they have been

generally on the increase;—the remaining heights on the surface of it, notwithstanding they are gradually washed down by the rain, etc. prove that it cannot be eternal. But from Scripture we learn, that it had its beginning little more than 5780 years ago.—Common sense plainly dictates, that the world could not make itself, or be formed by a fortuitous concourse of atoms. But the Scripture informs us, that God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by the word of his power, created all things in six days,—in the most distinct and orderly manner,—all very good in themselves, and marvellously fitted to answer their respective ends and their manifold connections, Gen 1-2; Exod 20:11; Exod 31:17; Heb 1:2; Heb 11:3; Prov 3:19; Col 1:16; Rom 11:36; Job 9:8-9; Job 26:10-13; Job 38; Ps 24:1-2; Ps 33:6-9; Ps 95:1-6; Ps 102:25-26; Ps 104:3-6,19,24; Ps 89:11-12; Ps 74:16-17; Ps 8:1-4; Ps 119:73,89-91; Ps 145:8; Ps 146:5-6; Ps 100:3; Ps 148:1-6; Ps 136:5-9; Neh 9:5-6; Prov 30:4; Prov 16:4; Isa 40:12,26; Isa 42:5; Isa 43:5,15,21; Isa 44:24; Isa 45:7,11-12,18; Isa 48:13; Isa 51:12-13; Isa 64:8; Jer 10:11-16; Jer 5:22; Jer 22:5; Jer 31:35; Jer 32:17; Amos 4:12-13; Zech 12:1; John 1:1-3; Acts 17:24-26; Acts 4:24; 1 Pet 4:19; Rev 4:11; Heb 3:4.—and that angels in heaven, and men upon earth, were the principal creatures which he formed, Job 38:6-7; Ps 103:19-21; Ps 104:4; Gen 1:26-27; Gen 2:7,22; Gen 5:1.

Angels, properly so called, are spiritual creatures, which God formed for his particular attendants and ministers, Ps 104:4.—These hosts of heaven were created during the first six days, Gen 2:1; Exod 20:11. Before that, nothing but absolute eternity had place, Ps 90:2; Prov 8:23-24; Eph 1:4; Matt 25:34.—It is most probable, that they were created on the first day, as they praised God when he laid the foundations of the earth, Job 38:6-7.—Being creatures, they must be finite in their faculties, endowments, and presence, Mark 13:32.—none of them can be in different places at once, Dan 9:21-23; Dan 10:13-14,20. They are represented as now either in heaven or hell, Matt 18:10; Matt 22:30; 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6.

They are unembodied spirits, endowed by God with a very extensive understanding and an active will. And though they can assume

bodies of condensed air, in which they may appear to men, Gen 18:2; Gen 19:1,5; Gen 32:1, yet no body is ever personally united to their spiritual substance, Ps 104:4; Heb 1:7,14; Eph 6:12; Luke 24:39; Luke 20:35-36; Col 1:16.—They have a very extensive knowledge, natural, acquired, or revealed, 2 Sam 14:17; 2 Sam 19:27; 1 Cor 13:1-2; 2 Cor 11:5,14; 1 Kings 22:23; Dan 7-12; Zech 1-6; Rev 1:1; Eph 3:10; 1 Tim 3:15; 1 Pet 1:12.—Their knowledge resembles ours, in their manner of increasing and exercising it:—and being finite, it never extends to future events which God hath not revealed,—or to the depths of divine mysteries, Isa 41:22-23,26; Isa 46:10; Mark 13:32; Eph 3:10; 1 Pet 1:12.—nor to any immediate discernment of men's thoughts or inward dispositions, 1 Kings 8:39; Ps 139:2,4; Prov 16:2; 1 Sam 16:7; Jer 17:10; John 2:25; Acts 1:24; 1 Cor 2:11; Rev 2:23; 1 Chron 28:9; 1 Chron 29:17.—Their freedom of will, dependent on God, but now fixed with respect to the objects of its choice, is evidently marked in the voluntary obedience of holy angels, and the rebellion of bad ones against God their Maker, Ps 103:20; Matt 6:10; Luke 15:7; 1 Pet 1:12; John 8:44; Jude 6; 2 Pet 2:4; 1 Pet 5:8; 2 Cor 2:11; 2 Cor 11:3; 1 Kings 22:22.—The greatness of their power is manifest from express declarations of Scripture, Ps 103:20; 2 Thess 1:7; 2 Pet 2:11; Eph 6:12; Rev 18:1-2; from their many mighty exploits,—as slaying all the firstborn of Egypt in one night, Exod 12:29; Ps 135:8;—killing seventy thousand Israelites in a few hours, 1 Chron 21:14-15;—and an hundred and eighty-five thousand valiant Assyrians in one night, 2 Kings 19:35; Isa 37:36; Isa 10:34; 2 Chron 32:21. But it is finite, limited by God, Job 1:12; Job 2:6; Matt 8:31; Rom 8:31.—and cannot, by any immediate influence, bow men's hearts, Prov 16:1,9; Prov 21:1; Ps 110:3; Deut 30:6; though, by impressions and suggestions, they may much influence their conduct, Eph 2:2; Acts 5:3; Luke 22:3-4; John 13:2,27.—nor can it perform any thing properly miraculous, Ps 72:18; Ps 86:8; Ps 136:4; Exod 15:11.

Angels are exceedingly numerous, Ps 68:17; Deut 33:2; Matt 26:53; Jude 14; Dan 7:10; Rev 5:11; Mark 5:9.—Their being called armies, principalities, powers, thrones, dominions, etc. denotes their orderly arrangement, and probably also their difference of rank or station,

Gen 2:1; Col 1:16; Col 2:10; 1 Pet 3:22; Eph 1:22; Eph 6:12; Col 2:15. But what their order or ranks are, we know not;—nor whether the name Archangel be ascribed to any but Christ, 1 Thess 4:16; Jude 9; Dan 12:1; Rev 12:7.—who is often called an Angel, or the Angel-Jehovah, Gen 48:16; Acts 7:30; Isa 63:9; Mal 3:1; Exod 23:20-21; Job 33:23; Gen 16:7,9-11,13; Gen 18:2,17,22; Gen 22:11-12,15-16; Gen 32:24; Hos 12:3-4; Judg 2:1-4; Judg 6:11-12,14,20-23; Judg 13:3,9,13,16-22; Zech 1-6; Rev 7:2; Rev 8:3; Rev 10:1,5,9.

All the angels were created in an holy and happy state. 1. The infinite holiness and goodness of God require that every rational being be formed in perfect moral rectitude, unless an incumbent curse, which could not have place here, prevent it, Ps 119:68; Ps 104:31. 2. The finished creation was all very good, Gen 1:31.—But they were fallible.—Multitudes of them being chosen by God to be for ever happy in the enjoyment of himself, still retain their original knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, 1 Tim 5:21; Dan 7:10. Matt 26:53; Rev 5:11; Ps 68:17; Deut 33:2; Jude 14; Zech 14:5; Luke 2:13; Heb 12:22; Matt 25:31; Matt 6:10;—and are confirmed by him in their holy and happy state, Matt 18:10; Matt 22:30; but not in Christ, whose reconciliation by his death they need not, Eph 1:10; Col 1:20; and who is not their Mediator, but man's, Isa 9:6; Zech 9:9; Luke 2:11; 1 Tim 2:5; Heb 9:15; Heb 2:16.—Though heaven be their peculiar residence, in which they are perfectly blessed in the full and immediate enjoyment of God,—they are often employed on earth, to execute his purposes, Matt 6:10; Matt 18:10; Heb 1:14; Ps 34:7.—Their work is, 1. To worship God in high praises, suited to their nature and state, Ps 148:2; Ps 103:20-21; Isa 6:3; Heb 1:6; Luke 2:14; Rev 5:11. 2. To minister to, attend upon, and serve Jesus Christ as Mediator, Zech 1-6; Matt 4:11; Luke 22:43; Luke 2:10,13; Dan 7:10; Ps 68:17; Ps 47:5-6; 1 Tim 3:16; Acts 1:10; Phil 2:9-10; 1 Pet 3:22; Rev 1:1; Rev 22:16; Heb 1:14. 3. To minister to,—protect, admonish, deliver, instruct, rejoice over, comfort, and transport to heaven, the saints, and to separate them from the wicked at the last day, Heb 1:14; Ps 34:7; Ps 91:11; Gen 19:12-13; Gen 32:1; Acts 12:7-10; 1 Kings 19:5; Gen 24:7,40; Acts 10:5; Dan 7-12; Zech 1:9-14; Zech 2:3-4; Acts

27:23-24; Luke 15:10; Luke 16:22; Matt 13:41; Matt 24:31. 4. To restrain and punish the wicked, Dan 10:20; Gen 19:11; Exod 12:39; 2 Sam 24:15-16; 2 Kings 19:35; Acts 12:23; Ps 35:5-6.—But it doth not appear, that every particular saint hath a particular guardian angel, but angels in general, as directed by God, attend them, Ps 34:7; Heb 1:14. Nor will the Jews' notion of a guardian angel, if they had it, or an angel attending an apostle, be any proof, Acts 12:15.

But many angels, abusing the freedom of their will, by pride or some other sin, quickly fell from that holy and happy state in which they were created, 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6; 1 Tim 3:6.—They are real persons, not horrors of conscience. 1. Personal qualities, as wiles, subtilty, devising, etc. are ascribed to them, Eph 6:11-12; 2 Cor 2:11; 2 Cor 11:3,14. 2. They tempt, lie in wait for, and destroy men, Gen 3:1-8; 1 Kings 22:22-23; Matt 4:1-10; 1 Pet 5:8; John 8:44; James 4:7; 1 Cor 7:5; Zech 3:1-3; Ps 109:6. 3. They believe the existence of God, and tremble at it,—and shall be eternally punished, James 2:19; Matt 8:29; Matt 25:41.—Their punishment began with the first moment of their sinning, in their being expelled [from] heaven and shut up in chains of darkness; but they were not so confined to hell, as to hinder their acting on earth, 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6; 1 Kings 22:22-23; Job 1:7-12; Job 2:2-7; Ps 78:49; Matt 4:1-10; Matt 8:29,31; Matt 16:18; Eph 6:11-12,16; 2 Cor 2:11; 2 Cor 11:3,14; Luke 10:18; Rev 12:7-9; Rev 20:1-9.—It was increased by the incarnation, public ministrations, and death of Christ, by the spread of the gospel, and the erection of the Christian church, Gen 3:15; Col 2:15; Heb 2:14; 1 John 3:8; Matt 12:43; and will be completed at the last day, Matt 25:41; Matt 8:29; Rev 20:10,14.—In this world, these fallen angels, or devils, exert themselves to their utmost, 1. In taking away the truths of God's word from men, particularly in hearing the gospel, Mark 4:15. 2. In tempting, accusing, and molesting the saints, Matt 16:23; 1 Cor 7:5; 2 Cor 2:10-11; 2 Cor 11:3,14; Luke 22:31; Rev 12:9-10; Zech 3:1-3; 1 Thess 2:18; 2 Cor 12:7; 1 Pet 5:8; Rev 2:10; Rev 12:7. 3. In seducing the wicked, and retaining them in their corrupt and miserable estate, John 13:2,27; Acts 5:3; Matt 12:43.—leading them into error and delusion, 2 Cor 4:3-4; 2 Thess 2:9-10; Rev 20:3,8,10.—or entering

into familiar fellowship with them, Exod 22:18. Lev 19:31; Lev 20:6,27; Deut 13:1; Deut 18:10-11,14; Isa 8:19,21; Exod 7:11-12,22; Exod 8:7,18; Num 24:1; 1 Sam 28:7-9. 4. In entering into men's bodies to render them delirious, furious, etc. 1 Sam 16:14; Matt 4:25; Matt 9:32; Matt 12:22; Matt 15:22; Matt 17:15. Nor, 5. Do we know what influence they have in raising storms, producing diseases, etc. Eph 2:2; Job 1:19; Job 2:7.

Mankind was the other more excellent class of God's creatures, in which the angelical and animal natures were marvellously united, Gen 2:7; Eccles 12:7. Adam and Eve were the first of this class, and parents of all the rest, Acts 17:26; 1 Cor 15:45; Rom 5:12; Gen 2; Gen 5; Gen 10; 1 Chron 1.—The parts of their nature were, 1. An erect body of unparalleled comeliness, formed to point them out as lords of this lower world, under God, and qualified for the contemplation of heavenly things, Ps 139:14-15; Eccles 12:2-4; Isa 64:8; Gen 2:7,22.—2. A rational soul, one of which is united to every human body, Heb 4:12; 1 Thess 5:23; Gen 2:7; Matt 10:28; Matt 16:26; 1 Cor 6:20; Zech 12:1; Ps 22:20; Ps 35:3; Ps 19:7; Ps 25:1.—It is not in any respect corporeal, but spiritual, Eccles 12:7; Isa 57:16; Luke 24:39; Matt 10:28; Acts 17:29.—It is only in a figurative manner, that it is represented as seen, or as having hands, a tongue, or the like.

Human souls are not generated by parents, but immediately created by God. 1. The souls of Adam and Eve were not formed of dust, but immediately created by God, Gen 2:7. 2. God alone is represented as the father or former of souls, Eccles 12:7; Isa 57:16; Ps 33:15; Zech 12:1; Heb 12:9; Num 16:22; Acts 17:28-29. 3. Souls cannot perish along with generated bodies, Matt 10:28; 1 Cor 15:42,53; Luke 12:20; Acts 7:59-60.—4. Souls being indivisible, parents cannot communicate any part of theirs to their children in begetting them.—In Gen 46:26, and many other places, souls are put for human persons, including both soul and body; or for the body, Gen 46:22; Lev 19:28.—Nor can souls die with their bodies, but are immortal. 1. Being not constituted of parts, they are naturally incapable of dissolution, Matt 10:28. 2. Though their capacities be very extensive,

they make small improvements in this life, Prov 30:2-3; Ps 73:22; Phil 3:12. 1 Cor 13:12. 3. Men, chiefly saints, have a great desire after immortality, Luke 2:25-30; 2 Cor 5:1-8; 2 Cor 4:17-18; Phil 1:23. 4. God's justice requires the immortality of souls, that they may be punished, or rewarded, in a future state, Eccles 3:16-17. 5. Scripture represents souls as surviving those bodies with which they had been personally united, Matt 10:28; Eccles 12:7; Luke 23:43,46; Luke 16:22-23; Acts 7:59-60; Gen 2:7; 1 Cor 15:45; 1 Cor 15:18-19; 1 Pet 3:19; Rev 6:11; Matt 22:32; 2 Cor 5:1-8; Phil 1:21,23. 6. One soul is of inexpressibly more importance than the whole world, Matt 16:26.—It is only in respect of their body, that men's death is like to that of beasts, or renders them incapable to know things, or to praise God, Eccles 3:17,20; Eccles 9:5; Ps 30:9; Ps 115:17; Isa 38:18.—But, this immortal soul continues closely united to one person with its body, while it is capable of being its residence, Job 4:19; 2 Cor 5:1; Phil 1:23; 2 Pet 1:14; Acts 20:10.

Man was created after the image of God, in spiritual knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, his mind duly discerning every proper object, and his conscience, will, and affections awing or inclining him to perform every part of duty towards God or his fellow-creatures, Eccles 7:29; Gen 1:26-27; Gen 5:1; Col 3:10; Eph 4:24.—Even since the fall, men somewhat resemble God in the spirituality, intelligence, and immortality of their souls, Gen 9:6; James 3:9. But nothing of that original moral wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, in which the image of God properly consisted, is to be found in them, till it be restored in regeneration, Rom 3:23; Rom 8:7-8; Eph 5:8; Eph 2:1-3; Eph 4:23; Col 3:10; Col 2:11; 2 Cor 5:17; 2 Cor 3:18; Acts 26:18; 1 Pet 1:23; 2 Pet 1:4.—This moral conformity to God, though not essential to, or inseparable from, man's soul, is called natural, as it was concreated with, and in him, agreeable to his nature, necessary to answer God's end in making it, and to be conveyed along with it in the propagation of mankind, Gen 1:31; Eccles 7:29.—And the remaining resemblance of our soul to God in respect of its spiritual substance and agency is still natural, Rom 2:14; Rom 1:20; Gen 9:6; 1 Cor 11:7.—But our evil concupiscence, not being from God, cannot be

natural in the primary meaning of that word,—though our nature be now infected with it, in its very formation.—Having this moral image of God concreated with his whole soul, Adam had full ability to have believed on Christ, if he could have been exhibited to him in his innocent state, Eccles 7:29. And it is by this very image of God, imperfectly restored in them, that the elect are qualified to believe on, and receive Christ, in the day of his power, Eph 4:24; Col 3:10.

As God is immortal in, and of himself, 1 Tim 1:17; 1 Tim 6:16; Isa 57:15; and angels and human souls are immortal in, but not of themselves,—man was at first created without any tendency toward the separation of his soul from his body, or any tendency of his body towards death, as the means of that separation.

Adam's body, though made of dust, and capable of becoming mortal, had no seeds of death in it. And hence death, in Scripture, is always represented as the fruit and wages of sin, Rom 5:12; Rom 6:23; 1 Cor 15:21,56; Ezek 18:4; Gen 2:17; Gen 3:19; Job 24:19; John 8:44.—At his creation, man was constituted lord of all other creatures on earth,—to manifest which, all the animals, by God's direction, repaired to him, and received their names from him, Ps 8:6-7; Gen 1:28; Gen 2:19-20. But whether in that state, he had any allowance to kill any of them for food, we know not.—Immediately after the fall, animals were slain for sacrifices typical of Christ, the promised Saviour. But, till after the flood, we never find men warranted by God to eat their flesh, Gen 3:21; Gen 4:4; Gen 9:3-4.—But as spirituality of nature is retained by devils and unregenerate souls, and an immutable immortality of body awaits damned men after the resurrection,—and dominion over this lower world is partly retained by wicked men,—it is manifest, that the image of God, in which man was created, did not properly consist in these, but in moral perfection, Eph 4:24; Col 3:10; 2 Cor 3:18.

God's work of creation is to be improved in contemplating, as we have access, his creatures, in their almost infinitely diversified natures, qualities, and uses: as, light and celestial luminaries, in their

mysterious nature, extensive range, fit distances, rapid motion, and powerful influence:—Air, fixed and unfixed, inflammable and uninflammable; in its fluidity, weight, elasticity, and usefulness:—Water, in its fluidity, plenitude, dispersion, saltness or freshness, penetration, and fitness for the formation of rains, dews, marine productions, and promoting of trade:—Earths, stones, metals, moulds, in their adhesion, divisibility, forms, colours, and uses:—Vegetables, in their structure, growth, curious parts, manifold uses, and almost infinitely diversified forms:—Animals, in their curious parts, their connected structure, life, dependence on food, motions, instincts, fitness for self-preservation, beautiful forms, melodious or awful sounds, exquisite but diversified taste:—and along with these, the unbounded divisibility of matter, laws of attraction, gravitation, electricity, magnetism, and of air, fixed and unfixed, muscular motion, nervous influence;—rational spirits, in their power of thinking, willing, recollecting, sociality or union with bodies, as proofs of the existence and manifestations of the mysterious nature and manifold perfections of God, even our God in Christ, Rom 11:36.

2. In viewing them as memorials of the operations of God, and as heart-awing means of impressing our minds with his presence, observation, and influence, Jer 32:27; Ps 75.

3. In viewing multitudes of creatures, as instituted emblems for representing the Most High, in his persons, perfections, stations, relations, and operations, in the work of our redemption, Hos 12:9-10.

4. In considering all creatures as formed in order to, and fit for subserving God's principal and most glorious work of redemption, Rom 8:28.

5. In taking out a particular new-covenant claim to them all in Christ, as means of our present discernment of the glory, and tasting the goodness of God in him, and as pledges and earnest of our eternal enjoyment of him as our all in all, 1 Cor 3:21-23; Rev 21:17.

6. In, as a consequence of all this, using them as means of exciting us to an habitual meditation on, admiring, adoring, and praising him as our own God and portion, and living to his glory in this world as his lower temple or sanctuary, Ps 104:1-34; Ps 148.

7. In a due regard to all creatures, as the fellow production of God, even our God.

II. God, by a continued work of providence, upholds and governs all things which he created.

1. As he is infinitely more perfect than they, and hath brought them into existence, he hath an undoubted right, and all-sufficient fitness, to uphold and govern them. Having infinite knowledge to discern all their qualities and connections,—infinite wisdom to conduct them to their proper ends,—infinite power to uphold and manage them, notwithstanding all their strength, mischievousness, jarring passions, instincts, or immediate aims,—infinite holiness and equity to prevent culpable partiality or impropriety in his conduct,—infinite patience to bear with offenders, while it can be for his glory and their good,—and omnipresence, rendering him equally near to each of them, he cannot but be infinitely fit for this work.

2. His own perfections require him to uphold and govern all his creatures. His independency requires him to hold all things in perpetual and immediate dependence on himself. His wisdom requires him to make all his creatures answer the ends for which he formed them. His goodness requires him never to forsake the work of his hands. Even his equity forbids, that they should be brought into being, and then left to shift for themselves.

3. Their very nature obliges them to a constant dependence on God. They cannot subsist a moment without new support from his infinite power, wisdom, and goodness. And having formed them to be receivers from, not givers to him, his providence must supply them according to their necessities, as far as his own glory, the chief end of their creation, can permit.

4. The regular motions of the heavenly bodies,—the regular ebbing and flowing of the sea,—the regular returns of day and night, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest,—the periodical retirements of many animals to places suitable to the season, their sagacity in defending or providing for themselves, and in forming their lodgings, hatching or nourishing their young,—the near approaches of those animals which are useful to mankind, and retirement of hurtful ones into woods and deserts, deep or distant places of the sea;—the multiplication of the more useful animals, while noxious ones, which are naturally more prolific, are not suffered to abound;—the astonishing variety observable in animals, vegetables, and other

things, seemingly similar;—the amazing diversification of men's faces, voices, tempers, and forms of writing, taken as connected with the order and safety promoted by it;—the constant proportion of men and women answerable to their circumstances;—the frequent counterplotting of man's most sagacious projects, and defeating his most forcible and promising attempts;—the many miraculous counteractions of the ordinary laws of nature;—and a thousand other like actions, irrefragably manifest a Divine Providence managing the world. 5. The exact correspondence of thousands, I had almost said of every event, relative to persons, families, or nations, and especially relative to Christ and his church, with the predictions of Scripture, plainly demonstrate, that God, the predictor, hath the upholding and government of all things in his own hand. 6. The Scriptures no less plainly declare that God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by the agency of his own will, upholds and governs all his creatures, John 5:17; Heb 1:3; Col 1:17; Job 33:4; Ps 104:30; Dan 4:34-35; Rom 11:36; Eph 1:11; Rev 4:11; Isa 41:4; Isa 45:5-6; Isa 46:4,10-13; Job 37:6; Job 12:9; Job 38-41; Ps 8-9; Ps 19:1-6; Ps 48; Ps 65-66; Ps 68; Ps 78; Ps 103-107; Ps 114; Ps 135-136; Ps 145-148; Ezek 9; Ezek 20; etc.

In this work of providence God upholds and governs all his creatures, and all their actions, Heb 1:3; Rom 11:36; Eph 1:11, Col 1:17; Isa 46:10; Rev 4:11. 1. All irrational creatures—animate or inanimate, great or small, Neh 9:6; Ps 36:6; Ps 104:19-21; Dan 4:35; Job 37—41; Ps 8; Ps 104-107; Ps 136; Ps 145-148; Hos 2:18,21-22; Ezek 34:25; Matt 6:28-33; Matt 10:28-31; Exod 8:16-17; Exod 10:12; Deut 28:28; Joel 2:20,25. Hence stars and rivers fought as his troops, in destroying Jabin's army, Judg 5:20-21; frogs, flies, and lice, plagued the Egyptian oppressors of his people, Exod 8-10; serpents punished the murmuring Israelites, Num 21; hornets drove out the wicked Canaanites, Exod 23:28; mice plagued the profane and murderous Philistines, 1 Sam 5:5; bears and lions executed his vengeance on the profane scoffers of Bethel, the disobedient prophets, and idolatrous Samaritans, 2 Kings 2:24; 2 Kings 17:25; 1 Kings 13:24; 1 Kings 20:36; unclean ravens provided pure food for his favourite, Elijah, 1 Kings 17:6; pity to cattle partly moved him to

dry up the waters of the flood, and to spare the city of Nineveh, Gen 8:1; 1 John 4:11. 2. All reasonable creatures,—holy angels, Ps 103:18-21; Ps 104:4; Heb 1:14.—fallen angels, Luke 22:31-32; 1 Kings 22:21-23. Job 1:12; Job 2:6; Ps 78:49; Matt 8:28-32; Matt 12:27-28; Matt 4:24-25; Rev 2:10; Rev 12:7; Rev 13:7; Rev 20:2,7-10;—men, and all their members, are written in this book of providential care, Exod 32:32; Ps 69:28; Ps 139:16; Ps 33:13-15; Prov 8:15-16; Prov 16:1,9; Prov 21:1; Dan 2:21-22,44,47; Dan 4:35; Job 12:10; Acts 17:28. He governed the fate of Jacob, a very mild man, and his offspring, Gen 28:13-15; of Ishmael and Esau, very wild men, and theirs, Gen 16:12; Gen 25:16,23;—the concerns of Jesus Christ, God-man, and his church, which is his body, Isa 42:1-7; Isa 50:4; Isa 49:1-12; Isa 53; Rom 8:28-39; 1 Cor 3:21-22; 2 Cor 4:17; Heb 13:5.—By his providence he managed the haughty and obstinate Egyptians, Exod 1-14; Exod 18:11; the oppressed and dispirited Israelites, Gen 15:13-18; the proud and atheistical Syrians, 1 Kings 19:15; the powerful and furious Assyrians, Chaldeans, Persians, Greeks, and Romans, Isa 10; Isa 30; Isa 33; Isa 37; Jer 25:1; Jer 51; Dan 2-11; Zech 6; the savage Tartars and Turks, Ezek 38-39; Rev 7-9; Rev 20; the crafty, wicked Papists, Dan 7; Dan 11:36-43; Rev 9-19;—nay, the whole earth, Isa 24; Ps 22:27-31.—His providence extends to men's birth, Job 10:3,8-12; Job 33:4; Ps 139:14-16; Ps 22:10; Ps 71:6;—their manner of life, Gen 15:13; Gen 16:12; Deut 30:9,19-20; Deut 32:10; Job 12:10; Ps 56:8; Ps 139:2; Ps 116:9,12; Ps 71:17-18; Prov 22:2; Prov 16:9; Isa 46:3-4; Matt 10:29-30; and their death, Job 14:5; John 7:4; Ps 39:5; 1 Sam 26:10; Jer 34:4-5; Jer 22:19; Jer 36:30. 3. All the actions or motions of his creatures, Isa 45:6-7; Lam 3:38; Amos 3:2,6-7.—1. All natural motions of inanimate, or actions of animate creatures, Ps 74:16-17; Ps 136:8-9; Ps 104; Gen 8:21-22; Isa 55:9-10; Jer 31:35-36; Matt 5:46; Job 37-41. Hence plants fixed between a fruitful and barren soil direct all their roots toward the former,—and fishes and fowls, at stated seasons, travel and station themselves to their own or mankind's advantage:—2. All preternatural motions. By his influence the waters overflowed the earth, and after they had drowned the ungodly inhabitants, were dried up, Gen 6-8;—Sodom was destroyed by fire and brimstone, Gen 19:24;—Egypt was plagued, and the Red

Sea and Jordan divided, Exod 7-14; Ps 75:14-15; Ps 89:10; Ps 78:12-14; Ps 77:14-20; Ps 114; Ps 136; Ps 135; Ps 105-106; Ps 78; Josh 3-4; 2 Kings 2.— manna and quails were rained about the Hebrew camp, and water brought from flinty rocks, Exod 16-17; Num 11; Num 20; Ps 78:15-28;—the earth swallowed up Korah and his companions, Num 16;—the thunders roared and lightnings flashed at Sinai, Exod 19-20; Exod 24:16-17;—the sun and moon stood still, Josh 10:12-13; Hab 3:11;—the sun went backward ten degrees, Isa 38:8;—a drought of forty-two months scorched the land of Israel, 1 Kings 17-18; James 5:17;—ravens, which feed on carrion, regularly provided Elijah with clean flesh, 1 Kings 17:6;—a whale swallowed up Jonah, and after three days landed him in a proper place, Jon 1:17; Jon 2:10;—an outrageous fiery furnace burnt the bonds of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, while it did not singe their clothes or hair, Dan 3:19-37;—hungry lions attended Daniel a whole night, without hurting him in the least, but furiously devoured his accusers, Dan 6:22-24.—3. All accidental motions, as the slipping of an axe-head,—falling of a lot,—or fixing of a random arrow in the joint of a coat of mail, etc. Exod 21:13; Deut 19:5; Prov 16:33; 1 Kings 22:17,28,34; Ezek 21:19-27; Jer 51:16; Ps 147:15-18; Matt 10:29; Gen 22:8,13.—4. All free actions, which depend on men's will, Prov 16:1,9; Prov 20:24; Prov 21:1; Jer 10:23; Phil 2:13; Gen 24:7; Gen 45:5,7; Gen 50:20; Isa 46:10-11; Isa 10:5-7; Acts 4:28.—5. All civil actions, even the management of armies in the hottest battles, Isa 10:5-7; Ps 47:9; Jer 36:19; Prov 8:15-16; Isa 10; Isa 13; Jer 46-51; Mic 2:13.—6. All moral actions, good or evil, Isa 26:12; 1 Cor 4:7; Phil 2:13; James 1:17; 2 Cor 3:5; Exod 10:1; Deut 11:3,6; 2 Sam 12:11-12; 2 Sam 16:10; 2 Sam 24:1; 1 Kings 11:14,26; 1 Kings 22:22; Ps 81:12; Isa 6:9-10; Isa 29:14; Jer 4:10; Ezek 14:9; Ezek 20:25-26; Rom 1:24-28; Rom 9:17; Rom 11:8,32; 2 Thess 2:10-12.—In respect of his operation about these creatures and their actions, his providence may be distinguished into his natural, miraculous, moral, and peculiar providence.

God's natural dispensation of providence includes, 1. His upholding all creatures in their existence and particular forms, and in their powers of action, motion, or passion,—and in the actions or motions

themselves, Job 12:10; Heb 1:3; Col 1:17; Rev 4:11; Neh 9:6; Ps 36:5-6; Ps 145:15-16; Ps 147:8-9; Matt 6:26-30. 2. His government of them,—which includes, 1. His fixing certain laws or rules, called ordinances of heaven, covenant with day and night, or the like, according to which he ordinarily regulates his influence, Jer 31:35-36; Jer 33:25; Ps 119:90-91. 2. His cooperating with, and directing the motions of his creatures, according to these stated rules and his own purpose, Gen 8:22; Gen 9:11; Isa 10:15; Jer 10:23; Ps 74:16-17; Ps 115:3; Acts 17:28; 1 Cor 12:6; Eph 1:11; Isa 46:10-11; Dan 4:35.—In this he applies his creatures to act,—and on such particular objects,—and in such a manner, Isa 10:5; Ezek 21:21-23; Job 1:12; Job 2:6; Acts 1:26; Exod 21:12-13; 1 Kings 22:34; and he accurately directs them to their proper ends, Prov 19:21; Prov 16:1,9; Prov 21:1; Gen 49:10.

In his ordinary managements of providence, God allows second causes to have their full influence, and acts in, and by them agreeably to their nature as inferior agents or instruments in his hand:—But his cooperating influence or concurrence is not merely general, fixing a particular impression upon second causes, and then leaving them to move and act of their own accord; but it is particular with every particular creature, and producing every particular motion or act, in its particular form. 1. The Scripture represents God as exerting particular influences,—in giving victories, Ps 33:16; Ps 18:43; Ps 144:1;—in giving direction or satisfaction, Ps 13:1-5;—in sending Joseph into Egypt, Gen 45:5,7; Gen 50:20;—in employing the Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Persians, as his rod, axe, hammer, and host, Isa 10:5,15; Isa 13:14; Jer 51:22-23. And sometimes his terror, falling on their enemies, procured victory or deliverance for the Jews, Judg 7:14-22; 2 Chron 14:11-14; 2 Chron 20:22-23; 2 Kings 7:6. How absurd to imagine, that all these were owing to impressions made upon certain atoms, at the creation! 2. If God only made a general impression of whatever kind on things, at the first, all things must now be carried on by necessity of nature, independent of his will;—and either that impression hath necessarily produced sin in angels and men; or they, in sinning, have counteracted his almighty

influence impressed. 3. Such a general concourse exempts his creatures from all continued dependence upon him in their operations, while they are allowed to depend upon him in their existence, Acts 17:28; Prov 16:1,9; Prov 21:1.—But concerning this divine cooperation, it must be observed, 1. It is not any power transmitted from God to his creatures, in order to move them; but an agency of his own will, by which he makes second causes to act, when and how he pleases. 2. The acting of God, and that of his creature upon which he acts, are not separable, or different, but he makes it to act, not by its own independent energy, but by the influence of his will. 3. No creatures are left to determine the influence of God's concourse with them, as they please, as the nature of the objects upon which the sun shines, determines his influence to melt, harden, scorch, or fructify them, etc.—If they were thus left to determine it, his agency would be subjected to theirs, and they would do more in an action than he did;—he could be no more the author of good than of evil; no decree could be certain of execution, or any prediction, promise, or threatening, of fulfilment. 4. The agency of God's will in order of nature, not of time, must always precede that of his creature, in every motion or act, Rom 11:36.

God's miraculous providence is that in which his agency surpasses, or is contrary to the influence of second causes, and stated rules of his common operation;—as in stopping the course of the sun,—dividing seas,—raising dead persons,—or giving sight to such as were born blind, etc.—God does not exert more power in working miracles, than in common providence, but merely suspends his ordinary influence, or counteracts the natural or common influence of second causes.—And herein no creature can be any more than a moral instrument of declaring the will of God, by some word or token, that such a miracle should be wrought.—If we consider the infinite wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, truth, and majesty of God, we may, in real miracles, expect, 1. That the moral instruments will make no fantastic or absurd application to superior powers. In working miracles, Christ and his prophets and apostles never did any thing but what was exceedingly simple, as pronouncing

a few proper words, touching the objects, stretching out a rod towards it, etc. which imported an authoritative declaration of God's will. 2. As it would be unworthy of God to perform an almighty operation for no, or even an insignificant end, every miracle may be expected to answer some very important end. 3. As it would be unworthy of God's wisdom, goodness, and infinite Majesty to work miracles merely to manifest his strength, they must also tend to vindicate his holiness, equity, goodness, and truth;—and hence none bid fair to be ordinarily moral instruments in working them, but men sound in their religious principles, and holy and virtuous in their practice. 4. That the miraculous operations shall be so many and so openly wrought, that both friends and enemies will have full opportunity to try their reality.—Counterfeits of miracles may be performed, 1. By the powers of second causes unknown to common people, as in electricity, natural magic, etc. 2. By deceitful slight of hand, which imposes on the sight of the beholders. 3. By diabolical impressions on matter, or on men's mind, making them think or speak in an uncommon manner.—Of these kinds are the boasted miracles of papists. But those of the Egyptian magicians were the most extraordinary. Nor can we certainly tell how they were wrought:—whether by some Satanical perturbation of the air, imposing on the sight of the spectators;—or by Satan's moving the rods in the manner of serpents, and at the same time perturbing the air, to make them seem real serpents;—or by indiscernibly removing the rods, and placing real serpents in their stead.—But it is certain, that these magicians' apparently-transformed rods were swallowed up by the really transformed one of Aaron, and that their other pretended miracles did not remove but enlarge the punishment of their country.

God's moral providence is that by which he manages the morally good or evil dispositions and actions of his reasonable creatures. It, in general, includes, 1. His establishing for them a law to be the rule and standard of their disposition and behaviour towards him, themselves, or their fellow creatures, correspondent with his perfections and will. 2. His influence on them relative to their good

and evil dispositions, thoughts, words, and deeds.—This influence, though infallibly efficacious, never interferes with the real liberty of rational creatures. 1. Except in miracles, God always acts on second causes answerably to their nature. 2. The liberty of rational beings doth not lie in any indifferent bent towards good and evil; otherwise neither God nor men, nor angels, ever did, or can have it; but it lies in a power of acting with knowledge and inclination, without being forced by any other. 3. Though God often bend their will to that which he wills and commands, he never puts any force upon the will of any. Nay, indeed the will cannot properly be forced.

In good actions, 1. God upholds men's natural powers of acting, and the gracious dispositions which he hath implanted in them. 2. He presents to them objects, which are calculated to move them to the good action which he intends they should perform. 3. He removes or restrains such objects or influences as, he knows, would hinder that action. 4. By his word he commands and encourages them to act in such a particular good matter and manner. 5. By his spirit he influences their heart and corrects their indisposition. 6. He bends their mind and affections toward the reasons, which enforce the good action. 7. He makes them feel a peculiar pleasure in such a particular form of acting. Thus, in almsgiving, 1. He furnishes a man with somewhat to give. 2. He presents a needy object to him. 3. He restrains such thoughts as might make him overlook or conceive harshly of that needy object. 4. He impresses on his mind the scriptural exhortations and motives to charity. 5. He powerfully excites his pity and compassion. 6. He fills his mind with pleasure in resolving on or bestowing his alms.

In sinful actions God permits them; and herein, 1. He forbears doing that which would hinder them:—he doth not deprive the actors of life, of sight, of reason, or the like, as Exod 14:28; Gen 19:11; 2 Kings 6:18-19;—he doth not oppose superior force to their inclination or power to commit the sinful deed:—he does not remove out of their way or hand the occasions or instruments of such a sin:—he does not stir up in their mind such thoughts of the wickedness and danger of

the sin as would deter them from it: he does not cure their ignorance by spiritual instruction, nor their malice by renewing their heart, nor their sloth and unconcern, by awakening fear and care in their soul. 2. As, in every rational act, there is something natural, moral, and influential; so in every sinful act there is something natural, which renders it the opposite of nothing,—a moral disconformity to God's law, and an influential tendency to hurt the agent or others.—In the first and last of these, God actually concurs by his cooperating influence; he produces what is natural in the act with which the sinful disconformity to his law is connected;—and he makes that act tend to the hurt of the actor, if not also of its object. 3. He excites in men's mind thoughts which, though good or indifferent in themselves, their inward corruptions improve to a wrong purpose. Thus Joseph's brethren improved their remembrance of his father's love to him, and of his dreams, to inflame their hatred and rage against him, Gen 37;—and the Jewish rulers improved their thoughts of Christ's success and esteem among the people, and of his raising Lazarus from the dead, to animate and increase their malice and fury against him, John 11:47-57. 4. He, in a holy manner, lays before them opportunities of sinning. Thus the Babylonish garment and wedge of gold were laid before Achan, Josh 7:21. Bathsheba washing herself before David, 2 Sam 11:2.—This presentation of the occasion or object neither binds, nor inclines, nor forces men to commit sin;—nor doth God present them for promoting it, but for the glory of his own perfections,—and frequently to punish men for some former wickedness, or to discover their wicked inclinations to themselves or others.

Though, in consequence of such permission, the sinful act infallibly happen, the sinfulness of it is not in the least chargeable on God. For, 1. He influences his rational creatures precisely according to the freedom of their own will. 2. Though he produce that which is natural in the act with which their sinfulness is connected, yet that sinfulness of the act or disconformity to his law proceeds wholly from their self-corrupting or self-corrupted abuse of the inward freedom of their will. Thus hatred, as a natural affection, is good, and from

God; but the direction of that hatred in opposition to God himself is sinful, and proceeds not from his permission or precourse, but from the corrupted disposition of him that hates him. 3. Sin ought carefully to be considered as not only an offence to God and breach of his law, but also as a just punishment of preceding sinfulness. It is in the latter respect that God's providence hath a most remarkable concern in the permission of it, in blinding the mind, and hardening the heart of sinners, Rom 11:7-8; 2 Cor 4:3-4; 2 Cor 3:14; 2 Thess 2:9-12; Isa 63:17; Exod 4:21; Exod 7:3,14,22.—In blinding men's minds, 1. God permits them to conceive such thoughts as occasion or lead to error and mistake. 2. He gives them up to the seduction of Satan and his instruments, 1 Kings 22:21-23; 1 Cor 4:3-4; 2 Thess 2:9-12; Acts 5:3; John 13:2,27. 3. Outward providences appear to enforce their temptations, Ps 73:2-15; Jer 12; Jer 20; Job 1-3; 2 Thess 2:9-12; Rev 11:2; Rev 13. 4. They are left to themselves to abuse, to contrary purposes, every thing which might tend to their instruction or conversion, John 6:64-66; John 10:30-40; Acts 7:54; Acts 22:22; Acts 26:24. 5. The powerful working of their inward wickedness disposes them to believe or not believe things, as best answers to promote its reign in their heart, Jer 43; Jer 44:6. They take all the outward prosperity which they meet with in their evil course, as a token that God is well enough pleased with them in it, Rom 2:4; Deut 32:15-16; Jer 44:17-18. 7. If they meet with outward calamities, they either overlook them, or view them as produced by mere natural causes, Isa 26:11; 2 Chron 28:22; Jer 5:3; Isa 1:5.—In hardening men's heart, 1. God justly withholds his grace, which would effectually soften it, Hos 4:17; Rev 22:11. 2. He withdraws that common grace, or even in part that special grace, which had once softened it, Isa 63:17. 3. He permits their sinful lusts to prevail and rage without any remarkable restraint, Ps 81:11-12. 4. He permits them to fall among wicked companions, who, by their example, instruction, or influence, encourage them in sin, Judg 11:4; 1 Kings 12:10-11; Prov 9:6; Prov 13:20; Prov 28:19,24. 5. He heaps outward favours upon them, which occasionally increase their pride, atheism, and sinful unconcern, Luke 12:16-20; Luke 16:19; Job 21:14-15; Ezek 16:49; Deut 32:15; Luke 18:24-25; Ps 73:5-9; Isa 5:11-12; Hos 13:6. 6.

He either forbears to afflict them, or afflicts them very slightly; or the time, manner, or instrument of their afflictions is such, that their corrupt heart despises them, rages against them, or improves them as excitements to sin, Isa 1:5; Jer 5:3; 2 Kings 6:33; 2 Chron 28:22. 7. By Satanical or other influence, their conscience is restrained from reproving them, or is so ignorant or biassed, that it calls evil good and good evil, Gen 6:3; Hos 4:17; Isa 5:18-23; Isa 30:10; Ezek 13:10,22; Mal 2:17; Mic 2:11.

The above account of God's blinding men's mind and hardening their heart, may be illustrated from the instance of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. 1. God, by exalting him to an high station, afforded him an opportunity of remarkable pride. 2. He withheld from him that gracious influence, which would have humbled his heart, and rendered him obedient and willing to let the Israelites go. 3. He sent him peremptory orders to allow them to depart, which, on account of his claim to them, and of the messengers he sent to demand their liberty, and perhaps also on account of their throng of work, tended to irritate the spirit of the proud king. 4. His mandate was delivered in such a form as could lead Pharaoh to reason upon it in this manner: "If the God of the Israelites be more powerful than I, why should he request my dismissal of his people? And if he be weaker, why should I submit to his will, in a point so exceedingly detrimental to my kingdom?" 5. A biassed consideration of the messengers, who made the demand in God's name, tempted him to suspect that the Israelites were too idle, or cherished some superstitious whim, if not a seditious design.—6. The first miracles which Moses and Aaron wrought were but objects of sight, and did no hurt. 7. The magicians' ready counterfeits of these first miracles, natively tempted him to look on the whole as a diabolical farce, and Moses and Aaron as jugglers. 8. The distinguished safety of the Israelites and their property under the several plagues inflicted on his kingdom, tended to irritate his proud spirit. 9. The easy, sudden, and often repeated removals of the plagues, tempted his proud, carnal, and wicked heart to despise both plagues and deliverances. 10. The miracle which his magicians could not counterfeit, being seemingly more insignificant

than those which they had, might tempt him to think that Jehovah could inflict no worse plagues than had already happened. 11. Moses's peremptory refusal to leave a single beast belonging to his enslaved nation, when he granted them allowance to go off themselves, was very provoking to his proud spirit. 12. The Israelites carrying off the Egyptians' gold and silver, strongly tempted his haughty and covetous heart to pursue them. 13. Their travelling to the southeast, where they were miserably entangled by mountains and seas, instead of going straight to Canaan, tempted him and his servants to think them under no divine, nay, no rational direction; and so might be easily forced back to their servitude, which was exceedingly profitable to his kingdom. 14. Meanwhile, God all along gave him up to the influence of his own corrupt lusts,—to the temptations of Satan, and, no doubt, to the remonstrances of wicked courtiers, who could suggest a multitude of reasons against his allowing the Israelites to leave the country.

2. God limits sinful dispositions and actions, Ps 76:10. 1. In their degree, that they are so sinful and no more,—so vigorous and no more, etc. Gen 20:6; Jer 3:5. 2. In their extent and influence, that it reaches so far and no farther, Isa 10:32; Isa 37:29; Ps 76:10; Rev 20:2. 3. In their duration, permitting men to continue them just so long, and no longer, Gen 6:3; Gen 15:13,16; Dan 7:25; Rev 11:2; Rev 13:5.—He thus limits men's sinning, 1. By withholding from them an ability or opportunity to commit particular sins, by laying them under poverty, sickness, or the like, 2 Chron 21:16-19; 2 Chron 16:10,12. 2. By cutting them off by death in the beginning or progress of their sinful course, 1 Kings 16; 1 Kings 22; 2 Kings 1-16; 2 Kings 24; 2 Kings 25. 3. By severely correcting or punishing them for their sin, Job 34:31-32. 4. By powerfully convincing them of the evil and danger of it, Judg 2; Judg 10:5. By converting and changing their heart, Acts 2; Acts 9; 1 Cor 6:9-11.

3. God overrules the sinful dispositions and actions of men and devils, 1. To his own glory, in making them occasions for the manifestation of his patience, goodness, or revenging justice,—and

especially in rendering them occasions of promoting redemption-work, in which all his perfections are glorified to the highest, Ps 76:10; Rom 5:20-21. 2. To the good of his people, in making them, or the troubles procured by them, means of awakening, convincing, converting, humbling, reforming, or sanctifying them, Rom 7:14-24; Heb 3:12-13; Heb 12:29; Isa 64:6; 1 Pet 2:1; Heb 1:14,25,28; Heb 10:24-25; 1 Cor 5:1-5; Rom 5:20-21 with Rom 6:1-2.

By God's peculiar providence, we mean that which is especially exercised about Christ, as man and mediator, and his church. That these are a peculiar object of divine providence is manifest: 1. All God's dispensations of providence promote the glory of his grace in Christ, whose fulness the church is, Eph 1:10,22-23. 2. All power in heaven and on earth is lodged in the hand of Christ, in order to be exercised for the good of his church, Eph 2:22; Matt 11:27; Matt 28:18; John 3:35; John 5:22. 3. The perfections of God are most gloriously displayed in Christ and his church, Eph 3:10,21. She is God's hill, Ps 2:6; Ps 87:1; his throne, Jer 17:14; the firmament of his power, Ps 150:1; his academy for instruction, Eph 3:10; Eph 4:11-13; Ps 147:19-20; his temple or house, Eph 2:20-22; 1 Pet 2:5; Heb 3:6.—She is, as it were, Christ, the rose of Sharon spread,—Christ furnished with members,—in whom there is glory to God in the highest, 1 Cor 12:12; Eph 3:21; Luke 2:10-14; 2 Cor 4:6. 4. The church hath a more near and dear relation to God through Christ, than any thing else, being his bride, his sister, his friend, his flock, his jewels, his rest, his garden, his portion, etc. Isa 54:5; Isa 62:4-5; Song 5:1-2; Ezek 16:8-14; Ezek 34; Ezek 36-37; John 10; Mal 3:17; Ps 132:13-14; Song 4:12-16; Song 6:2; Deut 32:9; Ps 135:4. 5. God hath a peculiar esteem of, love to, and delight in his church, as connected with Christ, Isa 45:15,19; Isa 41:14; Isa 43:4,15,21; Isa 44:1,2,6; Isa 62:3-5; Jer 32:39-42; Ps 87:1-2; Ps 147:11; Ps 149:4; Ps 132:13-14; Zeph 3:17. Notwithstanding unnumbered sinful blemishes and provocations, he loves one saint more than all the world besides, Isa 57:15-18; Isa 66:2; Gen 6:8. 6. He is peculiarly present with Christ and his church, 2 Cor 5:19; Rev 14:1; Ezek 48:35; Hag 2:4-5. 7. The prayers of Christ and his people have a peculiar influence in forming the dispensations

of his providence, John 11:42; Zech 1:12-15; Rev 8:3-5; Rev 11:3-6; Isa 45:11; Ps 106:23; Ezek 22:30; James 5:16-17. 8. Under the management of God's providence, all things work together for the glory of Christ and the good of his church, Rom 8:28.—For this purpose the world is so long continued in its present form, Acts 17:30; 2 Pet 3:9; and by the presence of Christ and his church in it, it is preserved from utter corruption and ruin, Prov 10:25; Ps 75:3; Isa 6:13; Isa 65:8.—All natural things and all miraculous events are directed to, and promote this glory of Christ and good of his people, Hos 2:18-23; Exod 3-20; Num 11-12; Num 16-17; Num 20; Josh 6; Josh 10; Hab 3; 1 Kings 17-18; 2 Kings 1-7; 2 Kings 13; John 2:11; Matt 4:24-25; Matt 11:5.—All the interests, and the whole fate of nations, in every age and place, are directed to, and really promote this end; though, by reason of our ignorance, we cannot distinctly trace their tendency to it, 2 Kings 9:6-7; 1 Kings 19:15-18; Isa 44-45; Jer 46-51; Ezek 21:27; Hag 2:6-8; Rev 6-21.—All good things of importance are given to the church as connected with Christ;—all the oracles and ordinances of God, Ps 147:19-20; Rom 3:2; Eph 4:11-13; 1 Cor 12:28.—all the gifts and common graces of wicked men, Balaam, Judas, Demas, etc. Num 22-24; John 6:70; Matt 10; Philem 24.—all true and spiritual gifts and graces, Col 1:25; 1 Cor 12; 1 Cor 14; Eph 1:3.—all holy angels and men, saints, ministers, Heb 1:14; Ps 34:7; 1 Cor 3:22; 1 Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11-13.—All bad things in the world are made to promote the honour of Christ and welfare of the church;—all commotions and destructive judgments are made subservient for relieving, awakening, purging, or preparing for the spread of the church, Ps 29:10-11; Isa 46:11-13; Hag 2:6-7; Rev 11:12-13; Rev 16; Rev 18-21; Ezek 20:36-37; Ezek 21:27; Hos 2:6-7,14; Dan 11:35; Isa 27:9; Mic 6:14; Zeph 3:8-20; Gen 49:5; Deut 33:10.—Contentions in the church are made means of fixing men in the truth, or of spreading the knowledge of it, Acts 15:36-37, and persecution is useful for purging or extending the church, Jer 24:5-7; Phil 1:12; Acts 8:3-4; Acts 13; Acts 16-19.—Wicked men are made of great use to the church, 1. In spreading the knowledge of divine truths. By the influence of Ptolemy, king of Egypt, or some renegade Jews, part of the Old Testament was translated into Greek, a widespread language,

to prepare the nations for the spread of the gospel.—Augustus's enrolment of his subjects, Herod's consultation, and his murder of the babes, solemnly marked Bethlehem the place, and that, the date of our Saviour's birth, Luke 2:1-7; Matt 2:1-18. 2. In protecting or providing for the church or her members, Gen 12:10; Isa 16:3-4; Rev 12:16. 3. In advancing some of her principal friends and pillars to great power and influence.—Thus Saul and Abner promoted David, 1 Sam 16; 2 Sam 3; 2 Sam 5. Pharaoh promoted Joseph, Gen 41. Another Pharaoh and his daughter, Moses, Exod 2. Nebuchadnezzar and Darius, Daniel, Dan 1-6. Ahasuerus, Esther and Mordecai, Esther 2; Esther 8. Artaxerxes, Ezra and Nehemiah, Ezra 7; Neh 2. 4. In delivering and enriching the church, Isa 45:3-4,13; Isa 14:11-13. 5. In purging the church of her corrupt members, by the terrors of persecution, or even by sucking the blood of saints till she be cured, 1 John 2:19; Isa 27:9; Isa 31:9; Ezek 20:38.—Even devils are made to work together for the good of the church. By taking possession of such multitudes in the time of Christ and his apostles, they occasioned multitudes of miraculous confirmations of the gospel and Messiahship of Christ. By entering into the Gadarene swine, they justified God's law, which prohibited the eating of these animals, and punished the transgressors of it,—they manifested Christ's almighty power and sovereignty, and proved the truth and great importance of his miraculous cures.—Nay, sin itself is made to promote the honour of Christ, and welfare of his people, Rom 5:20-21; Eph 1:7; 1 John 1:7,9. Sarah's passion promoted the promised restriction of Abraham's blessed seed to Isaac, Gen 16; Gen 21. Onesimus's theft occasioned his conversion to Christ, and Paul's furious persecution of the saints hastened his, Philem 10; Acts 8-9; Acts 22; Acts 26; Gal 1; 1 Tim 1:13. Papal fury, clerical horrid impieties, and licentious indulgences, occasioned the Protestant reformation; and King Henry's pride and lewdness occasioned his promoting it in England.—The Jews' rejection and murder of Christ were instrumental in his ransoming his elect, Isa 53; Matt 2-27.—But, 6. God, in his providential work, manifests an amazing regard to his church as connected with Christ, 1. In sometimes, as it were, preferring the exercise of his mercy towards her to the vindication of his own

honour, and providing for her safety, before he step forth to execute his just vengeance on outrageous offenders, Isa 26:20; Rev 7:1-3; Gen 19:22. 2. In taking peculiar care of his own people amidst the most terrible executions of his wrath, Ezek 9:6; Jer 15:11; Jer 39:11-18; Jer 45:5; Amos 9:9-10. 3. In stating the injuries done to his people, as the sole or principal ground of his most terrible judgments on nations, 1 Sam 15:2; Jer 48-51; Ezek 25-35; Ezek 38-39; Obad 1; Matt 24; Matt 25:41-45; Rev 6; Rev 8-9; Rev 11-20. 4. In taking such honourable notice of the meanest of them, while he leaves the great ones of the earth unmentioned, or loaded with infamy and contempt. How large and honourable the history of Jacob, in comparison with that of Cain, Ishmael, Esau, and their families? How much more honourable the history of Ebedmelech and the Syrophenician woman, than of all the kings and princes of their age, Jer 38:7-12; Jer 39:15-18; Matt 15:22-28. The pins of the tabernacle are more noticed than all the glories of Nineveh, Babylon, Persepolis, Rome, etc. 5. In delaying his more remarkable providential work, till he have laid the plan of it before his people, and obtained their approbation of it, Gen 18:17; Gen 41; Dan 9-12; Exod 32:9-10; Isa 45:11. 6. In bestowing all his choicest things,—his Son,—his word,—his grace,—his glory, only upon his church, Isa 9:6; Isa 2:5; Ps 147:19-20; Rom 3:2; Hos 8:12; Eph 4:11-13; 1 Cor 12; Ps 84:11.

All the providential dispensations of God towards ourselves or our fellow-creatures ought to be carefully observed, Ps 107:43; Hos 14:9; Ps 111:2; Ps 143:5; Ps 145:5,7; Ps 77:5,10-11; Isa 5:12; Isa 63:7. 1. How they are timed with the frame of our spirit, Ps 126:1; or with our circumstances, Ps 94:18; Job 20:23; Job 29:18. 2. How they begin, Ps 130:6; Luke 1:66; go forward, Luke 2:19,51; Hos 6:3; turn about, Zech 14:7; Gen 41:14; Esther 6:3-4; Gen 21:17.—and end, James 5:11; Job 42:10,12. 3. How they are mixed, sweet and bitter, dark and plain, Lam 3:22,32; Isa 27:8-9; Hab 3:2. 4. How they meet together, Job 1-2; Job 42; John 16:33; Eccles 7:14. 5. What they teach, Mic 6:8-9; Ps 73:16-17; Jer 7:7. 6. How they harmonize with Scripture doctrines, Ps 48:8; 1 Cor 1:26; Jer 17:9; Matt 22:14; with Scripture prophecies, 1 Tim 1:18; Amos 3:7; with Scripture promises, Josh

21:45; Ps 119:65; Gen 8:22; Mark 10:29-30; Exod 20:24; Prov 10:9; Prov 16:7; with Scripture threatenings, Lev 10:3; Hos 7:12; Mic 4:11-12; 1 Sam 2:30; Deut 32:35; and with Scripture examples, Ps 143:5; Jer 12:1-2; Ps 92:6-7; Eccles 8:14; 1 Cor 4:9; Gen 47:9.—and how they harmonize with each other, in their parts, form, and end, 1 Cor 10:13; 1 Pet 4:12; Eccles 1:9-11; or with their own particular or common end, Deut 32:4; Eccles 3:11; Rom 8:28.—or with the prayers of saints, Gen 32:24-26; Gen 33:10; 1 Chron 4:10; Ps 18:4-50; Ps 34:1-6; Ps 116:1-6; Ps 41:11; Mic 7:7-10; Ezek 36:37; Gen 24:45; 2 Cor 12:8-9; Ps 65:5; Exod 17:11; Rom 8:26-27; Dan 9-10;—and how they correspond with those sins which they punish,—in time,—in kind,—in similarity,—or in contrariety, 1 Kings 13:4; Judg 1:7; Gen 19:24; Lev 10:1-2; 1 Cor 11:30; Gen 3:5-6; Ps 49:20.—Gen 30:1; Gen 35:16-19.—Gen 27:1,6-24; Gen 29:23.—John 11:48; Luke 19:43-44; Luke 21:24.

Reflection. Having thus traversed the spacious fields of creation and providence, think, O my soul! Am I,—are all these beings around me, visible and invisible, the workmanship of God, and constantly preserved and governed by him? Why do I not, then, always consider myself as the temple of the living God, and all places as his residence?—Why do not I constantly perceive him in all things, and enjoy him in all that I meet with?—Why do not I cast all my care, and the care of all the churches, upon him?—Why do not I take every event as a demonstration of his love to my soul, and of his hatred of my sins?—Why do I undervalue any thing which Jehovah reckons worthy of his making, support, and government?—O his unfathomable wisdom!—his almighty power!—his amazing grace!—his perpetual mindfulness of his covenant,—that makes all these creatures work together for his glory and my good!—And Oh, the horrid guilt of abusing a single creature to the service of my sinful lusts!

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